CHAPTER ONE

Determinants of Ambivalence in *The Bostonians* and *Tar Baby*

Henry James, His Vision and *The Bostonians*

A very renowned figure in American fiction writing, Henry James follows the realist tradition in his literary work. Moving on this trend, he makes a special balance between psychological and social realism. Instead of just giving an objective representation of reality, he goes deeper into the psychology of his characters to make rigorous examination of the divisions of their consciousness brought about by the social forces like modernization, women's right movement, expansion of mass media and mass migration.

The American expatriate writer, Henry James was born in New York City on April 15, 1843 in a high class family. An eminent literary figure of English literature, James got a good family environment and grew up in a good intellectual circle. His father was a political leader and his brother an esteemed psychologist from whom James got deeper perspectives to view into life and the world.

In his lifetime, James travelled across the world and mixed up with different cultures. At an early age, he was taken to England, France, Germany and Switzerland, where he studied French and absorbed the artistic atmosphere of the old world. Most often he alternated his stay between America and Europe for the first 20 years of his life. He settled in England, securing the British citizenship in 1915. James studied at the highly renowned institutions of Europe in Geneva, London and Paris. He joined Harvard Law School but he preferred studying literature to law. James delved in the reading of classic English, American, French and German literature which gave him insights for writing literature.

In 1871, he first wrote *Watch and Ward*. He became a highly prolific writer in his middle age with his novels like *Roderick Hudson* (1879), *The American* (1877), *Daisy Miller* (1879), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Bostonians* (1886), and *The Ambassadors* (1903).

These novels illustrate the expatriate Americans' ambivalence between two cultures: the traditional European against modern American, the conservative values against liberal democratic premises, respectively. James exploits his craftsmanship to juxtapose the American innocence with the European experience. In most of his writings, James depicts the encounter of American culture with that of the Europeans. The legacy of his diverse writings, including novels, short stories, travel books, letters, autobiographies and literary and cultural criticisms stands mainly on the shifting frontiers between cultures in general, and the resultant effects on human consciousness in particular.

In 1861, the American Civil War resulted in the severe economic recession running through the spring of 1879 and the Second Industrial Revolution of the second half of the nineteenth century left deeper impressions on him as a writer. He incorporates such historical moments as the canvases to paint their rampant effects on individuals. In doing so, he objectively explores the clash of personalities and cultures in a very subtle level.

Being an expatriate, he was the man with tastes and interests in line with the prevailing standards of the Victorian era and Anglo-American culture. His protagonists are often young Americans revolting against existing societal oppressions and abuses. His writings exhibit norms, standards and values of his time through inner workings of central characters.

The nineteenth century Boston developed as a metropolitan city. A number of famous buildings were built in Boston which brought dramatic changes in its social mobility. Another notable event in Boston was the Boston Tea Party, a political protest against the tax policy of the British government. The Boston Tea Party and the Civil War (1861) in America were leading to complete socio-economic transformations. Such changes affected the common people and encouraged them to be more individualistic and independent.

Although James consciously sets out to write a very American tale, the result is a

mature, balanced study of an eccentric reform movement, the psychology of middle class values, and certain sexual antagonism as reflected in *The Bostonians.* It moves in the periphery of the major historical factors such as Boston Tea Party, Boston marriage and Civil War which are responsible for creating ambivalence in the Jamesian writing. Hence, these factors put the characters in the hallucination.

The Bostonians hinges around the same sex-bond. The characters fall in the self-illusion due to the conflicted opinion of their sex. So, the ambivalent looks towards new women can be explored. Notably, Olive Chancellor and Verena Tarrant are active in the women's movement of their days. The strained relationship between Olive and Verena is the product of complex modern American society after the Industrial Revolution. Olive and Verena come across the boundary of pre-civil war American ideals, such as innocence, naiveté and naturalness. Since the American society after the industrialization accelerated to highly entrepreneurial activities, the image of rural, agrarian and unmechanical America was fading away. Therefore, the American society was vacillating between the lost naiveté of the past and the glittering changes brought by the contemporary culture. Such kind of complexity is condensed in Verena-Olive relationship.

In *The Bostonians*, James presents one of his most delightful heroines, Verena, whose femininity, simplicity, and good nature are contrasted with the novel's bad heroine, Olive, an aggressive and somewhat masculine social reformer. Olive is a financially strong and independent woman. Verena is academically sound but financially not as sound as Olive. Therefore, Verena readily accepts Olive's proposal to stay together. Verena is an outstanding figure with her oratory and rhetoric. Her talent makes Olive and Basil Ransom crazy. Their possessiveness puts Verena in dilemma. Verena is emotionally exploited by Olive as she prevents her from being in relationship with men. Olive's superiority complex lies in being better off than Verena. The conflict between traditional views of the role of women which

Verena perceives from her mother and the revolutionary impression of Olive leads Verena into cultural ambivalence.

Henry James in American Realist Tradition

Realism as a literary movement finds its subject in everyday life. It depicts the contemporary life and society as it is. As a literary term, realism refers to the representation of characters, events and settings as they actually are. Moreover, realism focuses upon the details of physical environment, the common place, and the middle classes with their daily struggles as well as the varieties of everyday existence. Realism projects the contemporary real world in which social, economic and political issues are dominant features of writing. It is applied by the literary critics to represent the social realities. M. H. Abrams projects realism as:

> Realism is applied by literary critics in two diverse ways; (1) to identify a movement in the writings of novels during the nineteenth century that included Honore de Balzac in France, George Eliot in England and William Dean Howells in America and (2) to designate a recurrent mode, in various eras and literary experience in literature. (269)

Particularly, the writers belonging to this tradition use realism in two diverse ways. In the beginning of this tradition the writers involved only in representing the movement. Later on, some writers designated the subject matter for this movement.

In fact, realism began in France with Balzac, in England with George Eliot and in America with Howells before it expanded far and wide. Within the conventional framework of socio-economic and psychological reality, the writers of realistic tradition present the characters and plot as they are. The realist fictions have nothing to do with the elevated subject matter like the fancy of imagination and synthesis of fancy.

Realism is a new trend of writing. It is applied to the genre of the novel writing which is labeled as a branch of work which seems to have departed from naturalism. Peter Brooks defines realism as follows:

> Realism as we know it, as a label we apply to a period and a family of works, very much belongs to the rise of the novel as a relatively rule-free genre that both appealed to and represented the private lives of the unexceptional – or rather, found and dramatized the exceptional within the ordinary, creating the heroism of everyday life. (12)

As a rule free genre, realism values the ordinary and private life of the people. Realism focuses upon the accuracy of everyday life along with realistic descriptions of things which are immediately observable.

