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UNITE DE RECHERCHE ET DE
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**DREAM FULFILMENT: A STUDY OF MICHELLE
OBAMA'S *BECOMING* AND BARACK OBAMA'S
*DREAMS FROM MY FATHER***

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of a
Master's Degree in English Modern Letters

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DEDICATION

To My Parents

NWELEM NJAMZE PAUL

AND

FRANCISCA NGWAMOUN

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to prove that blacks in America can overcome racial discrimination. Representing the African Americans, Michelle and Barack Obama demonstrated their leadership and gave so many reasons why every person's dream in America is attainable. To the authors, after years of abolition of slavery and the Civil Right movement, whites stereotypically take advantage of skin color to determine who enjoys power in America. Michelle and Barack Obama have risen to debunk this racist idea of white supremacy.

The aim of this research is to deconstruct the idea of black inferiority. This has been achieved through the use of theories like Deconstruction, Social Realism and the theory of Resistance. These theories each has helped us to deconstruct the white's superiority complex while giving hope to the hopeless Africans American living in America. Our findings have revealed that blacks can succeed in all aspect of life in America taking example from the author's understudy.

The theory of Resistance has been used to better analyze the supposedly white superiority encounter with the African American. At the end of our study, it was discovered that so many Americans still find it difficult to accept African Americans as equals. To this effect, the authors therefore called on African Americans to take their responsibilities at hand, grow beyond superiority complex and obtain everything they dream for.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce travail de recherche cherche à prouver que le racisme en Amérique peut être vaincu. Représentant l'afro-américain, Michelle et Obama ont démontré leur leadership et ont donné de nombreuses raisons pour lesquelles le rêve de chaque personne en Amérique est réalisable. Pour les auteurs, après des années d'abolition de l'esclavage et du mouvement des droits civiques, les blancs utilisent de manière stéréotypée l'avantage sur la couleur de la peau et l'histoire de l'esclavage pour déterminer les capacités et le savoir-faire des noirs vivant en Amérique, ce qui n'est pas à sa place dans le 21^e siècle selon Michelle et Obama.

Le but de cette recherche est de déconstruire le complexe d'infériorité des noirs envers les blancs. Cela a été réalisé grâce à l'utilisation des théories telles que la théorie de la déconstruction, la théorie du réalisme social et la théorie de la résistance. Ces théories nous ont chacune aidé à déconstruire le complexe de supériorité des blancs tout en donnant de l'espoir aux désespérés africains vivant en Amérique. Nos découvertes nous ont révélées que les Noirs peuvent réussir dans tous les aspects de la vie aux États-Unis en prenant exemple sur la doubleur des auteurs. La théorie de la résistance a été utilisée pour mieux analyser la supposer supériorité des blancs face à l'afro-américain.

À la fin de notre étude, il a été découvert que plusieurs américains ont encore du mal à accepter les afro-américains comme des êtres égaux. À cet effet, les auteurs ont donc fait appel aux Noirs à prendre leur responsabilité en main, à dépasser le complexe d'infériorité des Blancs et à obtenir tout ce dont ils rêvent.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
RESUME	iv
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
Historical Context of Race in America	1
Statement of Problem	9
Research Question.....	10
Hypothesis.....	10
Motivations.....	10
Objective of the Research	11
Significance of the Research	11
Definition of Concepts	12
CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATION AND REVIEW OF	
LITERATURE	15
Theoretical Framework	15
Literature review	23
CHAPTER TWO: AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY AND CHALLENGES FACED BY	
BLACKS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AMERICA	36
The author’s biographies.....	36
Challenges Faced by Blacks in America.....	39
Slavery and the Post Slavery Period in America.....	42
White Superiority complex and Segregation in America.....	52
CHAPTER THREE: THE AUTHORS AND THE PROBLEM OF RACE	63
Family (Black Racism).....	63
Politics.....	71
Education.....	87
CHAPTER FOUR: AUTHORS’ VISION	94
Reconstructing the African American Identity	96
Politics and Nation Building in U.S.A	99
Authors’ Vision (Egalitarian Society).....	104

CONCLUSION..... 113
BIBLIOGRAPHY 119

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Background

Displacement has always been an integral part of human history caused by political, economic, social and cultural upheavals that characterize the history of most countries, especially postcolonial countries. Thus, immigrants of diverse countries displace themselves in the hope of finding a better living condition and life fulfilment. This process is therefore not regarded as a new trend but something that has been taking place for centuries thought with increasing speed as a consequences of modernity. Although the process of displacement has created many advantages for individuals to expand their horizons, explore and seek refuge, it has also been the root cause of identity crisis. The increasing occurrence of these mixtures of identities places a growing number of persons in a space where they feel unimportant.

In the works of the scholar Alton Hornsby, Jr, *A Companion to African American History* (1997), the American Slavery started in 1619 when the Dutch introduced the first captured 20 African slaves on shores in the British colony of Jamestown Virginia. These individuals were not slaves but indentured servants' persons bound to an employer for a limited number of years. In the late of the 16th century, the number of slaves who were brought to the English colonies was doubled almost 760,000 and made up nearly one fifth of the population of the United States. Planting the seeds of slavery system that evolved into nightmare of abuse and cruelty, the African slaves became hand labor; they had to work in plantations for long hours with lower prices. Later these colonies began enacting laws that defined and regulated slave relations, central to these laws was the provision that black slaves and children of slave women, would save for life (149).

Actually, the status of the first blacks in the New World was contended to be submissive, they must be viewed within the perspective of these conceptions and realities of servitude. Though many historians think of slavery in United States as primarily a system of race relations, as the chief's business of slavery were the production of the white supremacy

rather than the production of cotton, sugar and tobacco. Hornsby, Jr claims “slavery was the ultimate segregation that marked undeniable split in structure and the culture of the blacks” the institution of slavery led to the classification of super race “White race” and inferior race “Black race”, it generated the distortion of the African culture and the character. Colonists soon “become aware of differences between themselves and African immigrants and “color emerged as distinctive feature of the slave status; the trace of color became the trace of slavery” “It was depended on a perception of the Negro as peculiar kind of social being fitting and proper to enslave for life (ibid). He also argues that the white servitude was the historic base upon which slavery was constructed. Interestingly, the blacks lost the possibility to acquire property as the basis of genuine freedom, the true shift was that free blacks were not only losing property, but that blacks were gradually becoming property, a transition which was ultimately crystalized in *Race* (1997). Indeed, slavery was a central institution in the American history until 1865, through which the Africans were subjugated to very atrocious treatment from the early time of captivity then the Middle Passage till the life in the South colonies.

In the works of Rodriguez Junius, P, *Slavery in United States: A Social, Political and Historical Encyclopedia*, (2007) contends the “Slave Trade and the Middle Passage” were the open doors to the exchange of Western products with slaves, in order to fulfill the demands of the hand labors mainly in the southwest of the country: Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi and later Texas, where there was abundant lands suitable for the agriculture of cotton. This was the reason why about 84% of slaves were being brought to the New World. Between 1500 and 1860, about 12 million people are known to have left the shores of Africa destined for the Americas, and to a much lesser extent to Europe, although not everyone made it alive, and some died soon after the arrival. Despite the heavy loss of lives during what has been called the “Middle Passage,” many more Africans crossed the Atlantic than Europeans.

The transportation of enslaved Africans constituted the largest single migration of people before the middle of the nineteenth century. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the great majority of people moving from the Old World to the New World were black people. When gender is taken into consideration, then it can be said that far more black girls and women were forcibly taken to the Americas, at least before the middle of the nineteenth century. It follows, therefore, and not voluntary migration. While there is considerable debate over attempts to estimate the number of enslaved Africans who crossed

the Atlantic, the broad parameters of this massive demographic movement are well understood (419).

Unfortunately, millions of captives were shipped in very harsh conditions, with harsh climatic condition, and they voyage length that could vary considerably; it may take weeks and months across the Atlantic Ocean as from Angola to Virginia within the period of six months. Nevertheless, there were several examples of slave rebellion on the slave ship, the most famous is Amistad Rebellion 1839, where slaves control the ship and killed most of the crew as defense to escape and go back to Africa but they failed (Anderson1995-86). Clearly, the trip to the New World was a second immigration in the American history. The first one was the American dream whereas the second one was a nightmare to the African captives. The slaves had to endure burden of atrocities and hardships while being transported from Africa to America and across the ocean, where life conditions were atrocious. Overlooking the conditions that slaves had to endure while being enslaved is a tragic condition. They faced famine because of the poor ration and diseases with a high rate of mortality because of the crowd and the narrow space mainly on the ships.

The enslaved Africans were all enclosed under grated hatchways, between decks. The space was so low that they sat between each other's legs and stowed so close. Together, that there was no possibility of lying down, or at all changing their Position by night or day. They were all branded like sheep, with the owners marks of different forms. These were impressed under their breasts, or on their arms, and as the mate informed me with perfect indifference burnt with a red hot iron... (Anderson, 1995. 74)

For the enslaved African, this experience aboard the ship was transiting into even more than misery and death. For them it meant going from a kind of stench to another, more ferocious kind. Boarding these floating hellholes meant freedom through death. Moreover, the life in slavery was heterogeneous which means that the hardship of slavery deferred from man to woman. For instance the novel of the African Americans slave narrative Harriet Jacobs in which the Incidents in *The Life of Slave Girl 1839* portrayed the double marginalization being black slave and being a woman her body belong to her masteracing harassment and the extent to which the life under slavery stigmatized the moral side of women.

Furthermore, there were two kinds of slaves, the house Negro and the field Negro; the former lived in the same house with his master. They dressed pretty, they ate well because they ate his food, they lived in the debasement but they still live near the master, and they loved their master more than the master loves himself. On that same plantation, the latter

those were the masses, the Negro caught hell; they ate leftover what was left of the inside of the hog. The field Negro was beaten from morning to night; living in a shake in hut they wish the death to their masters. Though the life under slavery was extremely marked by subjugation, cruelty, and sexual exploitation of women, slavery for the enslaved people was a hell upon earth. Thus there was no way to minimize its horror till the dawn of the Emancipation Proclamation.

It is therefore clear that one of the fundamental factors that favoured racism in the United States of America was the African Trans Atlantic Slave Trade in other word known as The West African Slave Trade. The transatlantic slave trade was the traffic in slaves across the ocean where human beings were trade between Europe and Africa especially the West African countries. It was the transportation by the Europeans of African slaves across the Atlantic Ocean for sale in the West Indies and most especially in America. It was therefore a marketing activity involving the exchange of energetic Africans as trade items for manufactured goods on the coast of Africa. This barbaric and inhuman trade was also known as the triangular slave trade. This is because the trade involves three principal axes which are Europe, West Africa and America. The Transatlantic slave trade lasted for three centuries. It began in the 16th century and ended in the 19th century.

Even though history holds that, the first European country to practice this inhuman trade in West Africa was the Portuguese. This happened as far back as the 15th century. It is said that during this period around 1482, the Portuguese explorers obtained a consignment of ten slaves at Rio de Oro. The success of this expedition greatly encourages many Portuguese business men to continue. However, during the 16th century, Portugal monopolised the slave business at the coast of west Africa until during the 17th and 18th century that the volume of the business increase rapidly with the involvement of countries like England, Spain, Holland, France, Denmark and Sweden. After the abolition of slavery and slave trade life became difficult for blacks who could not return to their country of origins. Others became permanent workers in those plantations but this time around, they were remunerated, some got married and gave birth to children who did not know their country of origin.

For instance, Olaudah Equiano is a slave who lived about two hundred years later than these European explorers. He came to America against his will as an enslaved African. However, he later purchased his freedom, settled in England and worked extremely hard to abolish slavery. As part of his effort, he wrote a two volume autobiography entitled "*the interesting narrative of the life of olaudah Equiano.*" In his autobiography, he presents a

vivid and horrifying account of slaves journeying to America. Hence the outcome in the America society is what is known to day as racism or racial discrimination.

Writers from the 19 century to the 21 century have presented this problematic as being a counter discourse between the whites and the blacks. Michelle Robinson, Barack Obama, and Toni Morrison in their novels highlight this counter discourse through the confrontation between the two cultures; that of the whites (developed) and that of the blacks (underdeveloped). European history holds that, the black race was not the best human kind since they lack the technical knowhow and was most often than not looked upon as less human. Racism has always been a hot topic of discussion in America till present (Asukile, 2008: 41-43). Furthermore, Obama said openly that America has not recovered from the disease of racism, as the reaction of a crime for the shootings blacks recently as quoted by Reuter on June, 23th 2015 (Muhaimin, 2016). This case proves that even though America has been independent since 1774 and American civil right amendments has been validated in 1865 to oppose all racist acts, Blacks has been one of the presidents in America, but the racism persists till this day. This is because racism is rooted in the life and the history of the American society (Fadillah, 2013). Then this leads to discrimination, the practice of treating somebody or particular group in the society less fairly than others (Hornby, 2000 - 377).

These ideas were further accelerated by explorers who visited the new world such as Christopher Columbus. In reality, no one knows when the first Europeans came to the Americas. However, archaeological evidence suggests that the seafaring northern Europeans known as Vikings set up small encampments on the islands of northeastern Canada beginning some time around A.D. 1000. Still our knowledge about Vikings settlements is largely speculative. Not until the late fifteenth century did Europe inaugurate an age of exploration in which its journeys to the Americas were well documented. Christopher Columbus, an Italian living in Portugal, was convinced that he could reach Asia by sailing west. After receiving financial backing from Spain's Queen Isabella, he set sail in August 1492 and in 12 of October he landed on an island in what is now the Bahamas. Christopher wrote about his experience in his journal of the first voyage to America, in which he stressed the rich potentials of the new lands that he still regarded as part of Asia.

It is read that, these explorers considered the inhabitants as barbaric and uncivilized. From their point of view, writings led to identity questioning of many Americans especially the black people. This identity and race questioning led to one of the first European protesting against racism. With the discovery of the new world by Christopher Columbus in 1492, it is

said that, the natives of the Americans were the red Indians who were later enslaved in their own homeland alongside with their Africans counterpart influenced by the new train of the industrial revolution. Around the period of 1900-1910 were characterized with protest which was an important action of reconstruction of the black's identity in the American history.

It should be noted that most of this protest was during the period of segregation. This protest was as a result of the colored people mounting pressure on the white's supremacy and it was later intensified by the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People (NAACP) which saw it daylight in 1909. It important for us to bear in mind that most of the members in this association was World War 1 ex-fighters who later joined the movement asking for their civil rights. During this period, the question "who are you?" appeared as one of the most provoking questions to the black Americans. This has pushed researchers and scholars to develop a lot of interest in the concept of identity, race and nationalism. James D. Fear precise in his work "What is Racism?" brings the concept of racism to be found in the center of lively debates in any major subfield and tells us how students in American politics have devoted much new research in identity, race and gender.

After the period of slavery and slaved trade was abolished, the whites and the blacks remained segregated in all aspect of life till the second half of the twentieth century. This phenomenon made the issues of race and identity one of the most important thematic concerned by many writers of literature. The Afro-American frustration could not be hidden anymore. The black Americans were victims of all sorts of tortures and maltreatments. Martin Luter King Jr. One of the victims confirms to people what he passed through

I was well aware of the typical white's stereotype of the Negro... That he is Always late; that he is laud and always laughing, that he is dirty and messy and for a while, i was terribly conscious of trying to avoid Identification with black (6-7).

From the above statements, we see the inferiority complex that the whites have for the black people. They are looked upon by the whites as half human, childlike creatures, stupid and maintained them as people who belong to the lower class. The idea continued ringing in their minds as they ask themselves questions about the black people identity after emancipation,

“Can a Negro, who ancestors were imported in this country and sold as slaves a member of The Political U. And as such become entitle to all the rights, privileges and immunit Guaranteed by that Instrument to the citizen?” (18)

From the above quotes, it is clear that the black American and the whites are not given the same consideration hence, the inequality of race which questions the issue of identity. And the blacks were denied of their rights even though legally it was said that the black American was as free as the whites. Ironically, this said freedom made thing worst for them as their fellow compatriots looked at them as future competitors in the job market. This made life very difficult and tedious to the black Americans to defend themselves because many of them lack the power and the ability to demand for their rights since most of them were denied the right to education.

Notwithstanding, they were some few blacks who were willing to be educated. Since it is said that, during the slavery and slave trade periods, a Negro was discovered trying learned how to read and writes but unfortunately, this Negro was automatically punished by his master. His right hand was cut off. Alice Walker refers to it in ‘*the color purple*’ where her characters were talking about school. Olivia, one of the characters asked Nettie: Why can’t Tashi come to school? She asks me when i told her Olinga don’t believe in Educating girls she said. Quick as flash, they are like white people to learn, (153)

These strict rules brought negative impacts on the Negros since they could barely write to express their experiences. This subjected the blacks to illiteracy until it was only during the 1920s that black’s literature began to flourish thanks to the few educated elites especially in Harlem (a district of New York City). W.E Burghard Du Bois “*the souls of black folks*” and Paul Laurence Dunbar ‘*folks from Dixie.*’ Thanks to Harlem in 1920s gave a plat form for many Negro intellectuals and writers to explore the Afro-American culture and tradition thus bringing into the lamplights many writers at this time of the Harlem renaissance.

During this period, we witness the first best selling novel by a Negro called Claude Mc Kay ‘*home to Harlem*’ (1928). We are told most of these Negro’s writings where written in ghetto. It is very important for us to note that, after the Second World War many Negros works where published more especially in the late 1950s and 1960s. The peaks of this Negros writings was during the 1950s when black’s novelist, playwrights and poets became a vigorous element in American literature. At this moment, many Negros writers explore and expressed their experience and their unique culture. This put in to place great novels like James Baldwin’s novel ‘*Go tell it on the mountain*’ (1953). In this novel, we came to find

out that, he did not only write about blacks. Critics also bring Ralph Ellison's text "*The Invisible Man*" to the lamp lights referring to it as the most powerful text after the war. In this text "*the invisible man*" represents the Negro while the whites look at them as subhuman.

This period equally saw a boom in works written by women. For instance, Margaret Fuller who suffered from gender prejudice was later inspired to write a powerful review on social issues such as "*the treatment of women prisoners and the insane*" and another book title '*woman in the 19 century*'. We all know that at this moment, woman was denied the right to speak in public not to talk of owning wealth. This treatment was even made worst to the black women. Men at this moment especially the whites wanted to permanently keep the women spare bound under their rules and control, worst to that, the women were not allowed to go to school normally thus, keeping their superiority on the women making writing to them very difficult.

Just like Fuller, Toni Morrison came up as another powerful influential Afro American writer. In her writings, she added the women experience. Some of her works include '*Song of Solomon*', *beloved* and *tar baby*'. At this moment, it was very rare to find women names in any in anthologies dealing with American literature. They were easily forgotten because their writings were not taken in to consideration since most of their works was on their ill treatment given to them by the men. The women knew that the only way they could free themselves was through educations. At this time, the afro American woman had tripple oppression more especially in their identity. Judith sergent Murray (1758-1820) published her works under a man's Name to secure serious attention for her works. (25) Today, some of the stereotype's ideas had about the Negroes American have greatly been deconstructed. It was difficult for whites to believe in equality of colored as most whites consider the blacks as mere servants not their equals. Through their writings and meetings, their social status change. The black American woman did not only end at the level of changing their status but they courageously demanded fundamental reforms such as the abolition of slavery.

The literary works of Michelle Obama and many other Afro American writers had been a driving force to the blacks this last century as it has created a lot of impact in the American society. In their works, precisely *Becoming* (2018) by Michelle Obama, *Dreams from my Father* (2004) by Barack Obama, Toni Morrison *Songs Solomon* (1977) and the *Blues Eye* (1970), we realized they creates their own identity, they make the Afro Americans to be unique in their culture and tradition. Many authors' view on racism was essentially

based on the 21st century world. Michelle Obama in his novel understood the kind of society in which she was and could project the future.

It is for this reason that Toni Morrison in her novel is concerned with one of the burning issues of the time “*identity*.” It appears as a counter discourse against the ill treatments and the marginalization of the black Americans. Characters are shown breaking social bounces; they are aggressive and have as aim to transform the white’s dominations in to equal opportunities. They want to intentionally wipe out the Whiteman’s superiority complex. That is why their characters are carefully chosen which makes them breaks the social norms, laws and social conventions. Through these characters, Michelle Obama had made it clear that the misconception whites had about the blacks Americans has no place rather it has motivated so many black Americans citizens to aspire for more lucrative position in the American government such as Barack Obama who became the first black president in the United States of America and many others who proudly manifested their right as a black American citizen.

This also comes to approve Martin Luther King Jr. Who said, “*they come a time where man will not be judge by the color of the skin but by his content.*”

This has been a motivational factor to black people who had the ability to transcend the oppression, torture and the discriminations, as well as bringing to the lamplights a fighting spirits that puts both the whites and the blacks on a level land. It is therefore clear that most of the ideas Barack Obama stood for in his works is actually being deconstructed today as it no longer news to see the blacks in leadership positions in America. However, the challenges recorded over the decades are an indication that the heritage of the American slaves still hunts us till date. Racial comportement of white’s superiority become part and parcel of the Americans.

Statement of Problem

One turned to feel humiliated and dehumanized when he or she is identified as some one who has nothing to contribute or offer in the community in which he or she lives. It is noticed that the black Americans have for centuries been stereotyped and discriminated upon. For years, the Afro Americans have been forced to fight against the Whiteman discrimination and segregation. The campaign on black American identity and race appears as a result of the abolition of slavery and slave trade.

Due to the considerable efforts put in place by the black Americans to fight for the right of the colored Americans, they have seen a persistent increase in the violation of the colored people's rights. They have constantly been subjected by the white's majority, taking them as subhuman. In a bid to counter react to this marginalization, many blacks stood against segregation, racism, discrimination, marginalization, gender and race. The concept of identity and race today in America has greatly evolved. Many changes had occurred, be it in the domain of politics, economic and social domain. The conception that the whites have for the blacks is gradually changing even though a lot is still to be done. Before that the whites were looked upon as heroes in all aspects of life. The white's majority considers Africans as people have nothing to contribute in the society. But however, it is important to note that the question of identity and race has greatly shaped the history of the United States of America.

Research Question

In order to properly address the concerns, rose above, we shall be answering the following questions in the course of our analysis.

1. What are the challenges blacks face in the 21st century?
2. How do the writers grapple with the problem of race in their respective works?
3. What solutions do they offer in their respective novels?

Hypothesis

This research is grounded on the hypothesis that through Michelle and Barack Obama's works, racism can be overcome in America. In their memoirs, *BECOMING* and *DREAMS FROM MY FATHER* the authors deconstruct the idea of white superiority complex, racial discrimination and urges blacks Americans to wake up from slumber. This work is therefore undoubtedly based on the hypothetical contention that Barack Obama and Michelle Obama demonstrate the fact that blacks in America have finally been accepted as equal citizens with their white counterparts.

Motivations

Cameroon has distinct regional, cultural, religious and political tradition as well as ethnic variety. The division of the country into British and French rule by the League of the

Nations mandates after World War 1, created Anglophones and Francophones regions. The introduction of the two educational systems and the legal systems in Cameroon has not in anyway restored peace in Cameroon. These differences have greatly contributed to socio economic problems like tribalism, identity discrimination, marginalisation and corruptions. Many youths are jobless and life is becoming more and more difficult. They are tempted to believe that the political system put in place by the state has made things worst for the youths. In a similar situation like Michelle and Barack Obama we sought to draw ideas and inspirations from them and solve our own differences in Cameroon. Despite faced with identity and racial discriminations, Michelle and Obama succeeded in the American society. A similar situation could be applied here in Cameroon to succeed.

Objective of the Research

- This work aims at examining Barack Obama's *Dreams from my father* and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* to demonstrate how racism can be overcome through hard work. The Obamas through their respective works show us that the idea of the American dream is achievable.

Significance of the Research

The choice of these two memoirs, Michelle Obama's *Becoming* and Barack Obama's *Dreams from my Father* is not done at random. We choose these novels simply because of the author's views on related issues like race, identity, Slavery, segregation, marginalisation and gender. Instead of these authors to bring out their inferiority complex as blacks, they rather show the reverse in their writings, proving to the white community how much they have gone beyond the superiority complex. Now, whites who use to see blacks as inferior human beings will see from Michelle and the husband something totally different. Thus, it is paramount for us to see how these writers tackle issues like racism, identity, segregation, racial discrimination, gender and prejudice.

Definition of Concepts

In order to understand the perspective rose in this work, it is important that we define some key words. These definitions will set a standard for this work, fitting them into specific context under discussion.

The fourth Edition of *The American Heritage of the English Language* [2000] defines “Black American” as American of African ancestry. ‘Identity’ is defined by Encyclopedia Dictionary as, the condition or state of being a specific person or thing and recognizably as such. It also defines this phrase as the conditions or fact being the same as something else. Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary equally defines it as "who or what somebody or something is, or the state of being very like or the same like somebody or something. In the definitions above, we notice two basic meanings; the first is a concept of distinctiveness while the second meaning is a concept of absolute sameness. This implies that the first meaning identifies a person as an individual, whereas the second identifies him with a group. Thus, one can talk of personal and social identity.

In his book *Social Identity* (1996), Richard Jenkins has used the word 'identity' to include one's social identity. He refers to 'social identity' as ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relationships with other individuals and collectivities. This shows that the human being is a social being who feel relaxed and comfortable in the mise of other humans thus the identity must relate to the society.

According to *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, race is defined as a group of people distinguished by genetically transmitted physical characteristics, or a group of persons united by a common history, culture, tradition or nation. Anthropologist and biologist recognise physical variation across human population, race as we commonly think of it, has been shown by many scientist and and other theories to be social or cultural constructs. More variations generally exist within a given race. Thus, race often involves cultural rather than biological differences and characteristics ranging from diet, music and religious believes. And finally, race in a greater extend is a social construct because over the tens of thousands of years of human history, movements and the subsequent biological mixing of races have made racial categorisation an extremely arbitrary business ... a much more startling example of race as a social construction is the fact that immigrants from the Indian sub continent are said to be "blacks" in great Britain but not in North America, where the term is reserved for people of African descent ..." (321).

The meaning of discrimination the concept of stigma is integrally linked to that of 'discrimination'. According to the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology, the concept of discrimination simply means "treating unfairly" and is most commonly used in the context of sociological theories of ethnic and race relations. More recent sociological analyses of discrimination, however, "concentrate on patterns of dominance and oppression, viewed as expressions of a struggle for power and privilege." While this latter sociological definition emphasizes the structural dimensions of discrimination. Herek's social psychological analysis defines discrimination in behavioural terms "discrimination is behaviour". In other words, discrimination is the differential treatment of individuals according to their membership of a particular group. Herek differentiates discrimination from 'stigma', which 'resides in the structure and relations of society', and 'prejudice', which 'resides in the minds of individuals'.

There are different dimensions of racism. In the context of race, racism is the stigma and racial discrimination is the behaviour that gives expression to that stigma. Racism is rooted in the ideology of cultural superiority and results in the generalized and definitive valorization of biological differences, whether real or imagined, favourable for the racist, devaluing the other, with the aim of justifying an aggression or privilege. Racism is transmitted through generations and serves to rationalize the hierarchical patterning in society whereby one group dominates over other(s). Racism expresses itself through institutional norms, cultural values and individual and/or collective discriminatory behaviour patterns. Finally, reference can be made to legal definition. Race-based discrimination or racial discrimination is defined in article 1 (1) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as: "...any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life."

