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Melancholia in Collin's *The Curse of Caste*

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Abstract

The research analyzes Collins' *The Curse of Caste* as melancholic expression. The novel reflects historical facts of racism and its effects in black community. Due to the racial feelings many blacks lost their lives from which blacks got psychological shock. In the novel, Claire traces her past when she comes to know about her family loss. As she goes her past then she came to know the unfair treatment of black and because of the discrimination, her mother lost her life. Her father left her mother when her community did not accept black as a member of the family. In this regard, loss of her mother causes melancholic experiences in her. The novel reveals painful life of Lina who underwent racial suffering in her society. Due to excessive suffering she redeems from physical suffering by committing suicide. Later on, her daughter experiences its pain because of her mother unlawful death.

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I. Reproduction of Memory in Collins' *The Curse of Caste*

The research discusses melancholic psychological state in Julia C. Collins' *The Curse of Caste*. It is a psychological experience at a sudden mental stress by unexpected events. Melancholic experience is a deep rooted psychological feeling which is piled up by regular pricking experiences. It refers to the psychological wound caused by unexpected horrifying events which give a shock to recipient. It mentally disturbs and creates indelible wound in at the innermost layers. It regularly pricks and hurts to person any time. This kind of psychological experience causes irrecoverable sufferings to human mind. Moreover the irresistible painful experiences are deeply reformulated in our mind and develop into more complexity. Therefore, both kinds of experiences she faces and it continuously gives her mental and psychological tortures.

The research discusses how bitter human experiences leads an individual into death bed as the protagonist, Lina decides to commit suicide. The novel is about racial discrimination in which blacks felt bitter experiences and also lost their relatives and family members. Due to these kinds of experiences piled up into their minds and it created a complexity into their mind. It is about a painful and sorrowful case of racial discrimination. Due to the result of racial dichotomy, the major character Lina sacrifices her life. At her death her daughter explores and presents her suffering, she ever searches painful past and tries to find out the reality of suffering, but she does not find reality. Her daughter experiences mourning at her mother's untimely death due to the racial mistreatment.

Julia C. Collins' *The Curse of Caste* shows racial issues which cause the social conflict. The post colonial situation offers legal freedom for black people however, it becomes difficult matter for them. This novel is set during post colonial period which

has presented effects of racism in the African society. Black people explicitly resist white domination in the society. The novel *The Curse of Caste* addresses racial issues by showing antagonistic relationship between black and white people. The author projects racial suffering in society even after the declaration of racial equality. After post-colonial period, racial issues become dominant and black people came into front taking the issue of color complex. Racism is generally understood as either belief that different racial group characterized by intrinsic characteristics or abilities and that some such groups are therefore naturally superior to others. Similarly, the charge of ideology again, like the charge of racism can be directed at symbolic representations that are embodied, not in the consciousness of individuals. Lina and Richard are major characters in the novel.

Lina represents black woman, who gets married with Richard, a white man. But, being a black woman she is not accepted in Richard's house. Richard leaves her. She lives alone being hatred of the society. She gives birth a daughter and the daughter gets him married. Richard a white man compels to marry with black girl though the white society ignores black people. Black people want to take revenge against white in the society.

Even after the end of racism, the society practises racial discrimination. But the racial practices agitate black people. As revenge, Lina entraps a white man Richard and gets married because whites think black people are inferior who do not have equal social status so white society ignores black. Therefore, she decides to take revenge with Richard therefore, she gets Richard married with black girl. This kind of racial vindictiveness is prevalent in the society. This research aims to study racial vindictiveness in American society in which racial issue is dominated. The social

harmony is disturbed by racial issue. Black people are suffering from racial domination.

The novel *The Curse of Caste* has got many critical responses so the novel has been studied from many theoretical insights. However, the researcher is going to analyze the novel from different standpoint which has not been used yet. Racial vindictiveness is new insight and that is not applied in the novel. Unlike the researcher's standpoint, many critics observe the drama from several perspectives. Similarly, the novel is enriched from other perspectives as well. Ashford Carter has interpreted the novel as a spiritual power. He comments:

Collins also access particular discourses of spiritual autobiography, feminist sentiment mentality, and class stratification prevalent during the nineteenth century in her depiction of the heroic Claire Like most black protofeminist spiritual autobiographies of the time, Collins explores the particular divine power of the black heroine. The successful outcome of Claire's reliance on prayer signifies that she possesses a specific spiritual agency wielded particularly as she encounters various characters and especially as she interacts with various members of the Tracy household. (717)

The above mentioned extract clearly mentions about the divine power of of black and it closely represents the world in which spiritual power remains dominant. The heroine of the novel prays against unfair treatment of white people. It applies basic values of human behaviours. All human beings are equal but the human society creates and makes discrimination. Therefore, black people pray for racial freedom and salvation.

Another critic Colleen O'Brien discusses about memory of racism which has deeply rooted in black people. Therefore, slavery is unforgettable for black people even after formal declaration of racism. Furthermore, he argues:

Curses echo through the halls of ancestral homes, their sound amplified by the memory of an avenging spirit. Characters draped in darkness and shadow live secluded from the truth about their family history, their only evidence of ancestry carefully concealed in secret documents, a hidden portrait, or a haunted library. (661)

All the characters in novel represent black racism who represent past slavery. It is racial discussion which reminds past slavery. This critic analyzes the novel from historical perspective by bringing past. On the other hand, another critic Jennifer Rae Greeson discusses:

To summarize those thoughts perhaps too briefly in the early Republic, the seduction plot held special relevance for readers living through upheavals of rapid modernization and social reorganization. By moving the marriage relation out of a broader familial social context and into a fraught transaction between two isolated characters, the seduction plot enacted the shift from a society organized around kin networks, community controls, and face to face interactions, to a society made up of a collection of atomized. (770)

This critic interprets the novel from modern perspective in which he finds the modern society is enmeshed with crime, murder and smuggling. In the society, human beings are involving such inhuman deeds. On the other hand, Edlie Wong comments:

The characters in *The Curse of Caste* struggle to grasp this silenced past of slavery and draw together the various narratives that constitute

the tenuous connections among orphaned black daughter, banished white father, and silenced slave mother that comprise, in part the collective albeit repressed, the history of the Tracy family. The father's curse of disinheritance and the titular curse of caste blur into one and the stigma of race the novel suggest, becomes a mechanism of symbolic and social control. (687)

This critic explores slave narrative in which slave or black people memorize their past memory. All these critical studies on drama show that it has been studied by many critics who have analyzed from several critical insights. As they have found the different issues and claims own issues based on several insights. However the researcher has chosen a new critical insight to study the text.