The American realist tradition begins from the late nineteenth century as a reaction against romanticism. Besides James, the chief writers in the realist tradition include William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgeranld. Although the realist tradition influenced European as well as American literature, this emerged in the nineteenth century with slightly different conventions. As America's most noteworthy new authors established a literature of realism, they have insisted on sentiment, adventure and excitement of the people. They have focused on the American life as it really was. American realism is most commonly a feature of narrative fiction in which the authorial intention is rarely incorporated.

Twain penned his work in a realist style with American life, civil war, local colour and provincialism in his writings. In line with Twain's realist tradition, Justin Kalpan examines "Twain wrote a frank description of the hypocrites with whom he was travelling" (56). His novelization of documentary letters, certain elements of truth, description of commonplace events and biting criticism of polite society made Twain a realist.

Hemingway occupies a prominent place in the American literary history by virtue of his significant contribution to the American fictions in the twentieth century. By rendering a realistic portrayal of the inter-war period with its disillusionment and disintegration of old values, Hemingway has presented predicaments of the modern man. Hemingway generally depicts the problems of war, violence and death as common themes in his narratives. Therefore, his writings present the realistic interpretation of life in general and the hero in particular.

A close examination of Hemingway's novels reveals "the general drama of human pain" and "symbolic questions about life" (Brooks 357). His protagonists' trials and tribulations embody man's predicament in this world. An individual's perpetual struggle reasserts the supremacy of his free will over forces other than himself. In order to assert the dignity of his existence, the individual has to wage a relentless battle against a world which refuses him any identity or contentment.

Likewise, Fitzgerald as a spokesman of the Jazz Age of the 1920s incorporates some constant qualities of the realism. Most of the things that Fitzgerald wrote were true of his times and places he lived in. To label Fitzgerald as the social spokesman of the Jazz Age is thus not unfair. He shows his powers of sharp and acute observation and serious commitment to a realistic presentation of the socially significant details.

The writers who follow the realist tradition can be divided into two groups as social realists and psychological realists. The social realists are interested in exploring problems of economic inequality prevalent in the society. They also accurately capture the experience of urban life. The psychological realists are more concerned to explore beneath the surface of the social life. They probe the complex motivations and unconscious desires that shape their characters' perceptions. In order to document the realities of everyday life, both social and

psychological realists offer penetrating insights into the repression, instabilities, and inequalities that structured the late nineteenth-century American society.

James, like many other American writers of the late nineteenth century, has embraced an aesthetic of realism. James was influenced by writers such as Gustave Flaubert, Ivan Turgenev, Emile Zola, Edmond de Goncourt, Alphonse Daudet, Guy de Maupassant and Balzac. He values unsparing and accurate representations of the psychological and material realities of American life in his works.

James develops the literary techniques of objective reality and psychological authenticity in his writing. Jamesian realist fiction represents the growing political movements, social problems, oppression of women, prejudice against immigrants, discrimination against racial minorities, unsafe housing conditions and exploitative labor practices.

He insists repeatedly on the importance of representing life and being true to it as best as one can. Leon Edel credits James for "devising methods by which the narrative technique itself could add further dimensions of reality to his story-telling" (xii). This way Edel ascribes to James the merit of changing realism's mere reporting techniques.

Although it is clear that these critics are all involved in the practice of labeling, this does not mean that some of them are not conscious of this and understand the danger of it. Aware of the complexity of labeling, Brooks reclaims: "Henry James' relation to the realist tradition is complex, nuanced, evolving over time" (180). In Brooks' examination any great literary work recaptures the realistic trend of an established society. Realism replicates the real ground and the inner working of creative mind.

Though there was a tradition of mere reportage in the name of realism, James contributed by changing this realist tradition probing deeply into the individual psychology of his characters. His relation to the realist tradition is complex nuanced and changing over time.

Writing in a rich and intricate style and supporting intense scrutiny of complex human experience, James has forgrounded new realism.

Victoria Coulson has made rigorous examination into the study of James' "ambivalent realism" in *Henry James, Women and Realism* (2007). She discusses the fact that in realism the world is often filled with innumerable objects which "bear a great weight of semiotic importance" (11-12), but goes on to say that in James it has the function to express an ambivalence towards authority: "[…] James uses the difference between overt and covert meaning to encode conflict within representation, structuring the text as a site of resistance to semiotic authority" (18).

James' ambivalent attitude towards this modern phenomenon has been discussed and analyzed in depth. Michael Anesko (qtd. in Salmon, 42), for example, has made us aware of James' hunger for popular acceptance and his understanding of the financial benefits of such a literary market. Jonathan Freedman also endorses this viewpoint:

> Striking the stances of the Flaubertian aesthete and the avid businessman; searching high cultural distinction and a financially remunerative popular success; incorporating mass cultural topoi into his texts and yet at the same time proclaiming his distaste for its overt manifestations: these define a distinctive position of the Jamesian artist standing both inside and outside the literary marketplace at one and the same time. (18)

While following the realist tradition James looks for the highly cultural distinctions in his works. But James has distaste for its overt manifestations. Therefore, he holds a distinctive position in the literary marketplace.

Instead of reporting something merely, James incorporates ambivalent realism by associating the objective representation with divided consciousness. Even though Twain,

Hemingway and Fitzgerald are the American realists, James cannot be put in their line. James has achieved a distinct position due to the imposition of psychological aspect in his writings.

On the basis of different narrative genres, the mode of protagonist can be different. While dealing with the realist tradition, it is apt to quote Northrop Frye who has discussed about the plot-patterns of literature and representation of the protagonist in the different narrative genres. "According to Frye's theory there are main four narrative genres comedy, romance, tragedy and irony (satire)" (Abhrams 178). However, human beings project their narrative imagination in two fundamental ways in the representation of an ideal world and real world. The ideal world is the world of innocence, plentitude and fulfillment whereas the real world is the world of experience, uncertainty and failure. In all the literary narratives, there is the representation of hero. A chart will help clarify Frye's system:

Protagonist's Power	Fictional Mode	Character Type
1. Superior in kind to both men and their environment	Myth	Diving being
2. Superior in degree to both	Romance	Heroes
3. Superior in degree to man but not to their environment	High Mimesis	Leaders
4. Superior in no ways	Low Mimesis	Common people
5. Inferior to man	Irony	Antiheroes

(qtd. in Tyson, 223)

In the literary fiction the plot consists of protagonist doing something. The protagonists can be classified on the basis of mode of myth. In myths, a protagonist is a divine being, superior to men and his environment known as god. He has an important place in literature. In romance, the protagonist is superior to other men and his environment. But he is identified as a human being. In high mimetic mode, the protagonist is a leader with

authority, passion and powers of expression. Though he is superior to men, he is not superior to his environment.