The English term "prejudice" and its equivalent in many other European languages like France *prejuger*, German *vorurteil*, Portuguese *preconceito* literary means a prejudgments or preconception. We should note that prejudice is not the same as discrimination. Prejudice refers to one's judgment of others, whereas discrimination is a treatment given to a person consciously or unconsciously because of the person's race rather than because of the person's characteristic. Contrary to discrimination, prejudice is an attitude or a state of mind, involves

the arbitrary denial of privilege, and power of a majority group whose qualifications are equal to those of the dominant group. Discrimination is simply a choice made on the basis of some standard of value. Discrimination is proper actions for human. Human are special in that, they can choose their standards of value and thus, it has the capacity act for or against their own existence to pursue life.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section of the work treats theoretical frameworks used in the analysis of this work and review of related literature. The discussion in this section will fit us within a defined context and will, however, discuss related studies that fit within the context of black American literary studies. In the course of our discussion, we shall be identifying the gap which we are filling within the Black American literary spectrum.

Theoretical Framework

To address the problem raised in this research work, we shall be guided by three theoretical frameworks. This includes, deconstruction, social realism and resistance theories. Each of these theories play a complimentary role, with one complementing the other, to be able to address the problem rose. The first theory to be discussed is the theory of deconstruction. We choose the theory of deconstruction because it is a theory that examines ideas and rules or norms in literary works and deconstruct them. This theory was first propounded by a french philosopher Jacques Derrida. The theory of deconstruction is a critique of the relationship between text and meaning originated by the philosopher Jacques Derrida. Derrida's original use of the word "deconstruction" was a translation from French "deconstruire" a concept from Martin Heidegger.

In his book entitled *of grammatology*, Jacques Derrida explains that most of his influential ideas within deconstruction as many other works were published and attached to the concept of deconstruction such as difference, speech and phenomena, and writing and difference. According to Jacques Derrida, inspired by the system of sign initiated by Ferdinand De Saussure, language as a system of signs and words only have meaning because of the contrast between these signs "words have meaning because of contrast effect with other words." It is therefore clear that no word carries meaning on its own. As a consequence, we hardly find meaning but rather meaning is deferred to signs. Jacques Derrida insists on Saussure's theory by saying that the meaning of words lie in the differences between them and the various things they name. In Derrida's book *De la grammatology* (of grammatology) (1967), he confirms that any work of literature we interpreted defies the law of non-contradiction.

Jacques Derrida's theory of Deconstruction posits the decidability of meaning of a text. Ideas in this theory are expressed in the form of binary opposition, and expressed hierarchical orders thus; deconstructions argue that there is no one interpretation or meaning for a particular literary text. Jacques Derrida himself argues that we tend to express our minds in terms of opposites. The theory of Deconstruction however focuses on the close meaning of the text. It looks at the meaning of text relating it to events occurred in the text. It for this reasons that deconstructions prefer to confront the apparently limitless possibilities for a production of meaning that develop when language of the critics enters the language of the text. Once a text is written, it ceases to have a meaning until a reader reads and analyses it. There is no fixed meaning to the text thus, as far as deconstruction is concerned, there is no absolute truth. In the nutshell, we can say that Derrida's deconstruction is an approach to understanding the relationship between text and meaning. The approach consists of conducting readings of texts with an ear to what runs counter to the intended meaning or structural unity of a particular text.

The second theory is Social Realism. Realism came into literature in the eighteenth century as a borrowed concept from philosophy. In philosophical discourse, realism which is contrary to idealism holds the view that the object of knowledge has a reality, which is independent of the knowing mind. Some seventeenth century philosophers like Rene Descartes and John Locke, held the view that ideas in the mind represent real objects. It is against this backdrop that some literary men such as Gustav Flaubert, Stendhals, Balzac, Dickens, George Eliot, Thackeray, George Moore, Hemingway, Faulkner, borrowed this concept and transfused it into literary concept in the eighteenth century. The concept of realism is used in a more restricted sense than in philosophy. This is conceived as a movement that has to do with the objective presentation of facts without any form of idealization or Romanization.

Literary realism is further divided into two categories: social realism and psychological realism. Social realism follows the principle of rigid behaviourism whereby the individual is seen as being influenced by the norms and mores in his society. Social realism is defined as: "...Art with subject or content culled from the contemporary scene, usually focusing on people or groups who are socially, politically, or economically disenfranchised." ([www.artsmia.org/art in HYPERLINK " /glossary.html](http://www.artsmia.org/art%20in%20HYPERLINK%20/glossary.html)). Social realism deals with society as a whole and is thus, collective. Social Realism is an important and a significant critical approach in postmodern American literature because it is a naturalistic realism focusing on

social issues and the hardships of everyday life. Social Realism, therefore, refers to the urban American scene of the depressive artists, who were influenced by the Ashcan school of the early 20th century New York. Social realism, an international art movement, refers to the work of painters, print-makers, photographers, and film-makers that draw attention to the everyday conditions of the working class and the poor; social realists are critical of the social structures which maintain these conditions.

Through Social Realism, we can better analyse Obama's text within the context of identity reconstruction. The principal source of the subject matter of the works of social realism is made up of problems connected with human life, the works, thoughts and actions of the people who are either trying to establish a hierarchic society or who are struggling for their rights in capitalist, rather than socialist countries. Critical realism puts oppressed and exploited people at the centre of its works, people for whom we must have pity, people who rebel only as individuals, those who are incapable of changing their lives and of building a new society. The literature of social realism portrays the people as great, organized force, the creative and moving force of history.

"Social Realism" is a literary term that derives from Russian inspired beliefs about the function of literature in a revolutionary socialist society. The international production of social realist fiction is characterized by a belief in the power of the word and in the writer's ability to portray in a satisfying documentary fashion the structure of social reality. Social realism is inspired in various ways by the Russian revolution, Soviet communism, international Marxism, and the need to respond critically and in a denunciatory fashion to the various mechanisms of repression and the frustration of personal and collective aspirations. In this regard, we can accept the critical viewpoints of Coles (2001): Realism, in literature, is a manner and method of picturing life as it really is untouched by idealism or romanticism. As a manner of writing, realism relies on the use of specific details to interpret life faithfully and objectively. In contrast to romance, this concerned with the bizarre and psychological in its approach to character, presenting the individual rather than the type. Often, fate plays a major role in the action.

Realism became prominent in the English novel with such writers as Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, Laurence Sterne, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Anthony Trollope and William Makepeace Thackeray (Dictionary of Literary Terms, p. 163). The term 'Realism' is widely accepted according to need and time. Realism in literature and the visual art used to describe a variety of approach in which

accurate depiction of reality is the aim. Each of these uses involves a contrast between human thought or imagination and an external reality independent of mind. The notion that reality has a cognitive or normative authority on the mind is generally present (Chapter 2: Social Realism, pp. 5- 7).

Literature emerges out of life and records dreams and ideas, hopes and aspirations, failures and disappointments, motives and passions, and experiences and observations. Over the years, literature has reflected the prevailing social issues in many eminent works of literature under the shadow of realism. In Realism, social reality is an aspect of the picture but cannot be isolated as though it were an entity by itself. It cannot be taken out of the context of the general cultural pattern of a period. Even there have been honest attempts to recreate incidents from the great literatures of the past ages. They convey truth, the truth of emotion, which is the ultimate of realism. This aspect of realism is lacking in the works of some of the writers. Realism should be truthful and honest picture of society. It should be a true attempt to focus on reality with the concern to make it a superior world. Realism in art and literature is an endeavor to portray life as it is. It shows life with reality, omitting nothing that is ugly or painful and idealizing nothing. To the realists, the writer's most important function is to describe as truthfully as possible what is observed through the senses. Realism began as a recognizable movement in art in the 18th century.

True realism depicts man and society as complete entities instead of showing one aspect or other. It is not just an echo but the real sound of an individual or society or joint voice of their being (Chapter III: Theory on Social Realism, pp. 2-5). Social Realism developed as a reaction against idealism and the exaggerated ego encouraged by Romanticism. The consequences of the industrial revolution became a device; urban centers grew, slums flourished on a new scale contrasting with the display of wealth of the upper classes with a new sense of social consciousness and the social realists pledged to fight the beautiful art, any style which appeared to the eye or emotions. They focused on the ugly realities of contemporary life and sympathized with working class people, particularly the poor. They recorded what they saw, as it is existed in a dispassionate manner.

'Social' is an omnibus word covering all aspects of human activity that display an awareness of others. Simply speaking "Social Realism" is an extraordinary reach of understanding of social life. We can say that, social realism is an intellectual power of probing into the nature and function of society, its various institutions and traditions, and their functioning. Social Realism involves individual, social and cultural changes in all spheres of

human life with their intricacies, and nuances: facts relating to family, the class, the marriage, the school, the politics, economy, morality, religion, and educational standards. It relates more to social changes and social instabilities such as identity crisis, unemployment, youth unrest, industrial indiscipline, crime, war, misrepresentation and their causes and consequences. Social Realism is a keen depiction of social condition. Social insight is a heightened consciousness or comprehensive understanding of social and cultural milieu - a sense of social fact.

Socially conscious refers to an awareness inspired by a social ideology. It implies extreme social involvement and commitment to social decorum. Social Realism includes social consciousness, social sense and experience and social insight. Social Realism unravels the layer within layers of the social fabric through fictional medium. By choosing an appropriate story, characters, language and fictional technique, the novelist aims to present the multifarious aspects of society and its complex functioning. Social Realism is not just realism represented in novels. It is, on the other hand, the novelist's way of dealing with realism or sometimes dealing with social facts and events of society for his novel's sake. In the novelists' hands it remains a technique by which truth is represented in an artistic way (Chapter III: Theory on Social Realism, pp.7- 9).

If we examine the works of Sherman Alexie, we can realize that social realism has been impacted in most of his writings, especially, short stories. Through his short stories, novels and poetry, he wants to show a faithful image of social reality of postmodern age through creating characters, plot construction, and themes. Alexie wants to point out his subtle attitude towards social issues of his home country. What he wants to share with the people of the postmodern era is, equally true for any country of any age. Consequently, this submission is prepared to introduce social realism of Alexie's age to enable use understand clearly, the issue of identity crisis and misrepresentation. Alexie wants to present how Indians live in the postmodern world. He has a desire for writing about bad things and unveiling them in the finest and the darkest environment.

The third theory to be used in the analysis of this work is the theory of Resistance. Before we talk about the theory, it is important for us to know the various definition of the word 'resistance'. What is resistance? Resistance theory is a philosophy of social practices. It has to do with political and moral philosophy of nonviolent resistance. It undermines the concept of revolution and disobedient thus, at this period, many black's movements were put in place which lead to denunciations and renunciation which finally lead to activism. Before

applying the theory in our work, it is important we understand the meaning of the word resistance. Merriam Webster defines resistance as 'the action of opposing something that you disapprove or disagree with'. Collins dictionary defines resistance as 'something such as a change or as a new idea is a refusal to accept it'. Oxford dictionary defines resistance as 'the refusal to accept or comply with something' Cambridge dictionary defines resistance as 'the act of fighting against something that is attacking you, or refusing to accept.

The various definitions above show that, the word resistance is based on the act of resisting, opposing, withstanding etc. Vishal Lahoo Kamble in his Academic Research Journals defines resistance as,

a way by which injustices can be redressed or the relations disturbed and strained due to one or other reasons can be made favourable and better. By resistance, woes of an individual can be made general and by raising a collective struggle movement it can be redressed. Pg1

The theory of resistance was put in place to resist the rules that do not favour the citizens especially rules put in place by the administration or the government thus, appearing to be the resistance theory. This theory was laid down by an Indian name GAUTAMA BUDDHA in the senate of Shakyas Sangha where for the first time the masses decided to revolt and protest against the government. This action went so wild in the world such that it led to the putting in place of many movements aimed at protesting against the established, social system which had imposed injustice on the citizens. This pushed so many critics to write on the theory of Resistance for instance,

Lokmanya Tilak gave his own powerful contribution as far as the theory of resistance is concerned. According to him "When a state is constitutional i.e., it has people's consent, and then it is a real state in its true meaning. If it has no public approval, then it is unlawful. If for obtaining self-government of public approval, we should have lawful ways". According to Lokmanya's view, the Indians had the right to protest against the British administration. To him the British government had just one aim in India that of imposing injustice on the citizens and exploitations. Hence a political resistance against the British government was the only way to obtaining freedom.

Another critic of the theory was Henry Thoreau who expressed his own view on his essay book entitled "Duty of Civil Disobedience". His ideas in this book were that of resistance. He expressed regret for not properly paying his tax to the state so he is imprisoned

but when finally released he starts giving teaching on the right and duties of every citizen towards the government.

He realized how the political power could mussel on individual. As the result of it, he began delivering lectures on “Right and Duties of an Individual person toward Government”. We should be Self-reliant and self- dependent. As well, we must be prepared to work hard. He further professed that he was not born to serve others as a slave.

Another prominent critic of the theory of resistance was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. ‘*Writing and speeches*’, Vol-I, Education Department. Government of Maharashtra 1979. Moon Vasant (edit), “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: ‘ writing and speeches”, Vol-3, Vol-4, Education Department Government of Maharashtra 1987. Moon Vasant (edit), “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: ‘writing and speeches”, Vol-7, Education Department. Government of Maharashtra 1990. “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: writing and speeches”, Vol-8, Education Department Government of Maharashtra 1990. He demonstrated his ideas of resistance through what he entittled as ‘social and political resistance’ He was influence by previous writers of the theory such as Gautama Buddha and Saints Kabir who he regarded as his mentor.

Under Ambedkar’s theory of social and political resistance, he influenced a lot of people to follow and uphold his philosophy of resistance. His main was to create a self-awareness to everyone and called on the attention of those who consider themselves the untouchable to know that their powers and influence is given by the people they neglect. He later come out with two principles which are “ the importance of peaceful principles and the nature of social dictatorship “. He explains that, in the important of peaceful principles, power which is taken by power ends up establishing rules that does not favour the citizens. He says that? “violent revolution ultimately ends in establishing dictatorship, however non-violent is purity of object he granted only principally and not as rules because rules remain constant while change is according to changing condition.”

In “the nature of social dictatorship” Dr. Ambedkar explains how through social groups and movements he expressed his ideas on social and political resistance. He later called on the population advising them violence agitations helps grow social power. However, he also said that Resistance is also part of an intellectual reaction or an exercise which should not only be resolved through violent. He proposed a Tactful Resistance for every intellectual fighting against racial prejudice, discrimination, and segregation. To Dr. Ambedkar, Tacful

resistance will be used to refer to resistance that is characterised by tact. This refers to the ability to use skill in order to do the right thing. We all live in the world of our own and no matter how one view the world; one's future depends on him or her. M. Clyde, a Psychologist and author of *A Woman's World 1975*, God is over all and has the whole world in his hand, yet this should not relieve us of our own personal responsibility. To him, wise choices will lead to fulfilment.

Another important critic who wrote on the theory of resistance was NIKOLAYEVICH TOLSTOY. He was a Russian philosopher who contributed enormously to the expansion of the theory of resistance. In his write up, he said the state was of no importance to the citizens. According to Tolstoy, the presence of a state stands against the progressed and the development of the citizens and thus, the state should be eliminated. To him he prefers a society be based on Christian truth, love, peace, non-violence and equality (equal opportunities). Tolstoy says that in the absence of a government, a peaceful war against war shall continue. Savarkar and Bhagat also had a lot to say as far as the theory of resistance is concerned. They began by explaining the various torments, slavery and maltreatment of the colonial master on the native's citizens (British). In their policy of "non-violent theory of political resistance", savarkar and Bhagat wrote and sang against the British powers.

Revolutionaries are of the reaction against unjust and outrageous slavery inflicted by British power. Extremism, for him was an effective weapon. He laid emphasis on militarization, foreign policy and intellectual movements'.

It is evident that this theory of resistant led to many revolutionary organisations. More especially against the British imperialism thus, resistance becoming a normal phenomenon applied around the world. Because of critical works written by critics of the theory like MICHEL FOUCAUIT, AUROBINDO AND TILAK, the late 19th century to the early 20th century saw a boom in black's movements in the United States of America with the aim to resist the harsh ruled inflicted on the coloured hence,

The periods 1900-1910 and 1917-1923 were mark by race riots, which was a great push in social reconstruction of race in the United States of America. Most of these riots were as the results that blacks were against the supremacy of the whites and saw it necessary to resist. The National Association for the Advancement of the coloured people (NAACP) saw it light 1909, mixed with a group of liberal whites and the Africans Americans taking the lead of the riots. Thousands of World War 1 veterans joint the movement asking for civil rights and

the movement became stronger than initially expected. The first state wide manifestation was organised in Florida and later went wide to other states.

It is also important for us to recall that, the spirits of resistance also led to what was known as the Harlem renaissance. This was a kind of resistance or an explosive literary and Cultural Revolution put in place by the Afro Americans. It was also referred to as “ *the Negro movement*”.

The movement was characterised by an outbreak in creative writings among the Afro Americans (in New York City). These writings exalt the Afro American culture and heritage thus; this movement brought to the limelight the afro America culture and tradition more especially in the domain of creative writings. The Harlem renaissance is considered the most influential and important movement in Afro American history as far as writings is concerned. During this period, writers like W.B. Du Bois, Claude McKay, James Arthur Baldwin and Zora Neale Hurston. In a bid to expand the movement, they moved to New York with the aim to initiate the spirit of writings and creativity in the young Afro Americans. The writings of the Afro Americans dealt with exploring their own culture on a deeper and more complicated level. Most of their writings during this period expressed a pride in being black and a growing sense of confidence among the Afro American. They fostered the black pride through oral culture, folktales, dialect, jazz, swing, big band and blues music which appeared to be an expression of the joyous revolt.

In this music, they highlight themes like marginalization of the black Americans. Musicians, singers, dancers, comedians showcase in famous night clubs creating a new black identity in the minds of the whites. It is therefore clear to us that the Harlem renaissance was a black movement put in place to express their minds on the inhuman treatment and reconstruct the way blacks are perceived by the whites.

Literature review

From our findings, a lot has been written on the authors under study and their literary works. In fact, their rich literary portfolios have attracted a lot of scholars to write about them. Most of their literary works cut across domains like race, identity, racism, slavery, slave trade, childhood, marginalization, rejection and discrimination. However, little has been written as far as the topic under study is concerned. Thus, the aim of our review is to revisit some valuable works that have expressed similar or the same concerns with our research topic. But,

before going ahead in our work, we find it necessary to shed more light on what scholars or critics said about Michelle and Obama more especially those related to our novel under study.

Many years before becoming the first black lady and the first black president to enter in the white house, Michelle and Obama was already activist against racism, identity and racial segregation. They recount their experiences in their memoirs. *Becoming* and *Dreams from my father [a story of race and inheritance]* further explain to us how each of them went through the storms of racism, identity discrimination, marginalization, and black's slavery in the American society. They narrate some of their bitter experiences they had due to race and identity as blacks. This article makes us understands that, in their early childhood, they are discriminated upon in the gatherings of many other children.

“At one point one of the girls, a second, third, or fourth cousin of mine, gave me a sideways look and said just a touch hotly, how come you talk like a white girl” she talks to Michelle Obama astonishehly.pg1

This declaration was perceived by Michelle Obama as an insult or a challenge. These where one of the moments that made Michelle Obama to ask a lot of rhetorical questions about her race and her real identity. It is important to note that what she is explaining here can be refered to as “*code switching*” a term informally used to describe the ways people of colour or those from other marginalized groups often adjust their language, behaviour and even appearance in order to navigate certain social situations or audiences. (Vox media, LLC.) The notion of this code switching simply was a common phenomenon the whites used to apply on the colour people. The colour persons were called to adapt with that of the whites. They therefore explained to us how these racial discriminations affected their childhood and are the reason behind their boldness among the white's community today. They go further to say that their childhood story has been a success story beginning from their education till the husband running in for presidential election.

Min Pun uses identity critique to attack racial discrimination in the American society. In his article, “ The Politics of Identity: history of African Americans Reconsidered through Narrative” he takes a retrospective look in the origins and the history of Africa starting from the period of slavery and slave trade. He tells us how millions of Africans were victims. He therefore moves further to shed more light on who is an African American (identity) and his involvement in the U.S socio cultural development. Min Pun brings out the controversy that existed in the 19 century when a group of African Americans emerged and stood for a collective black identity. During this period, their aim was to cry out loud the

continue enslavement of the African American. Pun therefore uses the opportunity to rewrite the American slave history and the horrors of slavery and slave trade.

Notwithstanding, Pun invite all the African America intellectuals to fight against identity and racial enslavement and reunite themselves by creating impact in the American society. Even though, he metaphorically refers to them as a generation of black intellectuals who were rejected by the American society even after the end of the civil war. R. Thompson (1998) note that,

The black American entered history, in the sense of being able to control his or her own experience and, at least potentially, deflect the course of the Social and political system which was now required. To take cognizance of that freedom, to the extent of 1 Slavery may have fed, clothed and sheltered him Adequately, organized his work, trained him in artisan and agrarian skills, even treated himless cruelly Than Harriet Beecher Stowe, in her abolitionist novel Uncle Tom's Cabin (1952), had imagined'. (153)

The white majority took slavery as a point of focus that is, it was the automate way of calving out the blacks. According to the whites, if you were a slave automatically you should be a black thus, in terms of lifestyle and educational knowhow, the whites consider the Africans as people who had absolutely nothing to offer apart from their normal physical services that they were called to offer. CWE. Bigsby and R. Thompson (1998) has this to say,

The dawn of the twenty-first century has not ushered In the economic, social and educational equality for Which they yearned. Some part of Martin Luther King's 'dream' has been achieved, but not all. The American Dream remains less accessible to many African-Americans – still labouring under the Accumulated burdens of history and slavery – than to the waves of immigrants still arriving in plural-cultural America from poverty, oppression or displacement elsewhere. (176)

He ends his article by highlighting the efforts put in place by the African American to fight against racial discrimination in America society with slavery as a bad drop “ *the history of the negro*” Du Bois (1989) “ *it the history of this shift*”. (p3) He goes forward by saying that, this shift is sometimes express through their jazz music, arts and culture whereas it was considered by the whites going against the norms of the society. This shift was further

extended with the formation of black's political parties, social movement like Association for the Advancement of the Coloured People (NAACP) and other extra institutional means. All these efforts put in place by the African American was in a bit to to reconstruct the stereotype identity and make themselves known and recognised.

Martell Teasley, *Barack Obama and the politics of race: the myth of post racism in America* (2010). In this article, Mortell Teasley focuses on two main sub topics which are ‘*the dynamics of race and politics in America and the myth of a post racial society*’. Teasley in his article called on the afro American to reason beyond the concept of racism and fight for every opportunity that the whites American may have. He thinks that Obama's initiative to the helm of power in America was a big blow to racist for it has deconstructed the white's superiority and created a space for the blacks Americans. According to Teasley, Obama has proven beyond reasonable doubt that the colour of the skin doesn't matter rather what the person is capable of producing as results. “Obama as the first African American President of the United States marks the downing of post racial era in our country.”

From the above views, we can see a great relief in the minds of African Americans who at one point thought racism was an issue of the past in America.

Mortell in this article projects two main sub titles ‘*the dynamics of race and politics in America and the myth of a post racial society*.’ In the first subtitle, “*The Dynamics of race and politics in America*.” In this subtitle, Teasley reminds the black Americans on the political rights that was granted to all Americans citizens including the blacks Americans in 1965 but even though the political right was granted to all American citizens the social environment could not freely allow the blacks to expressed themselves in a socio- political and even economic domain (Marable, 2000). He goes forward to give the percentage of the black population in the United States and this have been a major delay in the Afro American involvement in decision taking in America till lately that few blacks have gone beyond racial discrimination.

In the second subtitle, Teasley talks about the myth of post racial society. Here, Mortell Teasley is interested on the image that is attributed to the black person which according to him do not really exist. That can account for the reason why he refers to it as a myth post racial society. He brings forth the lapses of the government in her role as the body who is supposed to put rules eliminating the existence of racism but failed so many times bringing racial realities to the lamplight. As Myers (2000) suggest “*the process of getting the right answer to an incorrectly formulated policy question is characteristics of many race*

related policy question '' (175). We realised that only blacks are biologically ''*raced*'' and have a history of race. Here, we see mortal trying to make the blacks consider the idea of racism and identity discrimination in America as an issue of myth and focus on important issues that will prosper the American society. He ends up by presenting Barack Obama as a model that many blacks to follow.

This article goes straight to the effects caused by racism to shaped the American history. Tittle ''racial inequality,'' the article revisits the American history taking from his founding fathers. The paper goes further by saying that apart from religious liberty, economic and political liberty has been a far fetch fight to win by the blacks. The paper reminds us the fact that the American society was founded on brutal forms of racial discrimination, inequality, oppression and absolute denial of liberty for slaves. In facts this is one of the great paradoxes of American history. This article explores a principal idea which is racial inequality in America and it contemporary realities taking from its historical background. As historical facts, the article tries to highlight us on the origins of racism saying that it is as an effect of biological differences across groups of people whose ancestor came from different part of the world to America. The article later classifies the United States of America as one of the countries in the world where racial discrimination is highly practiced.

The United States Immigration Commission in 1911 considered people of Irish, Italian, Polish, and English descent to be distinct ''*races*'', and the 1924 Immigration Act passed by Congress restricted immigration of what were termed ''*inferior races*'' from Southern and Eastern Europe. In Germany under the Nazis, Jews were considered a distinct race, not merely a religious group or an ethnic group. In Africa today, Tutsi and Hutu have sometimes been regarded as distinct races. Racial classifications are thus never simply given by biological descent even if they always invoke biology; they are always constructed through complex historical and cultural processes.''pg1

Today, we realized that, more of racial discrimination is exerted on Africans because physically they perceive and identified by the colour of the skin. Thus, face a lot of racial oppression and social injustice. But on the other side, the article affirms that though Africans are the most affected in U.S.A as far as racial discrimination is concerned. It will be wrong to say that only Africans suffer this racial injustice. The paper precise that, they exist some white's minority who seriously go through the same treatments that Africans goes through even though being whites.

Nevertheless it is a mistake to think of racism as something that only affects the lives of African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos and other racially defined “minorities”. Racism has profoundly shaped American society and politics in ways that deeply affect the lives of white Americans as well, particularly the lives of working class and poor whites, not just the lives of minorities.’’pg1

Finally, the articles focus on the fact that, identity and racial discrimination has never helped a nation to developed. And therefore, called on Americans state holders to rather judge man through his capacity and ability to produce good results rather than looking on the colour of the skin which will never help the country in anyway.

Where we turn to see what Mathew Clair says in his article, *Racism and Sociology of*. In his article, he tries to bring out the relationship that exists between the society and the people who practice racism, racial discrimination and racial inequality. But, he takes us to the origins of racism saying that it as a result of mixed biological, cultural and voluntary and involuntary movement (transatlantic slave trade 1500s-1800s) and as results of these, it has led to the enslavement and discrimination of many blacks in the United States. Mathew Clair push further by bringing out some research sub topics that has been in the lamplight during this last century. Some of the topics he tackles in his paper include racism as a social process, response to racism, challenges and future direction, contemporary definitions of approaches to racism, new racism and institutional racism. The paper end up heating hard on the absurdities of racism in a fast moving country like the great America. But, the article decries the new ways of perceiving racism that has gradually been taking place in the united states of America even though, they are always attached to skin colour. Just like other articles, Mathew Clair in this paper bring a rapprochement of racism and the society. According to him, the activities of man in the society are the principal cause of racism.

