

Tribhuvan University

Dialectics of African Identity and Slavery in Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*

**A Thesis Submitted of the Central Department of English, T.U.
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in English**

By

Goma Kattel

Roll No. : 26

Symbol No. : 00006064

T.U. Reg. No.: 9-2-467-172-2011

Central Department of English

Kritipur, Kathmandu

September, 2019

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Ms. Goma Kattel has completed her Thesis, “Dialectics of African Identity and Slavery in Colson Whitehead’s *“The Underground Railroad”* under my supervision. She has completed her research on September 2019. I hereby recommend this thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

.....

Laxman Bhatta

Supervisor

Date:

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Approval

The thesis entitled “Dialectics of African Identity and Slavery in Colson Whitehead’s *The Underground Railroad*” Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, By Ms. Goma Kattel has been approved by the undersigned member of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

_____ Internal Examiner

_____ External Examiner

_____ External Examiner

_____ Head

_____ Central Department of English

_____ Date: _____

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Laxman Bhatta my honorable teacher, my dissertation supervisor and professor of Central Department of English, T.U. Kritipur, for his academic supervision and encouragements in order to bring my thesis to the final shape. His wide-ranging knowledge, scholarly guidance and invaluable suggestions helped me too carry out this research work, without his kind cooperation and guidance; the work would have remained incomplete.

I am very much grateful to Prof. Dr. Anirudra Thapa, Head, Central Department of English, for his invaluable suggestion and encouragement to carry out this thesis.

I would also like to extend my profound gratitude to all the professors of CDE who taught and suggested me to prepare a proposal at the beginning of the research. Likewise, my thanks go to members of research committee. I am very much grateful to all the faculty members of the Central Department of English, T.U. , who helped me in different ways in the course of my study.

I will always remain indepted to my parents Father Shree Prasad Kattel, mother Ambika Kattel, Husband Khagendra Pd. Sangroula for their continuous support to undertake this research journey. My special gratitude goes to my friends Sarita Subedi for her continuous feedback and motivation.

September 2019

Goma Kattel

Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to show dialectics of African identity and slavery of Cora from the perspective of Neo-slave narrative with reference to Colson Whitehead's The Underground Railroad; it focuses on how Identity and slavery interplay with each other in course of Cora's identity formation. The protagonist Cora, in the novel experiences dehumanize behavior from her slave owners. Cora, endures from racism, however, she escapes from the South to the North through the Underground Railroad. Colson Whitehead explores the identity of African American females as a medium of slavery. By taking theoretical insights on Neo-slave narrative proposed by Ashraf H.A Rushdy, Bernard Bell and Toni Morrison; this research paper deals with the Dialectics of African identity and slavery with Cora's point of view. Cora is abused by white masters and she suffer mentally and psychologically. She faces the problems of dislocation, identity, racial discrimination and social injustice due to slavery. She is detached from her identity, culture and rights but consistently fights to resist against injustices.

Keywords: Racism, dehumanization, neo-slave narrative, dialectics.