Above all, in low mimetic mode the protagonist is just the same as the common human being, imitating the real life. He is neither superior to men nor to his environment. The protagonist of this type belongs to the realist tradition. In most of the realist fictions, the hero and heroine are of this type. There is another mode of representation known as ironic mode in which the protagonist is inferior, absurd and less intelligent.

Toni Morrison, Her Craftsmanship and *Tar Baby*

One of the most prolific and popular contemporary writers Toni Morrison mostly writes about African-American community and culture. She reveals how African American individuals have been dominated and silenced in the racist American society. Her central focus of concern is racial difference and its output. Morrison opines that race is inextricable to be an individual. She comes from a racist household as her grandparents were absolutely convinced that the whites were incapable of any improvement. This information about Morrison's early years is supported with the fact which Matthew Kibble points out in his article: "Although Morrison attended a multiracial school, she grew up with more than a child's contempt for white people" (108). Morrison can be seen as a pioneer in post-racial writing. She started her literary career at a time when African Americans were still fighting for equal rights. Morrison's works have been influenced by the then historical movements.

Morrison's novels particularly explore class distinction, the underclass of African-American women and the concept of beauty and materialism. Thus, these factors are leading the individuals in the cultural crisis. In line with the proper context, Morrison also depicts such factors in her novels. Her early novels like *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula* show the devastating effect of whiteness for a black person. But Morrison has moved on from there. Her novel *Tar Baby* leaves the impossible pursuit of whiteness and underlines the importance

of African-American culture and ancestry. It depicts with the aspects of African American experience which creates African American culture separate from white culture. Morrison's all novels make an enquiry up on the character's home, origin, root and identity.

Toni Morrison, one of the sophisticated novelists of African American literature, was born in 1931, in Ohio. She grew up during the depression of the 1930's. She was influenced by magical realism, jazz, blues and black secular vernacular speech rituals and discourses. Morrison attended Harvard University and completed a master's program in literature at Cornell University in 1955. Morrison held a series of teaching jobs at universities across the United States, but she eventually moved to New York City. She has universalized her writing through the means of her craftsmanship. Hence, Morrison represents both sexes, colours, ages and creeds in her writing.

Morrison has published six novels. In 1970, she published her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*. She followed this work with *Sula* (1974), which received a nomination for a National Book Award, and *Song of Solomon* (1977), which won a National Books Critics Circle Award. After Morrison published *Tar Baby* in 1981, she began working on *Beloved,* the novel that would not only earn her a Pulitzer Prize in 1988 but also ensure Morrison a place in the pantheon of American literature. Morrison's recent works include *Jazz* (1992), *Paradise* (1998), and *Love* (2003); *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), a collection of lectures she gave at Harvard University; and a series of children's books written with her son Slade based on Aesop's Fables. Today Morrison is the Robert F. Goheen Professor of the Council of the Humanities at Princeton University.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the civil rights movement aimed at ending the segregation and the systemized violence against African Americans. In *Tar Baby*, Morrison raises the question of women in exile who are doubly marginalized by race and gender. It questions the

notion of home and identity. The characters are culturally dislocated and their cultural traits are of primary importance.

In *Tar Baby*, Jadine Childe, the protagonist is the black female heroine who makes choices for her own life on her own provisions. Her quest is for psychic wholeness. Indeed, her quest for wholeness is unsuccessful because she accepts values of white middle-class culture without any question. She rejects the cultural construction of her black race. Actually, Jadine is adopted twice. Firstly, she is adopted by her uncle and aunt. Secondly, she is taken on along with her uncle and aunt by Varline Street, the wealthy, white businessman who pays for her higher education. Though Jadine has been supported by the white, she declares that she loves her uncle and aunt, Sydney and Ondine. But she hardly attaches to their ideals, principles, thoughts or their way of life rather she goes on assimilating the white values. She loves to be in Paris with her white companions. She has obsession for modeling profession. Above all, she disgusts everything related to black. In fact, Jadine's existence is the   rootless existence. Therefore, she gets disturbed.

The Bostonians and *Tar Baby*

James' *The Bostonians* and Morrison's *Tar Baby* demonstrate cultural ambivalence prevailing in the characters. After the industrial revolution, socio-economic factors become the affecting factors for the characters' cultural ambivalence. As the heroines of the both novels, Verena and Jadine depart from their real social and historical context, they fall in the ambivalence. Due to the complexity of the society, both of them fall in the dual positions. Both the heroines are in cultural ambivalence. Surprisingly, Verena trembles her feet to maintain the secret relationship which she breaks because of the fear of societal barriers. Verena tries to challenge the general role of women whose space was limited to kitchen.

In the same way, Jadine is a black westernized female, who rejects the views of traditional role of women. By rejecting the motherhood and her own cultural root, she reflects

the changing complex culture in African-American society. Jadine seems bolder in this matter. So, she chooses the career and rejects her boyfriend. She seems more affirmative towards her own terms. Both the heroines are unhappy whatever decisions they make about their lives. Jadine leaves Africa and feels alienated. In the similar way, Verena leaves Boston with tears. Thus, this is the part of this research to explicate more about the ambivalence of these characters in terms of place, ideology and sex.

In the context of both novels cultural ambivalence can be found thoroughly which is lacking in many research works. Morrison almost in all her works raises the problems of the exploitation of the white man or the society over black women and racism. But her *Tar Baby* deals with the feminist position putting the culture in the center. In the same way, James' *The Bostonians* underscores the same subject.

In the 1970s American society faced the changing roles of women and economic independence. Moreover, the modern technology became the reason for women's liberation. Modern technology such as rice-cooker, washin- machine, mobile phone, automobiles etc. made the life of the women shifting from domestic premises to the outer world. They got liberation from the kitchen work to the household works. In that period, women realized their existence of being women. The American women revolted and secured right to franchise early in the 20th century. American women's quest for their freedom and independence became one of the major reasons for their divided consciousness between the traditional ethos of the past and the aspirations for modern values at present.

Above all, there has been foreign influence on American fictions. Since the colonial beginning American literature has been influenced by European and the British tradition. European explorers, traders and settlers created the literature which is large, various and amazingly rich. For the material greed, the Spanish and English arrived in this New World. Large numbers of Englishmen poured into North America whose reports of explorations have

been described as the first distinct American literature. However, the seventeenth century English tradition of novel writing seems to have influenced the mode of the novel writing in the eighteenth century American literary tradition. Similarly, the eighteenth century British novels have affected the nineteenth century American novels. Truly, *The Bostonians* is the product of such influences. Likewise, American tradition has influenced the African literary tradition which is known as Afro-American Literature. *Tar Baby* is the product of such tradition. Therefore, the literary tradition seems to have influenced each other in the time frame of a century.