While Janice H. Hammond thinks that race and identity crisis in the United States of America is as a result of mass influx of Africans in America as slaves. He tittle the article as “*African American Inequality in United States.*” In this paper, she tries to trace the problem of identity in America taking from the transatlantic involuntary movement of Africans to the new world where many Africans were exchange for valueless commodities and finally transported. He therefore explains that, the problem of identity could be inevitable since many of these slaves lost their roots and could not find themselves back easily. Thus calling our attentions to know that the American economy was build under this evil practice to be where

it is today. The 1775-1783 revolutionary war appears like an opportunity to the African slaves. She describes the role played by the African in this war. Notwithstanding, after the war so many resolutions were implemented under the rulership of Washington. After the war, a constitution was written and important considerations were given to Africans.

Beginning in 1787, states delegate met to write a new constitution one critical issues were how to Count each state's slave population to determine Congressional representation and taxation. Southern states, which had significant slave population Fought to include slave population counts in order to increase Proportional representation in congress.”pg79

After the various laws setting the slaves free, the come economic hardship on the former slaves. These free Africans find it very difficult to feed, thus was force to get back to their formal masters so as to work and have what to eat. This led to a period of serious black's segregation imposed on any former slave. At this time, no black even had the opportunity to even own land this was due to the restriction that was placed on the African Americans which was making sure all the former slaves are subjected to very low cost of labour thereby continuously making their lives miserable. The civil rights activism during the 20 century came up as a result of this hardship that many Africans underwent. The paper brings out the pivotal role played by (NAAP) which consisted of caring on legal actions to free the Afro American from domestic slavery.

The same ideology is equally propounded by Norman Coombs in his book ‘*The Black Experience in America the Immigrant Heritage of America*’. In this book we focus on chapter six (6) which Norman tittle it ‘*From slavery to segregation*’. In this chapter, the author focuses on the role played by Abraham Lincoln one of the United States' greatest presidents, who led the country through the civil war helping to preserve the country and end slavery America. This chapter tells us how democracy can be a durable form of government demonstrated by Lincoln

“With malice toward none, with charity for all. Let us strive on to finish the work we are in, To bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him Who shall have borne battle, and for his widow and His orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just And a lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations”pg306

The chapter makes us to understand that, the coming of Lincoln to power was received by mixed feelings. This is because he appeared as an opportunity for the black slaves to finally

liberate them out of slavery and be consider fully as Americans citizens while on the other side of the coin, many slave's holders were not ready to let go what they consider as their personal investments. This conflicting situation gave Lincoln a hard nut to crack as president.

“At the same time, abolitionists were as unhappy with his election as were slaveholders. His election was clearly an attempt to strike a compromise, but the South was in no mood to negotiate.

It was not willing to permit the restriction of slavery to the states in which the system already existed, and the Southern states seceded”.pg96

But notwithstanding, many Negroes were better than the case before the arrival of Lincoln in power. Many Negroes where given the opportunity to vote making them decision makers in the United States of America. That account for the reason why many Afro-Americans took part in the civil war. In this chapter, Norman just want to draw our attention back to memory lane. He highlights the hardship and the segregation that the blacks went through in America while bringing the role played by Abraham Lincoln as president of United States.

Angela Khristin Brown in her academic journal decides to ignore the trauma that millions of Africans went during the periods of transatlantic slave trade. Under the topic “Cultural *perspective on African American Culture*” she highlights the different cultural aspect that has been that profitable to the American society and the afro Americans in particular which includes the field of music, arts, literature, dance and culture. According to her, the transnational movement of blacks to the United State of America appeared as a sort of blessing to the American citizens. In her write-up, she precise the story telling tradition which according to her left a lot of legacy in the young African American generation.

In her article, Angela is more interested on the manifestation of oral African tradition, the Harlem renaissance, the African American movement, music, dance, arts, literature and museums etc. In each of the activates mentioned above, she describes the process how they were all carried out by the blacks in United States of America. For instance, in terms of Oral, the whites discovered that it was so much educative that many blacks began to gain a lot of knowledge thus, many slave holders did not want the coming together of blacks for storytelling,

“African-based oral traditions became the primary means of preserving history, morals, and other cultural information among the people. This was consistent with the griot practices of oral history in many African and other

cultures that did not rely on the written word. Many of these cultural elements have been passed from generation to generation through storytelling. The folktales provided African Americans the opportunity to inspire and educate one another.’’ Pg1

This story presented some African American characteristics that made the Africans Americans to think as a single person. It was even noticed by the Native Americans that, some of the oral folk tales were even used as rap thus from the period of 1980s and beyond was used as an extension of oral African culture. Just like the oral tradition that was imposed in America the African style of dancing was not left aside. For instance, it was affirmed that “*Cakewalk*” was the first African American dance to gain widespread popularity in the United States of America. This African American dance was unique of its kind simply because of the hundreds dance group gathered from the numerous ethnic groups that was carried to America as slaves. It is said that, In the 1800s, African American dance began to appear in minstrel shows. These shows often presented African Americans as caricatures for ridicule to large audiences but later on gain a large popularity as ‘*Cakewalk*, Jazz dance mentioned earlier.

We noticed that slavery was devastatory in the lives of many Africans families as they were sole as common objects. However, the various activities put in place maintain strong familial ties. These activities were further accelerated by those Free African men and women, who struggled to buy their own liberty by being hired out, who were emancipated, or who had run away from their masters, often worked long and hard to buy their African brothers. Again, Stephen Menendian, Margurite Spencer and lidja Knuh in their article are interested on the form and the structure that racism has taken in the American society despite the laws put in place by the American government. They remind us of the ratification of the thirteenth Amendment in 1865 eliminating the existence of slavery in the American soil.

An antislavery newspaper continued to lecture. The pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines provide much information by and about those who worked for slavery's demise. Organized programmes that did not favoured slavery, especially among the Quakers, dated back to the eighteenth century (18 century). Thanks to the works of the antislavery groups that helped to achieve the abolition in the Northern states, and in the 1820s a manumission movement began in the Upper South organization of local societies in Kentucky, but despite their efforts, race and identity discrimination has been the talk of the day in America. As a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination the United States is under an obligation to condemn and pursue a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in

America. Thus, racial discrimination appears as a mean of exclusions, restrictions showing attachment to the white race only.

Racial discrimination is often the unintentional, but predictable consequence of public or private action. The United States is responsible for failing to address unjustifiable racial impacts that result from the influence of public conduct on private decision-making. Pg 1

This article is therefore calling on the powers that be notably the American government to know that their efforts towards eradicating racial discrimination and slavery and slave trade have not yielded any fruits. Here, the U.S government is responsible for a continue *laisse faire* for unjustifiable racial maltreatments on the black Americans which greatly has reduced interaction of public and private actions, “the United States is responsible for addressing unjustifiable racial impacts that result from the interaction of public and private actions.” The article ends by calling the attention of the American government to see possibilities on how to stop this phenomenon that has eaten deep in the American society, which according to them is not helping the society in its socio-economic development, “Unjustifiable disparate impact upon the rights of freedoms of particular racial or ethnic groups.”

The article ends by reminding the government that she has all what is needed for her to implement all the laws put in place against racism, slavery and slave trade. More again, Eyerman regret that fact that race is not use for a social construct rather used to enslave human beings given that slavery and slave trade has been abolished long ago. To him, the issue of race should be an issue of long forgotten, and no black should be task because of his colour in the contrary they should be given an opportunity to reconstruct the damage image since the period of enslavement in the United States of America because to the author it was a very traumatic moment to the blacks. Eyerman adds that even though many blacks suffered both physically and psychologically, it did not end there much loss their identities and eventually their cultures which to him appears to be the most painful part of racism. The author ends up by asking a rhetorical question. Does he imply that collective memory and collective identity could wipe off racial prejudices against African Americans? He ends up without clearly illustrating his point of view on the the issue.

However, Jennifer Catherine Muller brings in the race as “the social reproduction of systemic racial inequality in the American society”. Mechanisms of social reproduction do more than create materially unequal outcomes in producing inequalities they reify the idea of race as “real.” Key to the durability of race is the continual reproduction of inequitable

outcomes like wealth disparities, which both verify racial difference and offer seeming empirical support for the common sense racial ideologies that naturalize those outcomes, bolstering socially reproducing micro level actions further (Bonilla-Silva and Baiocchi 2007, Rigney 2010). In other words, the disparities produced by the social machinery of systemic racism construct race literally and ontologically. The storylines of colorblind discourse like the “the past is the past,” build an ideological armor that masks this machinery, protecting the vast array of racial privileges that have been structured into the systemic arrangements of society over U.S. history. These are privileges that are not simply psychic, impersonal, and institutionally derived, but which whites have held, protected, multiplied, and passed down in their most immediate and intimate social networks, and over many generations.

Nonetheless, the ideological patterns of white discourse are reflective too of the tendencies by which social science has approached the study of race, racism and racialized inequality. To be sure, social science research has all too-often imbued the prevailing ahistoricism and reductionism of “white commonsense” with epistemic authority (Harding 1993; Mills 1997; Steinberg 2007). Even among social science research that moves beyond well-critiqued ideologically- or attitudinally-oriented takes on racism³, there remains a tendency to study structural racism either historically or as it is manifested contemporarily.

For example, much scholarship builds greater understanding of the history and foundational elements of racial domination and oppression through studies of slavery, westward expansion and legal segregation. Still others have produced contemporary empirical research demonstrating significant, often vast disparities between blacks and other groups of color and whites in most arenas of contemporary social life.⁵ While significant and illuminating, few have bridged this polarity to develop theoretical, let alone concrete, empiricism linking the foundational eras of legal slavery and segregation that make up the bulk of our national history and the contemporary racialized inequalities still being reproduced today.

In this regard, even much good scholarship on race falls short in providing an adequate foundation for understanding contemporary racial outcomes; a sufficiently framed and empirically supported challenge to racial story lines like those identified by Bonilla-Silva (2010); or a related meaningful praxis for social justice and change. Race critical scholarship, as a multidisciplinary body of work, stands as an important exception to the above-stated tendency. As outlined by Bracey (2012), race critical scholarship is characterized by adherence to central principles first articulated by the legal scholars who developed Critical

Race Theory, 6 and today includes scholars across a stunningly broad range of disciplines. Core tenets characterizing a race critical orientation include assumptions that:

- (1) race and the racial organization of society are constructed through socio-historical-political processes; in other words, “race” and the hierarchies that emerge around racial social groupings are not biologically or structurally determined, but are rather produced as ongoing processes involving human actions under historically specific socio-conditions;
- (2) White supremacy is a foundational and persistently systemic aspect of U.S. society that shapes both social structure and everyday experience, making racial phenomena a “normal” outcome of these systemically racist arrangements; and,
- (3) Race and racism are fundamentally shaped by a material reality which privileges those racialized as white while oppressing racial “others” Bonilla-Silva 2001. These tenets make a race critical orientation ideal for theorizing why and how racialized inequalities are socially reproduced over time.

Understanding the persistence for an elaboration on the history and foundational scholarship of critical race theory of racialized inequalities requires that we look not just at history and not just at current life chances but that the two be co-theorized instead, in a broader project to uncover the underlying “social machinery” of white supremacy Martinot 2010:3). This dissertation seeks to contribute to that goal, specifically working toward a race critical theory of social reproduction. I work outward from the social reproduction theoretical tradition owing to Marx and Engels, Bourdieu, and Giddens draw on insights developed within feminist theoretical rearticulations of social reproduction; and build centrally on aspects advanced within Feagin’s Systemic Racism Theory (SRT), which is directly concerned with applying the concept of social reproduction to racism and racialized inequality.

Finally, Francis Tiambei in his 2013 PhD thesis dissertation “The Dialectic of Race and Gender: Identity Crisis in the Works of Toni Morrison”. In this dissertation, Tiambei do a critical evolution of race and gender in Morrison’s text. It is therefore clear that, his critical analysis of race and identity is relevant in our study too. Since our own dissertation topic is based on “Racism.” In the end analysis, we noticed that our review of related works covers a wide range of knowledge on our research topic. From the review above, we noticed that it is based on Race, Identity and transnationalism (migration) ; the repercussion that this has caused in the American society. We also read people’s view point on the high tonality

expressed by Michelle Obama in her memoir. In her memoir, “*Becoming*” she raised up the issues of class disparity, marginalization and racial discrimination while on the other side, Barack Obama too hits on the same societal ills rocking the American society.

Notwithstanding, some critics come closer to the focus of our dissertation. This is seen in the different ways they handle the plights of African American in the text under study. But fail to mention the fact that all this problem is originated from the period of slavery and slave trade where finally racial problems, identity and transnationality issues originated. Attached to these problems are marginalization, oppression, childhoods and gender discrimination. Thus, based on our review stand point, we arrive at the conclusion that very little has been done as far as our topic is concerned. “DREAM FULFILMENT: A Study of Michelle Obama’s *BECOMING* and Barack Obama’s *DREAMS FROM MY FATHER* “*A Story of Race and Inheritance.*” Hence, our dissertation provides us a brought view on the situation of the blacks living in Americans even till date.

CHAPTER TWO

AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY AND CHALLENGES FACE BY BLACKS IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AMERICA

This chapter is very crucial to the understanding of the pace of this work. This is because it gives us a critical observation of the lives of the authors under study in relation to the context of the work. This will help to understand the whole idea of racism and the transition it makes into black American literature. This section also examines the challenges faced by blacks in twenty first century America. In the course of this discussion, we shall understand the focal points of the different authors under study.

The author's biographies

Michelle Lavaughn Obama was born in January 17, 1964 and raised on the South Side of Chicago by her mother Marian Shields Robinson and father Fraser C. Robinson, along with her older brother Craig. She attended Bryn Mawr elementary school and later Edward A. Bouchet elementary school where she graduated with honours. She later enrolled in Whitney M. Young magnet high school and 1977 to 1981 she finally matriculated at Princeton University. She entered Princeton University, where she had as majored sociology. After that, she attended Harvard Law School and, after graduating, got a job at a corporate law firm in Chicago called Sidley and Austin. At Sidley, she was assigned to mentor a summer associate, Barack Obama, who worked for Sidley between his first and second years at Harvard Law.

Michelle root is trace from the history of slavery and slave trade in America since 1800s. It is proven that Michelle's great great grand father was among 200 slaves who lived in the whitewashed shacks around the 1800s, and the lineage has been traced and found in this particular place for more than a century. It was later on discovered that the last tenants left the hovels about three decades ago, and little could they imagine that a distant Michelle from a slave ancestry one day calling the White House home of habitation. Michelle Obama's great-great-grandfather is said to be born around 1850 and lived as a slave boy until the Civil War, on the sprawling rice plantation. History affirms that Jim Robinson stayed on the estate after

the civil war working as a sharecropper while maintaining his old slave quarters with Michelle's great great mother Louiser and their children. However, during Barack Obama's campaigns in 2009, he reaffirmed in one of his famous speeches on race during the primary, Obama highlight the fact that he was "*married to a black American who carries within her the blood of slaves and slave owners.*" Michelle Obama interviewed about his ancestry said,

She has said she knew little about her family tree before the campaign, but census reports, property record and other historical documents show that her paternal ancestors bore witness to one of the most shameful chapters in American history.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/>.

Michelle wouldn't say exactly how Robinson's life at the plantation was. Even historians find it difficult to trace the exact circumstances leading Robinson to Friend field even though, census record indicate it clearly that both parents were born in South Carolina (U.S.A.). Fraser Sr. Born in 1884 was taken to work as a houseboy for a local family before his 16th birthday.

As an old man, Fraser Sr. worked as a lumber mill labourer, shoe repairman and newspaper salesman. He registered for the draft during World War I but was turned down because he had lost his left arm, military record show. He later got married to Rose Ellah Cohen and had six children. Michelle Robinson Obama's biography had helped us to know more about her roots. We equally realised that her literary works reflects her childhood situation and that of her family. Thus, in her novel "Becoming" she talks on themes like racial discrimination, race, gender and politics. The name Chicago however, will always remind her the injustice the great grand parent faced in the hands of the whites.

As fate does it, she will meet some one with the same fighting spirit that of combatting racism and white superiority complex Barack Obama. The two quickly began dating and married after Barack graduated from law school. Michelle then quit her job at Sidley, looking for something more fulfilling, and had a string of jobs working with the South Side community first at City Hall, then at an organization called Public Allies, and then at the University of Chicago Medical Centre. Michelle and Barack had two daughters, Malia and Sasha, in 1998 and 2001. Barack quickly became involved in politics, rising from Illinois State Senator to United States Senator, and then becoming the forty-fourth president of the

United States. Barack was president from 2008 to 2016, and Michelle and her family moved to the White House with him. During her time as First Lady, Michelle worked on initiatives called Let's Move! (a children's health initiative), Joining Forces (which focuses on supporting military families), and Let Girls Learn (supporting girls' education worldwide), and a new White House Garden. Michelle and her family currently live in Washington, D.C.

Barack Obama was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. Barack Obama's biography and his successful move in to the white house has given a new chapter to the American politics. He is the 44th American president who came to power with an unusual circumstance. The biracial son of a Kenyan father Barack Hussein Obama and a white mother from the United States heartland Ann Dunham.

As soon as possible this black American embraced politics as the only way to change the situation of blacks living in America. Barack Obama's message at the Democratic National Convention in 2004 was a well and captivating message for the U.S political college. Hence, it marked his journey to the senate and the white house. In his speech in 2004 Democratic National Convention Obama said,

There's not a black America and white America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America. ... We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the Stars and Stripes, all of us defending the United States of America.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/>.

This illustrates Obama's background. The parents appear to come from vastly different background. The mother's name Ann Dumham who was born and raised in kansas. Untill she made Barack Obama Sir after when she moved to Hawaiian Island. Obama's father a Kenyan scholarship student enrolled at the University of Hawaii. So, fast the two got married in 1959 and on August 4, 1961 Barack Obama Jr. was born in Honolulu.

Two years after, the senior Barack Obama left the Ann Dumham and his son, for graduate study at Harvard and later left for a job as a government economist back at home. Obama Jr. met his biological father again only once, when his age. When Obama was six, his mother remarried, this time to an Indonesian oil executive. The family moved to Indonesia, and Obama spent four years attending school in the capital city of Jakarta. He eventually returned to Hawaii and went to high school there while living with his maternal grandparents.

Hawaii as that institution first African student. He studied econometrics, worked with unsurpassed concentration, and graduated in three years at the top of his class.pg 9

Barack Obama finally got married to Michelle Robinson in 1992 after dating for a while today a father of two. As said earlier she attended the Princeton University class of 1985. After graduating in sociology as a major while a minor in African American Studies before moving to Harvard law school. It now clear that both are blacks but have different roots. A comparative analysis of their novels proves it clear that one of the writers will be more critical than the other. For instance, in Michelle Robinson's memoir "*BECOMING*" we realized that she is more critical in her analysis. In her memoir, she highlights the issues rocking the African Americans such as racism, slavery and slave trade.

We come to realized that, Michelle's critical analysis on the subject matter listed in our topic above is motivated by her origins. We all have read Michelle Robinson's biography and all of us know that her great great grandfather was a slave from sprawling rice plantation. This alone has made Michelle Obama to appear more critical in her writings. Whereas the husband on her part is kind of moderates in his writings "*Dreams from my father.*" In his biography, we noticed that Barack Obama is biracial. The father who is a Kenyan who had a scholarship to study in U.S and later fell in love with Obama's mother who is a white American. From this biracial parent, Obama spent his entire life with the mother and actually enjoyed everything that a white child could actually enjoyed such as good schools and any other persona round him was white. This had to reduce drastically the conception and the understanding of the reality as far as racism identity and movement of blacks are concerned. This therefore contradicts him with the wife because the wife is actually writing out of the experience both her and the family went through whereas Obama's case is experience read from either history of witness some people go through.

Challenges Faced by Blacks in America

The American continent is known, today, for keeping a category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical traits due to its amazing history. In effect, this history, as that of others, has been marked by a series of migrations which saw the intermingling of varied races. It, today, represents the core value of the American identity. If there is one thing apparently evident, it is surely the fact that these migrations led to the gradual existence of

diversified races. In reality, the presence of various races in America is historically attached to some peculiar reasons which, in one way or the other, justify their presence in the continent. History, therefore, has a lot to contribute to the progressive racial settlement in America. In a bid to bring out appropriate answers to understand the place of history within the discourse of racial settlement, particularly in American literary discourse, we shall examine the phenomenon of racial diversity and its evolution. Some main historical periods identified, the Asiatic migrations, the European conquest and the slave trade era, shall be given due consideration.

Firstly, The Asiatic immigration was considered the opening door to a racial brewery in America. The history of the American continent reveals chocking results which obviously appears bitter to the world. In effect, for several centuries now, the Europeans' point of view shows greater considerations as concerns the history of the Americans. The situation with the African continent is a glaring example where the Europeans affirmed for several centuries that we have no history. The situation was similar to the history of the American continent where Europeans claim it started in 1492, following the first contact between the Europeans and the Americans. This claim received enormous criticisms with time, as several sources including oral, written and archeological literatures present another version, which in turn, claims the people of America got carried out thousands years back before the established year of 1492. If these sources appear divergent in their view as concerns the exact periods which covers and determines the progressive and orderly arrival of various groups of people in the new continent, all in return, accord themselves on the existence of several groups of people, commonly known as Amerindians before the arrival of the Europeans in the New Continent.

As previously indicated, several sources have established different origins of these Native Americans but, the widely spread version of the story presents an Asian origin of the first race of human beings in the continent. In effect, according to this version, mostly supported by varied archeological sources principally, it was the initiative of a group of hunters, who, following the long and heavy glaciation period in the bering channel migrated to the American continent where they officially settled and became the first settlers of the continent. In effect, during this notorious climatic condition which occurred about forty thousand (40,000) years ago, the Bering Sea saw itself covered by ice blocs, suitable for human crossing by foot. Since the Siberians were hunters and were by then, chasing mammoths which took the direction of the American continent to seek for refuge. The

Siberian hunters therefore met themselves “involuntarily” in the American continent according to some sources.

Others after reaching the American continent preferred to migrate further down south to seek for settling ground. As such, many tribes or ethnic groups migrated to southern America, where they lived as original settlers. These various ethnic groups from the Indian race, enjoyed the pride of sole proprietorship in the American continent but, such historical pride saw itself upset by the European invasion of the 15th century, modifying consequently the genetic configurations of the original race to a new order. Secondly, the European colonial expedition and the impact on the racial genetics of the new world settlers. In the brains and souls of most Europeans and people from other continents, there is the wide spread ideology that the American continent has been discovered by Christopher Columbus, precisely on October 12th 1492. From all evidence, this is just another euro-centered ideology, meant to discredit others, and glorify the European continent. In effect, we talk about a discovery, if and only if the subject had never been known before. So it was not a “discovery” rather an exploration. That notwithstanding, history retains the 1492, as an important date in the existence of both continents, even though more for America. The importance of this date in relation to our subject matter based on the progressive appearance or existence of various races in the American continent.

If for some researchers, the presence of Christopher Columbus at the American coast was just the fruit of some mathematical errors, one thing remains clear about the main objective of European presence in the new continent. In effect, European nations, kingdoms and empires by the end of the 15th century, were experiencing some renaissance tendencies, and the desire to open and expand their economies and political influence started gaining grounds. For that to be carried out in an efficient manner, these various European nations, kingdoms and empires had to send their most experienced explorers to sail around and identify potential territories. Columbus went out under the Spanish flag, and luckily for him, he came across the American continent, where, through the trade by barter, he was able to exchange some European products with some local one. Back in Europe, he blew the trumpet, claiming to have discovered a new continent. From there, other powers such as Portugal, Britain and France, rushed towards the new source of honey.

The entrance door to what shall with time be European scramble was the Antilles, where the early Europeans had their first contact with the American natives. In these American islands, the contacts between the Europeans and the Amerindians were sometimes

pacific and other times, troubled. These contacts were generally for trade purposes, as the Europeans showed great interest for the native heavy metals, but, the greedy interests of the European traders pushed them to overwork the natives, and with time, invaded them one after another, tracing by then, their way towards the interior of the continent.

While present in the continent, they extended their influence throughout the northern and southern parts of the continent, creating by their passage, distinct kingdoms and empires. The management of these various European territorial entities in America were obviously to be carried out by European agents, and for that to be carried out effectively, they had to settle in America. This decision to appoint European colonial administrators in their colonies in America, was due to the fact that, they considered the Amerindians to be primitive, having no notions in the modern systems of administration.¹ The diagram below is an illustration of the colonial occupation of the American continent by European powers.

Slavery and the Post Slavery Period in America

The American continent is widely known today not only because of its military strength and high levels of economic growth and development but, also because of its memorable history linked to the slavery and slave trade practice. The slave trade period occupies an important place in the history of humanity. This particularly is due to the atrocities registered during the process in and along the African coast, in America, West Indies and Europe. As mentioned previously, the slave trade period in which America was involved was the Trans-Atlantic slave trade which was launched by European traders by the 16 century. Portugal was the first nation to engage her into this inhuman trade following a proposal forwarded to the colonial office in America by the Portuguese bishop Don Carlos Chacon. The proposal by the bishop was aim to solve the problem of shortage of workers in the Europeans plantations. The weaknesses of the red Indians or Amerindians, the inability of these Indians to carryout heavy and hard tasks on Europeans established plantations and mineral exploitation sites and for Don Carlos, the best substitute race to the red indians could be no other than the African race.

In other words, this happened as far back as the 15th century. It is said that during this period around 1441, the Portuguese explorers obtained a consignment of ten slaves at Rio de Oro. The success of this expedition greatly encourages many portuguese business men to

continue. However, during the 16th century, Portugal monopolised the slave business at the coast of west Africa until during the 17th and 18th century that the volume of the business increase rapidly with the involvement of countries like England, Spain, Holland, France, Denmark and Sweden. After the abolition of slavery and slave trade life became difficult for blacks who could not returned to their country of origins. Others became permanent workers in those plantations but this time around, they were remunerated, some got married and gave birth to children who did not know their country of origin.

As such, in close collaboration with the colonial office, the first European ship left Europe in destination of the African continent in search for slaves, and this journey was known as the “Outward passage”. While in Africa, these traders sailed from one point of the African coast to another in search of slaves, which were supplied to them by some African collaborators, principally African chiefs or kings. After disposing the required slaves, the later were transported to the new continent, and this journey was termed the “Middle passage”; while in America, the African slaves joined the red Indians slaves in European plantations and mineral exploitation site. The products of their harsh and inhuman labour (cotton, tobacco, sugar cane,) were later transported to supply European industrial demands. This journey from America to Europe was known as the “Inward passage”.

Many historians today define slavery as being the status or condition in which one human is owned by another one property such as slaves. Through which they became a chattel that can be sold and bought at the auction block. The scholar Jaen Allan in his article: Slavery and Its Definition (1912) claims that slavery is to deprive someone’s liberty; he becomes “unfree” serving the others. According to the work of Peter Kolchin, American Slavery (1993), slavery is a system that treated human being as object of white action rather than a subject in their own right denying their culture, belief, and behavior of their own.

In the work of the scholar Alton Hornsby, Jr, A Companion to African American History (1997), the American Slavery started in 1619 when the Dutch introduced the first captured 20 Africans slave’s onshores in the British colony of Jamestown Virginia. These individuals were not slaves but indentured servant’s persons bound to an employer for a limited number of years. In the late of the 16th century, the number of slaves who were brought to the English colonies was doubled almost 760,000 and made up nearly one fifth of the population of the United States. Planting the seeds of slavery system that evolved into nightmare of abuse and cruelty, the African slaves became hand labor; they had to work in plantation for long hours with lower price. Later these colonies began enacting laws that

defined and regulated slave relations, central to these laws was the provision that black slaves and children of slave women, would save for life (149).