All these critical studies in this novel show that it has been studied by many critics who have analyzed from several critical insights. As they have found the different issues and claims own issues based on several insights. However the researcher has chosen a new critical insight to study the text.

The research applies a psychological theory melancholia which studies human inner feelings. This psychological aspect of this theory explores how human feelings are affected by social behaviours. Regarding this theory it mainly discusses on psychological wounds and repressed anger.

Melancholia is also psychological experience felt when a person gets adverse and complex situation. We often experience difficult and different events which may be unfavorable and unacceptable for us. It is more complex psychological experience which is formulated by different painful and unexpected experiences. Comparatively, it is more complex idea than melancholy. It is like a complex idea of human psychology which is formulated after having much torturous events. According to

Hassoun; "melancholia is the attachment to an unmastered, ungrasped other in hitherto unconscious experience. The other is felt as unmastered affect and as such, coincides with the shock experience of trauma" (117).

Melancholia is an abnormal pathology, and an illness which causes intense trouble. Jacques Hassoun clarifies; "Melancholia is defined as an experience of loss in the absence of the personal's knowledge or fantasy of what is lost" (117). It makes clear that melancholy is a psychological experience of person who undergoes regular stress of the particular event. He further argues:

We must ask ourselves about the object of anxiety as it arises in passion and in melancholia and recall first of all that passion is the most spectacular mode of expression for a melancholic structure. Passion and melancholia on the one hand, melancholia and mania on the other, seems to set up a relation to the object of which melancholia is the key in that being a symptom, it reveals as I have shown what is at stake in a child's relation to a mother who has been subjectively unable to help it through a first mourning process that grounds its subjectivity. (68)

Melancholia seems a little bit different which is more abstract and unidentified. Its painfulness cannot be properly identified. It regularly hits but there is no apparent object-loss to the subject. The subject cannot reach at the depth of melancholia by which it causes. But, it relentlessly disturbs to subject's psyche.

Melancholia occupies deep layer of psyche and it regains regular wounds and depressive manifestation. It either does not have time to prepare for it, or whatever receptive capacities are in the place prove inadequate. It hardly communicates internal feelings what the person has.

Similarly, Mourning is also known as an emotional shock after the loss and death of a close loved one to the phenomenon. To some extent both melancholia and mourning are similar. Both of these ideas hit our emotional stress. Freud explains; "they both share a similar outward affect on the subject and are both due to similar environmental influences. The inhibition, absorbedness of the ego, and the disinterest in the external world is evident in both, mourning and melancholia equally" (171). The disinterest in the previous love and the past passionate feelings causes internal conflict. Both mourning and melancholia sound similar emotional experiences, however, there is a fundamental difference between them. Duncan Bell shows differences; "mourning memory work that enables reconciliation with loss and melancholia, where the loss is continually revisited, is vital intrusive and persistent" (145). The negative self-regard and self-reproach that the subject presents can be easily challenged. It shows that melancholia is deeper stress than mourning. Larry Ray explains here:

An important contrast here lies in the way memories are communicated and the dispositions to which coming to terms with the past give rise-through mourning and memory work or melancholia. One theme within the emergence of modern, post traditional worldviews has been.

(146)

He actually finds an opposite characteristic in the melancholic patient, where the patient seems to want to communicate excessively, and searches for opportunities in self-exposure. This contradiction is vital part in discovering and understanding the true condition and mechanics of melancholia. Freud finds contradiction within the melancholia's condition. The subject presents ego as worthless, despicable, and inferior the subject doesn't appear to feel shameful in front of others the way the

typical subjects reacts when feeling remorse and self-reproach. Freud shows correlation:

The correlation of melancholia and mourning seems justified by the general picture of the two conditions. Moreover, the exciting causes due to environmental influences are so far as we can discern them at all, the same for both conditions. Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on. In some people the same influences produce melancholia instead of mourning and we consequently suspect them of a pathological disposition. It is also well worth notice that, although mourning involves grave departures from the normal attitude to life, it never occurs to us to regard it as a pathological condition. (243)

It shows the distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, loss of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-reviling. It culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment. This picture becomes a little more intelligible when we consider that, with one exception; the same traits are met with in mourning. The disturbance of self-regard is absent in mourning; but otherwise the features are the same. Mourning, the reaction to the loss of someone who is loved, contains the same painful frame of mind, the same loss of interest in the outside world. It is easy to see that this inhibition and circumscription of the ego is the expression of an exclusive devotion to mourning which leaves nothing over for other purposes or other interests. It is really only because we know so well how to explain it that this attitude does not seem to us pathological.

Both mourning and melancholia are negative psychological forces disturb our present experience and takes a person back to our past. Mourning and Melancholia draws a distinction between normal mourning and pathological depression, or 'melancholia.' In normal mourning, following the loss of a loved person or idea, the world as experienced by the mourner is depleted and full of sadness, whilst in the pathological state of melancholia; the sufferer directs this sense of depletion and hopelessness onto his or her own ego.

More or less both these ideas mourning and melancholia are similar to trauma, which is defined as a mental condition caused by severe shock, especially when the harmful effects last for a long time. It covers to the almost psychological stress in which a person loses his/her present while past experiences recovers. In this regard, Trauma remains its effect in human mind and, which comes time and again. Directly and indirectly it is represented through any kind of manifestation. Normally, trauma is understood from its nature of effect. Physical trauma is a kind of physical wound and injury and it is curable in some extent. Cathy Caruth discusses:

As a consequence of the increasing occurrence of such perplexing war experiences and other catastrophic responses during the last twenty years, physician and psychiatrists have begun to reshape their thinking about physical and mental experience, including most recently the responses to a wide variety of experiences, rape, child abuse, auto and industrial accidents, and so on which are now often understood in terms of the effects. (182)

Psychological has long term and indelible effects in human mind. Any human recipient has traumatic experience which always governs his mental status. It may remain dominant position or latent position but it comes time and again into the

expression. It is a kind of mental status; psychological wound which is remained into deep level in mind. A person cannot forget those psychological wounds so which are appeared at any time but cannot be hidden forever. It gives a kind of shock into human mind that remains into human unconscious mind.