The available literatures in this topic so far reviewed justify the view that heroines of both novels are culturally ambivalent. *The Bostonians* and *Tar Baby* have now earned a distinct place in the literary canon for the artistic presentation of the multifaceted ideas. Thus, this thesis will explicate cultural ambivalence in female protagonists in *The Bostonians* and *Tar Baby*. In order to manifest cultural ambivalence this thesis will go into some theoretical procedures related to culture, cross- culture and cultural ambivalence.

<div align="center">**CHAPTER TWO**</div>

Culture, Cross Culture and Cultural Ambivalence

Literally, an accumulation of language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts in line with feasts, festivals and ritual practices is known as culture. It moulds human behaviors, identities, roots and origins. With different aspects of culture, an individual grows, extends and interchanges with the passage of time. Culture is the   combination of time, place, sexuality and ideology for which contact zones and the globalization play decisive roles.

Different cultures interact intersect and involve into a new culture. The situation of meeting multiple communities in a single geographical location is known as cross-culture. While cultural individuals come in contact they interact with other cultures. In other words, the process of blending varieties of cultural practices at a certain location is known as cross-culture that leads to ambivalence at an individual level as well as communal levels.

Bostonian Culture

Human existence is fundamentally determined by culture. The place, the historical movements and economic conditions play a pivotal role in making culture. The Bostonian culture is rooted in the historical movements such as the war of independence, industrial revolution and the civil war. It was the port where the historical Boston Tea Party intrigued the American war of independence. The first revolution in the field of industry ended about 1860 in America, the second revolution ran around the time of Civil War (1861-65).

In the nineteenth century, Boston continued to grow. A number of famous buildings were built and social mobility was pervasive. Meanwhile, the American Civil War widened the distance between the North and the South. The source of the conflict between the North and the South resulted from the fundamentally different ways of life. Economy in the South was heavily based on the agriculture, especially in cotton-growing. The North was heavily

industrialized with factories and manufacturing being central to the economy. It began to split the nation and had bitter conflict between the states. The Civil War split families and friends. Brothers fought brothers on the battlefield. As men left for war, women had to step in to fill their place. Women took up roles as factory workers, clerks and school teachers. As the number of sick and wounded increased, women also took on the role as nurses. Thus, there was the changing paradigm of women's position which really gave way to new cultural practice.

Another notable event in Boston was the Boston Tea Party which simply was the destruction of the tea in Boston. It was a political protest against the tax policy of the British government. It was a resistance movement. Boston Tea Party and the long run civil war in America were leading to the new changes. Thus, in the socio- economic contest of America, new changes were emerging day by day. A tradition of marriage appeared in Boston. "Boston Marriage" was a term used in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century to refer to two women living together, independent of men. The term was originally coined in James' *The Bostonians.*

Before the Civil War, America had been a nation made up primarily of farms and small towns. Most citizens worked in agriculture or in small, family-owned shops and businesses. By the 1870s, however, the growth of industrialism had transformed American lifestyles; more people lived in cities and worked in factories than ever before. Lured by economic opportunities, millions of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and China moved to industrial cities, such as New York and San Francisco. Multiplying in size and serving as home to both wealthy socialites and impoverished immigrants, these cities reflected the astonishing diversity of the millions of people who lived and worked in them.

While this confluence of people from radically different economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds created a rich and vibrant urban culture, it also led to social tensions between

the very wealthy and the very poor. Therefore, during the process of cultural transformation people can move forward along with their cultural possessions. Further, it creates a sort of contacting places in different locations.

In *The Bostonians*, the characters argue, discuss and struggle to change the existing feminist issues. Basil Ransom, who is a lawyer and a war veteran, has the southern ideology upon feminist approaches as well as matrimonial concepts. However, he dwindles on finding Verena and Olive Chancellor in a same-sex bond. During that time, economic depression was rampant; women could hardly live independent of men. But Olive managed to live independently with Verena which germinated the sense of Boston Marriage. Verena, along with other characters in her vicinity turn ambivalent in terms of sexuality, culture and ideology.

Multicultural Feminism and Ambivalence

Obviously, there are feminist issues pertaining to class, race and gender. Though there is a great deal of similarity, differences lie among such grounds of feminism. Similarly, multicultural feminism is the study of the experiences of women of color, lesbians, the poor, and the underclass.

Multicultural feminist issues and experiences include women through the world centering Afro-American feminism. The women in the multicultural societies undergo double oppressions, Tyson argues:

> African American feminists have been especially helpful in revealing the
> political and theoretical limitations inherent in white mainstream feminists'
> neglect of cultural experience different from their own. For example, black
> feminists have analyzed the ways in which gender oppression cannot be
> understood apart from racial oppression. A black woman is oppressed by
> patriarchy, black feminists observe, not just because she's a women but

because she's a black woman, a category that has been defined historically in

American as less valuable than the category of white woman. (106)

The issue of identity is essentially important in a multicultural society in which women make

formidable institutions in order to subvert the stereotypical images of women. Ironically,

culturally created institutions exploit, manipulate and dominate women. It culminates into a

tension between the exploiter and the exploited. In this context, Denrad explains that ethnic

cultural feminism postulates damaging effects of sexism on women of color, both inside and

outside their ethnic community but it "does not advocate a solution to their oppression as

political feminism that alienates black women form their ethnic group" (172). Furthermore,

ethnic-cultural feminism "celebrat[es] the unique feminine cultural values that black women

have developed in spite of and often because of their oppression" (172). Multiple factors,

such as social, political and economic condition force women into the estranged position.

Multiculturalism has mainly been used as a term to define disadvantaged groups,

including African Americans, women, gays and lesbians and the disabled. Many theorists

tend to focus their arguments on immigrants who are ethnic and religious minorities, minority

nations, and indigenous people. The political theorist Susan Moller Okin recently posed the

provocative question: Is multiculturalism bad for women?' According to Okin, until the past

few decades minorities were expected to assimilate; now such assimilation is "considered

oppressive"(7). She poses a dilemma: "what should be done when claims of minority cultures

or religions contradict the norm of gender equality that is at least formally endorsed by liberal

states" (9)?

Thus, the aforementioned ideas can be taken as the examples of the clash of the

cultures which ensues ambivalence in the context of Afro-American backdrop as well as

Anglo-American context. Another noticeable factor responsible carving the situation of

instability in the culture of the women is modernity. Modernity heralded the birth of unparallel combination of cultures.

Contact Zones and Multicultural Identities

Contact zone refers to the place where cultural sublimations take place. Considering the status of the women, the benchmark of modernity affected the cultural position of women. In fact, socio-historical era, civil war, economic recession, political instability and the process of education affect the contact zone.