Actually, the status of the first blacks in the New World was contended to be submissive, they must be viewed within the perspective of these conceptions and realities of servitude. Though many historians think of slavery in United States as primarily a system of race relations, as the chief's business of slavery were the production of the white supremacy rather than the production of cotton, sugar and tobacco. Hornsby, Jr claims "slavery was the ultimate segregation that marked undeniable split in structure and the culture of the blacks" the institution of slavery led to the classification of super race "White race" and inferior race "Black race", it generated the distortion of the African culture and the character. Colonists soon "become aware of differences between themselves and African immigrants and "color emerged as distinctive feature of the slave status; the trace of color became the trace of slavery" "It was depended on a perception of the Negro as peculiar kind of social being fitting and proper to enslave for life (ibid.) He also argues that the white servitude was the historic base upon which slavery was constructed. Interestingly, the black s lost the possibility to acquire property as the basis of genuine freedom, the true shift was that free blacks were not only losing property, but that blacks were gradually becoming property, a transition which was ultimately crystalized in Race (1997). Indeed, slavery was a central institution in the American history until 1865, through which the Africans were subjugated to very atrocious treatment from the early time of captivity then the Middle Passage till the life in the South colonies.

In the work of Rodriguez Junius, P, *Slavery in United States: A Social, Political and Historical Encyclopedia* (2007) contends the Slave Trade and the Middle Passage were the open doors to the exchange of Western products with slaves, in order to fulfill the demands of the hand labors mainly in the southwest of the country: Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi and later Texas, where there was abundant lands suitable for the agriculture of cotton this was the reason for about 84% of slaves being brought to the New World. Between 1500 and 1860, about 12 million people are known to have left the shores of Africa destined for the Americas, and to a much lesser extent to Europe, although not everyone made it alive, and some died soon after the arrival. Despite a heavy loss of life during what has been called the "Middle Passage," many more Africans crossed the Atlantic than Europeans.

The transportation of enslaved Africans constituted the largest single migration of people before the middle of the nineteenth century. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth

centuries, the great majority of people moving from the Old World to the New World were black people. When gender is taken into consideration, then it can be said that far more black girls and women were forcibly taken to the Americas, at least before the middle of the nineteenth century. It follows, therefore, and not voluntary migration. While there is considerable debate over attempts to estimate the number of enslaved Africans who crossed the Atlantic, the broad parameters of this massive demographic movement are well understood (Rodriguez, 1995- 419).

Unfortunately, millions of captives were shipped in very harsh conditions, climate cruelty of the traders and the voyage length that could vary considerably; it may take weeks and months across the Atlantic Ocean as from Angola to Virginia six months. Nevertheless, there was several examples of slave rebellion on the slave ship, the most famous is Amistad Rebellion 1839, where slaves control the ship and killed most of the crew as defense to escape and go back to Africa but they failed (Anderson 1995 :86). Clearly, the trip to the New World was a second immigration in the American history; the first one was American dream whereas the second one was a nightmare to the African captives. The slaves had to endure burden of atrocities and hardships while being transported from Africa to America and across the ocean, where life conditions were atrocious. The degree of violence was so extreme hard aboard slave ships. Overlooking the conditions that slaves had to endure while being enslaved is a tragic condition. They faced famine because of the poor ration and diseases with a high rate of mortality because of the crowd and the narrow space mainly on the ships.

The enslaved Africans were all enclosed under grated hatchways, between decks. The space was so low that they sat between each other's legs and stowed so close together, that there was no possibility of lying down, or at all changing their position by night or day. They were all branded like sheep, with the owners marks of different forms. These were impressed under their breasts, or on their arms, and as the mate informed me with perfect indifference burnt with a red hot iron ... (Anderson, 1995.-74)

For the enslaved African, this experience aboard the ship was transiting into even more than misery and death. For them it meant going from a kind of stench to another, more ferociously kind. Boarding these floating hellholes meant freedom through death. Moreover, the life in slavery was heterogeneous which means that the hardship of slavery deferred from man to woman for instance the novel of the African Americans slave narrative Harriet Jacobs:

The Incidents in The Life of Slave Girl 1839 portrayed the double marginalization being black slave and being a woman her body belong to her masteracing harassment and the extent to which the life under slavery stigmatized the moral side of women.

Furthermore, there was two kinds of slaves , the house Negro and the field Negro; the former -lived in the same house with his master they dressed pretty , they ate good because they ate his food they lived in the debasement but they still live near the master ,and they loved their master more than the master loves himself .On that same plantation ,the latter those were the masses ,the Negro caught hell, they ate leftover what was left of the inside of the hog .The field Negro was beaten from morning to night ,living in a shake in hut they wish the death to their masters .Though the life under slavery was extremely marked by subjugation , cruelty ,and sexual exploitation of women , slavery for the enslaved people was a hell upon earth .Thus there was no way to minimize its horror till the dawn of the Emancipation Proclamation

It is therefore clear that one of the fondamental factors that favoured racism in the United States of America was the African Trans Atlantic Slave Trade in other word known as The West African Slave Trade. The transatlantic slave trade was the traffic in slaves across the ocean where human beings were trade between Europe and Africa expecially the west African countries. It was the transportation by the Europeans of African slaves across the Atlantic Ocean for sale in the West Indies and most expecially in America. It was therefore a marketing activity involving the exchange of energetic Africans as trade items for manufactured goods on the coast of Africa. This barbaric and inhuman trade was also known as the triagular slave trade. This is because the trade involves three principal axes which are Europe, West Africa and America. The transatlantic slave trade lasted for 3 centuries. It began in the 16th century and ended in the 19th century.

For instance, Olaudah Equiano is a slave who lived about two hundred years later than these European explorers, came to America against his will as an enslaved African. However, he later purchased his freedom, settled in England and worked extremely hard to abolish slavery. As part of his effort, he wrote a two volume autobiography entittled “the interesting narrative of the life of olaudah Equiano.” In his autobiography, he presents a vivid and horrifying acount of slaves journeying to America. Hence the outcome in the America society is what is known to day as racism or racial discrimination.

Writers from the 19th to the 21st century have presented this problematic as being a counter discourse between the whites and the blacks. Michelle Robinson, Barack Obama, like

Toni Morrison in their novels highlight this counter discourse through the confrontation between the two cultures that of the whites (developed) and that of the blacks (underdeveloped). European history holds it that the black race was not the best human kind since they lack the technical knowhow and were most often than not looked upon as less human. Racism has always been a hot topic of discussion in America till present (Asukile, 2008: 41-43). Furthermore, Barack Obama said openly that America has not recovered from the disease of racism, as the reaction of a crime for the shootings blacks recently as quoted by Reuter on June, 23th 2015 (Muhaimin, 2016).

This case proves that even though America has been independent since 1774 and American civil right amendments has been validated in 1865 to oppose all racist acts and also the black has been one of the president in America, but the racism persists to this day. This is because racism is rooted in the life and the history of the American society (Fadillah, 2013). Then this leads to discrimination, the practice of treating somebody or particular group in the society less fairly than others (Hornby, 2000 -377).

These ideas where further accelerated by explorers who visited the new world such as Christopher Columbus. In reality, no one knows when the first Europeans came to the Americas. However, archaeological evidence suggests that the seafaring northern Europeans known as Vikings set up small encampments on the islands of northeastern Canada beginning some time around A.D. 1000. Still our knowledge about Vikings settlements is largely speculative. Not until the late fifteenth century did Europe inaugurate an age of exploration in which its journeys to the Americas were well documented. Christopher Columbus, an Italian living in Portugal, was convinced that he could reach Asia by sailing west. After receiving financial backing from Spain's Queen Isabella, he set sail in August 1492 and in 12 of october he landed on an island in what is now the Bahamas. Christopher wrote about his experience in his journal of the first voyage to America, in which he stressed the rich potentials of the new lands that he still regarded as part of Asia.

It is read that, these explorers considered the inhabitants as barbaric and uncivilized. From their point of view, writings led to identity questioning of many Americans especially the black people. This identity and race questioning led to one of the first European protesting against racism. With the discovery of the new world by Christopher Columbus in 1492, it is said that, the natives of the Americans were the red Indians who were later enslaved in their own homeland alongside with their Africans counterpart influenced by the new train of the

industrial revolution. Around the period of 1900-1910 were characterized with protest which was an important action of reconstruction of the black's identity in the American history.

It should be noted that most of these protest was during the period of segregation. These protest was as a results of the colored people mounting pressure on the white's supremacy and it was later intensified by the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People (NAACP) which saw it daylight in 1909. It important for us to bear in mind that most of the members in this association was World War 1 ex-fighters who later joined the movement asking for their civil rights. During this period, the question "who are you?" Appears as one of the most provoking question to the black Americans. This has pushed researchers and scholars to develop a lot of interest in the concept of identity, race and nationalism. James D. Fear precise in his work "what is racism?" brings the concept of racism to be found in the center of lively debates in any major subfield and tells us how students in American politics have devoted much new research in identity, race and gender.

After the period of slavery and slaved trade was abolished, the whites and the blacks remained segregated in all aspect of life till the second half of the twentieth century. This phenomenon made the issues of race and identity one of the most important thematic concerned by many writers of literature. The Afro-American frustration could not be hidden anymore. The black Americans were victims of all sorts of tortures and maltreatments. Martin Luter King Jr. One of the victims confirms to people what he passed through

I was well aware of the typical white's stereotype of the Negro... That he is always late; that he is laud and always laughing, that he is dirty and messy and for a while, i was terribly conscious of trying to avoid Identification with blacks (6-7).

From the above statements, we see the inferiority complex that the whites have for the black people. They are looked upon by the whites as half human, childlike creatures, stupid and maintained them as people who belong to the lower class. The idea continued ringing in their minds as they ask themselves questions about the black people identity after emancipation

"Can a Negro, who ancestors were imported in this country and sold as slaves become a member of the political U. And as such become entitle to all the rights, privileges and immunit Guaranteed by that Instrument to the citizen?"
(Morris et al, 18)

From the above codes, it is clear that the black American and the whites are not given the same consideration hence, the inequality of race which questions the issue of identity. And the blacks were denied of their rights even though legally it was said that the black American was as free as the whites. Ironically, this said freedom made thing worst for them as their fellow compatriots looked at them as future competitors in the job market. This made life very difficult and tedious to the black Americans to defend themselves because many of them lack the power and the ability to demand for their rights since most of them were denied the right to education. Notwithstanding, they were some few blacks who were willing to be educated. Since it is said that, during the slavery and slave trade periods, a Negro was discovered trying learned how to read and writes but unfortunately, this Negro was automatically punished by his master. His right hand was cut off.

Alice Walker refers to it in "the color purple" where her characters were talking about school. Olivia, one of the characters asked Nettie: Why can't Tashi come to school? She ask me when i told her Olinga don't believe in Educating girls she said. Quick as flash, they are like white people to learn, (153)

These strict rules brought negative impacts on the Negroes since they could barely write to express their experiences. This subjected the blacks to illiteracy until it was only during the 1920s that black's literature began to flourish thanks to the few educated elites especially in Harlem (a district of New York City). Some famous Negro writers such as Frederick Douglass with his author biographical novel "the Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass", an American slave who said in one of his prominent speeches,

"when justice is denield, where poverty is enforced, Where ignorance prevails, and where any one Class is made to feel that society is in an organized conspiracy to oppress, Rob, and degrade them, neighter persons nor property will be safe'.' (1845)

Thanks to Harlem in 1920s gave a plat form for many Negro intellectuals and writers to explore the Afro-American culture and tradition thus bringing into the lamplights many writers at this time of the Harlem renaissance. During this period, we witness the first bestselling novel by a Negro called Claude Mc Kay "home to Harlem" (1928). We are told most of these Negro's writings where written in ghetto. It is very important for us to note that, after the Second World War many Negroes works where published more especially in the late 1950s and 1960s. The peak of this Negroes writings was during the 1950s when black's novelist, playwrights and poets became a vigorous element in American literature. At this

moment, many Negro writers explore and expressed their experience and their unique culture.

This put in to place great novels like James Baldwin's novel '*Go tell it on the mountain*' (1953). In this novel, we came to find out that, he did not only write about blacks. Critics also bring Ralph Ellison's text '*The Invisible Man*' to the lamp lights referring to it as the most powerful text after the war. In this text '*the invisible man*' represents the Negro while the whites look at them as subhuman. This period equally saw a boom in works written by women. For instance, Margaret Fuller who suffered from gender prejudice was later inspired to write a powerful review on social issues such as 'the treatment of women prisoners and the insane' and another book title 'woman in the 19 century'. We all know that at this moment woman were denied the right to speak in public not to talk of owning wealth. This treatment was even made worst to the black women. Men at this moment especially the whites wanted to permanently keep the women spare bound under their rules and control, worst to that, the women were not allowed to go to school normally thus, keeping their superiority on the women making writing to them very difficult.

Just like Fuller, Toni Morrison came up as another powerful influential Afro American writer. In her writings, she added the women experience. Some of her works include 'Song of Solomon', beloved and tar baby'. At this moment, it was very rare to find women names in any in anthologies dealing with American literature. They were easily forgotten because their writings were not taken in to consideration since most of their works was on their ill treatment given to them by the men. The women knew that the only way they could free themselves was through educations. At this time, the afro American woman had drippe oppression more especially in their identity. Today, some of the stereotypes ideas had about the Negro American have greatly been deconstructed. It was difficult for whites to believe in equality of colored as most whites consider the blacks as mere servants not their equals. Through their writings and meetings, their social status change. The black American woman did not only end at the level of changing their status but they courageously demanded fundamental reforms such as the abolition of slavery.

The literary works of Michelle Obama and many other Afro American writers had been a driving force to the blacks this last century as it has created a lot of impact in the American society. In their works, precisely 'Becoming (2018), by Michelle Obama, Dreams from my father' (2004) by Barack Obama, Toni Morrison 'Songs Solomon' (1977) and the 'Blues Eye' (1970). We realized they creates their own identity, they make the Afro

Americans to be unique in their culture and tradition. Many authors' view on racism were essentially based on the 21st century world. Michelle Obama in his novel understood the kind of society in which she was and could project the future. It for this reason that Toni Morrison in her novel is concerned with "identity," one of the burning issues of the time. It appears as a counter discourse against the ill treatments and the marginalization of the black Americans. Characters are shown breaking social bounces; they are aggressive and has as aim to transform the white's dominations in to equal opportunities.

They want to intentionally wipe out the Whiteman's superiority complex. That is why their characters are carefully chosen which makes them breaks the social norms, laws and social conventions. Through these characters, Michelle Obama had made it clear that the misconception whites had about the blacks Americans has no place rather it has motivated so many black Americans citizens to aspire for more lucrative position in the American government such as Barack Obama who became the first black president in the United States of America and many others who proudly manifested their right as a black American citizen. This also comes to approve Martin Luther King Jr. Who said, '*they comes a time where man will not be judge by the color of the skin but by his content*'.

This has been a motivational factor to most black persons who had had the ability to transcend the oppression, torture and the discriminations bringing to the lamplights a fighting spirits that puts both the whites and the blacks on a level land. It is therefore clear that most of the ideas Barack Obama stood for in his works is actually being deconstructed today as it no longer news to see the blacks in leadership positions in America. However, even we like it or not, the heritage of the American slaves still hunts us till date. Racial comportement of white's superiority become part and parcel of the American. A global view on the post slave trade abolition process reveals a painful crusade for the former African slaves in America or Europe. Such painful post-slavery period was marked principally by several abuses linked to human rights consideration: racial segregation and massive return to the black continent.

As concerns abuses linked to racial segregation, they were evidenced in various domains of the American society: Education, health, transport, civil services. In this light, all Afro-Americans did not have the same advantages or privileges. Looking at the fast degrading situation the black Americans went through; several individuals took the lead in the fight for better considerations of their fellow. Such personalities included Martin Luther King Junior, Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, Rosa parks, Linda Brown. They rallied the masses and carried out manifestations in main cities of the United States of America against racial principles.

Through their actions, they gave a great chance to liberty and freedom marking a turning point in the establishment of racial equality.

During the post-slavery period in America, there was a massive return of Afro-Americans to their home land. By the moment of the abolition, a troublesome question rose as to how and where will these former slaves be kept. The liberated slaves generally lived in precarious conditions and extreme poverty, which forced them to go back to the street begging. Britain and America anticipated on this problem, and took thought to resettle the liberated slaves from their respective territories in Africa. As such, Britain on its own founded Sierra Leone to resettle liberated slaves from Britain and her colonies, while America founded Liberia to resettle liberated slaves from America. Above this resettlement process, was the vision of Marcus Garvey, with his back to Africa Process? Several laws were also passed to ensure the protection of black rights in America, such as the Civic Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1970, and Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972.

From the above analysis, one can observe that the life of the enslaved Africans in European plantations in Americas between the 15 and 16 centuries was marked by inhuman treatments including raping, brutal flogging, poor feeding, to name a few. By the 16 century, several movements rose to request the end of the inhuman practice, even though motivated by some greedy ambitions. After succeeding to ensure a relative abolition of the trade, the abolitionist was faced to a huge problem, which was that of the slaves' management, and as solutions, they opted for the resettling of the liberated slaves in territories they founded in Africa. Those who deliberately decided to stay in the new continent were faced to severe racial discriminatory actions. Luckily with time, some acts were passed to ensure the protection of black and ensure racial equality.

Segregation in America

Segregation does not mean spatial only but it is more than spatial and social separation of the dominant to the minority groups. (1991). Segregation as it is stated by Reichmann, when it is practice by a dominant group, involves the requirement, in a direct form, that the minority group lives or uses facilities in isolation from dominant group. In special ways as well as common ones, American blacks occupy inferior statuses. Almost from birth, they are discriminated against and made to feel inadequate, useless, and undesirable by the dominant white community. As a group also they tend to be poor, marginally educated, and maladapted economically. In these latter respects, many whites living in the same localities are in

similarly depressed circumstances. Some of the apathy and skepticism about American political life which we expect to find among blacks is probably due to these socioeconomic disabilities. At the same time, the political viewpoints and roles of typical black citizens must substantially be seen as a response to the animosities and prejudices they experience because of their ethnic distinctiveness. Within the black community as elsewhere, there is a spectrum of affluence and poverty, prominence, and ordinariness. It is increasingly hard to find a "typical" Negro or black American. How old should he be? Does he live in a Northern city? Does he work at a menial job? Does he earn less than \$5,000 a year? For every such black, an equal number can be found in contrasting circumstances.

It is therefore clear that the United States is experiencing rapid demographic changes that are altering its racial and ethnic landscape, particularly in urban centers. According to the 2000 census, 56percent of residents of the 100 largest U.S. cities are nonwhite. Moreover, there is diversity in the composition of this nonwhite population. For instance, Chicago, historically a black and white's city, is now 36 percent black, 31 percent white, and 28 percent Latino, with the remaining 5 percent mainly being Asian. Growing racial and ethnic diversity has not always meant increasing racial integration in the nation's major metropolitan areas. The Chicago metropolitan area ranks as the fifth, sixth, and ninth most residentially segregated metropolitan area in the United States for blacks, Latinos, and Asians, respectively.¹ Residentially segregated neighborhood and white's superiority complex in our urban centers like Chicago remain among the most salient reminders of our nation's history of racial injustice.

According to Michelle and Barack Obama extreme political, economic and social segregation and white superiority complex, be it in schools, churches or houses is connected to persistent racial discrepancies in quality of health care, education, jobs, and other public and private sector services. Studies investigating the effects of residential segregation for young African Americans have concluded that the elimination of residential segregation would lead to the disappearance of black white differences in earnings, high school graduation rates, and unemployment. White's complexity and segregation is the degree of physical separation between groups (racial and ethnic) in terms of where they live. One popular measure is the dissimilarity index, which gauges how evenly or unevenly different groups in a metropolitan area are dispersed across neighborhoods.

A value of 100 indicates total segregation of two groups, as when, for instance, all neighborhoods are either 100 percent Latino or 100 percent white. A value of zero (complete

integration) means every neighborhood has the same percentage of whites and Latinos as there are in the metropolitan area. The City of Chicago would score zero on the Latino dissimilarity index if every neighborhood were 28 percent Latino. Values above 60 indicate a very high level of segregation, values between 30 and 59 indicate moderate segregation, and values of less than 30 indicate low segregation. In the City of Chicago, Michelle Obama indicates that black-white separation has been high for decades, with the dissimilarity index peaking at 92 in 1970 and remaining as high as 81 in 2000. Values for Latinos and Asians are lower, but still moderately high, roughly 60 and 45, respectively, in recent decades.

The three most common explanations for racial residential segregation are in-group preferences; economic status and discrimination. Residential segregation could persist because most members of most racial and ethnic groups feel more comfortable living with their own kind. One elaboration on this theory posits that white reluctance to live with blacks is rooted, not in racial antipathy, but in fear of economic liability, as whites associate integrated neighborhoods with higher crime and diminished property values. The research evidence on this point is inconclusive. A second elaboration posits that black segregation comes from a strong and unchanging African American preference for densely black neighborhoods. However, no studies have found many blacks preferring totally black neighborhoods; more typical is a preference for 50 percent black/50 percent white neighborhoods.

A second possible explanation for residential segregation and white's superiority complex is economic. Michelle makes us to understand that, Racial and ethnic minorities might not live near whites, generally, because they have fewer financial resources and thus cannot afford to live in the same areas. That is why we see that at the beginning of the novel, Michelle describes the kind of house she lives in "I was brought up in a brick bungalow belonging to my mother's aunt". The high levels of residential segregation in Chicago were income-based for blacks and since Michelle's family was poor, they were forced to live in the kind of house she describes. According to black-white dissimilarity indices within income groups in the Chicago metropolitan area barely change as income rises the most affluent blacks are nearly as segregated as their poorest counterparts. In contrast, dissimilarity indices for Latinos and Asians fall by about one-third when comparing those with higher incomes to those with low income.

A third explanation for white's superiority complex and racial segregation is persistent discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities within the housing market. Even as

explicitly racial covenants have vanished, it could be that subtle steering and marketing practices take their place. Social scientists typically measure differences in the treatment of white, black, and Latino home seekers by means of a housing audit. Whites and blacks or Whites and Latinos auditors are matched on social background characteristics, and then sent to randomly selected landlords or real estate agents to rent. Michelle Obama says that, although segregation levels are reduced for Asians and Latinos with greater financial means, the same is not true for African Americans. Secondly, we demonstrate the complexity of the preference explanation. While Cook County residents of all three racial and ethnic groups included in the study profess an interest in diverse neighborhoods in principle, when we examine the expression of those preferences in the form of actual search locations, we discover far less evidence of a commitment to diversity on the part of whites. African Americans and Latinos seek out many different community types, even though, given patterns of segregation, we know they end up in communities that are highly segregated (especially blacks). This disjuncture between blacks' and Latinos' preferences and their actual neighborhoods probably originates, at least in part, in barriers presented by discriminatory treatment, in the form of exclusion, steering, and unfriendliness.

In all indication, many years ago after the most ambitious effort to end racial discrimination in United States of America (the Chicago Freedom Movement led by Martin Luther King Jr. and Al Raby), African Americans and Latinos in Cook County continue to report substantial levels of unfair and illegal treatment in the socio economic and political areas in America. Discrimination still occurs, and enforcement is necessary. We need equal policies which reverse decades of exclusionary zoning laws that set minimum floor space and lot size requirements and maximum density limitations. While usually appearing racially neutral, these policies often restrict for racial and ethnic minorities by limiting them affordable opportunities.

“Very soon after I went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Auld, she very kindly commenced to teach me the A, B, C. After I had learned this, she assisted me in learning to spell words of three or four letters. Just at this point of my progress, Mr. Auld found out what was going on, and at once forbade Mrs. Auld to instruct me further, telling her, among other things, that it was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read” (82)

One the remarkable features of Michelle Obama’s upbringing are her education. She never had any cordial relationship with her classmates and even teachers. Traumatized

with so many racial instances, she had no choice that to focused in her studies since she knew it was only through school that she could combat racism properly. The complexity of the whites' Vis a Vis the blacks has been so denigrating. Michelle mother recalled the bad and traumatizing treatments the black Americans have undergone during the slavery and slave trade. She has virtually carried the education of the children especially that of her daughter on her head. She had studied the Whiteman's mentality and knew that it could only be through school that this denigrating attitude could come to an end. We noticed how Michelle's mother constantly persuaded the daughter to go to school. She is convinced that the best way to combat the white's man superiority complex is only through education. Just like Michelle's mother, Frederick Douglass in her text also explained the importance of blacks going to school. He goes as far to present one of his characters in the novel treating blacks as not wealthy enough to be educated. This is seen when Mr. Auld tells the wife that,

“If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell.
A nigger should know nothing but to obey his master.
To do as he is told to do. Learning will spoil the best
nigger in the world.” (7)

Faced with this kind barbaric behavior, Marian Robinson could not in any way allow the education of the children fall prey in the hands of the Whiteman discriminatory and segregated philosophy. To her, the injustice inflicted on the Afro Americans was enough and it was time to stand against it. Marian Robinson believes in education; she believes in quality education for every American be it black or white.

The kind of job Marian Robinson and the husband did in America [Chicago] justifies in it totality the place of the blacks in the American society. Fraser was a pump worker for the City of Chicago. He tended the boilers at a water-filtration plant. On the 2008 campaign trail, we learned from both Barack and Michelle, that Mr. Robinson developed multiple sclerosis as a young man. In spite of having this disease, he continued working and according to Michelle, he hardly ever missed a day of work. Michele Obama continues explain how her father sustained his job as a factory worker. He would go to work every day dressed in the blue uniform of a city laborer in search of earns might. In the text, Michelle tells us that the father will come back from a tedious day at work and would show her what it meant to love jazz and arts. This was a strategy for the father to take the children back to the origins of African American. To Michelle the mother and father thought them the bitter truth of life since this happened at a moment where racism was very rampant and common in many communities in

the United States of America. The qualities that Michelle brings out the parents in her young age encourage and empower her to become a prominent leader in the American society.

Michelle has seen optimism in her mother throughout her young age. Even when she introduces the husband to the father and mother, the father is not confident about the relationship. He believes that Barack Obama will not marry the daughter even though he is black, the white maternal parents will certainly prefer their son get marry to a white. The father laughingly tells Craig Michelle's relationship with Obama will not work but fortunately for Michelle's family, Obama appears to have the same vision with their daughter that of fighting against all forms of racial discrimination and superiority complex in the United States of America. The bildungsroman life story of Michelle Obama, which presents her story in various aspect of life, helps us to understand persisting dynamics of dehumanization of minorities in United States of America.

Michelle in her memoir looks at her life back and forth; she clearly tells us that the parents appear to be her first teacher. It was so important for her parents to make her understand that it was not easy for a black to succeed in America so it was therefore very important for the parents to prepare their children psychologically before she goes to the outside world. In fact, the parents believed so much in education in an extend of her working as a volunteer on behalf of their neighborhood school. Which was a way for her to maintain quality as to her the standard was seriously declining. Michelle goes further to tell us that despite the hardship that the parents were going through, they succeeded in enrolling the brother Craig in a predominantly white catholic school with a strong basketball program and rigorous curriculum.

When Michelle gets to Princeton University she is the only black lady in class not ashamed of her roots that of knowing so well that she is the descendant of the African American slavery and slave trade, she will at times be nervous when she noticed that she is looked upon as nothing simply because of her skin color. To the whites in class, it was impossible for them to be measured up their standard in an equal scale with Michelle. In terms of politics, Michelle Obama in her book, *Becoming* unfolds a lot of unpleasant racial segregation and superiority complex coming from the whites. Ever since Michelle was in her youths, she sometimes belief that because she was well educated, she was not too much link to the African ancestries but most often she was shock because she was never welcome in the white's community as expected. This enigma would follow her in her Michelle in her undergraduate studies at Princeton as said earlier right up to her professional career as an

active layer till during her husband's presidential election in 2008. She does not sit and feel discourage, rather she opens another possibility for serious resistance against the deep rooted politics of racial segregation, dehumanization of the blacks in the United States of America till the last day she left the white house.

