

Tribhuvan University

Constructing Multiple Selves in Washington's Autobiography *Up from Slavery*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Masters of Arts in English

By
Riya Rai

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

2018

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
Central Department of English
University Campus, Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Letter of Recommendation

Riya Rai has completed her thesis entitled “Constructing Multiple Selves in Washington’s Autobiography *Up from Slavery*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from June 2017 to April 2018 and completed it successfully. I hereby recommended her thesis be submitted for the final viva voce.

Hem Lal Pandey
(Supervisor)

Date:.....

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Constructing Multiple Selves in Washington’s Autobiography *Up from Slavery*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Riya Rai has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head of Central Department of English

Date:

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my warm thanks to my supervisor Hem Lal Pandey for giving me suggestions and valuable advises to write this thesis paper. I am also thankful to respected lecturers for their aspiring guidance and friendly advice during the project work.

Secondly, I would like to thank to Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English, for granting me a chance to carry out this research. I am also thankful to proposal viva supervisors Raj Kumar Baral and DhurbaKarki for their guidance for proposal defense. I would like to express sincere thanks to entire group of professors, lecturers and all teaching faculty assistance of the Central Department of English.

I am deeply indebted to my parents, sisters and brother for their regular inspiration, encouragement and support. I am thankful for their constant support to complete my work in time. I would also like to thanks my close friends for their continuous support and inspiration to accomplish this research work.

April 2018

Riya Rai

Abstracts

This thesis aims to illustrate the idea of multiple selves of B. T. Washington in his autobiography Up from Slavery. Mainly, it discusses how the post- colonial period invites multiple identities in the multicultural world. The text presents Washington's life story, how he grew up and becomes successful person in African- American culture. When he shifts from one state to another he faces diverse cultural influences. Identity is not innate rather it is constructed, Washington tries to present an idea that human identity is always in process which is not stable and fixed. His original African culture is changed because of the influence of American multiculturalism. Different factors like profession, geography, culture shape one's identity and these very entities change Washington's identity when he is in America. In this thesis, the concept of fluidity of identity and the concept of the multiple selves developed by Stuart Hall has been applied for analysis of the text. Based on the textual analysis, ideas of different critics and library based materials, the researcher explores multiple selves constructed through cross cultural phenomenon and finds out that the identity of Washington constantly changes through time and place.

Keywords: multiple selves, identity, race, multiculturalism, hybridity

Constructing Multiple Selves in B. T. Washington's Autobiography *Up from Slavery*

This thesis concentrates on the issue of constructing multiple selves in Booker T. Washington's autobiography *Up from Slavery*, which studies the life of Washington and it discusses how his identity is in transition from one culture to another and one place to another as well. Furthermore, it portrays the brutal experiences of slavery system in Southern America. The racial struggle was very arduous and he is physically, mentally misbehaved by whites because of slavery. Through this autobiography, Washington explores sexual abuse of black women and he represents dehumanized and brutal experiences of slave. This thesis is the analysis through the theoretical perspective of multiple selves in the autobiography to show how Washington's identity shifts from a minor slave to a public figure in the world.

The autobiography addresses to the changing location of the author and it relates to his multicultural identity. It also explores the transitory identity of an innocent slave boy and shows how he tries to sketch out his personal account through various status. Washington changes his identity when he changes his location throughout the society. This autobiography is the representation of the hybrid self of blacks whose original identity is in crisis due to the changing location and culture. Washington is a representative of all the blacks, who represents the black's history. Identity is always in flux. Identities are not innate rather they are constructed. In the text, black people are shown to be dominated and their identities are constructed according to the culture and tradition of white people in the African- American history. Hence, the researcher tries to exhibit how Washington uses multiple selves to sketch out his personal transformation of identity from a mere slave to the public figure.

The thesis introduces how Washington forms a new identity in different locations and accepts new adjustment to live in the new American culture. Washington exposes his personal identity from African to African- American. Throughout the autobiography, he recalls his story from childhood in the plantation of Franklin County Virginia who shifts from there to West Virginia Malden, New York, Paris, London, England, Belgium, Georgia etc. Though he is from marginalized groups, after the Civil War he attempts to reform himself with new environment and identity as well. It becomes a new atmosphere for Africans to face and adjust in new America. Thus, the research paper analyzes how Washington changes his previous identity into present environment and situation in the new place. Washington also creates a writerly identity to show his unstable and unending transitory identity as well as human identity which is not by birth but constructed by the changing society.

The autobiography focuses on Washington's transitory identity, who begins his journey from the plantation to the different states of the multicultural world in America. Washington exhibits multiple selves in order to retrace his journey from childhood to manhood and he depicts how his hard work changed the slave life. The story begins "I was born a slave" (17) to recall his past memories. An ex- slave displays his life transition from bondage to freeman and represents his changing identities such as a slave, a student, a teacher, a founder, a professor, a spoke person, an adviser and a famous public figure in his time. Through this autobiographical writing, he establishes a new identity as an author.

Additionally, Washington shows the African- American history very clearly, he narrates: "The years from 1867 to 1878 I think may be called the period of Reconstruction" (67). He represents that during the reconstruction period black peoples were wanted to escape from labor life through education and politics.