Mary Louise Pratt elaborates a contact zone as a meeting place to two and more than two separate cultures or multicultural identities in oppositional natures. They have spread in the global society. Pratt explores the contact zone as social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other often in "highly asymmetrical relation of domination and subordination like colonialism, slavery or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the glove today" (4). Pratt investigates the thematic scenario of the present social spaces where we see cultural communities from distinct multicultural identities contact each other with distinct opponent ideas. They emerge in a definite social or geographical location through processes of disagreement, struggle and compromise.

Contact zone depicts the situation of social spaces or multicultural identities. In "Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation," Pratt considers transculturation the phenomenon of contact zone. She explains that various factors, including political, cultural, professional and intellectual determine their movements over geographic regions. Pratt argues that people come in contact with other individuals with different backgrounds in processes of their travel across zones. Precisely, "the phenomenon of contact zone produces meaningful writing experience, especially travel writing and transculturation" (4). Pratt remarkably connects the contact zone with processes of globalization that establishes relationships among people of diverse cultural settings.

Contact zone means transculturation. People share their values and belief systems through various activities, such as sports, business, technology and educational institutions. It also obviously describes the ideas of understanding, interpreting and presenting explicitly different thoughts. It also depends on how we react to views and thoughts different from ours. In addition, it may stand as individual and community contact they come in touch with the particular situation. They are culturally visible in the outline of multicultural identities that specially appear in an opposite direction.

Afro-American Culture and Globalization

Literally, African-American culture stands for black culture in the United States. On one hand, the distinct identity of African-American culture is rooted in the historical experience of the people. The culture is both distinct and enormously influential to American culture as a whole. African-American culture is rooted in Africa. In fact, slavery greatly restricted the ability of Americans of African descent to practice their indigenous cultures, numerous values and beliefs did not survive in their original forms. They have been modified and sublimated with white culture over time. The Beat poet Amiri Baraka in his article "Black Arts Movement" illustrates the African-American quest for identity:

> The Black Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s followed in the wake of
> the non-violent American Civil Right Movement. The movement promoted
> racial pride and ethnic cohesion in contrast to the focus on integration of the
> Civil Rights Movement, and adopted a more militant posture in the face of
> racism. It also inspired a new renaissance in African-American literary and
> artistic expression generally referred to as the African-American or "Black
> Arts Movement." (70)

While the particularity of individual culture is matter of prime importance, the modern era is in the process of continuous globalization. Globalization as some of the globalists assume is

viewed in terms of the process of becoming single place among various socio-economical, political, geographical, technological and cultural factors that interconnect in this world. This shows the relations between the global and local communities.

Globalization can be viewed with the political and technological changes. Some of the anti-globalists regard it as the interference and hindrance to the other communities and nothing is new in the era of globalization. Moreover, globalization clearly explains the positive and negative issues among the individuals states, countries, continents and coins the theme of the process of becoming a single space. There are distinct aspects of globalization that exist in our day to day life. This research tries to explain the cultural ambivalence created by globalization.

The formation of the globalized cultures has the significant consequences of globalization. Furthermore, B. Manfred Steger mentions, "today, cultural practices frequently acquiring escape fixed localities such as town and nation, eventually acquiring new meanings in interaction with dominant global themes" (70). In this count, we presume that the present cultural practices differ from time and space. However, it forms the single dominant global themes of cultural globalization or globalized culture or dominant hybridized culture.

Cultural Ambivalence

Ambivalence is a state of having simultaneously conflicting feelings towards a person or thing. To define it in another way, ambivalence is the experience of having mixed feelings, uncertainty or indecisiveness concerning something. Moreover, ambivalence infuses psychologically unpleasant experiences because the positive and negative aspects of something are present at the same time. This state can lead to avoidance, procrastination, rejection or violence too. Thus, cultural ambivalence can be read as the coexistence of opposing attitudes due to cultural subjugation and a state of uncertainty because of cultural

mixing up. It is also an inquiry into being torn between two opposing cultural aspects in relation to marital bondage and gender ethos etc.

Ambivalence is the situation of having dilemma or dual position that can be seen within individuals. It is the psychological process of the individuals who often remain in dual condition. Unlike ambivalence, cultural ambivalence is the cultural process of being psychologically in dual position and is essentially rooted in culture. In other words, it is the condition of diverse cultural communities that they remain culturally dual in their position. It results due to the cultural shift or transition after one cultural community contact with other. The cultural instability and indeterminacy is highly linked with that of cultural ambivalence in which the individual or community mainly remains culturally oscillated.

Ambivalence as the concept was initially developed in psychoanalysis to deal with a continual flux between wanting one thing and equally craving for its opposite. It also reflects oppositional reaction of attraction and repulsion from an object, person or action. In psychological expression, ambivalence refers to a state of mind in which contradictory tendencies, attitudes or feelings circulate in the human mind as a single object such as the existence of love and hate, good and bad, colonizer and colonized. In this way, psychoanalysts examine ambivalence as a psychic condition of a person or individual. According to Eugen Bleuler, "The positive and negative components of the emotional attitudes are simultaneously in evidence and inseparable" (10). That is why ambivalent situations are created by the duality of feelings and negative and positive feelings present at the same time.

Moreover, the term "ambivalence" was introduced in 1911 by Eugen Bleuler to describe one of the four symptoms as he considered primarily to schizophrenia. This vividly deals with the situation of being negative and positive emotional attitudes of the individual. Bleuler analyzes it:

Aambivalence is to be understood the specific schizophrenic characteristic, to

accompany identical ideas or concepts as the same time with positive as well

as negative feeling (affective ambivalence), to will or not to will at the same

time the identical actions (ambivalence of will), and to think the same

thoughts at once negatively and positively (intellectual ambivalence). (79)

Thus, it co-exists as opposing drives, desires, feelings, or emotions, actions and reactions towards the same person, object or goal. The above mentioned lines suggest that they appear in different forms such as the negative as well as negative of affective ambivalence, ambivalence of will and intellectual ambivalence.

In *The Dictionary of Behavioral Science*, Benjamin B. Wolman defines ambivalence, "as the co-existence of opposing emotions, attitudes or traits in the same individual, as the rapid alternation of emotional attitudes towards another and as the state of being able to view two or more aspects of an issue or to view a person in terms of more than one dimension or value" (14). The person views the same kind of experience that appears in several dimensions. It is the situation of individuals that we learn to have similar experience in our day-to-day life. We can easily find such similar occurrences in the life of Jadine in *Tar Baby* and Verena in *The Bostonians*. The protagonists seem to be in dilemma due to their culturally oscillated positions which tend to come out of similar experiences.