In her memoire, Michelle tells us that leaving the white house at the end of the husbands' mandate was a great relief for her. She confesses the kind of huddles and the hard moments she had as being the first black first lady in America Tara Lal Shrestha, in one of her articles tells us how Michelle Obama while speaking to a class of native American students in Mexico has this to say,

“I knew invisibility. I'd lived invisibility. I came a history of invisibility. I like to mention that I was the great great granddaughter of a slave named Jim Robinson, who was probably buried in an unmarked grave somewhere on a South Carolina plantation” (107)

As the husband's political career expands in the United States of America, racial attacks were much more visible in the society. To Michelle, the husband had the ability to resist racial discrimination more than she could, she had a self-described need to be liked and could not merely shrug off insulting comments with the same tranquility like that of the husband. She tells us in her memoire that when the husband is going in for a seat in the U.S Congress House of Representatives, she is very skeptical about the prospect and his eventual outcome in the election. She even went as far telling the husband that he should look for another possibility to impact the society positively. Michelle affirms in her text that she went as far to make her husband to promise her that if he lost the race for the U.S senate, he must give up on politics. This is not because she doubted the political potentials of Barack Obama rather she knew that since the husband was black he was not going to welcome by the white majority and knowing fully well that the husband could not only count on the black minority to win a political position in the United States of America.

On the side of Barack Obama, his mixed ancestry uncertainty did not spare him from serious attacks of racism. We recalled that Obama is a descendant from white single mother and black father from Africa who went back to Kenya after his studies. From his early childhood, he had weakness a lot of racial discrimination be it in school, at work till his when he finally makes up his mind of joining politics and usually this racial discrimination came from the whites who constantly reminded him of his African American origins. At the beginning of the novel *Dreams from My Father. A Story of Race and Inheritance*, Barack

Obama present the text as a child search for his father, and through that search a workable meaning for his life as Afro American. We note that before then, Obama rather preferred identifying himself with the mother than that of his African parents. He tells us that many blacks did not want to identified their selves with the blacks however; this was further accelerated when he came across a magazine try to expose a black man who tried to change his skin color because to them the white skin was the best.

Even though he had noticed the difference between his skin color and the skin color of the people who raised him, what pains Obama the most is the sudden realization that one is carrying identity that have social implications. Obama refers to this as a “violent” realization an “ambush attack... I still trusted my mother’s love but now I faced the prospect that her account of the world, and my father’s place in it, was somehow incomplete.” (51) From this moment, Obama’s mindset has never been the same again this was because the white complex of superiority and segregation has completely opened his mind to the world. He realizes that the respect and values he gives to individuals is rather the contrary when it comes to him simply because of the skin color. However, Barack Obama in his text succeeds to tell her reader that the old times had passed. Superiority Complex has no sense today. In fact, to Obama, what a white does, a black can do, and what a black can do a white is also able to do. Whites at every moment in life thought they were far more superior to the blacks but in reality no one was more superior to other.

Where some whites had made some discoveries, there were blacks with them like Matthew Henson who went with the geographer R.E. Peary who failed many times in twenty years to reach the North Pole. We ask ourselves if this blacks if this black that was by his side was inferior or superior. Milkman had the impression that the father surpassed all men but was rather surprise when he met his aunt Pilate, then he noticed the later was far bigger than the father was. Obama makes us to understand that because of the black skin color, in whites’ eyes even animals were superior

After all this treatment levied to the blacks, it is therefore clear that one of Barack Obama’s aim entering in to politic is to prove to the Americans and the entire world that blacks has the ability to do even more better than the whites. The whites must know that most of the hard, odd and dirty works which even made them famous at times were done by blacks. Even though it was clear and certain that the successes were labeled under the fame of the whites and all the benefits were given to them and the blacks barehanded. Just like the reactions of Barack Obama towards racial superiority complex and segregation, Toni

Morrison in her novel *Song of Solomon* through one of her characters Macon also decried the white man superiority complex and racial segregation who said,

“He knew as a negro he wasn’t going to get a big slice of the pie. But there were properties nobody wanted yet, or little edges of property somebody didn’t want Jews to have or Catholics to have, or properties nobody knew were of any value yet” (63)

In all its forms, it was unfired and unjust to look at blacks as sub humans. We noticed that Toni Morrison is writing this text at a time where blacks knew it was impossible for them to be measured with the whites. Morrison even goes further to illustrate this racial superiority complex of the whites through the conversations Guitar and Freddy has,

You stupid man, real stupid. Ain’t no law for no colored man except the one sends him to the chair, said Guitar. They say till had a knife, Freddie said they always say that. He could have had a wad of bubble gum; they’d swear it was a hand grenade. (82)

These few examples illustrated above shows clearly the white’s man hatred for the black skin color. They could never believe in any idea tilted towards the equality of race by every human being. Michelle Obama tells us in her text that, even though the Americans citizens were aware of the constitution which states it clearly that, “we are created equal” but it was rather unfortunate that no activities or actions on the daily lives of the citizens respected this law even the American government did not care to see it workability. One is tempted to think that all their effort was to find elements that could absolutely prove the whites man race over the black man race.

There was also an existential aspect to Barack Obama’s struggle for race and identity. He strongly stood against this racial superiority complex that the whites claim they were. One fateful day he opens up a magazine which had a well exposed picture of a black who used skin lightening creams with disastrous consequences. To Barack Obama, the author of this article in the magazine had in mind to denigrate the black skin and make the black feel like it was shameful being a black and from that instance, Barack Obama makes us to understand that his struggled against white’s superiority complex and segregation doubled. This further makes racism more real to Barack Obama in the American soil. The voting right passed by the United States government in 1965 gave Barack Obama more courage to fight harder in the

political areas in America. To the wife, it was clear that the husband will certainly impact the world in something else not politic.

But Barack Obama constantly reminded the Americans citizens of the Declaration of Independence 1776 by Thomas Jefferson in the Congress hall, he told the Americans that, he holds this declaration of independence as proofs that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and to Barack Obama he saw it unjust to be judge by the color of the skin or to be consider unfit for standing as a candidate in the historic presidential election simply because he is black. That for these right to be secure, government should institute among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these end, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying it foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. This thought from Barack Obama was similar to that of Patrick Henry who delivered a powerful speech to the Second Virginia Convention tittle “give me liberty or give me death.”

Barack Obama will have ignored all the denigrating words imposed on his family and will take the bull by the horn by officially take political carrier by becoming for his first time a state senator of Illinois moving above the white superiority and segregation. He is given the opportunity to deliver a speech in the house of senate which the speech immediately transforms him to a presidential candidate thereby giving the blacks a little more legitimacy, we are certain that many Americans at this point in time do no longer look at whites at the level of color rather the content just like we mentioned later own the speech made by Martin Luther King Jr. Obama rise to the political top was unprecedented in the history of America. In fact, it is said that, Barack Obama being an African American even made his rise more remarkable in the entire world and in America in particular. Non have ever dreamed of seeing a black pulling crowd, proposing a lot of excellent ideas during campaign yet he was still confronted with this idea of white superiority complex, he was charge of either being too black, being a Muslim and still doubts regarding whether white Americans were ready to see a black president preside over the destiny of the United States of America.

Even after Obama’s presidential victory, it was still very difficult for some die hearted racist to believe that a black family now leaves in the white house while others said that Obama’s victory was largely a result of many religious Christians persuasion who were

convinced that his presidential campaign was anointed. In fact, these Christians believe that Obama was chosen by God and coupled to this was the unconditional support of the color people in the United States of America to Obama's candidacy.

While some Americans have argued that Barack Obama may have had a race conscious approach to the American politic for instance, he has the ability to adapt his speech depending on the race of his audience. Some people think that due to the discriminating tendency Obama adopted a strategy which appeared deracialized this was noticed in his presidential commitment. Obama repeatedly said racial discrimination and white superiority complex has faded away and it was important each and every one look in the same direction and hold America as the ultimate gold, he continue by saying that the whites should easily integrate the world of the black without any constrains even though Obama has constantly remained a consistent critic against the white superiority complex and segregation people who knew him since the 90s will tell you that his running for election has not change his view.

CHAPTER THREE

THE AUTHORS AND THE PROBLEM OF RACE

This Chapter gives an insight into how the authors relate to the problem of race in the twenty first century America. It is worth noting that, these authors have a special connection and role to play in the socio-political and economic growth of both American citizen and black American citizens. This is an indication that they both relate and contribute to the growth of black American literature. It also discusses the whole notion of racism and situates the context within which this work situates

The topic under research has been and remains a persistent problem in the United States of America. Racism has given rise to so many conflicting societal problems such as segregation, racial discrimination. This has therefore been a called for concerned for many Afro American writers such as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, and James Baldwin who stood their grounds to fight against this denigrating phenomenon through their various writings. The fight against racism became widespread during the Harlem Renaissance where Jean Toomer in his book insists that *‘I was neither white nor black, but simply an American.* “Michelle and Obama could never be indifferent in the fight against racism.

It is therefore worth noting that, in the early twenty-first century, race still occupies a dominant role in the American politics. Despite this truism, presidential candidate Barack Obama and wife appears as the first blacks who uniquely poised to transcend the obstacles of race as the first African American to have a realistic chance of winning the presidency. The constant exploration and exploitation of the Americans on the blacks has therefore given room to the Americans to consider blacks as permanent slaves. This lone was a motivating factors for the authors to stand against the inhuman treatment given to the blacks.

Family (Black Racism)

Michelle begins the book *“Becoming”* introducing her family to give a clear conception of where they came from, what values formed their basis and how important this is in her life. She grew up in the South side of Chicago, where the dilemma of the American race issue was also part of people's lives and preoccupations. We even see in her novel how

she describes her house bungalow which at the time belongs to her mother aunt. One of the most striking phenomena in Michelle in Chicago is that; the area was dominated by whites around the 1950s making life unbearable for the black American.

Michelle Obama explains that though they grew up in an area where blacks and whites were rather visible in the streets of Chicago. Forcing some of them to move in the suburbs living the whites in the remote areas of Chicago, Michelle's family will rather start a stiff resistance against the whites instead of moving in to suburbs of America like other blacks, the mother will instead be very instrumental in her life. Even though looked upon as second class citizen because of the colour of the skin, she will rather become more influential in her daughter's life and even in the white's community. This accounts for the numerous successes that Michelle Obama goes across as a child in school and in her political career. The act of making blacks into permanent commodities has pushed Michelle Obama to constantly maintain a very good performance at school even though she was never still looked upon like the white's children.

Can a negro, whose ancestors were Imported in this country and sold as slaves become a member of the political in U.S and as such become entitled to all right, privileges and immunities guaranteed by that instrument to the citizen (18)

This illustration shows clearly how the white's man believes that nothing good will come out from the black man. This however have disturbed Michelle in her childhood but fortunately for her, the mother had a grip on the community that is why Michelle will describe her family in the text as "my family was my world, the centre of everything". Michelle won't leave the mother indifferent because she recognises the fact that her success highly depends on the hard work of the mother. Michelle Robinson will slowly adapt to the mother's spirit and will refused to be dominated by any white be it in politics or education. That is why in the text under study she says that "my mother taught me how to read early, working me to the public library, sitting with me as I sounded out words on a page". This greatly explains in its totality the roll of the family in her life. From the novel Michelle does not in any way forget the role of the family members. In fact, from the opening pages of her text she keeps on praising her aunt Robbie and Uncle Terry who has been so instrumental in her growth. Michelle in her novel systematically present the role each of the family members played in her growth. For instance, the presence of Uncle Terry in the apartment pushed Michelle to

learn piano. We noticed that the family knew America so well that they knew exactly what Michelle needed.

Michelle will intentionally mention each member of his family in the novel showing each of the roles each played in her life. This is seen in the opening chapter of the novel ‘‘I spent much of my childhood listening to the sound of striving’’. This opening statement made in the novel by Michelle will henceforth constitute an important value that she will adopt throughout her entire life. Michelle Obama became thereof very optimistic in her life, she believes that things can be better for the marginalised black community in America. Michelle’s father as a lover of jazz will not hesitate teaching music to the daughter. Jazz at this time in the American society most essentially in the domain of arts and music made so many Afro American writers to write about the Blackman culture.

During this period, there was a great advancement in writing for instance the Harlem Renaissance which was also known as ‘‘Negro Movement’’, actually brought to the limelight the black American culture. Writers like W. E. B. Du Bois and Zora Neale Hurston produced critical works that were tilted to discrediting racist beliefs, alienation and the marginalisation of the black American. It is therefore in this regard that, Michelle’s father will put more emphasis on the daughter to study piano. He knew that the best way the daughter could get acquainted easily to the black culture was to study music. ‘‘I was about four when I decided I wanted to learn piano’’. According to Michelle, music has been part of the family long ago. Many family members have adopted singing and she had no option than to learn music. ‘‘My family was loaded with musicians and music lovers, especially on my mother’s side. I had an uncle who played in a professional band. Several of my aunts sang in church choirs.’’ (9) It is therefore clear that the advent of the ‘‘Negro Movement’’ in other words the Harlem Renaissance transformed in its totality the Michelle’s family.

Michelle’s parents remain constant and vigilant on the fact that they have suffered in the hands of the whites and in no account will want the children to go through the same torture and marginalisation. They will therefore put all mechanisms in place for their daughter to feel comfortable wherever she finds herself. Michelle is therefore not discouraged for being discriminated by the classmate instead she redoubles her efforts while in school. Apart from Michelle’s biological family who instigate enough courage in her while in her primary school, she will get acquainted to people like David. He has been so instrumental during Michelle’s high school days just like Suzanne whom according to Michelle will get herself involved in so many school activities. Thus, we noticed that Michelle will return back

during weekends and will explain to the family how she has been coping in school. Most often, the mother will assert the difficulties face by black American students is to establish their autonomy as blacks in the midst of a white's majority.

Apart from presenting the biological family which has been so instrumental in her growth in America and whom she proudly identifies as “working class” her father, she also brings in the husband as she presents her Immediate family. She goes forward by presenting the unforeseen circumstances that led to her meeting with the husband “I sat in my office on the forty seventh floor, waiting and not waiting for him to arrive”[pg92]. She is an adult now, meeting Barack Obama at a moment they both are conscious on the situations of blacks in the United States of America that is why their interactions will be more of romance

Despite my resistance to the hype that had preceded him, I found myself admiring Barack for both his self-assuredness and his earnest Demeanor. He was refreshing, unconventional, and weirdly elegant... (98)

The presence of Barack in Michelle's life will completely take a way racist believes in her life. She freely identifies herself with Obama. On charismas Barack Obama will introduce her to his family and friends while Michelle's family on her part will not believe on the relationship. They consider Obama as a white. This accounts why the father after the departure of Barack Obama, will laughingly tell Craig that the relationship between the daughter and Obama will not last. We notice that, Michelle enjoy the parts she presents her immediate family in her memoire. She expresses her experience with the husband so well that one is tempted to say that their union was revealed to her before their meeting. She will carefully and intentionally size every opportunity towards the husband and makes him believes more in her love. So fast Michelle and Barack are officially married with two children and the family become so prominent and influential in the United States of America “America had come to see Barack as self-assured and powerful, but my mother also recognized the gravity of passage, the loneliness of the job ahead.” (278)

According to Obama, defining a black family in America goes beyond being just a descendant of the African Diaspora or having African DNA. There are so many determining factors that leads to the ideals and stereotypes that maintain racial disparities in America. Now that Barack is old and has more Black friends like Ray, racism starts to become more real for him though Barack still holds onto his desire to make peace with everyone, that is why he denies Ray's claims that their peers are racist. For Barack, people can have preferences about what people look like without being racist. But for Ray, it is impossible to ignore that he and

Barack suffer more than others, presumably because they are Blacks. Despite Barack's insistence that Ray is overstating Hawaii's racism, he is nevertheless trying to figure out what it means to be Black. The outings with Gramps introduce Barack to Black men and women whose style of life is different from his own, introducing him to the idea that there is no singular Black experience in America. And especially at the bar in the red light district, Barack is made uncomfortably aware of the power difference between Blacks and whites.

Seeing the Life photograph raises immediate feelings of shame and suspicion in Barack; it suddenly makes racism real for him. He attributes his earlier innocence to his white mother's habit of buying him books about civil rights and famous Black figures and to the particular melting pot culture of Hawaii, where in theory at least there is enough diversity and few enough Black people that it is easy enough to pretend racism doesn't exist there. Upon seeing the photograph, however, Barack begins to wonder if her mother knows about skin lightening. And later, when he returns to Hawaii to live with his white grandparents, he feels that there is a gulf opening up between him and them because of their different skin colors. This eventually transforms into anger: Barack comes to understand that as a Black man in the United States, where minorities still experience discrimination, many white people intentionally or not see him as a threat. He doesn't know whether or not people treat him like a human being. This sense of alienation from the people who raise him lead to increasing feelings of powerlessness and anger, which culminate in Barack's college days, spent escaping from his identity through substance abuse and mocking fellow Black students who act too "white." Especially given his Hawaiian upbringing (in comparison to his classmates' upbringings in Chicago, Compton, or New York City), Barack feels the need to prove his Blackness to his college peers. However, even his Black peers eventually begin to call him out on what they identify as bad behavior. They impress upon Barack that his apathetic, exclusionary attitude doesn't make him Black it just makes him rude

Barack Obama opens the first lines of his memoir "Dreams from My Father" presenting a tragic news. That faithful day, when he was just twenty-one the aunt called to inform him that the father died through a car accident

Berry? Berry, is this you? "Yes.... who's "Yes, Berry.... this is your Aunt Jane. In Nairobi. Can you hear me?" "I'm sorry – who did you say you were?" Aunt Jane. Listen, Barry, your father is dead. He is killed in a car accident. Hello? can you hear me? I say, your father is dead. Barry, please call

your uncle in Boston and tell him. I can't talk now, okay, Barry. I will try to call you again... (1)

This incident once more will create a lot of awareness in Obama's mind-set, he is remorseful and wishes he could do something to save the father's life. He recalls the social injustice he suffered as black while growing up solely with his white parents and tries to deconstruct the prevailing situations. Obama could not stand the bullying and the victim of racism that made him for a long, whenever he was discriminated upon as a black, he defended himself in the public by saying that his mother was a white. To Barack Obama, telling people that the mother is a white was the best way to seek for acceptance and consideration from people who did not look at him as a white. We therefore notice that the absence of Obama's father in his life contributed greatly in the diminishing of the black Americans. He certainly did not realise himself that it was his right and duty to stand against the white's superiority complex, rather he was dominated by the white superiority complex from the maternal side where everybody happens to have the white's skin. The closeness he had with the maternal parents made him to be ignorant of the realities of American racism. Barack Obama will come to age and will want to establish a great resistance against racism and by all means deconstruct the ideas of white's superiority complex by tracing back to his roots and accepting who he actually is, he tries to get in contact with the father's relatives in a bit to understand more about the historical facts of his African family.

Barack is a young boy living in Hawaii. He tells us about his sufferings as an African American while growing up and the lessons he learned out of them. He lives with his white mother and grandparents; after his Kenyan father had returned to Kenya to work. Barack was only two years when his father left his mother. He never met his father until the age of ten. He only remembers his father's exceptional personality and confidence. At one point, Barack Obama regrets that 'his father had not been able to tell him his true feelings when they met, any more than Barry had been able to express his ten years old desires'. After many years; he heard that his father had died in a car accident. "Only a vague sense of opportunity lost", says the writer. This death brings about a change in Barack's life to a small town in Kansas. It is the place from where he traces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii. Later on in the novel, his mother marries an Indonesian man. Barack moves to Indonesia along with his mother and step father to start a new life.

A new culture brings a lot of problems to Obama as a child. The culture, he says, 'Quickly makes a child into a man'. Here it is interesting to note that when most of the

children in Indonesia were shell shocked from a move in their country, Barack watched and learnt, observed and discovered. After a while her mother started realizing that this new environment was making her son scared to share his feeling. Thus, she decided to send him back to Hawaii, only to make him know what it is like to grow up as an American. It was his mother who helped in shaping his ethnic identity as a black man and inculcated his pride in being black. Due to the love of his mother and grandparents, he was able to deal with indignities that he and other blacks were to face in the society without being annoyed at all white people. The greatest example is that his white mother and grandparents never uttered the cutting remarks of his absent father in front of him. His mother raised Barack to admire and see the greatness in the character of the man who had deserted her and was polygamy. It dawns upon the readers that it was the influences of distressed cultures and the initiation of the truth that he was the black in a white society, led him to the formation of this man.

The title of Obama's autobiography, *Dreams from My Father*, announces an intergenerational perspective that involves both a passing on of dreams from father to son and the son's search for his father's past. This double perspective is emphasized further by the subtitle, *A Story of Race and Inheritance*, which connects Obama's search for his Kenyan father, who left the family when his son was two years old, whom Obama only saw once for a few weeks when he was ten, and who died when Obama was twenty-one, with the search for a viable narrative of his life, for a way to make sense of his transatlantic heritage. Integral elements of this search are core themes of African American letters: the quest for self-discovery vis-à-vis social constructions of race; the search for ancestors, the meanings of home, and the power of dreams in the struggle for racial equality. In the words of Cornel West: "What is my relation to my African heritage? How do I understand my African American tradition and sense of homelessness in America?"

We noticed that Toot and Gramps [Barack Obama's grandparents] are fairly progressive as far as racism in the United States is concerned. They were ready to allowed their daughter get married Obama's father; this was demonstrated by the much love they showed to their grandson. In any ways, Obama was not given the opportunity back at home to be look upon as a black person instead they provided all the care and assistance a child could have. The same fatherly treatments are given to Obama when Lolo marries Ann and for that moment they were in Indonesian, Barack Obama was completely taken away from the world of racism in America rather they turned to giving Barack Obama a sound education making sure he grows up and be a real America citizen but it is at this moment that Obama begin to

experience racism from his peers in school who constantly and persistently denigrate the color of his skin

The apex of Barack's life was finally visiting his African family in Kenya. This reflection stayed with him throughout, as he had lived under the shadow of a man whom he was named but did not know, a man that meant him bigger than life. Here he came to know in a real sense that Barack Obama was. When he finally met his Kenyan siblings, they embraced him as Obama. "My name belonged and so I belonged, drawn into a web of relationships, alliances and grudges that I did not yet understand", he writes. Although his father had died yet Obama learnt the legacy, pain, optimism, thoughts and demos of this man. "Where once I'd felt the need to live up to his expectations, I now felt as if had to make up for all his mistakes", so says Barack Obama of his father which is to a larger extent is the central part of this intriguing memoir.

He explores the meaning of heritage in his own life. It is during this visit where he receives his inheritance, not the wealth of property but the wealth of information about generations past. It is the discovery of his father's past and connectivity with his Kenyan siblings. Growing up Barack had a little influence of his father and only dreamed about him. Even in the school, he spun years about his father's life in Kenya (Africa), "My grandfather, see, he's a chief. It is a sort of like the king of the tribe. So that makes my father a prince. He will take over when my grandfather dies." Behind his fairy-tale, the writer dreams of the real life behind his father's mysteries. He goes to find out how he relates to his unknown father's identity.

The writer has been facing a number of external changes that shifted his identity. He remains in a constant journey, searching for something that offers meaning to him. He finds that Polygamy, debt, aggression, violence, political uprisings betrayals and infidelity are all part of his heritage. Here he learns that his father was not the man he thought. The potential his father had was never realized. Sitting on his father's grave, the writer understands what his father might have taught him, if only silence, caused by fear throughout generations, would not have been a hindrance. He portrays the true facts, "I realized that that I was, what I cared about, was no longer just a matter of intellect or obligation, no longer a construct of words. I saw that my life in America-the black life, the white life, the sense of abandonment I'd felt as a boy, the frustration and hope I witnessed in Chicago, all of it was connected with this or the color of my skin.

The pain I felt was my father's pain. My questions were my brother's questions. The writer returns to America to grapple with the issue of his brown skin and how some Americans react to that. Barack also tells about his ideal years as teen age, his past fondness for pots and liquor but soon these obsessions lose color away when he finds reason to his life. The author tries to bring a ray of optimism for the desperate communities in sink estates around the decaying shells of Chicago's industrial parts. The search of the young boy for truth and story of his missing father answers to his divided racial inheritance leads him to write such a powerful biography.

Politics

Michelle Obama believes that the African political leaders who have emerged as a consequence of the new role of negroes in the political life of America are men and women with a purely middle class outlook thus, consciously or unconsciously, the authors have placed their memoirs in a literary tradition of political prose that moves back to the early days of another political figures in American Abraham Lincoln.

In the rough and tumble politics of America, cities, it has often been negroes associated with the underworld who have been able to organize the negro voters and wring concessions from white society. These Negro leaders often operate behind the façade of a legitimate business, very frequently the undertaking business. The undertaking business brings them into intimate contact with the Negro masses. Among the Negro masses they gain a reputation for generosity and humanity by giving money to the poor and to churches sometimes and by enabling criminals to escape punishment. Behind the façade of their legitimate business, they carry on illegitimate business such as gambling, vice and the lottery known as the "numbers." Therefore, their interest in the political machines is mainly to secure protection for their business enterprises. She accused those always making financial contributions to both the democratic and the Republican Party machines in order to ensure protection for their businesses. Their political affiliation or leadership has no relation to the needs of the Negro masses. And she is convinced that it is due to this kind of political bankrupt that her parents suffered in Chicago. (7)

"I have never been a fan of politics," she declares, she continues by saying in her novel that her personal experience on American politics has done absolutely nothing to change her point of view or her conception to words becoming an active actor on politic. At one point she says she most look another way of contributing to nation building and not necessary doing it through politics thus has no reasons for running in an office post. But, far from being

apolitical, Michelle Obama in her novel appears to be highly political taking in to account her thematic concerned raised in the novel and the genesis of her life.

In her text *Becoming* Michelle Obama talks about many taboo subjects such as her period, her sexual partner, difficulties in getting pregnant and her argument with her husband. However, these instances are presented in the novel as personal life stories nevertheless, these experiences fit into a larger narrative about race, segregation, family values that runs throughout the novel. One of the key political problems Michelle Obama addresses in her novel is racism and violence. She points out the lacsity of the political leaders through the marginalization and ghettoization of many African American be it in schools, enterprises and even in the public service.

Michelle Obama's place and role as the first African American First Lady is more than merely symbolic. Her self- representation as a professional woman, mother and spouse is directed towards a wider representativeness that is new in the United States' political environment. That is the reasons she says that,

‘‘Racism is more than just words or actions. It also includes the invisible barriers, big and small, that can prevent people from doing as well in life as others simply because of their cultural background.’’(189)

As a descendant of slaves and slave owners whose American ancestry can be traced back to the 1850s, she can lay claim to an African American legacy that the President lacks. As a consequence, some of her more controversial statements during the presidential campaign about the black family, class mobility and national pride need to be read in the context of an African American literature and historiography that challenges the American creed of equality, liberty and unconditional love of one's country. Michelle Obama's family historical background, her Princeton undergraduate thesis, journals, newspapers and her own words in interviews are analysed here in the discursive context of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Richard Powers' *the Time of Our Singing*, and Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave-girl*, as well as the historiography of the civil rights movement.

Such a reading reveals how Michelle Obama's background weaves the legacy of slavery into the American fabric, and shows that a redemptive construction of American history, in which the success of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the Obama presidency are taken as fulfilment of the African American faith (and of Martin Luther King's

dream). Anna Spain Bradley in one of her articles titled “Human right racism” explains that racism, in all of its forms, is the under acknowledged human rights problem of our day. Various defined, racism threatens the lives and rights of millions of people around the world. Despite outlawing racial discrimination through a multilateral treaty in 1965, governments continue to perpetuate and permit racism with impunity and individual acts of racism are commonplace. Its elimination remains an unrealized promise of universal human rights. The United States offers a sad example where, despite anti-discrimination laws and equal protection rights, the government has failed to protect its people from racism.