Washington narrates: “This included the time that I spent as a student at Hampton and as a teacher in West Virginia” (67). Washington recalls his past incident to represent his shifting identity from student to a teacher. Again he narrates: “At that time a journey from Virginia over the mountains to West Virginia was rather a tedious and in some cases a painful undertaking” (32). All memories and experiences are about Washington’s life, how he grows up in the small shelter and leaves many old shelter for his good life. In this autobiography, Washington performs his past activities very seriously just like white peoples dehumanized them and give them second class citizenship. The thesis vividly shows that Washington as a small innocent black boy growing up with a single name ‘Booker’. He was the last ex- slave writer who was born in slavery and became the first African- American to receive an honorary degree from Harvard University. Washington finds education as the best weapon to change his dominated identity. Geography, location and profession change his identity automatically. He was the contributor to his race as well as he equally contributed for native Americans. In the end of his life, he becomes an educated successful public figure or known as a philanthropist.

Washington brings the concept of multiple selves to retrace his life journey from childhood to manhood. As an African- American, he has many challenges to success overcome from slavery. Therefore, his identity is shifting from African to African- American in the multicultural world. Washington cleverly displays: “My life had its beginning in the midst of the most miserable, desolate and discouraging surroundings” (17). His racial struggle is an unmanageable, owners are cruel. The text also portrays the African- American history. The black people fight many years for their freedom and rights to citizenship and land. They are shown to be deprived of facilities.

Thus, this paper discusses how Washington becomes successful to overcome from slave. Washington's major goal is that he wants to break the boundary between first class citizenship and second class citizenship. He uses multiple selves to recall his past experiences and to construct the layer of identities. Washington grows up as a slave, he has many embarrassing moments in his childhood. In this regard, he narrates: "it was common to use flax as part of the clothing for the slaves" (23). Washington recalls that he has a pair of noisy wooden shoes and a flax shirt presents an exceedingly awkward appearance for slave. Again Washington narrates: "my struggles and longing for an education" (34). He realizes that education is a means to uplift African- American life. He moves different places to search space for blacks but black people have no authority to work and to live independently. But still black people have emotional feelings.

The text was published in 1901 and it is widely viewed and make criticism on it. It mainly focuses on the issue of black slavery. It has many sites to interpret rather a single site. Critics like; Donald B. Gibson, W.S Scarborough, William D. Howells and W. J Button advocate according to their view upon *Up from Slavery*. As an African- American, Washington was born in slavery, he narrates: "I was born in a typical log cabin, about fourteen by sixteen feet square" (17). His journey starts from a small cabin which is "not only our living- place, but was also used as the kitchen for the plantation" (18). The cabin was without glass, windows and it is too small and he faces very uncomfortable life there. But later he becomes an exemplary figure in the world. His slave identity shifts from one culture to another because human identity is not stable. Gibson claims: "The first day I entered school, it seems to me, was the happiest day that I have ever known" (372). Through this quotation Gibson points out

when Washington entered school that is his happiest moment in his life. White owners treat them like inhuman, abuse physically and mentally as well.

Furthermore, Gibson points out that when Washington shifts from his birth place to another place automatically his identity is transition from one to another. In this sense, he argues: “He arrives in Malden with his mother to join his stepfather, he finds his new situation which is no better than that he had left in Virginia” (375).

After Civil War, still black people’s life is same because of social system. In that time, many black people are transfer from one place to another for space and freedom. In this regard, Donald B. Gibson claims:

Some of our neighbors were colored people, and some were the poorest and most ignorant and degraded white people . . . Drinking, gambling, quarrels, fights, shockingly immoral practices were frequent . . . Though I was a mere child, my stepfather put me and my brother at work in one of the furnaces.

Often I began work as early as four o’ clock in the morning. (375)

These lines point out that Washington faces both cultural and geographical problems in Malden. In this sense, Stuart Hall asserts: “identity is a matter of becoming as well as of being” (3). So, human identity is complex and shifting entity is the matter of becoming. Again Gibson explains:

Without my knowing it, there were a larger number of people present from Alabama, and some from the town of Tuskegee. These white people afterward frankly told me that they went to this meeting expecting to hear the South roundly abused, but were pleasantly surprised to find that there was no word of abuse in my address. On the contrary, the South was given credit for all the praiseworthy things that it had done. (383)

He shows that Washington's identity shifts from an innocent slave to a famous public figure and now white people frankly tell him that they want to attend his meeting expecting to hear the South roundly abused. In his public speech, a large number of people were present from Alabama and some from the town of Tuskegee. Washington was followed by white people in these days because his speeches are more impressive rather than other public figures.

Moreover, even the blacks are capable in comparison to whites, Washington and Lincoln serve as fellowman to both whites and blacks. In this regard W. J Button argues: "Like Lincoln, he sprang from common soil, and like Lincoln he met in life a great opportunity; like Lincoln, he was prepared when opportunity came; and again like Lincoln he rose to sublime heights in the service of his fellowman a benefactor of both the black and the white race" (399). Button points out that Washington also has ability to do something like whites. Button compares Washington quality and personality with Lincoln because of his good deeds. Washington becomes a benefactor of both race just like Lincoln. This quotation is the key idea of this research paper because black people also have capacity to work like whites. As a slave, Washington gets an opportunity to attend a formal school in Hampton Institute which led to professorship and that leads to one of the most prestigious African-American educated. His identity shifts from slave to "our national benefactors" (211). Washington works for all groups until his death. The black leader best known among white American is Booker T. Washington.

Another critic, W. D. Howells claims: "He was born that his people had no tables or beds where they ate or slept, they never sat down to meals, but caught upon a bone or a crust and fed upon it wherever they happened to be. They never went to bed, but dropped down anywhere, and slept upon a heap of rags or the bare floor" (286).