Understanding the term ambivalence from a historical point of view denotes historical uncertainty which occurs in the life of people of certain time frame. They exist with conflicting situations and reflect fundamental oppositions that are the state of mind to form the dynamic of an epoch of transition. In response to transitional epoch, it is historical movement and traditional belief, in which an individual is between the situation of dead and the new belief. As a result s/he is trapped between at least two cultures at the same time one of which is traditional and another is the new one.

Ambivalence as a pattern of behavior is a characteristic expression of great ages of transition. The individual caught between a traditional ethos, which has become part of his blood and a new ethos which perplexes him toward which he aspires, finds himself in an inescapable predicament, and he is seen wandering between two worlds, one dead and other powerless to born. In this way, an individual is oscillated between two cultures. He proposes both the dreams of an uncertain future and the anxieties about the past that keeps the individual culturally oscillated.

In order to make the analysis more effective, one can move towards the world of Shakespeare's Hamlet as a sublime example of the ambivalent attitude that the character Hamlet possesses. He remains in the position of ambivalence of hatred and love. The whole development of the dramatic rise and fall explores the protagonist's situation to be unable to resolve whether to be or not to be, whether to act or not to act. He passes through upsetting paradoxes with his uncertainties, self-questionings, and self-confrontations. Hamlet as the work and major actor and performer thus seems to posit himself as an ambivalent figure that is inherent in the age of Shakespeare. Even in our time and texts, we encounter with similar situations within the life of the protagonists like Jadine and Verena.

Ambivalence mainly covers two central issues. The first is appearance of a foreign culture. Some of the temptation and attraction of the foreign cultures become the factors to motivate people. The second is the reaction to others' cultures so that they resist exoticism and favor their own native culture which they completely possess. In this case, they remain in-between two cultures that is the situation of being what to do and what not to do, where to go and not to go, and give rise to the state of ambivalence. As Bhabha says:

> Ambivalence describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion, which
>
> characterizes the relationship between colonized and colonizers. The relation

is ambivalent because the colonized is never simply and completely opposed

to the colonizer. (12)

Therefore, this colonial mentality also can encompass the state of cultural ambivalence. Due

to the colonial effect the people feel culturally disillusioned. Sometimes, they try to imitate

other's culture instead of assimilating their own culture.

Furthermore, it is through the construction of the colonial mentality that focuses on

the question of how such colonial mentality covers the entire intellectual debate to define the

state of ambivalence. Colonial mentality is the outcome of being at the intersection from

where one cultural people cannot direct towards any definite destinations. Again Bhabha

adds, "instead it produces ambivalent subject whose mimicry is never very far from

mockery. Ambivalence describes this fluctuating relationship between mimicry and mockery

that is fundamentally unsetting to colonial dominance" (13). It shows the paradigms of

cultural encounters between colonizing foreign cultures and colonized native cultures that

result in the ambivalence within culture.

As we observe, the world is mixing up as globalization takes place. Thus,

transculturation has been formed everywhere. Human culture has been merging together with

cultural diversities. It has made the situation of cultural instability and indeterminacy more

vivid and transparent. In this milieu, Gandhi mentions the present world in three conditions:

First, a growing body of academic work on globalization insists that in the

face of the economic and electronic homogenization of the glove, national

boundaries are redundant or at least no longer sustainable in the contemporary

world. The random flow of global capital is accompanied, as Arjun Appadurai

writes, by and unprecedented movement of peoples technologies and

information across previously impermeable borders; from one location to

another. (125)

In addition, globalization has also contributed to the situation of ambivalence, and cultural ambivalence can be viewed as cultural interactions or negotiations or exchange of dual natures of the cultural users. As a result of which, the emergence of the present political and cultural boundaries come into existence. Political boundaries interfere other issues of the particular society and cultural horizon as hegemonic nature of the dominant cultures. That can be assumed as the sum total of all the ambivalence, in-betweens, instability and indeterminacy.

We can refer Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* as one of the clear examples of ambivalent nature within the colonized mentality. It brings outstandingly new dream of postcolonial procedure as, "The human condition plans for mankind and collaboration between men in those tasks, which increase the sum total of humanity are new problems, which demand true inventions" (252). In addition, ambivalent condition comes in effect due to the dual nature of the colonized subject as well as colonizer. They apparently share the existence as one is the resistance of new cultural practices and the other has the acceptance of different shape of social, cultural, or economic issues.

In Tiffin's line of argument, counter-colonial discourses become the part of the attempt of resistance and acceptance in any geographical space:

> The project of post-colonial writing [is] to interrogate European discourses
> and discursive strategies from a privileged position within (and between) two
> worlds; to investigate the mean by which Europe imposed and maintained its
> codes in the colonial domination of so much of the world. (95)

He talks about the projects of postcolonial expression in the form of writing. It does not fit only on the intensity of knowledge and discourse but rather in reality, the colonized try to resist the colonizer's practices, exercise, and uses by disobeying as they are stated as being civilized, educated and learned. They even avoid wearing clothes, eating the food they eat,

worshiping their god, and speaking language, reading literature. Finally, the postcolonial studies include these conducts that make the larger discourses in the academic height to bring the shape of ambivalent attitude.

Jenny Sharpe in his writing *Figures of Colonial Resistance* highlights on how everyone falls under the bequest of the colonial past and its aftermaths in the academic practices and political ideologies. In some cases, he rejects the British culture and sometimes accepts it. Sharpe mentions the outcome of resistance as counter culture. He also terms it as giving birth to the 'mimic man':

> The first figure I discuss is the mimic man or 'colonial subject' makes visible the contradictions of colonialism at a time when a British presence in India was more or less taken for granted. The mimic man is a contradictory figure who simultaneously reinforces colonial authority [and at the same time] disturbs it because, the colonial subject was produced through a discourse of civility. (99)

In this case, Sharpe highlights the oppositional condition constructed by the colonial subject that appears as the grand European project of "civilizing mission." Because of biased project of colonizers grounded on "civilizing mission" the colonized become the contradictory figures. They could not totally avoid their project of 'civilizing' in similar incidents, they disrupts it through mimicry. Mimicry is the process of dislocation of cultures, which relates the "civilizing mission" into reason. It results in ambivalence that can be seen both in colonizer and colonized. Therefore, civilizing mission stands as the production of colonial subject through discourses of civilization.

In *Tar Baby,* the main character Jadine is adopted by the rich white couple, Valerian and Margaret. Initially, she begins to accomplish white American culture due to being in relation with the whites. Later on, Jadine is perplexed by her position in the society since she

is un-homing and rootless. Due to the influence of Valerian-Margaret, a millionaire couple, she begins to imitate them and possess their culture. But, ultimately she comes to the society that does not possess her, she finds herself being in cultural exile. So, Jadine's situation lies at in-between-ness due to the African-American culture and racial identity. So in *Tar Baby,* there is the revelation of the problem of this in between-ness for Jadine and Son because their home is not Africa, nor can they belong to mainstream American culture. As the islanders in *Tar Baby* belong to the Caribbean Island, it tries to exemplify the process of colonization. The characters including Jadine are in the process of homelessness and rootlessness. Thus, with her African roots, Jadine is psychologically colonized.