Police continue to racially profile and murder African Americans at alarming rates, prompting public outcry but little remedy. Law enforcement efforts to curb rape and sexual assault have failed to protect the African Americans who experience disproportionately high rates of sexual crimes and murder. Latin report encountering discrimination by landlords and employers in their efforts to rent homes or interview for jobs, and a recent poll reports that 37 percent have been the target of racial slurs. Islamophobia against Muslims persists across racial groups. In June 2018, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) documented the rise in racially-motivated hate crimes in America. In New York City, hate crimes against Jewish people were up by approximately six percent in 2018. Racist motivated voter suppression, race-baiting speech by politicians, and pro-Nazi symbols have experienced resurgence. Notably, 60 percent of Americans say the election of Donald Trump as president has worsened race relations.

Michelle is known for her hatred for politicians. In her memoir, “Becoming” indicates that her intense dislike for politicians, date back during her childhood in her home town Chicago. In fact, Amy Davidson Sorkin in one of his comments says that, “one of the thought provoking aspects of former first lady’s memoir is the question of what she considers politics and what does not.” (217) Her hatred for politics comes as a results of the poor political system put in place by the America government in other to permanently keep the blacks into subjection, slavery and permanent hardship.” Been used against black folks, as a means to keep us isolated excluded”. She goes further to expressed the suffering the father had gone throw as an employee, never was he promoted due to the hash political system in place,

“this particular form of discrimination altered the destinies of generations of African Americans, including many of the men in my family, limiting their income, opportunity, and, eventually their aspirations”. (38)

All this political system and governance put in place by the American government made Michelle Obama to develop a lot of hatred for politics. Just as destiny holds, Michelle will fall in love with a die hearted politician who will later give reasons for her to get herself involves into politics too. “I didn’t much appreciate politicians and therefore didn’t relish the idea of my husband becoming one”. [41] In the novel Michelle will denounce so many malpractices of the American system of government. She illustrates the assassination of the 35th president of America John F. Kennedy who was on a tour to Texas in an open top convertible accompanied by the wife Jacqueline Kennedy. She also in mentioned the death of Martin Luther King Jr. who was an American Baptist minister and activist who later became the most visible spokesman and leader in the American civil right movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. Martin Luther King Jr. represented the African American in the political scene in United States of America but was never looked upon as an American rather he was discriminated and marginalised upon.

...They comes a time when people get tire of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life’s July and left standing amid the piercing chill of an alpine November. (King Jr. 1955).

All these political instabilities pushed Michelle Obama to develop a lot of hatred for politics couple with the hardship inflicted on the African American. She will in turn make up his mind to support the husband in to politics. Michelle understood that the husband could be victorious over whites. She remembers the husband speaking to audience and little groups of community and creating a lot of impact in their lives. The husband will encourage them to use political engagement through their votes. At this period in time, newspapers and magazines had elevated Barack Obama and encourage him to run for office. Yet it was still difficult for Michelle Obama to believe that the American could one day solicit the husband for any political post.

Throughout the campaign, I’d asked myself over and over whether America was really ready to elect a black president, whether the country was in a strong enough places to see beyond race and move past prejudice. (275)

Michelle says as the husband’s political career develops and gain grounds in the United States of America, so many Americans stood against but did not in any way discourage the husbands focus. She insists on the fact that the husband had a remarkable ability to break any political opponent without a lot of effort even though she tells us that the husband was treated as a weakling by his opponents when he wanted a seat at the United

States congress house of representatives. Barack Obama could not be present during this election because the first daughter got a severe ear infection while they were on a vacation. This made so many American politicians to think that the absent of Obama in the voting exercise was intentional. A local newspaper called anyone who had missed this vote as “gutless sheep.” Even the democrat accused Barack Obama of using his child as an excuse not to go work. Michelle immediately bounces back to the genesis of the husband’s presidential struggles with Hilary Clinton during the primaries. Hillary Rodham Clinton (1947-) helped define the role of the modern political spouse and was one of the most accomplished first ladies in American history.

A trained lawyer, she built a thriving career in the public and private sector, which she balanced with family life following her 1975 marriage to Bill Clinton. She was one of her husband’s closest advisors throughout his political career, which culminated in his election as president in 1992. As first lady, she focused on her lifelong interest in children’s issues and health care. The Clintons faced a series of personal and political crises while in the White House, during which the often-polarizing Hillary was subject to intense scrutiny and criticism. In 2000, she won a seat in the U.S. Senate, becoming the first lady to win elected office. Undoubted with all these political experienced Hilary Clinton was without doubt the favoured candidate of the democrats over Barack Obama who was barely making a name in the American politics.

“...Hilary Clinton was a serious and formidable opponent. In poll after poll she held a commanding lead among the country’s potential democratic primary voters, with Barack logging ten or twenty points behind, and Edwards sitting a few points behind Barack. Democratic voters knew the Clintons, and they were hungry for a win. Far fewer people could even pronounce my husband’s name.” (283)

She starts to imagine the tedious task that lie ahead of her and the husband if finally, they win in the presidential election. But she comes back to the primary presenting the husband’s ultimately the 2008 Democratic Party primaries reflected a David vs Goliath contest. On one side you had David [Obama] and on the other you had Goliath [Clinton]. One of the core strengths of Obama’s campaign was its structure. The reason for such strength lay in the team assembled by Obama. Clinton has selected lobbyist insider Mark Penn, the man responsible for being Clinton’s candidacy on experience. Barack Obama chose political professionals, professionals who were committed to progressive values, not the “... politics

of anything goes” [Obama, 2004]. By having such renowned political strategists as David Plouffe.

In early November 2008, American politics underwent a historic change. A change that will be remembered as the year an African American was first elected President of the United States of America. From a country that revered established political zeitgeists such as the Kennedys and the Clintons, the arrival of Barack Hussein Obama signalled a change in not only American politics but also in American voting patterns. The campaign that Obama ran in 2008, powered by ‘hope’ in the lead up to the Presidential election is to be considered as nothing less than spectacular. Obama was to win the Presidency with the largest margin of victory of any Democratic candidate in history. His victory signalled a cultural and political shift similar to Regan’s landslide victory in 1980, which had been near inconceivable four years before (Nagourney, 2008). In 2004, few Americans had ever heard of Obama, let alone considered voting for him.

This was not the first case in US history of a so called ‘outsider’ becoming President, for the young and catholic John F Kennedy had beaten Richard Nixon in the 1960 Presidential election. However, Obama’s African American descent in a country that only saw the Civil Rights movement achieve equality in the 1960s and 1970s, paired with his limited experience of national politics made his election more remarkable. The prevalent belief that Hilary Clinton would head the Democrat’s bid for presidency in 2004 further emphasizes the unforeseen nature of Obama’s victory, and makes the question of what happened in those four years that transformed Obama from an unknown to President of the United States even more salient. Obama was ‘new’, Obama was ‘different’ and Obama was ‘attractive’ which made it seemingly effortless to build a powerful brand around him. On the face of it thesis true, as the campaign was able to use the Obama brand to surge in to not only the United States but the world’s consciousness.

Barack Obama’s campaign was able to install the idea that everyone is include, and the movement is actually a conversation to which everybody is invited. Obama’s campaign team were thus able to create a new type of presidential identity by taking advantage of social medial resources available to them. This is where the Obama campaign were able to be strategic and smart, constantly making sure their message of change was being heard where people were already assembled. On the surface, the fact that over the course of four years Barack Obama was to go from State Senate to President of the United States is a tremendous achievement. In 2004 Obama was just an obscure State Senator, barely a “...blip...” on

America's political radar (Lister, 2008). Yet on the 4th of November 2008, Obama was declared the forty-fourth president of the United States. This signalled a victory of hope over fear, and a "...new beginning for the country and the world..." (Plouffe, 2009: pp 374). Over the course of this analysis, the case in how Obama was able to accomplish this tremendous achievement has been addressed. By using Obama 2004 Keynote Address as the starting point, one was able to gain an understanding of how Obama emerged onto the political scene, drawing light on why Obama would later decide to run for President. However, it is through the analysis of how Obama was able to overcome Clinton that we are able to gain an understanding of the strength of Obama.

Throughout the democratic primary Obama went from strength to strength. Clinton was the obvious favourite but the relatively unknown Obama employed strong campaigning techniques which saw a heavy reliance on the internet and social media to project his message on to a younger and more diverse voting public. In just three years his campaign raised \$750 million from over three million contributors. This large figure from a relatively unknown senator from Illinois highlights the Obama effect and the extent of his reach to a wider population. Instead of letting his relative political infancy blight his brand, Obama was also able to use his position as the new candidate to his advantage. As Reagan had once underestimated Kennedy's "youth and inexperience", Obama through his message of "hope" and strong drive for social change was able to brand himself as the candidate to back. Just as he hadn't come from an old Democratic dynasty, his position as the new candidate gave him a credible edge as the man needed to put America back on track. Obama was the clean-break candidate. The efficiency with which he ran his campaign, the timing of the economic crisis and the lack of a strong Republican opponent meant that with hope on his side, Obama was able to sweep into victory

Just like Michelle, Barack Obama tells us how he decided to start his political ambition as a community organiser chapter 7. His determination to change the situation of things in America and the conception whites has about the blacks.

Change in the congress, compliant and corrupt. Change in the mood of the country, Manic and self-absorbed. Change won't come from the top, I would say. Change will come from a mobilised grass root. That's what I will do, I will organize black folks in the grass roots for change. [54]

In the novel "Dreams from my father" we realised that Obama is full of political ideas and determined to implement change in the community. He is very positive and does not give up

in any of his actions he takes instead he tries to make a lot people believe in his political projects. After so much impact in Chicago, Obama's parents finally move to a new location which is Hawaii. Obama is surprise when he gets to the city of Hawaii that the city has a high rate of slavery. It happens that the city happens to be a place where there is a lot of migrants who came to work in plantations and suddenly lived together freely with each other no distinction and discrimination. Obama suddenly has to use this community as a means to step up his political ambitions again.

According to Barack Obama, the wealth of the black bourgeoisie is too inconsequential for this class to wield any political power, the role of Negro politicians has been restricted to attempting to satisfy the demands of Negro voters while acting as the servants of the political machines supported by the propertied classes in the white community. When the Negro enjoyed the right of suffrage during the Reconstruction period, the Negro political leaders were a part of the Republican Party machine supported by northern industrial capitalism. The state constitutions which the Negro leaders helped to draw up embodied middle class interests and ideals. With the exception of a few political leaders who were concerned with making land available for the freedmen, the Negroes' political leaders, many of whom belonged to the class of Negroes who were free before the Civil War, were interested primarily in securing civil and political rights for the freedmen. After the disfranchisement of the Negro, the Republican Party continued to maintain a mere skeleton of an organization in most of the States. In these organizations, which played no real role in local political struggles, Negro politicians continued to have influence.

Although the Republican Party organizations did not have much influence locally except in the matter of federal appointments, they were important in the Republican National Conventions where candidates were nominated for the presidency and vice-presidency of the United States. A candidate who could be sure of the support of delegates to the Republican National Convention would have a good chance of securing the nomination. The only rewards that Negroes received for their support of the Republican Party were a federal appointments that went to middle class Negroes. The most important rewards included the appointment of Negroes as minister to Liberia, as recorder of deeds in the District of Columbia, and as registrar of the United States Treasury. A few Negroes were also appointed as consular agents, postmasters in small towns, and as a collector of a port until President Taft inaugurated the policy of not appointing Negroes to posts in the South because of the opposition of the southern whites.

These appointments did not affect the economic or social welfare of the Negro in American life, though Negro leaders made the appointments appear to be of great importance to the Negro. Southern Negro politicians continued to be the most important political leaders among Negroes until the mass migrations to northern cities where the masses gained once more the right to vote. When the Negro masses acquired the right to vote in northern cities, they continued for a while to give their support to the Republican Party, chiefly on sentimental grounds, though there were some good reasons for their sentimental attachment to the Republican Party. The Republican Party was the party of Lincoln; it was the party which had given them their freedom.

The Democratic Party was the party of the southern white men who had been responsible for lynching, disfranchisement, and segregation. Negroes had respect for the words of the great Negro abolitionist leader, Frederick Douglass, who once said, "The Republican Party is the ship. All else is the open sea." But gradually the Negro masses began to demand more than the appointment of middle class Negroes to honorific posts. A part of their re-education was due to the activities of the Communist Party. The Communists began to attack the religiosity and other worldly outlook of the Negro masses.

They organized Negroes in demonstrations against racial discrimination; they nominated Negroes for political office; they gave special attention to Negro workers in their attempt to capture organized labour. However, the Communists succeeded only in enlisting the support of relatively small numbers of Negroes. The small gains which the Communists were able to make resulted in an anti-Communist campaign on the part of the municipal authorities and middle class Negro leaders, especially the Negro preachers. Negroes who were active in Communist activities were subjected to special brutality on the part of the police. Because of their traditional religious background, the Negro masses were easily persuaded by Negro preachers that the irreligious Communists were using Negroes as tools.

The Communists had less influence in directing the political development of the Negroes than did the inauguration of the New Deal program during the Depression years. The situation in Chicago provides an excellent study of the change in the Negro's political Outlook. At the time of the presidential election in 1932, less than a fourth of the Negro vote as compared with three-fifths of the white vote in Chicago went to Roosevelt. But in 1933, when more than 80,000 Negroes or 34.4% of the entire Negro population were on relief, Negroes began to shift their support to the Democratic Party which utilized its strategic position to capture Negro votes. In the 1935 election we noticed that the Democratic mayor,

four fifths of the Negro vote went to the Democratic candidate; and in 1936 half of the Negroes voted for Roosevelt. From then on the Negro voters supported the Democratic candidates. Oscar DE Priest, a leading Negro Republican, had been elected to the United States Congress in 1928; but in 1934 Arthur Mitchell was elected to Congress on the Democratic ticket and thus became the first Negro Democratic congressman in the history of the United States.

The political leaders who have emerged as a consequence of the new role of Negroes in the political life of America are men and women with a purely middle class outlook. In the rough and tumble politics of American cities, it has often been Negroes associated with the underworld who have been able to organize the Negro voters and wring concessions from white society. These Negro leaders often operate behind the façade of a legitimate business, very frequently the undertaking business. The undertaking business brings them into intimate contact with the Negro masses. Among the Negro masses they gain a reputation for generosity and humanity by giving money to the poor and to churches and by enabling criminals to escape punishment. Behind the façade of their legitimate business, they carry on illegitimate businesses such as gambling, vice, and the lottery known as the "numbers." Therefore, their interest in the political machines is mainly to secure protection for their business enterprises. They often make financial contributions to both the Democratic and Republican Party machines in order to insure protection for their businesses.

Their political affiliation or leadership has no relation to the needs of the Negro masses. Except in the case of a crisis such as that created by the Depression when the Negro masses changed their political affiliation, the Negro politician may even mobilize the masses to vote against their economic interests. In his role as leader, the Negro politician attempts to accommodate the demands of the Negro masses to his personal interests which are tied up with the political machines. He may secure the appointment of a few middle class Negroes to positions in the municipal government. But when it comes to the fundamental interests of the Negro masses as regards employment, housing, and health, his position is determined by the political machine which represents the propertied classes of the white community. The position which the Negro political leader generally occupies in relation to the Negro masses and the dominant white community is shown in the following typical case. The economic and political life of this small northern city, which borders a southern State, is dominated by a large manufacturing corporation. This corporation provides employment for many Negroes as

unskilled labourers and a large proportion of the whites as professional and white collar workers.

The white political leader is an official of the large corporation. At the same time, he is the owner of several local business enterprises including a cinema and a restaurant, neither of which admits Negroes. The white political leader finances the business enterprises of the Negro political leader who owns a cinema attended solely by Negroes. When the Negroes started a campaign for their admission to the "white" cinema and the "white" restaurant, the Negro political leader discouraged them and urged them to be loyal to Negro business enterprises. On the national scene, the white political leader played the role of a friend of Negroes. He is influential in securing a contribution from the large corporation to a fund raising campaign for Negro education, of which he is a director. Moreover, he consented to become a trustee of a Negro college who receives money from the fund raising campaign. In the eyes of the black bourgeoisie of this city, some of whom send their children to the Negro college, he is a friend of the Negro. The few Negro intellectuals who have dared to express disapproval of the existing system of control over race relations have been labelled Communists.

So according to Barack Obama, the real American history of black oppression is the continual resistance against racism. The collection of his narrative form successfully manages to represent the socio-cultural environment of that time when racial discrimination was rampant in America. Through the life story of narrator, we can see the way how his experience of exclusion in white ruled society even being half-white becomes confused for his own identity. From his presidential position everything seems normal like there is no racial discrimination because such discrimination happens among marginalized people. That is the more reasons Richard Johnson in one of his articles title "Neither Black Nationalism nor Deracialization, Barack Obama's racial politics in context" The key to understanding Obama's position within the racial policy alliances typology is to understand the context of his political development.

Richard Johnson highlights a particular approach to racial politics which was typical of White and Black progressives in the Hyde Park community of Chicago where Obama began his political career. Obama's pre-presidential political career was defined not by 'colour-blinds' or 'deracialized' issues but by a set of race-conscious policies designed to tackle racism beyond de jure racial discrimination. Scholars have wrongly understood the racial dimensions of Obama's politics due to an overemphasis on election strategy. In order to

draw generalizations about the candidate's wider racial philosophy, statements over time, biography, and racial context need to be taken more seriously. Rather than depend on the dominant framework of 'racialized' or 'deracialized' campaigns, Desmond King and Rogers Smith's conceptualization of race-conscious and colour-blind policy alliances can describe more accurately a person's racial politics.

Most scholarship on Black electoral politics has been limited to two models of Black candidacy: the 'racialized' campaign model, which is said to be typical in Majority-Black constituencies and the 'deracialized' campaign model found in Majority-White constituencies. described these two models as the 'twin pillars' of Black electoral politics. Many commentators argue that the 'racialized' model involves adopting a 'militant' political style, appealing only to Black voters, and supporting policies of racial redistribution and reparation (Jeffries & Jones, 2006, p. 247). Christopher Karpowitz and colleagues (2014, p. 9) define it as 'an aggressive style of political advocacy, a predisposition toward domestic interventionist policies, and a reflexive opposition to dispositional explanations of persistent racial inequality'. Associated with the Black nationalist or Black power approach to politics, Abigail Thernstrom and Stephen Thernstrom (1997, p. 483) assert that the racialized strategy is most effective in Majority of Black districts, whose racial homogeneity has 'invited the sort of militancy that became the model for the Black legislative candidate'.

In contrast, the deracialized model's central hypothesis is that White voters will not support a Black candidate who overtly identifies with his or her Black racial identity. If Black candidates can avoid associations with their Black racial identity, then they can minimize the salience of race in the campaign and attract support on a non-racial basis. According to this view, the only way in which Black politicians win election in Majority-White jurisdictions is by purging racial content from their campaigns. Joseph McCormick and Charles Jones (1993, p. 76) define deracialization as conducting a campaign in a stylistic fashion that defuses the polarizing effects of race by avoiding explicit reference to race-specific issues, while at the same time emphasizing those issues that are perceived as racially transcendent, thus mobilizing a broad segment of the electorate for the purposes of capturing or maintaining public office'. They added that the strategy was 'needed to enhance effectively the likelihood of White electoral support in predominantly White political jurisdictions.

A deracialized strategy consists of three elements. First, a Black candidate must have a 'nonthreatening', 'mainstream' political style. Wilson, Sigel man et al (1993) asserts that Black candidates avoid the subject of race in appeals to White voters and not make any direct

appeals to Black voters. The model contends that Black candidates will focus on non-racial issues, avoiding policy matters which contain either implicit or explicit racial content (176). The writer's social position gives him no ground to see all the racial reality of society for advocating the racial discrimination. He takes help of memory and childhood experiences to explore the history form below from the perspective of common people because at the time of writing this memoir his position was also of the common man. As revealed in the autobiography he later accepts blackness as his identity and this acceptance by writing *Dreams from My Father* makes him even more authentic source to explore the history of common black people.

Obama being common man before to be president this memoir plays imperative role to show the struggling history of African American. Instead of using his perspective after change in his social status, the writer makes use of same old perspective when he was among the grassroots black population. Every personal incidents of racial suffering described in the novel shares similar vibes with black people who have suffered same kind of racial experiences. According to Michel Foucault.

“Discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized” (1961)

In case of the novel *Dreams from My Father*, the racial discourse forwarded by Obama became popular only after he climbs to the position of US president. As soon as he became powerful, his discourse generates great value among people. The title of Obama's memoir, *Dreams from My Father* finely expresses the historical perspective as the narrative involves both passing on dream from black father to a son and later the son's quest of his father's inheritance and his own racial identity throughout the novel. The multi-perspectives embedded in the memoir get highlighted further by the subtitles. It depicts Barack Obama's racial history of his Kenyan father who abandons the family and children. Obama through the text the quests for his past life, family heritage and history of father itself is the history of black people because his father is one of them, marginalized and suppressed in white dominated society. Obama's act of finding his original identity and racial heritage gives him wide ground to excavate the history of common black people and throughout the memoir his narrative contributes to show the contemporary picture of black people's lifestyle and their struggle to survive in white dominated society.

Barack Hussein Obama, as the 44th president of the United States on 4 November 2008 wants to break the boundary of identity crisis, racial discrimination as being African American. Barack Obama was elected as the first African American president. *Dream from My Father* becomes popular after his speech at the Democratic National Convention in Boston. Barack Obama's position as the president of America contributes greatly behind instant recognition of the Afro Americans potentials.

Many scholars like Michael Gledhill discuss the memoir from perspective of Obama's successful life despite being a man from the black community. His story of long struggle from the suffocated atmosphere of racism to the height being president attracts the attention of whole world. However, little has been inquired behind Obama's gradual discovery of causes for existence of the pervasive racism through generations after generations. Furthermore, there are hardly any discussions on how Obama's backward narrative into the past of his father and grandfather intends to trace out the long-lost root of black history that can answer his quest for his own original identity.

While talking about Obama's autobiography, it tries to capture and explore the cultural context of slavery and black identity in the racial and reveal the racial suffering of marginal people. In this regard, Obama's narrative itself is a written form of abstract racial culture of that time. History from below is a core subject matter of this autobiographical text *Dreams From My Father* because the writer projects time frame and experiences when he is common man and most of his narratives deal with suffering and plight of being common man. It stands with new historicism and examines with all kinds of people and subjects without having partiality. It especially "includes the voice of ordinary, voiceless, marginalized, oppressed, subaltern and common man, local history, and forgotten people history, of any society, literature, and nation. It attacks the

In the novel *Dreams from My Father*, Obama speaks of the need to find "solutions to the puzzle of being a black man". His autobiography offers one such solution by translating the search for racial belonging and ancestral roots into a call for community. He writes about his commitment to civil rights work and social engagement in words reminiscent of Du Bois. This commitment is central in the history of African American thought. It is voiced in Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream," which includes a line that Obama evoked in his speech at the Ebenezer Baptist Church and his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention in 2008: "We cannot walk alone". In the "Great Need" speech, Obama further spoke of "King's vision of a beloved community" and called for renewed efforts to establish

this community. In *Dreams from My Father*, this vision and the pledge to contribute to its realization begins with Obama's work as a community organizer in the impoverished South Side of Chicago. Upon leaving for Chicago, he observes. Whatever my father might say, he knew it was too late to ever truly claim Africa as my home. And if I had come to understand myself as a black American, and was understood as such, that understanding remained unanchored to place. What I needed was a community, a place where I could put down stakes and test my commitments.

As Barack develops his ideas of what a community organizer does, he also starts to develop his idea of what a community is and how one forms. He makes it clear that communities don't just arise out of nowhere; rather, they form because people put in the work, together, for a common cause. Not being able to find a job as a community organizer impresses upon Barack how difficult this work might end up being, and it tests how he thinks of himself especially since he takes a high-paying job that isn't advancing his values. Being the only research assistant who is Black is a point of shame in part because Barack is made to feel again as though he is the new kid at Punahou. The support of the secretaries might make this even worse, especially since they don't approve of his desired life path he may feel as though he is letting Black people down by not trying to climb the corporate ladder and increase Black representation in high-level positions.

His reaction to David's death, meanwhile, impresses upon him that he's totally cut off from half of his family. It's clearly a big thing for him that he feels no grief, and he sees this as a result of his estrangement. Once again, Marty shows that he understands the necessity of community, which is why he tells Barack to throw himself into life outside of work. For Barack, though, he discovers that sharing stories and working so closely with people in Chicago helps him create a community for himself without even having to look outside of work. As he gets a sense of how tragic the lives of some people have been, it becomes easier for him to share some of his own tragedies some of which share similarities to these stories (Lolo, for instance, turned to alcohol). Barack's altercation with Ruby over the contacts shows how difficult it is to eliminate internalized racism even for activists and organizers devoted to helping free Black people from the devastating effects of white supremacy, some vestiges of white supremacy (such as a preference for blue eyes) persist. Even though Barack is right to suggest that Ruby doesn't need to wear contacts to be beautiful, he also recognizes in this moment that he's being insensitive. By making Ruby feel ashamed about her insecurity, he is blaming her for a society wide issue and distracting from the bigger work at hand.

Here, the author presents himself as a community organizer in Chicago which really deals with the complex problems. These days are well covered in this book. He gives up successful job in New York to work on the streets. It is his first break through as he seems desired to help others, especially poor blacks who had been fighting for fair housing and educational opportunities. His tireless efforts are observed to motivate and encourage the communities. He comes to know from first-hand experience shows hard it is to make progress while struggle against the dead weight of poverty. He knows how many black young people have fallen a victim to despondency in the blind alley. It is in fact his platform from which he rests on to do enormous things. These efforts shape his character all along the way. He faces numerous barriers on his way to gain influence. This part of life gives him a chance to solidify his political views also. Still, he finds himself incomplete. He writes, "My identity might begin with the fact of my race but it didn't". He finds many people around him with same ideas as him, the only difference was that unlike Barack, they knew about their black heritage because they were grown up in the face of hardships and trials. His life in Chicago as community organizer; still it is a spell bound reading.

However, Obama in his novel urged blacks to make a religion of our determination to spend our meagre income so far as possible only in such a way as will bring us employment consideration and opportunity, as he mentioned in his novel and during his campaign to become senator. He however noted that the number of black Americans was twice as large as the Sweden. It constituted a mighty economic force when it has vision enough to use its strength. Negroes and their talents must be Use in their community and to foster Negro newspapers and journals, Negro colleges, Negro literature and art, and Negro business and organisations. The talent and skills of the educated and capable black man would save the race. "We believe," said Barack Obama that the first and greatest step toward the settlement of the present friction between the faces of lies in the correction of immorality, crime, and laziness among blacks themselves which still remains a heritage from slavery. Another Academy member, the brilliant linguist and classical scholar, W. S. Scarborough, took a slightly different position. He agreed with Crummell and DuBois about the need for manual training but saw it mainly as a means of avoiding idleness among the masses. The educated Negro will help form classes of society where culture and refinement draw the line classes made up of an aristocracy of intelligence and character that protects the masses from their foes from without and from their own folly and unrighteousness which include the creation of an integrated talented tenth, in which Negroes participated as individuals rather than as race

representatives. Educated men of both races, who saw the higher ideals above the pettiness of racial discord, would settle the race question. He was particularly concerned with the younger blacks and his aspiration level.