Caruth argues that trauma as it first occurs is incomprehensible. It is only later, after a period of latency that it can be placed in a narrative, "In most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden, or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (181). Traumatic narrative then is strongly referential but not in any simple or direct way.

One of the dominating natures is, melancholia is experienced without particular event. It does not relate with any particular event whereas it only experiences any critical status or psychic feeling. It constructs deep indefinable feeling in our heart or mind. It destroys human sense of present experiences and realization of present. In place of it, it creates a huge space for memory. Mostly, melancholia victimizes human being affecting its mind and heart. The significance of melancholia shows manifestation of historical narratives. Moreover, it becomes problematic when it is reflected in the repetitive action. Trauma as a form of terror management contributes to the condition of an individual's psychic ruin. These instances will enjoy psychiatric intervention for the purposes of gauging and mediating a person's potential for violence as a means of exercising his or her post-traumatic demonstration.

The research is divided into three chapters: Introduction, Textual analysis and Conclusion. The general way to prove the application of tool is given in introduction

along with the some critics view on the text. The second chapter merges both theoretical aspects and textual aspects. In fact, it is main chapter of this research. It explores the textual evidence along with theoretical point. It finds out theoretical aspects through text. It searches those theoretical aspects along with textual evidence. Finally, conclusion is summary of whole work. It gives overview of the entire work.

Melancholia in Collin's *The Curse of Caste*

The novel *The Curse of Caste* explores the melancholic past memories when the society had practised slavery and racial complexity. It created a psychic wound of slavery and unequal position and inhuman social practices. In the novel, Lina is a victim of racial discrimination which causes her death. Because of unendurable pain and suffering, she decides to die. In this respect, she finds her condition pathetic and it gives continuous suffering. In the novel, Claire narrates past memories when her mother died due to the racial complexity. She married with white man and it becomes her cause of death. In this regard, in searching her parental origination, she is affected by psychological pain. This kind of wound develops complexity in human mind.

The major character Lina experiences it when she is treated badly by white men. The novel recovers the silenced past of slavery when racial complexity could cause of social inferiority. It depicts striking disparity between the slave mother's legacy and the Tracy's genealogical history. It was painful recovery of ex-slaves began the difficult and often fruitless journey to identity and recover those beloved kindred ties severed by enslavement. The central character Lina represents black position in society who has tragic psychological jolts. Lina in the novel struggles to grasp this silenced past of slavery and draw together the various narratives that constitute the tenuous connections among orphaned black daughter, banished by white father. It exposes racial stigma which has caused sense of inferiority in black race. Claire is a narrator who brings past events as a source of unhappiness and her psychological problems. She exposes at the beginning of the book: "My school days are over, and now farewell to books and quite happiness" (1). It shows that the novel only talks about all past memories which cause present suffering.

In fact, Claire's melancholy is her mother's death. She loses both parents and loses her parental love. On her mother's death and father loss, she reveals all past events and social practices as far as she can find at present. In fact, she experiences inexpressible pains at present, she cannot understand herself because it only can realize. She is asked by other women about her sadness but she does not want to share because she cannot share it: "Can it be possible that you have a grief unshared by me? But tell me darling, what is it that disturbs you so? Said Ella" (4).

Melancholia infers human feelings at certain kind of loss and death. It is mental status in which human beings depress and regret. This kind of psychological torture affects human being which may leads toward negative thoughts. In this sense, we can understand that mourning and melancholia both refer to our mental and psychological condition after we lose and face unexpected results. For the reasons, both mourning and melancholia more or less related to traumatic experiences. Both of them are experienced after certain kinds of emotional shock and treacherous events we face.

It is a psychological experience of human being which brings an emotional crisis. It is derived from something emotional breakage and it may be cause of physical incidents. It creates complexity in human mind. Any kind of physical disturbances bring emotional shock and it remains long term in human mind. It is a traumatic event which impacts human psyche and it retains for long time. As Herman argues; "traumatic events have primary effects not only on the psychological structures of the self but also on the systems of attachment and meaning that link individual and community" (5). He infers effects of traumatic events in our mind. We often experience different shocking events, but, such events make room for our human mind. It deeply makes disturbance for long time.

Lina, a dark haired woman, and Richard, the son of a New Orleans slave owner, fall in love. Richard discovers that Lina is actually a slave. Richard and Lina marry despite this fact, and Richard's irate father disinherits his son. Fleeing north to Connecticut where Lina dies in childbirth while Richard is back in New Orleans, trying to make peace with his father. Richard is deceived into thinking that his baby daughter died along with his wife. An orphan child, the dark and beautiful Clare, grows up not knowing who her parents were—or even their race or hers. Then the story shifts back to New Orleans, and there is a chance discovery that may change lives and reconcile the family.

In the history different shocking and horrendous events created depressive temperament in human society. It was written by several narratives as a result, it is reflected in writing. Just as today there is the impact of specific historical shocks like Holocaust and other genocides but also the impact of electronic media on the feelings of viewers. It shows the direct reaction in abnormal phenomena that becomes more uncommon and stressful. It is also taken as psychological casualty, resulting in mental and emotional disorder. It is related with brain. It is failure to maintain psychological equilibrium. This failure to maintain psychological equilibrium increases irritability and disturbance on sleep.

The novel is all about a melancholic tone and the narrator and character Claire, is a daughter of Lina, narrates the some pieces of memories, pangs of painful condition. The novel begins with Claire's narration who brings past fragmented memories. In fact, she exposes her deep feeling about racial discrimination it causes her present sufferable. Because of racial discrimination and inhuman relation upon black cause her mother's untimed death. Due to her death, she is moved in present. She says; " I hope you will not deem me ungrateful if I decline you much tempting

invitation, as it pains me to refuse that which would afford me so much real pleasure" (4).