<div align="center">**CHAPTER THREE**</div>

<div align="center">**Cultural Ambivalence in *The Bostonians* and *Tar Baby***</div>

Culturally Oscillated Verena in James' *The Bostonians*

In James' The *Bostonians* Verena is the protagonist with whom much conflict can be found. Initially, Verena is unconcerned about the feminist issues though she lives in the city of Boston. Moreover, she does not show any concern about women's rights, human emotions and romance of the people. As soon as the feminist Olive Chancellor, who is associated with the city of Boston, meets Verena she desires to posses her. Olive imposes her feminist issues upon Verena. When Olive first meets Verena at Miss Birdselye's home, she is affected greatly by the oratorical ability of Verena. Olive immediately sees Verena for the purpose of fulfilling her dreams. As Verena first comes to Olive's house, she incidentally meets Basil Ransom who later wants to brainwash and possess Verena.

Despite the threat of ostracism, many women characters in typical novels continue to dispute the traditional views of women, questioning their domestic roles. They change the notion of delicate creatures coming out of the domestic boundary. In *The Bostonians*, almost all the female characters come out of the domestic chores to participate in the feminist movement.

Verena comes from Cambridge. She is "submissive and worldly" (James 92). Olive's ideas of feminist issues and her being used to with the social arrangements at Cambridge put Verena in the dialectical position. The narrator asserts here: "Even to Verena, as we know, she was confused and confusing; the girls had not yet had an opportunity to ascertain the principles on which her mother's limpness was liable suddenly to become rigid" (97). Even though Verena takes life very simply without being conscious of so many differences of the social complexion, she wonders about the secret sources of information that she obtains from Olive.

Verena undergoes confusions and indeterminacies due to different circumstances. The vapours of social ambition mount on her brain. Verena's intimacy with Olive further complicates and makes her perplexed:

> By this time Verena had learned how peculiarly her friend was constituted, how nervous and serious she was, how personal, how exclusive, what a force of will she had, and what a concentration of purpose. Olive had taken her up, in the literal sense of the phrase, like a bird of air, had spread with extraordinary pair of wings, and carried her through the dizzying void of space. (100)

Verena feels nervous, sad and serious. As Verena cannot understand Olive, she feels personally excluded. But Olive does her outmost to govern Verena with "extraordinary pair of wings" which leads Verena to the further confusions.

Verena being in a continuous relationship with Olive promises not to marry. Moreover, Verena's acts, attitudes and manners change gradually as she is under the influence of Olive Chancellor. In this regard the narrator evaluates:

> The girl was now completely under her influence; she had latent curiosities and distractions left to herself, she was not always thinking of the unhappiness of women; but the touch of Olive's tone worked a spell, and she found something to which at least a portion of her nature turned with eagerness in her companion's wider knowledge, her elevation of view. (153)

Due to the prolonged relationship with Olive, Verena has no innate queries. Verena falls in the charm of Olive's tone, wider knowledge and elevated view about the feminist movement.

Likewise, Olive wants to prevent Verena from the matrimonial error. Therefore, she frequently persuades Verena not to marry. Verena reports Olive about the various

propositions made to her. Some of the propositions are from Basil Ransom, Mr. Pardon and Mr. Henry Burrage. So, Verena is entangled in parallel choices.

Verena indulges in a great deal of unsystematic viewing of feminist anguish. However, she delivers a remarkable speech in the presence of huge mass of women confidently. Her speech justifies that Verena has been able to possess wonderful insight to refer to the history of feminine anguish. But this is what Olive becomes able to pour over Verena for a long time. To travel with Olive and deliver speeches, Verena suppresses herself politically and sexually to stand as a defender of feminism. Meanwhile, she becomes conscious of her sexuality.

In the historical movement of Boston Tea Party, plenty of men and women participated and revolted against the tax policy of the then government. Similarly, the women show an interest in the uprising which Olive leads. Therefore, she makes an appointment to the interested women in the movement. With a sense of vastness and variety in New York, Verena experiences the ambivalent situation. The author assures in this manner:

> Of course there were plenty of people in New York interested in the uprising, and Olive had made appointments, in advance, which filled the whole afternoon. Everybody wanted to meet them, and wanted everybody else to do so, and Verena saw they could easily have quite a vogue, if they only chose to stay and work that vein. Very likely, as Olive said, it wasn't their real life, and people didn't seem to have such a grip of the movement as they had in Boston… Verena hardly knew whether she ought to confess it to herself might in the end make up for the want to the Boston. (288)

This is the way Verena comes across the lines of multicultural groups of females who are completely different from the Bostonians. Verena realizes that the women in New York are in a new vogue. However, Olive affirms Verena that the feminist movement of New Yorkers is

not as real as that of the Bostonians. The New Yorkers are totally different from Bostonians. Therefore, Verena senses a complicated world around her and finds herself in hopelessness.

As Verena and Olive march forward with the bond of feminist movement, Verena becomes dilatory. Now, Verena and Olive come to know that Basil Ransom loves Verena which is clear in this dialogic exchange:

> 'Verena, I don't understand why he wrote to you.'
>
> 'He wrote to me because he likes me. Perhaps you'll say you don't understand why he likes me,' the girls continued, laughing.
>
> 'He liked me the first time he saw me.'
>
> 'Oh, that time!' Olive murmured.
>
> And still more the second.' (290)

After this revelation, Verena becomes less frank. Usually weak and low-spirited, she wishes to do the penance for the pleasure in New York. Olive suspects that Verena might leave her one day and their relationship might not continue further.

Mixing up with different cultural communities such as Boston, New York and Cambridge, the further Verena and Olive travel in order to deliver speech on feminism, the more mysterious, illusionary and impatient they feel. Both Verena and Olive stay together, work with the same ideology of the emancipation of the female, dwindle and are divided from each other.

However, Olive wants to possess and protect Verena. Olive is afraid of Verena going out of her grip. She thinks that Verena's departure from her companionship might harm Olive as well. That is why Olive's instinct is to safeguard Verena from falling out of her grip. In this context the narrator reclaims:

> Olive could see that they really wanted Verena immensely, and it was
>
> impossible for her to believe that if they were to get her they would not treat

her well. It came to her that they would even overindulge her, flatter her, spoil

her; she was perfectly capable, for the moment, of assuming that Verena was

susceptible of deterioration and that her own treatment of her had been

discriminatingly severe. She had a hundred protests, objections, replies; her

only embarrassment could be as to which she should use first. (306)

Verena's divided consciousness can be noticed here. She partly consolidates the feminist

movement and she partly overindulges in Basil Ransom. The politics of feminism hinges to

and fro.