Education

Just like other female black American writer, Michelle Obama describes herself as a writer with a racial and gender identity. Comparing herself to writers like Tonny Morrison who referred to herself as black woman novelist. In reality, they are intentionally referring to their ethnicity as African Americans, yet it also means that they had publicly chosen an identity. In other words, they have decided to be blacks. In this sense, Michelle Obama's way of reasoning goes beyond the skin colour to refer to a way of seeing the world. The important idea at the basis of the black American is that every black maintained that blacks should properly go to school and given important jobs, so that they could, by their own efforts, make their lives personally rewording. In other words, Michelle Obama wants the blacks to know that once an individual achieved legal and educational skills, they will be able to manage and transform their own lives for the better.

Raised in a very segregated environment, with an emphasis on education, both Michelle and her brother learned to read at home by age four thanks to the greater effort of Marian Robinson who took it upon herself to educate her children in all possible means. Both skipped the second grade. By the sixth grade, Michelle Obama was taking classes in her school's gifted program, where she learned French and completed accelerated courses in biology with excellent grade. Michelle went on to attend Whitney M. Young Magnet High School, the city's first magnet high school for gifted children, where, among other activities, she served as the student government treasurer. In 1981, she graduated from the school as class salutatorian. Following in her older brother's footsteps, Michelle attended Princeton University, graduating in 1985 with a B.A. in Sociology. She went on to study law at Harvard Law School, where she took part in demonstrations calling for the enrolment and hiring of more minority students [African American] and professors. She was awarded J.D. in 1988.

Bearing in mind that blacks were traded like commodities from one slave owner to the other in America, Michelle Obama's mother took it upon her to educate her children. She makes it clear to the daughter tracing their origins back from the period of slavery and slave trade. Michelle parents have understood the importance of education in the American society. Michelle parents knew that the best way to combat African American social injustice could

only be through education. The parent standard of living has been compared to the second class citizens in America by blacks. The father was a city employee even though Michelle says that the whole of his father life time had essentially been dedicated in to service as a democratic precinct captain but was never promoted despite his hard work. The mother on her part was very influential in the community she was more of an educationist. She gave hopes to so many African Americans who looked the whites as superior in all works of life. Michelle makes us to understanding her novel that the parents especially the mother was very persuasive as far as their education is concerned.

The mother will also make them to understand that their liberty could only come to the end if they get themselves integrated in to education. Michelle starts school and he is very excited and eager to do extremely well in her studies. She explains that the mother pushful attitudes are enough for her to succeed in school. "I like school right away" even though was full of whites, these whites did not in any way influence the mind-set of the Michelle while in school rather she took it as a challenge to work so hard and dominate the whites who most often under looked them, discriminated them upon and graded them as slaves who doesn't deserve anything better. This attitude will rather encourage Michelle to work harder in school. Michelle makes us to understand that her wonderful performance in school led her to attend Whitney M. Young High School in Chicago along with other white students whom at one moment discriminated her upon. The noticed a lot of commitment in Michelle as far as her studies is concerned. She suddenly appeared to be outstanding and very intelligent to many.

Michelle gets into the University of Princeton. During her stay in the University, Michelle will rather multiple her efforts in ameliorating her results higher and getting herself involved in school activities. Michelle's outstanding performance in the University made her to gain a place in the student's affairs promoting her to the post of treasurer and the National Honour Society. For much of her experience gotten in America as a black, she has kept herself in a rigid track. Everything about her was to create an impact in her immediate environment [Chicago] and doing what is needed to attend success "At Princeton, it seemed the only thing I needed to be vigilant about was my studies" she became a focal point to the few African American students who were in Princeton's University.

"Czerny was a smart and a beautiful black woman, barely thirty years old, a swift moving and lively new Yorker who wore flared jeans and wedge sandals and seemed to be having four or five ideas at once."

Michelle Obama's senior year thesis at Princeton University, obtained from the campaign by Politico, shows a document written by a young woman grappling with a society in which a black Princeton alumnus might only be allowed to remain "on the periphery "My experiences at Princeton have made me far more aware of my 'blackness' and the situation faced by so many African American than ever before," the future Mrs. Barack Obama wrote in her thesis introduction.

"I have found that at Princeton, no matter how liberal and open-minded some of my white professors and classmates try to be toward me, I sometimes feel like a visitor on campus; as if I really don't belong. Regardless of the circumstances under which I interact with whites at Princeton, it often seems as if, to them, I will always be black first and a student second." (87)

The thesis, titled "Princeton-Educated Blacks and the Black Community" and written under her maiden name, Michelle La Vaughn Robinson, in 1985, has been the subject of much conjecture on the blogosphere and elsewhere in recent weeks, as it has been "temporarily withdrawn" from Princeton's library until after this year's presidential election in November. Some of the material has been written about previously, however, including a story last year in the Newark Star Ledger.

Obama writes that the path she chose by attending Princeton would likely lead to her "further integration and/or assimilation into a white cultural and social structure that will only allow me to remain on the periphery of society; never becoming a full participant." During a presidential contest in which the term "transparency" has been frequently bandied about, candidates have buried a number of potentially revealing documents and papers. In Hillary Rodham Clinton's case, there's been a clamouring for tax records, White House memos and other material the candidate's team has chosen to keep from release. The 96-page Princeton thesis, restricted from release by the school's Mudd Library, has also been the subject of recent scrutiny.

The Obama campaign, however, quickly responded to a request for the thesis by Politico. The thesis offers several fascinating insights into the mind of Michelle Obama, who has been a passionate advocate of her husband's presidential aspirations and who has made several controversial statements, including this week's remark, "For the first time in my adult lifetime, I am really proud of my country." That comment has fuelled debate on countless blogs, radio, journals, newspapers, talk shows and cable news for days on end, causing her to explain the statement in greater detail. The 1985 thesis provides a trove of Michelle Obama's

thoughts as a young woman, with many of the paper's statements describing the student's world as seen through a race-based prism. "In defining the concept of identification or the ability to identify with the black community," the Princeton student wrote, "I based my definition on the premise that there is a distinctive black culture very different from white culture." Other thesis statements specifically pointed to what was seen by the future Mrs. Obama as racially insensitive practices in a university system populated with mostly Caucasian educators and students: "Predominately white universities like Princeton are socially and academically designed to cater to the needs of the white students comprising the bulk of their enrolments.

To illustrate the latter statement, she pointed out that Princeton (at the time) had only five black tenured professors on its faculty, and its "Afro-American studies" program "is one of the smallest and most understaffed departments in the university." In addition, she said only one major university-recognized group on campus was "designed specifically for the intellectual and social interests of blacks and other third world students. Her findings also stressed that Princeton was infamous for being racially the most conservative of the Ivy League universities. Perhaps one of the most germane subjects approached in the thesis is a section in which she conveyed views about political relations between black and white communities. She quotes the work of sociologists James Conyers and Walter Wallace, who discussed "integration of black official(s) into various aspects of politics" and notes "problems which face these black officials who must persuade the white community that they are above issues of race and that they are representing all people and not just black people," as opposed to creating "two separate social structures."

The future Mrs. Barack Obama sent an 18-question survey to a sampling of 400 black Princeton graduates, requesting the respondents define the amount of time and "comfort" level spent interacting with blacks and whites before they attended the school, as well as during and after their University years. Other questions dealt with their individual religious beliefs, living arrangements, careers, role models, economic status, and thoughts about lower class blacks. In addition, those surveyed were asked to choose whether they were more in line with a "separationist and/or pluralist" viewpoint or an "integrationist and/or assimilationist" ideology. Just fewer than 90 alums responded to the questionnaires (for a response rate of approximately 22 percent) and the conclusions were not what she expected. Despite the high degree of identification with whites as a result of the educational and occupational path that

black Princeton alumni follow, the alumni would still maintain a certain level of identification with the black community.

In a socialist stand point of Michelle Obama during her stay in the Princeton University, blacks were marginalized to the highest level. She decried this marginalization and segregation in her thesis. Even in her novel Michelle Obama says that,

“still, it was impossible to be black kid at a mostly white school and not feel the shadow of affirmative action. You could almost read the scrutiny in the gaze of certain students and even some professors, as if they wanted to say I know why you are her These moments could be demoralizing, even if I am sure I just imagining some of it”. (p85)

Michelle finished school and will find herself so active in the American society. She is very nervous in her new job she had acquired simply because her salary is below expectations compared to what she used to earn in the city hall. Michelle is once more taken to her days back in Princeton University where the black American were looked upon as sub human who knows nothing and has absolutely nothing to offer. She thinks that the low salary comes as a result of her not being a white person. Thus, Michelle’s memoir recorded an extraordinary sell just at the end of 2018. People took a lot of interest in her novel due to her choices of words, her thematic concerned which she raises in the novel. Michelle Obama describes how black Americans have gone through the hardship of racism in America. She therefore believes that her novel will go a long way to speak to speak out this bad practice that has eaten deep in the American society.

In “Dreams from my Father” Obama makes us to understand that, Over the past decade, students of African descent have gone through struggle to get access to the mainstream of American education. As a tool used in the new world to integrate a person to a civilized society, education has been a struggle for African American students until today. The underachievement of African American students in schools constitutes a topic of debates among federal, state, local legislatures to the smallest American households. Massive research has been conducted to find the causes and simultaneously the remedies to the problem. A careful analysis of research leads us to believe that the legacy of slavery might have its fingerprint in the struggle and achievement of African American students in schools. Although the specific cause of failure is still unknown, there are some indicators that direct this writing. To epitomize previous findings about the cause and effect, motivation to achieve is the core reasons for African American students’ failure. The lack of motivation can only

happen if there was an air of discouragement in their past. To remedy the cause of motivation, a historical analysis of African American students would benefit the research for long and lasting solutions. Thus, the study of the legacy of slavery is a good starting point to learn how students of African descent come to their current situation.

In Hawaii, there was more racial mixing than anywhere else in the US, Barack as a youngster learned through many occasions that he was a black person in essentially a White man's world. He was one of the only two black people in the class. His confusion and resentment at school can be sensed in his memoir where he was known as Barry. It is painful that the other kids used to run their hands through his tight curls give him high fives and treated him like a cool street rapper. He argues with himself almost on every page. The recognition of his ultimately privileged position and understanding for others is evident on each page. He believes in the power of words. 'If I could find the right words, things would change', he says and this was proved in the later years (2004) when he was chosen a key note speaker in a democratic convention. He tries to convince how philanthropy and selflessness are the most practical solutions to the individual, national and international miseries. The memoir also tells about his life as student, where he used to live in a flat, eating soup from a can and even sleeping rough in New York.

He also writes on an attitude that he learnt on the subject of 'Respect'. He says, "And something else, too, something nobody talked about a way of being together when the game was tight and the sweat broke and the best players stopped worrying about their points and the worst players got swept up in the moment and the score only mattered because that's how you sustained the trance. In the middle of which you might make a move or a pass that surprised even you, so that even the guy guarding you had to smile, as if to say, 'Damn'..." His life journey takes him to Columbia University but still he finds himself at a loose end. Then a new turn comes up in his life that changes everything and changes nothing, the call from her aunt from Kenya, "Barry, your father is dead". (1)

It was his intense desire to know about place of blacks in America that drives him to Chicago the door seems to open for those who want to apply themselves through learning and education. It is a beautifully written memoir of a young man who struggles to come to term with his heritage as a child of bi-racial parents. His thoughts on black culture and struggle to define blackness certainly demands appreciation. The memoir really makes feel the readers by the fact that this young writer has indeed graduated from the University of life as well as Harvard Law School. The people in the book have been treated with kindness and

understanding and every experience is framed in such a perceptive way that never loses its sympathy for the people involved. The book depicts the generosity of perception that is rarely seen in the young people in today's world. Like every reading, the book certainly carries a few drawbacks. At times, there have been unnecessary details given like. During this time, he gets a chance to meet her Kenyan sister Auma, who tells her some unknown details about his father, 'quality to make everybody to think that he had everything, even when he had nothing.' After several years, he decided to go back to Law School.

CHAPTER FOUR

AUTHORS' VISION

In this chapter, we focus on Michelle and Obama's visions projected in their respective memoirs. The ultimate aim of bringing racism to the lamplight and giving hopes to the blacks who desperately have no hope again. Here, we try to find out from their different novels the kind of society they want America to be and their contribution to better the situation. As the only Black First Lady of the United States and the only black president till date, Michelle and Obama are historic figures in America. They represent the middle-aged group of Blacks whose adolescent years were shaped by the height of the civil rights movement and the end of segregation. Therefore, they come from a generation of Black people whose views on society were focused on gaining equality, fighting for justice, and being recognized for their contribution to the community.

To the authors, the 20th century was a period of drastic changes in the status of black culture in America. Where the belief that literature had mission to convey personal, social and political reality. This was mainly achieved through the literature of the New Negro Renaissance, where the black genius authors such as Alain Locke, W.E.B Du Bois, and Langston Hughes had significantly depicted the African Americans' quest for racial and cultural uplifting. Although these authors had different philosophical strategies to search for place within the dominant culture and racial improvement, but they artistically merged to distort the stereotypes of the "old Negro" into strong racial pride of the New Negro" The 1920s sparked a new beginning for the black arts and movements.

The New Negro Movement was artistic philosophy which was evoked by the African American author, professor, and philosopher Alain Leroy Locke (September 13, 1885 – June 9, 1954) who had an ultimate contribution for the blossoming of black racial pride. In the period 1925, Locke published his masterpiece work an anthology called "The New Negro: An Interpretation" which includes works of major black samples, such as Langston Hughes, Mackey and Countee Cullen. In the work of Michael D. Thompson: The New Negro Movement, (1999, p 92) claims that Locke's work crystalizes the purpose of the Negro Renaissance which fostered the positive self –image, free expression "cultural democracy", and racial pride. Locke declares in his work "life is seizing its first chances for group

expression and self-determinations”, he stimulated the black artists to be more innovative and creative.

The historian Charles Johnson in Holmes characterized Alain Locke as the “Dean” of new black generation of the 1920’s. He was the one who encouraged the black writers, artists for the self-definition, and spiritual emancipation through arts, fiction, and poetry. Furthermore, his philosophical strategies for the racial uplifting made him an important African American intellectual between the great W. E. B. Du Bois and Martin Luther King (Ibid. 61). He had other major contributions in publishing journals such as *Opportunity* - journal of Negro Life- and *Survey Graphic* which contains hundreds of pages such as “The Making of Harlem” and “Black Workers and City.” Locke edited a special issue of the later publication which was devoted to the Harlem Renaissance to flourish the African the scholars Cary D Winte and Paul Finkelman *Encyclopaedia of the Harlem Renaissance*, (2005) defines William Edward Burghart Du Bois (1868-1963) as a formative leader of the Harlem Renaissance in the early twentieth century. He is the founder of NAACP which was devoted to achieve the equal rights, and he was the editor of the NAACP’s journal “Crisis”1934 Du Bois published his best selected articles and editions about what blacks should fight for and what they could reach – aspirations- for future. He had belief that Black elites were responsible for the advancement of their race and culture, therefore, he called the most competent and outstanding minority of blacks “Talented Tenth”¹⁰ they believed that through their examples these individuals would help blacks to find suitable place in America. Hence, the writers, poets, and other artists in the Talented Tenth should focus not on their personal views and expressions but on the advancement of blacks as whole “racial power” (Ibid 2005).

Du Bois had significant impacts on race construction; he was a talented writer who sharpened the issue of the current problem the “Color Line”. He published his influential book: *The Souls of Black Folks* 1913a collection of essays and stories about the psychological and social experiences. The latter are concerned with Blacks who are living in dilemma - Double Consciousness or “the sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of other’s. In other words, Dubois brought pragmatic interpretations about Blacks’ inner struggles, whether to abandon the African culture and embrace the American one, Dubois asserted on the striving inner to be black and act as white, his analysis raised the attention of Blacks “self-conscious” (Ibid.). Hence, Du Bois’ clear response to the question: what does the African American wants. He simply insisted on the black men or women to be both Negro and

American without being split in between in order to secure the opportunity of self-development. This chapter thus reconstruct the black American image.

Reconstructing the African American Identity

American modern histories began with looting and extermination of the Native Americans and proceed to the history of slavery (Barker, 2000: 256). Almost of the slaves are the black people from Africa who are brought by the whites to America. After the abolition of the slavery with in the legitimate of emancipation proclamation by the President Abraham Lincoln on first January 1863, blacks and their descendant settled and became the American citizens. Although the slavery had been abolished, as the citizens of America the blacks did not get their right as it should be. They still get unfair treatment, arbitrarily, and abuse by white people caused their past as slave. Their background as the slaves make them always stereotyped and labelled as an inferior race. The white always see their self as the superior race which has the right to control the inferior race. As in applying the legislation that separated between whites and blacks called as the Jim Crow laws. So, even though the slavery had been abolished, but the whites are always trying to maintain their dominance against the inferior races, especially black, while black are always doing resistance to be separated from white domination and reconstruct that image of theirs which has been destroyed for centuries.

The black African American resistance of racism grows by the times. The resistance toward racism in the early 20th century is in form of anti-racism campaign and anti-racism law making in The United States. The climax of anti-racism is in 1960th by the leading of Martin Luther King Jr, who find the equality right for the blacks. Finally, the United Nation Court decided to abolish all forms of racial discrimination based on Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on December 21th 1965. Nowadays, the pressure against the blacks on racism and discrimination is being the attention of the black intellectuals that lead to protest against racial discrimination by blacks. The protest action is done in various ways as a form of awareness of the right which dominated and controlled by whites. The protest is in doing both individuals and organizations aiming achieve freedom from the white domination and recognized as human beings with the same rights as other human (Tallack, 1991: 253).

Michelle and Obama are both determined to reconstruct their image away from the one the whites have attributed to them as African Americans. Before then, we all know that whites had a bad image of black people. They were seen by whites as half human, stupid, childlike

creatures, people whose social class is naturally is law. It was therefore a very difficult job for Michelle and the husband to construct their image and that of the African American in general, for racist who looks down upon blacks to believe in a certain equality between the blacks and the whites. They are not in any moment in life discourage because they are blacks in fact, in *“Dreams from my father”*, Barack Obama expresses the notion of acceptance of his roots this is seen through his multiples voyage to Kenya and in some other African countries. He clearly identifies himself as a black man but not ready to let any opportunity passed him by because he is a black

Yes, I'd seen weakness in other men, Gramps and his disappointment, Lolo and compromise. But these men have become object lessons for me, men I might love but never emulate, white men and brown men, son of Africa, that I'd parked all the attributes I sought in myself, the attributes of Martin and Malcolm, Dubois and Mandela. And if later I saw that the black men I knew, Frank or Ray or Will or Rafiq fell short of such a lofty standard, if I have learned to respect these men for the struggle they went through, recognising them as my own, my father's voice had nevertheless remained untainted, inspiring, rebuking, granting or withholding approval. You do not work hard enough, Barry. You help in your people's struggle. Wake up, black man. (220)

Obama and the wife are determined to make all the African American believe in their potentials. They try to encourage every black American to brave the odds of racism imposed on them. However, Obama makes every black to feel happy with his origins just him who feels so comfortable talking about issues of race and it origin to people.

Walking Johnnie and me to the door, Asante asked me about my name, and I told him
 And I told him about my background. “I thought so” Asante smiled “you know
 That's where I went for my first trip to the continent. Kenya. Fifteen years ago, but
 I remember that trip like it was yesterday. Change my life forever. The people were
 So welcoming. And the land, I'd never seen anything so beautiful. It really felt like
 I had come home.” his face glowed with the memories. (259)

In all dimension, Obama wants to construct a black identity that doesn't have any regret of being black or mollato. In his novel, he makes us to understand that, they are focus and determine to continue the good job of great Africans leaders who fought tirelessly to see that the dignity of the black American is duly taken in to consideration like any other human being. He tells us how Martin Luther King, Jr. in (1929-1986) was the key leader of the Civil Right Movement. Who brought tremendous changes in the life of the Africans Americans

through his speeches, marches, and protests. His education gave him the tool to find out pragmatic solutions and to connect preaching with activism in order to develop the philosophy of “integration” as a challenge to the social injustice of Jim Crow Law. The latter banned Blacks from entering with the Whites to the same schools, restaurants and other public services, Therefore, Dr King had to find out ways for desegregation the with the whites “integration. “Dr, King believed that the weapon of the nonviolent protest was the ultimate solution. (Lydia, Bjornlund, 2013. 242)

Obama at this time wants to awaken the sleeping minds of the African American who are mentally dominated by the whites.

They’ll train you to want what you don’t need. They’ll train you to manipulate words so they don’t mean anything anymore. They’ll train you to forget what it is that you already know. They’ll train you so good, you’ll start believing what they tell you about equal opportunity and the American way and all that shit. They’ll give you a corner office and invite you to fancy dinners, and tell you you’re a credit to your race. Until you want to actually start running things, and then they’ll yank on your chain and let you know that you may be a well-trained, well paid nigger, but you’re a nigger just the same.” (13)

Barack Obama at this point has noticed that, it was still difficult for some blacks to publicly defend themselves. He is therefore calling on them to be courageous enough and not to be lure in to ridiculous activities or jobs that doesn’t honour the African American.

While on the other side, Michelle and the mother appears in the text as the African American women who has refused to accept the treatments that other African American went through. Michelle is greatly influenced by the mother spirit who knew so well that in other to reconstruct our identity as a black, we need to empowered ourselves with education. To her many African American has fought for black’s liberation and it was absurd to Michelle to accept or see black marginalisation in the 21st century. To her, Influential men and women like the father whom she said suffered discrimination and segregation.

If there were American Dream story, Dandy, who arrived Chicago in the early 1930s, would have found a good job and pathway to college. But the reality was far different. Jobs were hard to come by, limited at least somewhat by the fact that managers at some of the big factories in Chicago regularly hired Europeans immigrants over the African Americans workers. (38)

Michelle and Barack Obama in their respective novels under study want us to understand that, the poor treatment, and the discriminative aspect that existed between the blacks and the whites had a serious positive impact in the life of the African American. Barack Obama tells us that, the blacks have learned to act and to believe in the possibility that he can change his conditions. To Obama this has been an important step towards black identity reconstruction. Obama at this point feels like blacks are still ignorant of their true potentials. Harper Lee, in her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, reminded her readers that all behaviours are learned ones not a matter of races or sex. She added that,

According to the white community in Maycomb, all Negroes lie, all Negroes are basically immoral beings; all Negro men are not to be Trusted around our women, an assumption one associates with minds Of their calibre. (225)

Just like Michelle and Obama, Harper Lee, in her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* reminded the white community through Atticus Finch [a white lawyer], one of the main characters that,

Some Negroes lie, some Negroes are immoral, some Negroes are Are not to be trusted around women black and white. But this is a Truth that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men. There is not a person in the court room who has never told a lie, who Has never done an immoral thing, and there is no man living who has Never looked upon a woman with desire. (226)

Both quotations above help us understand clearly that, behaviours are not supposed to be generalized thus it is therefore very wrong if they do so. Instead, blacks were victims of injustice and prejudice directed towards them by the whites who claims that blacks had extreme bad behaviours. so many blacks complained on the poor behaviours the whites put forth on them not the other way round. It was therefore very important for Obama to called back their consciences and advise them that, even though they are looked upon as inferior creatures by the whites, it was unjust and anti-constitutional to the American laws asking them to wake up and take their destiny at hand.

Politics and Nation Building in U.S.A

The United States of America is a great nation with about three hundred million inhabitants with only two political parties and to Obama this has facilitated a lot of black to

get themselves in to politics and nation building. These two main parties in America are the Democratic and the Republican parties in the congress. In this systems politics, many blacks had post of responsibilities in these respective parties thereby giving the blacks some autonomy to vote. Blacks leaders and some policymakers came together and organised themselves into associations, in bit to maintain a good numbers of blacks together to easily keep their interest in the eyes of the American political leaders. It is through this strength build by blacks that Obama and wife believe that they could easily break through the political huddles in America.

Breaking through as the first black American president and his wife as the first black first lady, saw themselves not only as the American president and first lady, but as people who had something special to give to the African American who had no hope for America. So as he is president, the high school graduation rate for African American students is at its highest point in history. Barack Obama tells us that in the 2013 to 2014 academic year, 72.5 percent of African American public high school students graduated within four years. We noticed that Obama and wife has laid more emphasis on the education because he knew it was only through education that the African American could be transform from white's complex of superiority. He tells us how many African American did not believe in him when he took he presidential move to become the 44th American president.

Throughout the campaign, I'd asked myself over and over whether
 America was really ready to elect a black president, whether the country
 Were in a strong enough places to see beyond race and move past prejudice.
 Finally, we were about to find out. (275)

Michelle and President Barack Obama on their own account and by scholarly analysis of their policies, developed a unique foreign policy. In their memoires, they both project a vision that arguably, is distinct from not only their predecessor, but future presidents as well.

To Michelle and Obama, the principal problems of blacks in America are the theme of racism which has been settled by the American constitution already. They insist on the fact that the idea of whites trying to identify people through their origin, customs, religion, and race inside the same country is condemn by the American law, calling the African American to understand that they are protected by America law. He further explains that, the U.S law prohibits discrimination based on a person's national origin, race, colour, religion, sex, disability and family status.

Three years after Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize, a time when America had already begun to weary of black demands for equality, the problem of discrimination presumably solved that the Supreme Court of the United States would get around to telling the state of Virginia that its ban on interracial marriages violated the constitution. (8)

Laws prohibiting national origin discrimination make it illegal to discriminate because of a person's birthplace, ancestry, culture or language. This simply means that people cannot be denied equal opportunity because they or their family are from another country, because they have a name or accent associated with a national origin group.

In August 28, 1963, civil rights leaders and union leaders supported the putting in place of the civil right act of 1964 that banned black's discrimination in public accommodations. They extended it to employment opportunities and labour union and the voting right Act of 1965 which extended federate rights to ensure African American political participation especially during elections.

Michelle and the husband still believed that the African American can do better than Martin Luther King Jr, Dubois and Toni Morrison. These are blacks who believed that one day the will be a positive shift in the lives of blacks living in America and Barack Obama come to fulfilled this long awaited dream. They clearly identified themselves with the African culture, fighting in their small congregations and associations to have their own liberty from the Americans. This brought to the lamplight the Black Art Movement stemmed from black artist who thought that it was very important that African American culture be defined and validated by what the four fathers saw as important to the black community.

Other association also came up such as Congress of Racial Equality [C.O.R.E] the National Council of Negro Women [N.C.N.W] and finally the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee [S.N.C.C]. these associations where actually put in place for the world to see the contributions of the African American in nation building Likewise, verbal arts can be seen as part of black cultural identity which brought a lot of development and visibility to the African American man and to Michelle Obama black American has all it takes in America to succeed. To her, the African American folk tales said a lot about the Americans. Baraka in his *journal of modern literature [1996]* said, "for black people, freedom is our aesthetic and ideology" [39].

In the memoires under study, the authors try as much as possible to exemplify one of the main themes in their work which is optimism. To the Michelle and Obama black

Americans should continuously without reserve strive for a better living condition in America without reserve. To Michelle Obama, striving implies that someone is working hard and also that they have optimism that the future can be better. Michelle says this quoting herself as a perfect example.

I spend much of my childhood listening to the sound striving.