The above mentioned quote depicts that Washington rises from enslavement to a prominent educator. Washington remembers slave life, slave never experienced bed to sleep, tables to eat and they have no authority to stay freely with family members.

Furthermore, Washington portrays the inhuman bondage of slavery in America. Washington explores brutal violence, dehumanizing practices of slavery and sexual abuse of the black slave. Howells calls Washington a public man as well as he known as an exemplary African- American because he always worked for others.

Similarly, W.S Scarborough claims:

Begins with the author's slave days, records his arduous struggles and ends with his days of triumph over caste and color prejudice. Tuskegee of course is his central theme and he writes of his labors there with a simplicity that appeals powerfully to the reader . . . he has shown himself to the world as never before. He has told of his privations and his triumphs. (150)

Scarborough criticizes upon Washington's successful life journey and he points out that Washington begins his life story 'I was born a slave', he remembers his slave days, records his arduous struggles. His slave days are very touchable and unforgettable moment. Washington starts to work from the age of nine because in his early childhood, children are hired as slave. But he wants to join school because of an inner desire to learn English. He was a lucky boy as a slave because he gets an opportunity to read and write. After completed his education, he becomes an educated exemplary black person. Washington is not only the representative of his race but also the representative of all American.

Washington's known as one of the most divisive leader of race relations in African- American history. Washington's propensity for self- naming is revealed in one of the most curious and compelling moments, he narrates: "In some way a feeling

got among the colored people that it was far from proper for them to bear the surname of their former owners, and a great many of them took other surnames. This was one of the first signs of freedom” (10). Thus a feeling that was beyond anyone’s control led to engagement with a new system of locating identity in the world. Through this autobiography, Washington remembers his childhood, adulthood and manhood memories. Susanna Ashton then continues to explain:

In one of his happier childhood memories, Washington recounts taking a small wooden box, knocking out a side, putting some shelves in it, and filling the shelves with “every kind of book that I could get my hands upon, and calling it my ‘library’”. Washington’s use of offsetting quotation marks calls attention to his awareness of childish aggrandizement here. It also foregrounds his career as a library builder? Both Tuskegee’s and many others that he formally or informally sponsored across the country. (4)

This quotation demonstrates that Washington has one of his happiest moments, he puts every kind of book in his hand and calls them his library. It also foregrounds that Washington’s career as a library builder. In the end of his life, he becomes successful to build the Tuskegee Institute and Hampton Institute as well as Washington known as a founder of Tuskegee Institute. Again Susanna Ashton explains:

When they were slaves, a colored person was simply called “John” or “Susan”. There was seldom occasion for more than the use of the one name. If John or Susan belonged to a white man by the name of “Hatcher”, sometimes he was called “John Hatcher”, or as often “Hatcher’s John”. But there was a feeling that “John Hatcher” or “Hatcher’s John” was not the proper title by which to denote a freeman; and so in many cases “John Hatcher” was changed to “John S. Lincoln” or “John S. Sherman”, the initial “S” standing for no

name, it being simply a part of what the colored man proudly called his “entitles”. (16)

The given lines are key to understand how a colored person name is shifting from John or Susan to John Hatcher or Hatcher’s John. African- Americans did not even have proper names like whites. There is no fixity of identity. One person may have different names to call. Therefore, black people identity is created by owners.

Washington focuses on the concept of multiple selves to represent his shifting identity and crisis in identity as well.

According to Stuart Hall “identity is a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process and always constituted” (392). In this regard, Washington’s identity is never complete, always in process, shifting from slave to an educated person, a spoke person, an adviser as well as he represents himself as a famous public figure in his time. As a slave he was humiliated by white people but when he becomes a public figure everyone notices and respects him.

Furthermore, Hall talks about cultural identities and views, “the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture” (395). Identities are provisional. Thus, human identities are marked by time and place as well as identities are marked in terms of many categories: gender, race, ethnicity, national citizenship, work status, sexuality, class location and generational location. Black people identities are more fluid rather than whites because of slavery system. In this sense, Washington’s identity not only marked by time and place but also marked by national citizenship, work status, class location and generational location.

Moreover, Bhabha develops his theory of identity by shifting from the binary opposition to the concept of hybrid and hybrid identity. He claims:

This question takes on ever greater complexity when we consider the fact the diaspora we are taking about are metropolitan diaspora that is dispread that have found home away from home is hill of lies and duplicities. A diasporas citizen very likely find economic betterment in the new home, but his every often in allied with a sense of political cultural loss. (174)

Immigrant people's identity is blurred because of homelessness. Moreover, cross-cultural adoption includes all individuals who are born and raised in one culture. They move different place to survive. Therefore, cultural identity changes along with the change of location. Human identity is not natural but it is constructed by colonizer in the context of colonization. In United States, African- American have more fluid identity because it is constructed and imposed by the white masters in the context of slavery system. In this text, Washington develops the concept of multiple selves to show his shifting identity.

In the same way, Bhabha has developed his concept of hybridity from literary and cultural theory to describe the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequality. So, post- colonial perspective declares that human identity is on process and it is always uncertain and instable.

This thesis is the study of the African- American an ex- slave Booker T. Washington's autobiography, *Up from Slavery* from the perspective of constructing multiple selves. It focuses the fleeting identity of Washington. As a representative of the black people, Washington struggles for the identity and freedom in the multicultural society and he shows that how African- American identity is shifted from one to another. In this regard, Smith and Watson opine: "Identity is socially constructed in gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, class, family genealogy and religious and political ideologies, to cite the most obvious" (33). Washington's

hybrid identity is common in this multicultural world which is constructed. As an ex-slave, his identities are casted historically and culturally. Mainly, the research paper focuses on how Washington's identity is changing through location, culture, situation and professional transformation from one to another.