Colonel Frank Tracy, a white Louisiana slave-owner, threatens to disinherit his son Richard and erase him from the family memory if he does not give up his attachment to Lina, a mixed-race woman and former slave whom he has married. Richard tells his father, "I cannot forsake my wife," for he plans to spend his life with her despite his father's disgust. Enraged, the colonel draws a pistol, points it at his son, and says, "I will see you die at my feet before you shall return to the arms of that accursed wife!" (41). He lies sick with a fever, often delirious and raving for his wife. His condition continues to worsen, and he seems to "fluctuate between life and death" (45). During one of his unconscious fits of fever, Richard proclaims, "What matters it, if her skin is dark, if the blood of the despised race tinges her veins? Oh! Believe me, she is good and pure!" (44). His words echo those used in anti-miscegenation arguments to relate blackness to toxicity and contamination. However, the white community and society torture her. As soon as Richard father's reject her it creates a kind sense of loss and inferiority.

Collins presents an interesting juxtaposition here through Richard, a man whose body and blood battle toxic infection even as he professes the purity of his black wife's body and blood. The novel draws upon the cultural association between race and disease yet undermines it to show the true toxin to be racism, not race. If we could freeze the moment when Colonel Tracy fires that shot and map its impact on other characters' lives and bodies, we would see a web connecting several characters in this novel who suffer from critical point. In fact, even physical nature of events affects them psychologically.

The author with the help of Claire's narration exposes racial evil in society. It does not only create momentary inequality, but it created unending psychological wound in their mind. Claire does not have any more experiences about racial discrimination because she came much later when the society has changed to some extent. However, she often faces invisible and deeper level of discrimination. The novel advocates all flashback scenario where and when the society had evil of racism.

Herman particularly discusses on effects of war victim who lost their relatives and closed member. It creates an image of war for them. Losing someone in war reflects in their mind. Human felt painful experiences in post war period. Thus, the event depresses them who did not reconstruct the past therefore, they shared with bystanders. In his words; "war and victims are something the community wants to forget; veil of oblivion is drawn over everything painful and unpleasant" (2). He infers war and its effects in human mind while war victims experienced. It was collective experience of war victims. Herman iterates that; "traumatized people suffer a sense of alienation, of disconnection and pervades relationships from the most intimate familial bonds to affiliations with community and religion" (7). In this respect, mourning causes human behaviours and social relation. It changes human behaviour and the person loses his/her societal performance. It moves the person toward alienation and suffering. Particularly, mourning deeply affects human mind which is manifested through everyday behaviours. It comes from something unexpected and accidental loss of person, that's why the person finds complexity in psychological management.

The novel exposes Lina's personal situation at present and she is invaded by her past memories. Her past experiences related with racism and slavery haunts her mind time and again. She is victimized by her memories. In the story Lina ever

memorizes her past which was deep down in her mind. The memories which reveals her pathetic condition; however, she wanted to bury in oblivion, but they are engraved on the mind.

Lina's psyche is filled with fearful apparitions from the past. She cannot be bold and daring because human psyche is vulnerable; therefore, she is victimized from these invading memories. At the presence of her terrible jolts of memories do not allow her to celebrate any kinds of happiest moments.

The novel brings two races and marital relationship between intra race. On hand, Recharad is from white American society who has dignified social position being a white privileged class. On the other hand, Lina is from black race, who has inferior position in society. Richard falls in love with Lina, however he does not care about racial restrictions and limitation. He marries her and then his father calls him later. As soon as he goes to his house, his father ignores his relationship with Lina. Then Recharad leaves her. Even they have a child, but Richard does not make any more relationship with Lina. It tortures in Lina's life, she is overpowered by grief and agony. The unexpected and hateful betrayal of Richard creates melancholic and traumatic experiences on her. She cannot come out from this sudden shock in her mind. Even her daughter realizes and understands these tortures of being black. In the novel, her daughter Claire assesses others behaviours toward her and comes to understand what the racism is.

The personal type of mourning makes effect upon person when he/she gets loss of something. Because of having death of someone dearest and closest one, person cannot manage himself/herself. Moreover, mourning is derived from others many reasons. Sometimes, it could be political, ideological, ritual and social. But, any type of mourning impacts human's psychological. It frequently haunts on personal

life. Overlapping on present situation, it is manifested in different forms. Regarding the effects of mourning, Ruth Leys puts his words:

Owing to the emotions of terror and surprise caused by certain events, the mind is split or dissociated: it is unable to register the wound to the psyche because the ordinary mechanisms of awareness and cognition are destroyed/ As a result, the victim is unable to recollect and integrate the hurtful experience in normal consciousness; instead, she is haunted or possessed by intrusive traumatic memories. The experience of the trauma, fixed or frozen in time refuses to be represented as past, but is perpetually experienced in a painful, dissociated, traumatic present. (2)

Discussing different types of mourning, it shows ultimate effect of it. But, difference is personal type of mourning gives tortures for a single personal whereas collective type of mourning tortures a particular group or society. It exemplifies world wars, Indian partitions and different wars. This type of mourning is concern for a group of society or it may be extended to the country and more. It is collective experience of mourning. During world war many people lose their relatives and the world war itself was destructive and dark for humanity. It shocks to all people and remain in human mind.

It shows several ways in which slavery, which was the most oppressive period in the black history, has affected the identity of African American. It is their cultural trauma and they have been searching their black unified identity. In order to understand how slavery and the discrimination of African Americans influence their sense of identity. Identity is a sense of personal continuity and uniqueness based not only on personal need, but also on membership in various groups, such as familial,

ethnic and occupational. African slaves were not only discriminated for belonging to their racial group, but also for being slaves and belonging to that social group.