It came the form of bad music, or at least amateur music

Coming up through the floorboards of my bedroom (1)

It should be noted that African American music has done a lot in the political and social contribution in the building of black identity in America. As far as music is concerned, Michelle believed that blacks have done a lot to its present development contrary to what so many of them thought. In its beginning, jazz was look upon by some Americans whom at one point considered the style of music [Jazz and Rag] as savage and had nothing good to learn from. This genre was given less interest thus was denigrated whereas according to many African Americas, music has done a lot in building a stable and powerful America today. According to Nicholas Payton, in “black American music and Jazz tradition” (2014)

To speak of “jazz tradition” is like to speak of “racial justice.” It not possible to have justice within the cosines of race because race was specifically designed to subjugate certain people to an underclass so that the “majority” thrives. Injustice is inherently built within the racial construct. There has never been any tradition within jazz other than to ensure black cultural expression is depicted and undervalued. (2)

In this except, Payton wants to clearly illustrate the contribution of music in the development of America. This is seen in the interest Michelle family accord to music. She tells us the almost everybody in her house could play piano but because of envy coming from some whites, she said the African American music [jazz] had no impact in the American society instead them it did more harm than good. But one can conclude without any fear and doubt that the African American culture and tradition especially the genre of music it far from noticing it impact in the United State of America.

To Obama, they have proven that, the misconception whites had of African Americans has no sense nowadays. He calls on these African Americans to openly stand for their rights and if possible publicly criticize any injustice towards them. To the authors, it is time for the African Americans to rewrite the false images whites had of them believing that they can do

better than the whites who considers themselves as second class citizens. In one of his prominent outings Barack Obama said to the African Americans that,

“I admit that American has too often been selective in its promotion of democracy. But that does not weaken your commitment, it only reinforces it. There are basic principles that are universal, there are certain truths which are self-evident and the United States of America will never waver in our efforts to stand up for the right of people everywhere to determine their own destiny.”
(2009)

Barack Obama wants to get involves as many African American in the development of America as much as he can. He wants them to understand that America is their country and the country needs their knowhow in all aspect of life. He believes it his duty impact the blacks Americans with the ability to speak out their minds and have a say in how they are governed, confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice, government is transparent and does not steal from people. He calls on the blacks not to consider these ideas as referring to American ideas but rather as human rights and that is why he thinks that it should be supported everywhere.

The authors in other words want the world to know that in America everything is possible depending on individual's ability. Gone are those days were blacks could not attend white's schools to benefit from the same knowledge, blacks were separated social amenities like libraries, supermarket and even churches which are considered as God's houses blacks were still discriminated upon.

The first lady of the United States is the matriarch of America. The matriarch is commonly viewed as domineering and powerful, but according to black feminist thought there are other implication that comes with the tittle. Patricia Hill Collins, the author of *Black Feminist Thought*, recognised a pattern of four socially constructed images of black womanhood. These four labls are mammy, who accepts her subordinations, the matriarch, who symbolizes the strong mother who emasculates her husband and lovers. The welfare mother, who is responsible for causing her own poverty and that of the black community around her. According to Patricia Hill Collins, throughout 2008 election, Michelle Obama was viewed as a matriarch “Pundits have portrayed Obama as an oversharer and a taskmaster, demeaning her husband by acknowledging his morning breath and his body odor. Upon her engagement as the first black first lady, Michelle did not in anyway give any impression to the

whites that she could not withstand the task as first lady. Instead she gave Americans the impression that she could do better than any other American first lady has done before.

“Barack said, but she also seemed to understand the stakes, leading us to believe that he’d be supportive without dwelling on his disappointment.

That morning, it hit me that we’d reached the no turning back moment.

(230)

Authors’ Vision (Egalitarian Society)

The American society has been identified to be a stumbling block to the African Americans personal development in the sense that it has against the law restricted blacks from to abilities. This is because at a point their place and role were limited to odd jobs and they considered as people who had nothing to contribute as far as the development is concerned. In fact, the Americans consider the blacks as people main to play passive role nothing else. But as far as the novels under study are concerned, we noticed that the African American literary criticism is useful here in the sense that blacks like Michelle and Obama argue that blacks should have political, economic and social rights equal to those of the whites.

According to some social critics like Mindel in *Ethnic Families* 1988 the blacks were identified to have a sharp separation in the development of capitalist society (149). In reaction to this view, Michelle believe that it was important each African American finds a comfortable job and make their lives personally rewording for themselves and the United States of America. That has been the ultimate struggle of Michelle and Obama that of making the blacks in America dream again.

I’d never been someone who dwelled on the more demoralizing parts of being African - American. I’d been raised to think positively. I’d absorbed my families Love and my parents’ commitment to seeing us succeed. I’d stood with Santita Jackson at operation pushes rallies, listening to her father call for black people to remember their pride. My purpose has always been to see past my neighbor Hood to look ahead and over come. (117)

The authors are calling on the African Americans to refuse to subscribe to the patterns of the whites and take their destiny at hand.

According to Michelle and Obama, the greatest consequences of black subordination in the 21st century are the destruction and the damaging of self esteem. To them many Africans have suffered damaging loss of self esteem to a much greater degree than any white. In this

case, Barack Obama sees the experience of African Americans as a series of change that is from totally victimised by the American society and to growing developing Africans whose consciousness allows them to have some control over their lives.

It is very important to also note that, Michelle and Obama makes the world to understand that the presence of blacks in America it not by chance rather they should be given the opportunity like any other white American to build and contribute to a powerful America. The ideologies of both writers are similarly opposed to racist activities which according to them it is the main caused of most African American misery and that are why Michelle and the husband will fight racism in their works with no reservation. All through their memoires, they have proven to the Americans and the whites in general that blacks are not dull or idiots but rather needed just an equal platform to showcase their knowhow. Here, Michelle and Obama have offered themselves to the world as a mirror to the injustice inflicted to the blacks. “what have we ever done to be treated so mean.”(14)

To the Michelle Obama and the husband, they believe that the presence of blacks in America is absolutely important for it development. She refuses and stand against the idea of whites always presenting themselves to the African Americans like they are not important enough in the America society.

This particular form of discrimination altered the destinies of generations of African American, including many of the men in my family limiting their income, their opportunity and eventually their aspirations. (38)

Michelle in other word take a retrospective look in Chicago where she come from. She highlights the father situation and tell us how sorrowful it was simply because he was black. In other words, Michelle Obama wish to portray her concerned and support for blacks Americans whose ultimate goal and desire is to be equal like the Americans. On like Michelle, Barack Obama stood for the representation of blacks in all works of life in America.

Michelle Obama is told by the teacher that she is not feet to be a Princeton candidate. According Michelle Obama, it is very important for United States America to rethink the status of blacks or redefining the African American person in the United State of America. Just like Michelle and Obama, the Ghanaian Anthony Appiah in one of his articles says that “I think that one must read Dubois with the knowledge of the temporality of his article, written

before the turn of the 20th century, which sought to unify the black race and respond to racism by disproving the inaccurate stereotypes about them. (2)

Anthony Appiah's statement has serious impact in writers and readers of African American literature. *In Becoming*, Michelle Obama shows that whites consider themselves more superior and important than the blacks. This is seen when she describes herself while trying to gain admission in Princeton University, how she is treated like a veritable stereotype. She tries to explain how nobody in America seems to see any effort put forth by a black. When she develops the ambition to further her studies in Princeton University, her teacher saw nothing good in her rather to discourage her. To Michelle, the action of the teacher is considered as an act of social rejection, discrimination but never the less she gave up in her dreams which were that of enrolling into the Princeton University. In this kind of situation, the authors want to encourage the African American never to doubt their potentials as they become estranged from their society.

Just like Michelle, Barack Obama wants the African Americans to know that in the contemporary American culture and even tradition, the institution of slavery has long been forgotten. He says that it is true that when we are racially identified it hurts especially when you belong to a group that is unfairly treated. Barack Obama is therefore against the doctrine of whites always trying to categorise the human world according to races hereby giving the impression that another race is more superior than the other. But, Obama and Michelle want the black Americans to understand that they are fully part of America. This is seen in the way the authors construct their characters in their various text.

How do we transform mere powers into justice? Mere sentiment into love? The answers I find in law books don't always satisfy me for every brown V. Board of education, I find a score of cases where conscience is sacrificed to expedience or greed. And yet, in the cnversation it, in the joining of voices, I find myself modestly encourage. (400)

When we take into consideration the texts under study, it is easy to conclude that Michelle and husband are realist in nature. Everything they write in their memoire is just the reflection of their social reality in America. That is, their various memoirs narrate all their struggles, childhood events till maturity. For instance, Michelle in her text depicts characters, events and even the settings in accordance with her family realities as many people sees it

My father, Fraser Robinson, worked for more than twenty years for the city

of Chicago tending boilers at a water filtration plant on the lakeshores. Even as his multiple sclerosis made it increasingly difficult for him to walk, he never missed a day of work. (176).

The statement above is linked to the author's ideology about America. In this regard, the author wants to encourage the black America to move out of that position which was reserved for the racially discriminated persons. People whose jobs were mainly physical and difficult to work. They were looked upon as people who could barely reason or could barely think anything good about the future of America thus the manual works in the factories, plantations and industries were reserved for them. In this way, Michelle in her memoir tries to disrupt racial norms and called on black Americans to take their responsibility and make America a better place for all. To her, racial rejection should not be the concern of black Americans in the twenty-first century they should concentrate on the essence of life.

The Michelle and Obama will go as far to encourage the black Americans to remember the American dream. They will insist on the fact that the American dream is a concept which incorporates a strong component, inseparable from the migratory flow including the United States of America. Michelle Obama will precise that, the husband coming to power in a larger extent took into consideration declaring during his campaign that he wanted to keep the American dream alive. Barack Obama himself is a child of the American dream and a witness of its feasibility. The concept became so widespread that any black American could feel it everywhere in America. In the idealised version of the American dream, anyone living in the United States can achieve success, through their hard work, courage and determination.

To the authors, the American Dream is viewed as a persistent heritage of the enlightenment put more emphasis on the development of the United States of America. The Dream is based on equal opportunities, opening to each and every one the possibility of belonging to this unique nation. In deed this possibility must be offered to every American, i.e. to every immigrant, since, apart from the American Indians, all US residents are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. Her parents from slave's descendants, his father coming from Kenya, Michelle and Obama are proofs that the American dream is not limited to immigrants from Europe, but can also be reached by immigrants from Africa.

Becoming is the autobiography that the American people need and must read about. Michelle Obama's story is the living example of the American Dream and leaves a powerful message of how an African American girl from a

working-class background had the privilege to attend Ivy League institutions and unexpectedly becoming the First Lady of the United States. What made Obama's autobiography interesting was that she told her own story in her own words which gave the reader a more intimate perspective on what she went through and how her early and personal life was like. (1)

Barron has focused upon American dream where she is a symbol of what is good about America. She reminds us that an African American girl from the poorer town has the potential to do and be anything. And not to simply become First Lady, which was a role forced upon her. By determination and hard work, she got to Harvard and Princeton and carved out a highly successful career in her own right. Likewise, Obama spreads a message that the hard work and a good education, even makes president of the United States. This is the American Dream.

When we read Michelle's memoir we come to realise that she is totally against the fact that African American space in the society is where blacks are taken as submissive, passive, nurturing and defined in relation to white Americans. Obama establishes her identity as the First Lady in relation to particular society, geography, temporality, politics, and different psychological aspects. Her identity has been changed when she moves from Chicago to White House. Being a woman from the black community, she encounters with the people from diverse culture. However, Obama explores her upbringing in Chicago, her career, her relationship with Barack Obama and finally her years living in the White House as First Lady. Her memoir incorporates Obama's struggles, hardships, challenges and complex circumstances that eventually transforms her as an agent of peace, justice and empowerment.

Just like the husband in the United States of America, her memoir reflects her contribution and devotion in her mission to empower the African American child from the backward community whose lives are characterized by deprivation, scarcity, illiteracy, poor infrastructure and lack of basic requirements for living. In her memoir, Obama as a major character forms multiple identity. By birth, she represents as typical African girl who gets born in a small traditional African society.

My family lived in the South shore neighbourhood of Chicago,
in a tidy brick bungalow that belonged to Robbie and her husband,
Terry. My parents rented an apartment on the second floor, while Robbie
And Terry lived on the first. (1)

Michelle Obama recounts her time growing up on the South Side of Chicago as she shares the beautiful memories of her childhood as well as some of the important things. She was an extra ordinary child, driven to do well in school. Her story begins “I spent much of my childhood listening to the sound of striving” (1). She speaks lovingly of her roots in this working class family, her parents and her brother and grandparents and how their values shaped the adult she would become. We witness the grief she experienced over the loss of her father and her continuing admiration and love for her mother who was tenacious in seeking a good education for her children. In this memoir, she is so open and honest and it feels so intimate. She speaks about the discrimination against the men in her family, about being black at Princeton, raises the issues related with black identity and women empowerment. Different critics and reviewer have their interpretation regarding *Becoming*. Howze in Women of Color Magazine claims:

Becoming is a story that focuses more on hard work and sacrifice than privilege; it grapples with the nuances of understanding identity, and it overflows with an emotional call to perseverance. The memoir is written like the words of a trusted girlfriend and less like sound bites of a public figure handing down golden nuggets of advice. (42-44)

In his article, Howze has focused Michelle’s hard work and sacrifice in order to establish her distinct identity. As a career woman, this memoir is relatable because of its vulnerability. So, Michelle does not only talk about her personal struggle rather incorporates the entire women from black community. Despite the racial discrimination, she starts an initiative for children. Which helps spark her children’s health initiative, called Let’s Move! She gets large chain companies to promise to cut the salt, fat, and sugar in the meals they market to children, works with schools to provide healthier lunches, and gets networks like Disney and NBC to run PSAs during kids’ programs about the importance of physical activity. Michelle accomplishes a lot of her goals with Let’s Move! And also works on other initiatives like Joining Forces (which focuses on supporting military families), Reach Higher (which helps kids get to and stay in college) and Let Girls Learn (which supports girls’

Michelle and Obama have shown through their behaviours and characters that education and hard work are the true ways for African American to free themselves from white’s discrimination and marginalisation. In solving black marginalisation, both authors laid a lot of emphasis in obtaining education just like the whites Americans. Michelle in her part, explains clearly the role her mother played in her life. To the authors especially Michelle, the

mother and the father new that it was only through education that any black could with stand any competition with a white

My mother taught me how to read early
 Working me to the public library, sitting with
 Me as I sounded out words on a page.
 My father went to work every day dressed in
 The blue uniform of a city labourer. (4)

We noticed, lots of emphasis was put on black education because they knew it was the only way for someone to free himself from many societal problems. According to the authors, being ignorant and dependent was the worse situation to bear. To Michelle and Obama, only education could enable an African American obtain a respectable job. The believed that their ancestors lives where that of sacrifice thus calling the 21st century African American to cease the opportunity now and rewrite the history of the black American.

The author in this light wants to make all the Africans living in America to understand that the old times had passed. All blacks are free and are American citizen. From Obama's point of view, superiority complex has no sense today in the 21st century. To Michelle and Obama, what a whites does, a black can do, and what a black can do a white can also do. So, to them, it is impossible today for a non-American to arrive America and will failed to fulfil his or her dreams. He at one point regrets the situation of his father moving back to his home land Kenya abandoning him alone in the hands of the mother.

That's the story I had been telling myself, the same story I imagined
 my father telling himself twenty-eight years before, as he had boarded
 the plane to America, the land of dreams. He, too, had probably believed he
 was acting some grand design, that he wasn't simply fleeing from possible
 inconsequence. And, in fact, he had returned to Kenya, hadn't he.
 But only as a divided man, his plans, he dreams, soon turned to dust.....

(14)

Most of the time when we want to deal with relation between whites and blacks, we automatically think of white's belief in their superiority over blacks. From earliest period until now, whites always thought and are still thinking that they were and are superior to blacks. Barack Obama continue by saying that it is true that we present physical differences but there is no scientific proof which shows that whites are superior to blacks. This is a strong alert the

author is giving to the African Americans. Calling their attentions to take their future in hand and give nobody the opportunity to be under rated because of the physical appearance or the colour of the skin. Whites often thought they were and are stronger than the blacks, more intelligent, more inventive and far better than the blacks. In fact, according to Michelle and the husband, they taught blacks to accept the philosophy of inequality and force them to believe that they had nothing to offer in the American society.

To Michelle and Obama, they believe that it is time the African Americans show America and the entire world that the whites need black's support and vice versa. Taking back memory lane, it is true that one cannot go without the other therefore; one is not superior to the other. No black should therefore expect the black situation in America to remain the same. Since the beginning of times, blacks had often reacted as Michelle and the husband had done through their memoirs which constitute the object of our study.

Still, it was impossible to be a black kid at a mostly white school and not feel the shadow of affirmative action. You could almost read the scrutiny in the gaze of certain students and even some professors, as if they wanted to say "I know why you're here" these moments could be demoralizing even if I'm sure I was imagining some of it. It planted a seed of doubt. Was I here merely as part of a social experiment. (78)

In their African American daily activities, they had often silently reacted because they are called blacks or had black skin contrary to the whites.

Religion has done so much in the regeneration of African American in the United States of America. Some blacks in America like Michelle and Obama believe that blacks are the fathers of civilisation. An online source by Isaka Seme, who put up an orientation on the subject that "the regeneration of the African American" put for word by the coloured "American magazine of New York" (June, 1960). This is a clear indication that the world was in the early period ruled by religious leaders. The consequences are that their points of view were and still influential. Men of religion believe that we are all descendant of common ancestry Adam who was created alone at the beginning. Problem of division came after, when Eve was created. Both committed the original sin and were cursed for that. We learned from the bible that God created woman as an afterthought, to be a help to a man if we refer to the bible (genesis 2vs 18).

Obama in his memoir tried to exploit the bible by educating the Christians on the equality of man in the United States of America. In the church, Barack Obama will look for the black community or the coloured Christians and will try to advise and encourage them as possible as he could. Especially the women community because he saw that the women were more concerned as far as racial discrimination is concerned. Most often, he implored the women to use opportunity put in place by the state and empower themselves politically.

CONCLUSION

As conclusion to the key elements of this research, the African Americans had a perpetual quest of identity, as being the stepping stone in shaping Blacks' history. Conspicuously, the African Americans overcame the walled of segregation, racism, and white's prejudices through the embodiment of measurable strategies of the Civil Rights leaders who persisted on the pragmatic solutions for social integration and political rights. On the other hand, artists of the New Negro renaissance had profoundly fashioned the African heritage through, arts, fiction, and poetry in order to reconfigure their cultural identity. To sum up the arguments of the first chapter, slavery got the lion's share in building the American economic investment, whereas it was the dark chapter in the African American history. It was a stigma- that yielded several moral, cultural and social traumas. Hence, Michelle and Barack Obama had a crucial role in changing the stereotypes of their doom of slavery and servitude. They persisted on the aim, to change their position from an object to a subject from slave ship to the centre stage in order to search for political inclusion which was the boost to Civil Right Movement as being the vehicle to challenge the White "superiority and the Black inferiority.

In the shadow of the second chapter, Challenges Face by Blacks in Twenty-First Century American is fundamental part in forming the individuals' beliefs and affiliations. Identity functions as an indicator of self-definition and self-determination for the construction of a good citizen. That was later crystalized through the legacy of the Civil Right leadership that had realized the hopes of integration ,equal rights ,civil participants in politics "the right to vote" King' s charismatic leadership had substantial effect in tracing the political, social, and educational history of the Africans Americans .His legacy of America's race problems was solved , which may be seen nowadays through Michelle and Barack Obama who had played a very important role in black identity reconstruction, Black and White eating , working together ,even an marring each other" interracial marriage."

Thanks to Michelle and Obama's works we are aware of some of the major evils which prevail in the American society. From their writings, it is clear that it originated from the fact that they wanted to challenge their society, fight against the conventional social

norms. As African Americans writers, they constantly protested against social injustice imposed on the blacks. In order to override racism, both authors vision was aimed at transcending racial discrimination and social barriers between the whites and blacks. The characters are real and have actually under gun white's discrimination in their real lives. At times, these characters are forced to go beyond boundaries in other to fight injustice just to protect the black community. Just as Michelle herself, she also presents the mother as one of the characters who breaks bounds and stood firmly against the white superiority complex. They committed themselves to exploring obstacles to black's freedom in the United States.

The aim of this research has been to show that any person standing in the American soil can fulfil his or her dreams despites the challenges faced as blacks taking the authors as perfect examples. How both authors treat issues of racism in their memoirs? Michelle's *Becoming* and Obama's *Dreams from My father* (a story of race and inheritance) are essentially focus on racial discrimination, social injustice, claims that are based on the colour of the skin. The inferiority complex imposed on the black skin race is said to be the results of millions of blacks forcefully sold and taken to America for enslavement which comes as a result of the weakness of the American government who did not redressed so many issues like the abolition of slavery and slave trade, civil rights, racial discrimination and racial prejudice.

Racism as one of the main challenges has devastating and psychological consequences in the Afro Americans. It has as main objectives to denigrate the black's race and it identity. Throughout the novels under study, we have seen each of the author's points of view on the issues of racism. They both suffered racism and thought it was necessary for a collective fight against. Michelle and Obama are both aware that racism is a socially construct by the whites which remains the dominant majority with a sold aim to subjugate the African Americans who numerically represent the minority. These slave images are still very present in their minds, they have read history books about Africans slavery and slave trade and today, it looks absurd for these whites to see blacks part of decision making in America. It is these reasons Michelle Robinson and Barack Obama have come out powerfully in their memoirs to let people understand that colour, race, and ethnicity shouldn't in anyway dictate or determine the ability, talents or the knowhow of an individual.

They both demonstrated to their white's counterparts be it in terms of academics, social activities and most especially in politics. They both successfully transcended beyond the whitesman's mind-set of racial discrimination and segregation and has proven beyond reasonable doubt that race and colour has absolutely nothing to do with knowledge, talent and

merits. In our review, many authors in one way or the other condemned the subjugation and the discrimination of blacks by the whites who assault them even in public. This has pushed them to the position of resistance, they think it is their place to influence change in the American society.

In the last chapter, we examine the intensity of each author, how they both handle the issue of racism. We brought out individual experience as expressed in their novels, reviewing the collaboration between the dominant white cultures to that of the minority black culture. In our findings, it is therefore clear that blacks in America has been segregated and marginalised for years. In fact, Michelle and Obama has make us to understand that race is the outcome of colonialism, Pitcher B. in one of his works says that race was shaped by the colonial encounter in other to assert their superiority complex on the blacks in a bit to facilitate the black enslavement and exploitation (23). This is why Barack Obama present the fight against racism in his novel as being first of all an ideological fight before being physical.

The Negroes were constantly degraded in the presence of their wives and children. Children need to see their fathers as strong and omnipotent. Negro children saw their fathers as helpless and frightened objects of the arbitrariness of white men in uniform. In school, the children were taught urban, middle-class white values with their emphasis on aggressiveness, responsibility, and the assertion of masculinity. But adult Negro men were barred from responsibility and treated as though they were irresponsible children; and they were punished for aggressiveness. As a result, the children were contemptuous of their fathers. "Our dads didn't Count. » they said." "When we wanted anything, we asked our mothers." And the Negro men felt an even deeper sense of being victimized. But the sense of injustice started to breed a feeling of hope. It is a curious and now often discussed fact that riots occur precisely at a time when objectively and subjectively the situation is not only improving, but improving more rapidly than was believed possible. Riots never break out when the situation is considered hopeless. Action then appears senseless, and the reduction of people to historical objects is so complete and internalized and thus regarded as inevitable-that no resistance is possible. When black people or yellow people or white people think of themselves as born servants, helpless victims, there can be no rioting. People who say, "Give the Negroes a finger and they want the whole hand," and who blame the rioting on desegregation and liberal court decisions are, in part, right. So is Police sChief William H. Parker of Los Angeles when he blames permissiveness and the over-regard for civil rights. If the American Negroes were still slaves, there would have been little chance of rioting in the summer of 1965.

The trigger for the riots might have been anything. In fact, it was the arrest by the police of a drunken driver in the middle of a heat wave. For days the thermometer had stayed just under 100 degrees. The weather was as chronically muggy and oppressive as was the life of the average Watts Negro. In a heat wave, every-one feels like a helpless object battered by forces he cannot control. The riot started almost as a temper tantrum against the heat and the despair. In a short while, this feeling proved contagious. it spread to Chief Parker who had a tantrum against the liberals and to Mayor Samuel W. Yorty who had a tantrum against the state government. And, like a child's temper tantrum which has succeeded in attracting attention, the riot flowered under the attention of newspaper headlines and national television. For the rioters, the riots were fun. The conventional explanation by middle-class parents to their children about sex skips over the important point that sex also can be fun. In much the same way, observers have not understood or have withheld the fact that the riots were fun. There was a carnival in the midst of carnage. Rioters laughed, danced, and clapped their hands. Many got drunk. Violence was permissible. Children stayed out all night.

Several children between the ages of ten and fourteen (who first asked the permission of their mothers to talk to a white man) later admitted defensively that it was "great fun." "It was a little scary but mostly it was great because everybody had a good time, sort of a ball." "Nobody cared if we ever went to bed."

Contrary to the usual pattern of riots, there was hardly any sexual delinquency or increase in sexual activities. Usually rioting, and the uncontrolled, unrestrained, and thus pleasurable descent into repressed and suppressed emotion and the release of all tension in the absence of ordinary inner and outer controls, brings with it sexual promiscuity. But when the lower-class Negro says he "wants to feel like a man," he is talking about status not sex. The rioters constantly volunteered the information that "we never had to worry about sex." "Sex is nothing to get excited about." "White makes too much of it." Sex has always been the lower-class Negro's one free pleasure. Homosexual and heterosexual experience starts young. And from the time a boy is ten or eleven, girls are always available. So, the release of tension in rioting led not to sexual delinquency, but to looting.

Growing up, Barack Obama heard Negroes asking themselves if a prophet or a messiah would appear among their number and help them. Many others were sure that Du Bois and Frederick Douglass was the race leader who had been sent to bring unity and self-respect. But the task was not completely done which was that of completely eradicate the white superiority complex and Negroes continued to pray for someone to release them from

despair. Du Bois, as a young man of imagination and intelligence, began to think he might be the man to redeem the American black minority from their long lasting sufferings. He was determined to prepare himself for the role. However, Michelle and Barack Obama believed that the Negro race would be saved through their own self development and through the good will of the whites.

They considered it essential to convince Negroes that they should be interested in education (more schooling, literary societies, community centres just like Michelle's mother demonstrated to the daughter) and organization (social services, industrial enterprises). They also set out to persuade whites that Negroes were worthy of help. They demonstrated it by their saviour faire, dominated the whites in all their dealings be it in school or out of school. The Talented Tenth was to be the avant-garde, the first wave of Negroes who were to lower the colour barriers. But he did not ask for complete assimilation or amalgamation. He was opposed to homogeneity and wanted to see racial cultural differences preserved. However, they objected to the pariah role which American Negroes were assigned. He refused to be "a stranger in mine own house." they chose Du Bios' "Veil" ' as the symbol of racial barriers and depicted the Negro as one who was gifted with second sight in this American world, a world which yields them no true self-consciousness, but only lets them see themselves through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation,

This double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness-an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. Michelle wanted to give his race a sense of its own self-consciousness, and he sought to end the "unreconciled strivings" by synthesizing them and creating an organized group of American Negroes who could be proud of themselves as Negroes and as Americans. In effect, she was enunciating the theory of social realism, whereby peoples of diverse backgrounds "live together on a basis of equality, tolerance, justice, and harmony.

However, social realism was rejected by many whites, who ethnocentrically and racist affirmed the inherent superiority of their own Stoup, and who maintained that accommodation between the Faces could be established only on the basis of dominance and submission. They demanded separateness, but not equality. On the other hand, they desired not only organized self-segregation, but also insisted that their people should be allowed to participate fully in the

common political, spiritual, and social life of the nation. Michelle and Barack Obama committed themselves to exploring obstacles to human freedom, particularly as they apply to blacks thus giving hopes to all blacks in America.

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