Washington lives through several difficult phases and he gets a typical African identity in his birth place but it is automatically changed when he leaves his plantation and moves to the other's plantation in another place. He expresses his inner feelings that he needs more space and freedom to live there as a human being like white American. He travels many places to seek freedom and identity for him and for his race as well. Washington finds problem in his own identity because identity is in flux. His identity is not stable but shifts automatically from one culture to another.

This thesis shows that human identity is not fixed by one's birth but it is automatically establishing a new self. As an African- American slave, Washington searches his individual identity through this autobiographical writing. In this sense, Stuart Hall's concept of fluid identity shows that identity is a process in post-colonial world. In this regard he opines: "identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference" (3). According to Stuart Hall, human identity is always in flux, which is not an inborn quality but it reflects the ongoing changing quality. Identities are constantly producing and reproducing according to time, situation and location.

Washington's identity shifts from his birth place that is East Virginia to West Virginia, Malden. It is also a locational and cultural shift within the country. He works at housekeeping with Mr. Ruffner and Mrs. Ruffner in Malden. She always encouraged and sympathized Washington in all efforts to get an education. In this sense, Washington narrates: "I had been called 'Booker'. Before going to school . . .

as soon as I found out about it I revived it, and made my full name ‘Booker Taliaferro Washington’” (38). He gives his last two name ‘Taliaferro Washington’ because he wants to complete his name. In this way, he borrows his last name ‘Washington’ from the founding father of United States and the middle name ‘Taliaferro’ is an Italian word which shifts from ‘Booker’ to ‘Booker Taliaferro Washington’. Washington wants to make his name unique because all students have two name. Even within the country, different social locations influence his identity. However, he irritated with slavery as he expresses: “I can remember anything almost every day of my life had been occupied in some kind of labor” (19). Black children are forced to work in the plantation with their parents from early morning until the sunset. As an African-American slave, his identity and status is in margin. Therefore, he faces both cultural and locational problems in the United States. As a poor slave, Washington has no any satisfaction of being student in school and in his name as well. He mentions:

When, however, I found myself at the school for the first time, I also found myself confronted with two other difficulties. In the first place, I found that all the other children wore hats or caps on their heads, and I had neither hat nor cap and my second difficulty was with regard to my name or rather ‘a’ name. From the time when I could remember anything, I had been called simply ‘Booker’. Before going to school it had never occurred to me that it was needful or appropriate to have an additional name. (37)

Washington expresses that as a slave, he has an awkward experience when he finds himself at the school. Especially, he faces two difficulties: one is all children wear hats or cap but he has neither hat nor cap. Secondly, all children have minimum two name but he has only one name ‘Booker’. In this point, Hall’s idea of identity becomes a “retelling of the past” (12). According to Stuart Hall, identity is created

through different ways and Washington's identity is analyzed throughout the narration and the position in the narratives from his past experiences. In this regard, Stuart Hall points out two views of identity in terms of sameness and difference. The first view is that cultural identity is shared and we all reflect the same sense of oneness. However, the second issue of cultural identity elaborates on how identity often undergoes constant transformation implying fluid change, reflected in the way Washington changes his name throughout the autobiography.

Washington gets diverse experiences and his identity transforms from the position of slavery to the position of public figure. However, aristocratic groups with their absolute power, by imposing dominant ideology and hegemony, control over the black people. So, their identity and status get marginalized by power. In the book *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, hegemony is defined as "the power of ruling class to convince other classes that their interests are the interests of all" (116). Thus, hegemony is a kind of power. The white people rule over the black slave to impose their power over them. Black slaves are not allowed to live freely and they are restricted in every activity. Washington's hard working habit established him as a teacher, a social activist, an adviser, an orator, a professor and a national benefactor too. Washington's identity is always in transition from slave to a busy public figure.

During the period of slavery, slave owners deliberately ignored, dehumanized and misused their slaves because they had power. Washington was born in slavery system. Slavery system was difficult, slaves had to work in the plantation and housekeepers for their masters from sunrise to sunset but they had no rights only the duties. At that time, slaves were punished if they tried to escape from the work or if they broke the rules. Black children also work together with his/ her parents. Washington also works with his step-father in salt-furnace as he presents: "The first

thing he was learned in the way of book knowledge is working in the salt- furnace” (33). Through this quotation, he shares his own ideas about an ideal education for African- American and describes two important educational facilities for his race in the nineteenth century: Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute. In this sense, Foucault claims: “power is not . . . one individual’s domination over others or that of one group or class over others . . . rather power must be analyzed as something which circulates and only function in the form of a chain; it is never in anybody’s hand” (98). Here, in these lines Foucault shows that power is the institutional entity which helps to manipulate the individuals. Whites create the power discourse to dominate and bound the blacks as their slaves. Power is institutionalized by whites to dominate the black slave. The black identity is manipulated by white ideology. Black people are also deprived of education. Black people are called uneducated and uncivilized and their body is misused as an object. So black identity is determined by their white masters.