The novel all about racial and color complexity in American society which led back slavery time. In fact, the novel historically addresses end of the civil rights movement which declared racism is uncompromising issue in American society. During slavery period blacks had inhuman condition; however, the society extended it even later. Lina is victimized by remaining slavery system. The white man played with her sentiments, feelings and emotions; therefore, she cannot forget her past.

Moreover, her former indelible memories recount her frequently. Due to the irresistible memories, she is split psychological. The novel portrays the protagonists Lina as a traumatized character because of the having painful past experiences and her familial and personal relationships. Lina has been affected psychologically and physically, the debilitating effects of relational trauma. Lina is a victim of trauma who faces different unexpected injuries in her life. It shocks and leaves wound into the mind there. It is deeply rooted in the mind it regularly haunts to the subject. The novel begins with first point narrative of Lina's daughter Claire Neville, who explains her present condition. She shows her insecure position where she feels fearful images around her atmosphere. She mentions; "As my very soul shrinks from coming in contact with strangers, who will not understand my nature, and therefore, cannot sympathize with me" (3). This line explains that she has not been feeling comfortable for adjusting in society.

Even she can understand her mother's painful condition. As she grows up, she comes to know the reality. She further clarifies; "And the proud head was bowed upon her clasped hands, and bright, pearly tears were falling thick and fast. Just one moment of weakness, murmured she and I shall be strong again, strong to do and

dare" (3). The society where racism was dominant, that's why racism developed prejudice, violence, dislike, discrimination, oppression and inhumanity. As a result, Claire also experiences such complexity in human behaviours. It reanimates painful memories with haunting presence. The memories of sorrow and melancholia formulate all physic resolution to grief. The past racial injustice even victimizes Claire, so she expresses her painful scenario: " formed a beautiful and striking picture as she sat, with bowed head and drooping figure, the seeming embodiment of grief; for Claire was strangely wildly, and darkly beautiful" (3).

The novel retraces slavery system and its evils in society. Claire is a result of racist culture in America. The novelist intentionally projects the Claire in the opening of the novel. Even her present is not adjustable, therefore, she always discover her past. It disturbs her present. While making her present each and every painful scenario disturbs her at making present identity. It incorporates racial tension and animosity. The race is considered one of the conflicting subjects in black and white mixed community where racism was prevalent though it was avoided formally. Blacks could not have respected position who could not resist white domination in the society.

Under the conditions of plantation slavery, black slaves were commonly thought to be docile, superstitious, easily satisfied, and servile; while during the present post-industrial phase of capitalist development, blacks are more often viewed as parasitic, angry, ungrateful, and dangerous. Thus the inter-relatedness and dynamic character of forms of social consciousness makes it difficult to pin down the content of an ideology once and for all. Perhaps the best we can do is to describe the content of a form of consciousness for some historically specific period, and even here some idealization is unavoidable. This indomitable voice is reflected by Claire:

Forgive me, Ella dear, if by my silence I have wounded you gentle heart, for believe me, you are the dearest friend I have on earth, and there is none to whom I would reveal my inmost heart, as I have to you.

But I cannot help feeling the bitter isolation of my life. (4)

Her memories or wounds refer to sense of hatred and complex feeling in her mind.

Because of racism American society does not pacify social issues. Because of social injustice, inequalities and discriminations cause the conflicts and disharmonies in the society. On the basis of social values and behaviors harden the relationship between black and white. It causes the trouble and conflicts in American society.

The novel is all about past memories, the main character Lina ever remembers. She brings all her past at present. It shows a pang of racial treatment and social position in ongoing society. The society creates partiality between black and white which causes her painful suffering. She recounts her past relation with Richard and his unfair treatment because of racial discrimination. Similarly, Claire restates past condition: "I feel too my parents were pure and good; it is only when I think of the vague mystery that surrounds my birth and parentage, that the doubt comes" (6).

As a narrator, Claire reveals all past unequal and unfair relations between black and white which can cause of melancholic state. In this regard, Lina faces miserable condition therefore, she laments over her parents condition. She retells story of tragedy her parents faces.

Mourning formulates an indelible memory and it occupies human mind. Stephen Bann relates mourning with history and identity. Most of the narratives preserve mourning and traumatic events in history. It constructs destructive and shocking images. On the basis of narrative, a person or group of people relive memory in the history. Bann discuss it with relation to world war, slavery, partition

politics and other greatest and darkest events of human history. These events have been presented in narrative forms, but the narrative memorizes all mourning scenes in history. Bann argues:

Even in the case in which the role of historians is most evident- that of meaning in the sense of historical significance. The world continues to be important. World War II may have different meanings for different inquirers. But that a historian claims a certain significance for this event is not in itself sufficient for it to have this significance: historian may be wrong about the significance of events. (1)

It focuses on historicizing of mourning in different narratives. It means mourning is formulated as a memory and it remains in history. It further formulates complexity of understanding and it is extended in narrative form.

In this respect, mourning is a common experience of human being which derives from sudden, unexpected and sorrowful events which psychologically destroys and dissociates person. It affects human psychology and it is extended by historical narratives. In other words, it is politicized by historical narratives as well.

Even today it can be seen through socialization process. White people have social privilege and even it is not but they think that. It is still problem of society because there not social harmony. Racism is a form of extreme prejudice and is a manifestation of the psychological process of social perception. A prejudice is a form of extreme stereotype which consist an attitude of one person towards another or group. Prejudices are forms of group stereotypes, and the formation of group stereotypes is a product of the formation of attitudes. Prejudices are linked to ego-defense – the adoption of attitudes that serve to bolster the self-esteem of the individual that holds them. The societal beliefs of racism do not pacify the society

whereas it provokes racial antagonism because of sense of revenge in both black and white race. Black people have sense of revenge at the same way white people let it continue their age long domination. The continue practices of racism in the society creates disharmonies between black and white race.

The narrator of the novel, Claire uncovers her history of her family incorporating racial issues which signifies American society and racism. Due to the racial tortures, her mother decided to die. On the very melancholic mood, she discovers herself and family. She ever remembers her mother condition because her mother suffered an inhuman treatment of white society. She mentions here:

You have a host of kind and loving friends to cherish and protect you, who make your pleasure a constant study, and seek to anticipate your every wish, while I am homeless and almost friendless, have never known a mother's kind, protecting care and I do not know that I even have a right to name I bear. I know nothing of my mother not even her name. I know not if a shadow rested on her fair fame. The only link between my past and present life. (5)

She discusses with Ella about her past life. In fact, Claire wants to know about her mother's condition and who is responsible for her death. Due to her mother's death, she suffers from present. At present, she does not have own identity in society. She becomes a homeless, nameless and identity less woman character. Due to the racial defect in society, her mother has to die untimely. The social color complex invokes the social tensions which dominates racial freedom and identity in the society. Black people have long been suffered from racial injustice which provokes resentments against white people. As the black people manifest their repressed anger through social behaviors similarly white people never apologize in front of black people

whereas the domination retains in the society. It shows the racial tension between black and white in the society in which racial differences can be found in terms of their antagonistic behaviors. In the novel, it is found that all black and white people have enmity when their behaviors are performed in the society.

Claire mentions her suffering at present condition when she does not find her parents. It shows her psychological ends due to her pathetic condition at present. She bears irresistible pain and suffering. She further reveals her suffering: "I can and do trust you, but with the trust comes the presentiment of sorrow connected with revelation. But I will cease to repine, and will school myself to hope that all will yet be well" (6).

It Claire remembers various social realms of bondage of black who had bitter social condition. Her mother died due to the racial paining. She lost her both parents and her self identity which causes her painful scenario. Her past memories ever disturb her. Sometime she is panicked by her mysterious origination and sometimes her painful present scenario:

Claire was thoroughly unhappy, and she at last retired to rest. But, it seemed, sleeps and had fled her pillow; for a long while she tossed fierce black eyes; then of sayvord's earnest gaze, and Lloyd's respectful attention; then she wondered at the likeness she bore to the Tracy's. It was singular, to say the least, and she felt herself an wonderingly, and talked mysteriously of somebody and something Claire knew not what. At last sleep came to her relief, and happiness dawned on her troubled mind. (15)

Claire is guided by past memories because she does not find her present. Mourning is not associated with pathological issues because it is a normal reaction to events and

generally is overcome with time. During the mourning period the person realizes that the loved person or object that is lost is truly gone and turns away from reality. This turning away from reality is marked by dejection, loss of interest, inability to love and inhibition of all activities. These same symptoms are present in melancholia, however, in mourning reality eventually wins out and slowly the person returns to their normal state. One of the most dominating situations on her is her mother's death.

The novel is all about emotional response, the narrator of the novel Claire always uses flashback memories. She discusses with other characters and neighbors but she unintentionally refers to her past memories. It leads her toward deeply guided psychology. Mostly it discusses on slavery when blacks were in critical situation. It indirectly refers to black's condition and how the unfair societal practice created melancholic situation:

Lina possessed a voice of sweet and thrilling power, and Richard never wearied of hearing her sing those old ballads, which sang with such deep pathos and exquisite feeling. She soon learned to watch for this coming, and blushed beautifully when he bent to whisper some impassioned strain, or allowed his dark eloquent eyes to rest earnestly on her down cast face. They sought not to analyze their feelings they were happy and that was enough. (19)

Mourning is a conscious response to something, a painful event. Melancholia is more puzzling because of this absence of a loss that can be observed. The person believes that they are inferior and despicable and have always been that way and will tell others about their inferiority. The fact that they feel comfortable enough to tell people how awful they are is unusual because most people who are ashamed.

Freud follows this with observing that the characteristics that a patient suffering from melancholia chastise themselves for having do not actually apply to them but will often be characteristics of a person they are close to. Because they are actually debasing someone or something else they do not have a problem with sharing those criticisms even though they apply it to themselves.

Lina gets torture from social partiality when the society does not treat black and white equally. This racial discrimination and hatred feeling creates a psychological complexity. As it is expressed in the novel; "I fear my happiness is too great to last. A pre-sentiment of evil hovers over me, it is foolish, no doubt" (19). The racial discrimination and complexity of relation makes black difficult situation. The vast form of hatred feeling between two races cause antagonist feeling, it can be seen here:

I attended a sale of slaves, the property of old Hartly, who resides about fifty miles up the river, and was formerly a man of considerable wealth, but being of a wild, reckless disposition, has in a few years, squandered his fortune, and degenerated into a confirmed drunkard and gambler. I purchased several plantation and house of servants. (23)

Such memories and situations of expectancy which demonstrates attachment to the lost object is met by the verdict of reality that the object no longer exists. In melancholia, however, the libido withdraws into the ego and identifies itself with the lost object. This would make sense in ambivalent relationships where the love/hate relation to the object simultaneously stay and leave at the same time. This identification with the object can become dangerous when the melancholic desires the object to disappear enough to harm him.

Lina has been affected psychologically and physically, the debilitating effects of relational trauma that replicate paternal rejection. Similarly, Lina longs to stay with her husband after marriage but she has been forcefully exiled. She is scheming to free herself from the bonds of affections. Being despaired Lina is forced to break relation with husband. Richard's father mistreats her:

Would that this dream of happiness could last. Would that it were in my power of paint a picture with naught but scenes of beauty, but alas, no Richard had put off the evil hour as long as possible, but now it could be averted no longer. He must return home to meet an angry father, perhaps to be disfranchised forever from that father's love. (27)

The Curse of Caste can be considered as the artistic reformulation of traumatic stress originally originated by familial as well as existential alienation that the female protagonist is suffering from. For Lina, the most insistent trauma culminates from the racial hatred. It creates a sense of inferiority and self hatred in society. It affects her psyche. With the disintegrated relationships with family, her relatives and other memories disturb her mind. The actual break-up is implicit but elusive as Lina traumatic memories are reawakened. She becomes desperate lonely, and tormented by such memories.