Human identity is shaped by cultural practices and constructed by society. He leaves his birth plantation with beautiful dream to search freedom but he finds his identity is in the crisis and a sense of loss in the new geographical location. Washington faces many challenges like, he narrates: “In the midst of my struggles and longing for an education, a young colored boy” (34). He accepts new culture to adjust but never finds pleasant experiences in Malden. Jonathan Boyarin argues: “identity has been constructed traditionally in two ways. It has been figured as the product of a common genealogical origin and on the other, as produced by common geographical origins” (86). According to Boyarin, identity has been constructed in two ways: genealogical and geographical. Washington’s identity is also not clear and it remains uncertain. As an African- American, he has a slave identity but geographically,

professionally and culturally his identity changes time to time. When he shifts from one place to another, automatically it is changed because human identity is always in process to change and get reshaped.

Washington is unknown about his originality. This shows that he is not a human being in real sense or his identity is always created and imposed by the white superiors. Washington narrates:

I was born a slave on a plantation in Franklin County, Virginia. I am not quite sure of the exact place or exact date of my birth, but at any rate I suspect I must have been born somewhere and at some time . . . The earliest impressions I can now recall are of the plantation and the slave quarters- the latter being the part of the plantation where the slaves had their cabins. (17)

Washington projects his cultural background where he was born but not sure of the exact date of his birth. He recalls the plantations and slave quarters because it reflected slave life. Black people are treated as non-human being, women are raped and abused from owners because of slavery. Therefore, black people do not get any chance or opportunity to lift up their position in their own society. As he mentions his birth and birth place, it projects black peoples have very miserable condition in slavery time. He further states: “There was no wooden floor in our cabin, the naked earth being used as a floor” (18). As an African- African slave, his identity and status have been marginalized. Slaves are transported from one place to another as the goods. He utters: “The slave ship while being conveyed from Africa to America” (17). Black people are used in the plantation for white masters. The slave owners rape the slave women and the child born of rape is made slave in their plantation. They have no fixed or stable identity but it is constructed by political ideology.

Cultural identity is a representation of the particular culture. A person can represent his or her culture, where he or she lives. In this regard, Washington narrates:

I do not even know his name. I have heard reports to the effect that he was a white man who lived on one of the near- by plantations. Whoever he was, I never heard of his taking the least interest in me or providing in any way for my rearing. But I do not find especial fault with him. He was simply another unfortunate victim of the institution, which the Nation unhappily had engrafted upon it at that time. (18)

Washington digs out his personal account he was born from unknown father. He knows only about him. Through this narration, Washington was son of an unknown white man who lives near the neighboring plantation. They force their female slaves to have sexual relationships and this depicts the sexual exploitation of the female bodies. Women body is objectified as sex toy and they do not care about their desire and intention but only use. In this way, black people become the part of the slavery system rather than the part of human being.

Washington moves to different places inside his own country and the different social location, culture and profession influence his identities. However, Washington feels uncomfortable from his changing identity as he expresses: “When I heard the school- roll called, I noticed that all of the children had at least two names” (38).

Washington hears that the school- roll called, he becomes in deep perplexity because he knew that teacher would demand him at least two names. When the teacher asked him what was his full name, he calmly replies, “Booker Washington” (38). According to Stuart Hall, identity is not in complete version but it keeps on changing and it is produced by socio- cultural values. In this regard he claims:

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of

thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a ‘production’, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (222)

These lines are key to understand, the cultural values play vital role in shaping the identity of human beings. Identity can be built through the social norms and values from which one they belong to. Cultural identity “is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture” (113). Through Washington’s transformation, he reflects him as a slave, a student, a teacher, a professor, a founder, a famous person. These different characters and identities transform Washington in variously critical ways: emotionally, physically and psychologically. This fluid identity renews Washington. Thus, Washington’s various characters assumes the reflection of his ongoing changeable identity. In the same way, he further narrates:

Simply a victim of the system of slavery. I cannot remember having slept in a bed until after our family was declared free by the Emancipation proclamation. Three children- John, my older brother, Amanda, my sister, and myself- had a pallet on the dirt floor, or, to be more correct, we slept in and on a bundle of filthy rags laid upon the dirt floor. (19)

Washington lives in a small cabin together with his mother, brother and sister until the end of Civil War. He never experienced the separation of slave families. However, he had some unpleasant memories. Washington remembers how they had to sleep together on the cold and dirty floor without clothes.

Furthermore, Washington displays slave have unfixed identity. Washington profoundly narrates:

I had no schooling whatever while I was a slave, though I remember on

several occasions I went as far as the schoolhouse door with one of my young mistresses to carry her books. The picture of several dozen boys and girls in a schoolroom engaged in study made a deep impression upon me, and I had the feeling that to get into a schoolhouse and study in this way would be about the same as getting into paradise. (20)

Through the narration that Washington remembers his slave days. The blacks are captive by white and work for them. He portrays his inner desire to get into a schoolhouse and study in the same way like other white children. But Stuart Hall believes that cultural identity exists only in the representation. Though, in this idea, he argues: “we should think identity as a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process and always constituted within not outside representation” (110). So, these lines explain that how Washington’s identity shifts from one to another and his identity is constituted by society.

Culture is always influenced by human activities. It covers all human ways of life, ways of thinking and way of living where we can find collective consciousness or unconsciousness. Therefore, culture is the result of human activities. Regarding cultural identity, Johann Herder argues: “The foundation of construction of identity rests on the perceived wholeness of a community derived from the totality of its expressions- language, customs, dress and religion” (362). In this sense, Washington has broken his ties with his family and his original community in United States. It is an attempt to assimilate his identity into a vague pluralism of American multiculturalism. Washington depicts how his identity transform from slave to a successful an exemplary person in the multicultural society. He was an African-American educator, an author, an advisor for president of the USA and also the

dominant leader of African- American community in 1890 to 1915. He was known as a leader of African- American, who born into the slavery system.