But the watchful eyes of love soon detected the change. His voice was less cheerful, his step less buoyant, and his smile less frequent. And when he did smile it was sometimes so sadly, as to bring tears to Lina eyes. From that time she ceased to be perfectly happy. Her spirits varied with her husband. If Richard was lively and gay, Lina was happy too, but if Richard's bow was thoughtful, or wore a look of care, the smiles faded from her lips and the rose from her neck, (28)

Although traumatized by the breakdown of love relationships and communication alliances, Lina explores her past memories for recovering her pains. She has been illuminated within dreams and memories, which are recovered time and again. Lina discovers how she is manipulated, how her identity is shaped by the surrounding cultural belief systems. The sense of trauma is also experienced under racial social system. It may also involve witnessing the horrific deaths of others. Anyway the victim of trauma feels that are helpless in their enforced counter with death, violence and brutality. The mental restlessness pressurizes the thought of Lina. She becomes nostalgic which depressed her as it is said here “nostalgia is the suffering caused by an unappeased yearning to return” (5)

Along with these, trauma also has to entail something else; betrayal of trust as well. This is the special instance that makes experiences traumatic. Traumatic images are deeply rooted in her mind and these memories are repeated into her life. It causes the difficult existence in her life. The existence relies on her personal survival. Lina has very profound impact of such individual suffering. She is attached with her family, friends, political community, and beliefs. Events can be seen as traumatic when any illusion of safety or security is broken.

Lina’s existence relies on her past painful memories of past. She cannot escape from such memories which are deeply internalized into her mind. When Lina is betrayed, she realizes the traumatic bitter experience in this way:

At last Lina ceased to look for a letter. She never complained, but that quiet despairing look was pitiful to behold. It was in vain Juno taxed her brain in the manufacture of choice delicacies to tempt the palate of the gentle invalid, who invariable thanked her faithful friend with a sweet smile but failed to do justice to the dainties she prepared. (31)

Lina actually explores her own experiences. She suffers from paternal avoidance and rejection upon her will. Such betrayal affects her psyche. She depressed and loss her feeling of self-confidence and independence. Lina cannot forget such memories personally because the present condition is separated from husband. Memories rapidly become distorted and lost; and herein lies the tragic element.

The concept of trauma can be of great value in the study of history and historical narrative and also of narrative in general as verbal representation of temporality. The ideas of trauma also allows for an interpretation of cultural symptoms of the growths, wounds, scars on a social body and its compulsive repeated actions. The sense of the dynamics of trauma offers a new understanding of the determinant returns of family disasters on talk show that goes beyond discussions of market share and public taste. It explores the relation between psychic wounds and signification. According to Freud an event that is overwhelming penetrates the shield of the psyche. It either does not have time to prepare for it, or whatever receptive capacities are in the place prove inadequate.

Lina is victim of trauma who faces different unexpected injuries in her life. It shocks and leaves wound into the mind there. It is deeply rooted in the mind it regularly haunts to the subject. Then she recollects such unexpected experience and she goes through it. But she relives these memories into her mind. These past memories dominate her present living. Trauma is supposed as bitter or painful experience by the result of any unusual events that brings about a violent rupture at the level of both the personal and social. It annihilates the sense of continuity in our lives and our self-narratives which remains dominant in our lives.

In case of black identity, Claire embodies her identity with own origination. One black generation came across slavery but it was represented through black

writing or black art. It is gone through generation by generation. Black people search their identity through past because it is common history or memory of black people. The reconstruction of the past intends to support a specific positioning in the present or future. It is source of black identity therefore they dig out their past common history. The shared history and shared knowledge lead black collective identity.

Freud reminds his audience that “the interdependence of the complicated problems of the mind forces us to break off every enquiry before it is completed—till the outcome of some other enquiry can come to its assistance” (285). With mourning being such an integral part of human life it is much easier to attempt to explain how the mind adapts to a sudden change such as death. When the mind takes similar events and alters that process it becomes more difficult to explain and therefore, until other aspects of the mind have been made clear, we are left only with hypotheses.

The novel focuses first on the enslaved quadroon Lina Tracy, whose freedom depends upon her white husband Richard purchasing it for her. Unfortunately, Richard Tracy's courageous return to New Orleans to defend his marriage and antislavery politics goes awry. After his outraged father shoots him, the disabled Tracy tries but fails to get word of his survival to his pregnant wife in their Connecticut home. After a series of uncanny coincidences that are hallmarks of the sentimental romance, Claire Tracy becomes a governess in the home of her paternal grandparents as well as the love interest, a visiting French aristocrat whose father is housing Claire's morose father in an expansive chateau near Marseilles.

Lina got painful existence when she left her husband. Her husband cannot stay there. When the events are deeply rooted which gives increasing circulation of images and incessant influx of cataclysmic incidents covered by related events. Her mind is engrossed with past images and mental picture. She cannot escape from such past

memories. It haunts her time and again. The unending psychological horror guides her life and it makes her living disturb. Traumatic experience always effects in her mind and it overlaps our thoughts every time. It always comes then individual has been victimized. These bygone experiences are manifested through her memories. Such nightmare experiences collapse her thinking her mind. Her husband's father never shows any sympathy for their love and marries. The Colonel views:

Our society is getting into a pretty state, when the sons of the best families stoop to marry their father's slaves. You have imbibed the pernicious sentiments of northern demagogues until they have encompassed your ruin. What is to become our institution, if we take our slaves upon equality with ourselves? What slave on the plantation would properly respect you as their master, while they knew your wife was Negro slave? (39)

Lina unconsciously holds with regard to construct the understanding and communicating their experiences as well as knowing/ possessing themselves. It makes her fragile and it can be annihilated. In other word the recipient sense of self and identity is fragmented. The embodied her experiences structured into her mind and haunted and disrupted by the repeatedly by severe trauma. It threatens to negate self, inter subjectivity foundations of trust and fidelity in of her private life.

Such disastrous experience at its core represents unformulatable experience. It can be known and yet it is never known in the sense of being understandable and communicable. Indeed, the communication of disastrous experience. At that time recipient experiences the deep powerlessness associated with the traumatic experience. Some realities in human life cannot be formulated and not all brokenness can be fully repaired. Lina is haunted by the violence of political conflict and the

memories of her parents who chased her from there, suffers from the post-traumatic stress disorder. Her cause of illness is the result of separation from the husband, her people and cultural ceremonies. Excluded from the own societies, she absorbs some of the old ways and stories from her family. But even this experience is confused to her where she learns the facts and cultural inheritance.