In addition, Washington's identity is changing continuously through his profession and location. He narrates: "It was June of 1875 when I finished the regular course of study at Hampton" (62). Washington gets an opportunity to teach at his old school in Malden. Through his teaching job, he develops his performance skills, he collects useful knowledge's and attends Wayland Seminary in Washington D.C as a guest. In 1879, again Washington gets chance to speak at Hampton's graduation ceremony, where afterward General Armstrong offers him a job to teach. He makes a plan for black people which is not only teach them to read and write but also teach them the necessarily vocational skills to earn their daily bread. In this regard, Washington narrates: "As Hampton I not only learned that it was not a disgrace to labor, but learned to love labor" (63). This line clears that Washington learns to love labor because of financial value. The skill of labor makes independent and self-reliance. It is his first knowledge which changes his life.

Furthermore, cultural identity is considered to be the identity of a group or culture of an individual as far as he or she are depended upon by his or her belonging to a group or culture. According to Hall, he argues:

Cultural identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. It is not some universal and transcendental spirit inside us on which history has made no fundamental mark. It is not a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute . . . cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourse of history and culture. (237)

Human identity is not fixed or not a fixed origin. In this regard, Washington not only describes his life but he also gives an insight into the lives of African- Americans before and after the abolition of slavery. Additionally, Washington introduces practical education in Tuskegee that would make the Negroes socially useful and economically productive. During Washington rises as a national spoke person for his race, they are systematically excluded from the vote and political participation through African-American codes and Jim Crow.

Washington further narrates: “the colored people in Atlanta, Georgia, gave me a reception at which the Governor of the state president, and a similar reception was given me in New Orleans, which was presided over by the Mayor of the city” (205). Washington diligent behavior uplifts his life. Again Georgian people’s give him a chance to work as a governor of the state president and the Mayor of the city because of his good personality. In 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt invites Booker T. Washington to the White House and makes him the first African- American to be so honored. Both president Theodore Roosevelt and his successor president William Howard Taft use Washington as an adviser on racial matters because he accepts racial subservience.

Moreover, Washington tries to maintain peace between the cross cultural community at that time. He narrates:

In the fall of 1898 I heard that president McKinley was likely to visit Atlanta, Georgia, for the purpose of taking part in the peace Jubilee exercises to be held there to commemorate the successful close of the Spanish- American war. At this time, I had been hard at work, together with our teachers, for eighteen years, trying to build up a school that we thought would be of service Nation.
(213)

Washington points out that former president McKinley wants to meet with him because he was an advisor on racial matters. In that time, Washington was engaged at work together with other teachers in his old institute. Washington again narrates: “he organized the National Negro Business League” (222). After eighteen years, they success to build up a school, they thought that it would be service to Nation. Which held the first meeting in Boston in the summer of 1900 and it brings together for the first time a large number of the colored who are engaged in various lines of trade or business in different parts of the United States. Thirty states are represented at their first meeting and this is an exemplary meeting of colored in the African- American history. Washington’s hard working brings delightful surprises in the colored lifestyle.

Cultural identity is related with past and it has its own history which is constructed on the binary of self and other. According to Bhabha, he uses the concept hybridity in his text *The Location of Culture*, to argues that cultural production is always most productive where it is most ambivalent. He argues:

Hybridity results from various forms of colonization, which lead to cultural collisions and interchanges. In the attempt to assert colonial power in order to create anglicized subjects, he traces of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different- a mutation, a hybrid. (111)

Bhabha brings the concept hybridity to define the cultural identity. This hybrid trace contradicts both the attempt to fix and control indigenous cultures and the illusion of cultural isolation or purity. Washington reveals that how he exhibits transitory identity or multiple selves to recall his past memory. He has been known as an educated professor, a civil rights activist, an author and a benefactor. Washington deeply narrates: “Our new house was no better than the one we had left on the old plantation in Virginia” (33). He remembers, slaves never get better house rather than one they

left on the old plantation. At that time, he thinks slave's identity is fixed which is never change but human identity is always in the process of changing. Thus, identity is fleeting, shifting, temporary construction, changeable and situational.

Washington is the representative of the black people and he struggles many years for his identity and freedom in the multicultural society. His major goal is that he wants to uplift their life autonomously because black people also have ability like whites and he gets fruition in the end. In the beginning, he has dominated and humiliated identity but later he changes his identity continuously because identity carries through location and profession. When Washington shifts from one place to another, he loses his original identity because of spatial and cultural diversity.

In addition, Washington exposes his fleeting identity. In West Virginia, his neighbors were dirty and poor, with no sanitary regulations. He mentions: "frequently they have the habit of, "drinking, gambling, quarrels, fights and shockingly immoral practices" (33). Washington's key out that black people have immoral practices such as: drinking, gambling and fighting. Black people are tagged as a thief, rapist, drunkard, murderer and lower class people because of slavery system. So, education is the best weapon to change the black people life who are suffered from racial discrimination. At the end, he becomes successful to break the boundary between two race and he becomes a respectable person. Most notable speech of Washington in Atlanta, he narrates:

When I arose to speak, there was considerable cheering, especially from the colored people. As I remember it now, the thing that was uppermost in my mind was the desire to say something that would cement the friendship of the races and bring about hearty cooperation between them. So far as my outward surroundings were concerned, the only thing that I recall distinctly now is that

when I got up, I saw thousands of eyes looking intently into my face. The following is the address which I delivered. (156)

Through these lines, everyone understands the historical background of Washington. The notable speech of Atlanta makes him nationally famous and becomes the leader of the former slaves and their descendant as well as he becomes one of the most celebrated educator and orator in the world. Likewise, he was the first African-American to receive 'an honorary degree' from Harvard University, in 1896.

Moreover, Hampton Institute is an inspiration for Washington's teaching and educational methods. In this regard, Washington further narrates:

When I first went to Hampton I do not recall that I had ever slept in a bed that had two sheets on it. In those days there were not many buildings there, and room was very precious. There were seven other boys in the same room with me; most of them were, however, students who had been there for some time. The sheets were quite a puzzle to me. The first night I slept under both of them, and the second night I slept on top of them; but by watching the other boys I learned my lesson in this, and have been trying to follow it ever since and to teach it to others. (54)

Aforementioned lines are Washington's description of his first experienced with bed sheets. Washington uses to sleep between the two bed sheets which are tricky for him and many other students like him had not used it before. He learns many lesson from Hampton Institute which is very important to learn especially for slaves because everything is new for him and other slaves. The bed sheets were quite puzzled for him.

Another important most valuable lesson provided at Hampton Institute is the value of the bath. In this way, he narrates:

I sometimes feel that almost the most valuable lesson I got at Hampton Institute was in the use and value of the bath. I learned there for the first time some of its value, not only in keeping the body healthy, but in inspiring self-respect and promoting virtue. In all my travels in the South and elsewhere since leaving Hampton, I have always in some way sought my daily bath. To get it sometimes when I have been the guest of my own people in a single-roomed cabin has not always been easy to do, except by slipping away to some stream in the woods. I have always tried to teach my people that some provision for bathing should be a part of every house. (53)

Through these lines Washington clears that he becomes more inspired from the Hampton educational system. The most valuable lessons that he gets at Hampton Institute is the use and value of the bath. He learns first time in his life journey which is the memorable moment for him. Washington always tries to teach his people that the value of health and social practices which is useful in the life journey.

Foucault adopts the term ‘discourse’ to denote a historically contingent social system that produces knowledge and meaning. In his view, there is no fixed and definitive structuring of either social identity or practices. He rejects the idea of a person having an inner and fixed essence that is the person identity. Identity formation begins at birth and continues throughout the life course. Washington narrates: “I was born in a typical log cabin” (17). He was born as slave in a typical log cabin. His much of boyhood spend in a salt-furnace and a coal mine. After completed his education from Hampton Institute, Washington gets an opportunity to teach in his old school. As a social activist, he gives his whole life for his own race. Washington was the first African- American who completed his master’s degree from Harvard University. He further narrates: “while I was with the president” (214). Now

Washington works with president because he becomes an advisor of former president McKinley. Indeed, Washington's identity shifts from a minor slave to an advisor of the president McKinley.

Furthermore, Washington expresses his life journey and how his identity is fleeting from one to another. He collects many knowledge in his Hampton journey, the most important and valuable lesson is to take a bath. And these collected ideas are utilized in his educational methods when he becomes a teacher. In addition, Washington narrates: "to the usual routine of teaching I taught the pupils to comb their hair, and to keep their hands and faces clean, as well as their clothing. I gave special attention to teaching them the proper use of the tooth- brush and the bath" (75). Washington points out that he teaches practically in his old school because practical education is necessary for slaves to uplift their lifestyle. He accepts that he was inspired from Hampton practical education and now he utilizes this idea in his institute to develop the slave student's skill mentally and physically. Through the quotation, Washington clears about his identity, how his identity is automatically shifting from slave to a skillful teacher.

In this regard, one person may carry the layers of identity or Washington identity changes through time and profession. According to Balibar, he claims:

Cultural identity is described as being what expresses the singularity of groups, people or societies, what forbids conflating them in a uniformity of thought and practice or purely and simply erasing the borders that separate them and that translate at least the tangential correlation between linguistic facts, religious facts, facts of kinship aesthetics facts in the broad sense (for there are styles of life just as there are musical or literary style) and political facts. (15)

Culture is the result of human activities and it is always influenced by human activities which also covers all human ways of living life, thinking and living. A person can have multiple or different identities which are based on gender, ethnicity, religion, nation, profession, location and family roles. Identities are automatically shaped by system of culture. Washington was born from an African mother and a white father. He grows up with his mother and stepfather in Malden, West Virginia. Therefore, identity is uncertain and Washington identity shaped by African culture and his identity transition from African to African- American in his life journey.

Moreover, Washington was an outcome from the rape of his mother by her white master in Franklin County, Virginia. He narrates: “around 1858 or 1859, I do not know the month or the day”. Washington suffers from different kind of discrimination, injustice and violence in the name of slavery. He is one of the famous African- American leader of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Washington narrates: “In the spring of 1899 there came to me what I might describes as almost the greatest surprise of my life” (191). He recalls that some of his friends give him chance to travel Europe with his third wife for a few months. It was his first vacation in nineteen years. He visits Holland, Belgium, France, England and meet a number of important individuals, including the queen of England. At the end of his life journey, he becomes a famous public figure in the world and he was known as a black visitor who visits the most of the European countries. Now, he becomes an educator among the colored people of the world. His identity shifts from slave to a famous person in the world as well as he was known as native son of Virginia, prolific writer, editor and speaker too. He was the last African- American who was born into slavery and a Boston newspaper ranked him ‘our national benefactors’.