Lina gradually brings the unconscious to consciousness, recovering the repressed memories of her past life and the war which have been tangled with the present and reintegrating them into his psyche. She did not find her identity and other such identities are constituted out of the traumatic character of the experience. Lina shares with Juno:

Poor Juno with tearful eyes, promised all that ina had requied, and then, with choking voice asked, have you not one word for master Richard? A beautiful smile lighted up her pale face, and she faintly whispered I love you, but the sentence died on her lips; and ere Juno relinquished the little hand, the lids had closed over eyes into which the misty shadows of death were fast stealing. Such is life. (35)

This is the case, by narrating the stories of their self torture and self actualization of the subject. She feels that suffering. Therefore she lives into past memories. She is terrified from psychological horror into her mind. She never felt happiness. Her mind is occupied such tensions and pain. In fact, it was a kind of loss. Lina has lost her mental relief and joy in life along with this catastrophic event in their country. Lina seeks mental relief and wants to have pleasure but it was not her control. She wants go beyond from ghostly memories but it is her fate of present life. The measurable past haunt at present. She has been pressurized from many tensions at once. It makes her life worst. These past events take back when remember her life in the past. It only

affects into our mind. It perishes individual capability and ability. It causes great loss into human mind. Along with such bitter feeling and bitter experience, he/she loses driving force of life.

Lina is wounded from bitter experience in her life. She has been living in France but mentally she is not there. Her past memories take back in her own homeland. It reoccurs in her mind. She attempts to escape from such memories but she cannot. She explains her life; “Strange hand robed the form of the departed grave, strange but kind hands smoothed the shining curls, and placed the lovely snow flowers on her meek bosom” (23).

To erase those bitter memories she likes to have refresh memories but previous event remain highlighted. She victimizes from such long before flashback memories. She cannot define such unusual and unexpected memories. She reminds those past days which make horror into mind. During communist’s coercion and autocratic suppression, it gives inenarrable affect at their life. People gets threats and horrific images of horror, terror and unexpected. Such events bring a kind of image into her mind.

Lina’s existence relies upon past memories and her survival is difficult. She misses all those things and her existence becomes more miserable. She is mentally affected from longingness of own past memories. Irene explores her own experience. Her parental avoidance and rejection of relationship make her living worse and worse. Such betrayal of her relatives profoundly affects her psyche. She becomes depressed and losses her feelings of self-confidence and interdependence. She feels her identity undergoing a crisis. These kind of repetitive memories frequently come time and again into her life. She thinks over it. She does not have any way to go beyond from that. She acknowledges this fact.

Lina tries to recover the past terrible memories. It is her traumatic past where she has lost so many things. She wants to retain with own things but which are no more there. It makes her living difficult at present. She has conflict in her mind because memories are tussled each other into her mind. But lost memories again hunt into her mind. She was wounded, but was she angry with him. She has got such memories which always suffer to her. She reproduces those painful memories. She cannot forget her past and guided from those painful memories.

Many black people are still being victimized from white domination. The power relation between black and white is very dominant and some discrimination are foreground in the society. It can be found that black people have social torture and hate from white people. It is theoretically written that black and white are equal but which has not been practiced in real life. Thus, racial issue has represented through many ways. Black people have painful present even after civil war in America. It reveals the racial discrimination which has been underlined in the society. Though racial discrimination was illegal after declaration of civil war in America but it might not avoided into practice. Racial issues are deep rooted into society, which can be represented through different things. It is reflected through behavior of people.

Lina is a victim of racism, realizes racial discrimination when the society differently treats her. This situation hurts her and she feels torture. At present time, Lina cannot free from past memory and experiences. Her present moments are not free from past experiences where she was deceived and mistreated by white people. Being married with a White man Richard, Lina does not think she should be separated. Unexpectedly, her relation with Richard is forcefully separated. This unthinkable consequence affects her and takes back to the slavery period. She imagines racial discrimination during slavery and finds its reflection at the present

which panics her. Racism becomes a source of psychological wounds which comes through social behaviours. Lina experiences it by going her past and present as well. The social discrimination creates self hatred and humiliation. This kind of regular experiences cause a melancholic experiences, therefore, she cannot endure it then she wants to kill her.

III. Reflection of Haunting Memories in Collins' *The Curse of Caste*

The research study in Julia C. Collins' *The Curse of Caste* claims that the central character Lina experiences mourning and melancholia by having regular mental disturbance of her traumatic past experience. Being a member of black community, she experiences sense of inferiority which enforces her to think over her cultural and racial originality. She cannot detach from her past experiences when she loses her husband. It is her traumatic experiences when her husband leaves her without reason. Likewise, she feels disturbance when she is mistreated in her community. More importantly, she gets betrayal by her white husband, though, there is not distinct reason behind it. The society, where she lives, is bias for racial treatment which takes her back in racial movement. It means, she gets regular pressure of past experiences and her husband's unkind behaviour adds more tortures in her life.

Racial issue for black people is a traumatic experience which psychologically sickens them when they face discrimination, exploitation and hatred in society. This kind of bitter feeling affects them deeply. It is an experience which hardly manifest whereas it misguide them. Lina has similar experience who finds an inferior position in society which panics her every time. Moreover, her husband mistreats her and ultimately leaves her. This event gives a great shock in her mind. On hand, she feels self hatred being a member of black race, on the other hand, she loses her husband. It reminds her broken family life.

Lina, being a sufferer, cannot move away from her past memories. Her present is occupied by memories. Having a disturbed past experience leads her present life. A sense of loss of her husband and self hatred of racial inferiority torture her, but, she cannot get relief from such deeply rooted psychological wounds. Therefore, it

ultimately drives her toward suicidal attempt. Lina symbolically manifests her deeply rooted agonies and makes unusual expression. Her melancholic experiences often misguide her in reality. She cannot escape from her past experiences due to indelible past experiences. It regularly pressurizes her and she does not get proper settlement of her feelings. Due to the loss of her family members and relatives, she cannot express her deep rooted psychological wounds.

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