Furthermore, Washington becomes a successful professor and a chairman in Tuskegee Institute. Indeed, identities are instable and context based. Smith and Watson opine:

What may be a meaningful identity, on one day or in one context, may not be culturally and personally meaningful at another moment or in another context . . . Identities linked to gender, national citizenship, work status, sexuality, class location, generational location, ethnicity and family constellation. (33)

These lines clear that identities are marked not only by culture but also by the different other things such as race, gender, national citizenship and family background, sexuality and politically too. Racial discrimination was everywhere in Washington childhood days. He narrates:

One day, while at work in the coal-mine, I happened to overhear two miners talking about a great school for colored people somewhere in Virginia. This was the first time that I had ever heard anything about any kind of school or college . . . As they went on describing the school, it seemed to me that it must be the greatest place on earth, and not even Heaven presented more attractions for me at that time than did the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia, about which these men were talking. I resolved at once to go to that school, although I had no idea where it was, or how many miles away, or how I was going to reach it; I remembered only that I was on fire constantly with one ambition, and that was to go to Hampton. (43)

Through this quotation Washington remembers his slavery days, he listens that two miners are talking about colored school. In United States, even school and rest room also build separate for colored people. Identity is categorized according to race. So,

position and identity is marked by the race, class and family background too. The black people identity was in crisis by racial discrimination in African- American history.

Thus, Washington has multiple characters and different identities such as a prominent African- American educator and leader, most celebrated orator in the world as well as powerful speaker to both black and white audiences. Being a black his identity is also influenced by history and his cultural identity is different from other white American. Washington includes that his identity is not only related to black but also related to slave, immigrated people, spoke person and activist too. He becomes fail to hold his identity because of multiculturalism. Furthermore, Washington identity is flexible and constructed as well as his autobiography pictured out the autonomy of identity.

To sum up, the thesis has shown constructing multiple selves in Washington's *Up from Slavery*. The researcher shows that Washington identity is transfer from African to African- American in the multicultural world. Washington finds himself with multiple characters and transitory identities from slave to a public figure in the world of his time. In this sense, he represents himself as a slave, a student, a teacher, an advisor, a spoke person, a leader of black people, a benefactor, an author as well as a famous public figure and a busy visitor also. Therefore, Washington suffers from various miserable condition and finds himself has shifting identity. By birth, he represents as a slave and a typical African boy who was born on plantation in East Virginia. After changing location, he faces cultural, geographical and professional difficulties to adjust in the new location. Even he finds different feelings rather than his birth place because of multiculturalism. When he changes location automatically his identity also changed because of cross cultural adoption. Now, he becomes Booker

to Booker Taliaferro Washington or his incomplete name 'Booker' is completed by himself.

Firstly, Washington evokes himself as an innocent slave and later he represents himself with multiple selves having different identities such as a founder, a professor, a social activist, a philanthropist, an educator and a busy man of his time. Therefore, his identity always shifts from one to another. Secondly, the researcher finds out that Washington has both physical and psychological distance from his own cultural practices but Washington tries to get his own culture by revisiting his old plantation and he always works for black people to uplift their life style. In the end of his life, he becomes successful to break the boundary between first and second class citizenship. White people's dominated them each and every sector such as education, occupation, given second class citizenship and build separate rest room for colored because of slavery system. Washington's hard working brings delightful surprises in the colored lifestyle.

Washington establishes the layer of identity. He finds his personal identity which shifts from one spatial cultural identity to another. It does not always remain same but he feels a lack between his African culture and adopted African- American culture. So, he tries to conserve his African identity through this autobiographical writing as well as he also creates a writerly identity to show his unstable and unending transitory identity which is not by birth but constructed by the changing society. He grows up in diverse culture but diversity separated him from his original culture or his original identity is transformation from African to African- American because of the influence of American culture. Therefore, Washington hybrid identity is common in this multicultural society in United States.

Work Cited

- Ashton, Susanna. "Booker T. Washington's Signs of Play". *The Southern Literary Journal*. University of North Carolina Press, Vol. 39, no. 2, Spring, 2007, pp. 1- 23. JSTOR. [www. Jstor.org.stable.20077873](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20077873).
- Balibar, Etienne. "Culture and Identity." *World Conference on Cultural Politics*. UNESCO, 1982.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge. 1994.
- Boyarin, Jonathan. "Social Identity." *Rediscovering the Social Group*, Ed. John C. Turner. Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Button, W. J. The Meaning of Tuskegee- (I). *The Journal of Education*, Vol. 83, no. 15, 1961, pp. 399- 400.

Foucault, Michael. *History of Sexuality*. Faber, 1983.

Gibson, Donald B. "Strategies and Revision of Self- Representation in Booker T. Washington's Autobiographies." *American Quarterly*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Vol. 45, no. 3, Sep., 1993, pp. 370- 93. JSTOR.www. Jstor.org.stable.2713239.

Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*, A Reader. Ed. Padmini Moniga, OUP, 1997, pp. 110- 395.

Herder, Johann. "Identity, Culture and Democratization." *New Political Science*, 2001, pp. 69- 86.

Howells, W.D. "An Exemplary Citizen" *The North American Review*, University of Northern Iowa, Vol. 173, no. 537, 1901, pp. 280- 88. JSTOR.www. Jstor.org.stable.25105207.

Scarborough, W. S. "Up From Slavery by Washington." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social science*, Sage Publications, Inc. in association with the American Academy of Political and social sciences, Vol. 18, Nov., 1901, pp. 149- 51. JSTOR.www. Jstor.org.stable.1010215.

Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narrative*. University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Washington, Booker T. *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography*. Maple Press Pvt. Ltd. 1901.