Consequently, Verena falls under the complex circumstance while being in New

York. With the influence of Basil Ransom, Verena is skeptical of her ideology of feminism.

As Ransom continues to joke about everything, including the emancipation of women Verena

contradicts with him. She, however, shows reverence towards him. This encounter with Basil

Ransom causes Verena some disappointments and sufferings.

Afterwards, Verena with dreadful revelations tells Olive that she has been deceived

by him. Flannery in his book *Henry James: A Certain Illusion* mentions some views

regarding Verena Olive relationship: "Verena is a tabula rasa figure distinguished by her

capacity to please others." Verena is said to be the "embodiment of caritas, of a complete and

selfless love." She is innocent figure, a "princess of fairy tale, as void of any cultural

tradition" and Olive is "destroyed by Basil Ransom's capture of Verena at the end" (63). In

fact, Verena happens to fall in relation with Basil Ransom since they make their visit to

Cambridge and New York. With a great deal of talk, Verena shows her liking to Basil

Ransom. Thus, Verena shows her duality of nature.

The relationship between the two ladies juxtaposes due to the seed of suspicion. Now

Verena-Olive relationship seems to be in opposition. In this respect the narrator is precise

here:

> Miss Chancellor flashed this out with a sudden violence, a spasm which threw
>
> Verena off and made her rise to her feet. For an instant the two young women
>
> stood confronted, and a person who had seen them at that moment might have
>
> taken them for enemies rather than friends. (363)

Standing on her own feet, Verena becomes bold herself to confront Olive in the matter of feminist ideology. She does not internalize feminist movement totally. So, she readily contradicts with Olive.

Now Verena lives in a state of confusions and moral tensions. Verena is in ambivalence of her ideology of feminism. She participates in the Feminist Convention and professes on the values of feminist issues all around the country. Unlike her determinations not to marry, she makes her resolutions to marry Basil Ransom. Verena knows that her relationship with Basil, the anti-feminist, will make Olive incurably "lonely and eternally humiliated" (376). A doubtful state can be seen in Verena when she wants to reconcile and harmonize with Olive. Hence, Verena is divided for Basil Ransom and Olive Chancellor. Verena acknowledges discrepancy between who she actually is and who she likes to be. Verena's inconsistencies are due to her recent movement and consciousness of sexuality.

The consciousness of sexuality leads Verena to Basil Ransom. On meeting together, Verena and Basil communicate each other on a bench in the Central Park. The narrator endorses their relationship in this part of the text:

> She felt his eyes on her face ever so close and fixed there after he had chosen
>
> to reply to her question that way. She was beginning to blush; if he had kept
>
> them longer, and on the part of anyone else, she would have called such a stare
>
> impertinent. Verena had been commended of old by Olive for her serenity
>
> while exposed to the gaze of hundreds; but a change had taken place, and she
>
> was now unable to endure the contemplation of an individual. She wished to

detach him, to lead him off again into the general; and for this purpose, at the

end of a moment, she made an inquiry. I am to understand, then, as your last

word that you regard us as quite inferior? (39)

Verena faces the conflict between the women's movement and the interference of Basil. She

finds Basil Ransom's gaze to be discourteous. She becomes unsettled because of Ransom's

gaze upon her.

Verena's wish to "detach" Ransom suggests that he has a hold on her. The conflict

which Verena faces between Ransom and the women's movement increases throughout the

novel. After her walk with Ransom in New York, Verena comes to the conclusion that she

must avoid him because he interferes with her life. Thus, we see Verena caught between

Ransom's life and Olive's life that are representing two distinct ideologies. Basil Ransom is

anti-feminist whereas Olive is a radical feminist. Ransom senses the confusion within

Verena and believes that she is not living the life style which she truly desires.

Verena's acceptance of this observation shows that there is a lot of truth in it. When

Ransom initially invites Verena to take a walk with him in New York he says, "Come out

with me" (13). This sentence has a double meaning when we regard it in the light of

Ransom's conversation with Verena on the bench in Central Park. Not only does Verena go

with Ransom to the park but he also draws her out emotionally.

 The conservative Basil desires to make Verena his wife and confirm her identity as an angel

in the house. Thus, Basil's desire to win Verena and destroy Olive's influence upon her can

be taken as a kind of cultural battle in the modern American society in which the conservative

beliefs and new democratic premises perpetually struggle. In fact, falling in the gaps of the

cultural loopholes, Verena undergoes a kind of confusions and suspicion of her identity. The

interpretation and reinterpretation of economy, women rights and the realization of the

culture of the North and the South make Verena culturally oscillated. Thus, Verena becomes the scapegoat of New American Society.

North, South and Verena

Verena lies in between the two ideologies represented by the South and the North in the novel *The Bostonians*. South represents the ideology of patriarchy, politics of the Conservative party, conservative thought and male chauvinism whereas North stands for feminism, democracy and individuality.

Basil Ransom comes from the South to the North whose character, posture, manners, attitudes and aptitudes are associated with the South. Olive Chancellor is enticed with the North whereas Verena lies in between the two ideologies. When Olive first meets and persuades her, Verena supports the feminist movement. Verena and Olive grow up in the city of Boston and represent the new modes of living. The North where Olive and Verena live symbolizes democracy, individual freedom and humanity. Thus, the two women move ahead for feminist movement. Olive says early in the novel that Verena must be saved. With this intention, Olive mesmerizes Verena's growth of perception. Olive declares that Verena will do what she exactly likes. Thus, there is strong bond of inseparability. Such are the views of Olive as well as North where women can travel far and wide, deliver speech and can live independently.

Basil Ransom is from the South whose beliefs and perceptions are guided by the Southern ideologies. Naturally, his beliefs are shaped by his long established ties with this land. His arrival in New York sheds light onto this:

> His family was ruined; they had lost their slaves, their property, their friends
> and relations, their home; had tasted of all the cruelty of defeat. He had tried
> for a while to carry on the plantation himself, but he had a millstone of debt
> round his neck, and he longed for some work which would transport him to

the haunts of men. The State of Mississippi seemed to him the state of despair;

so he surrendered the remnants of his patrimony to his mother and sisters, and,

at nearly thirty years of age, alighted for the first time in New York, in the

costume of his province, with fifty dollars in his pocket and a gnawing hunger

in his heart. (43)

Basil's beliefs and perceptions have strong affinity to the southern land. He experiences the

despair of war which split his family, friends and relatives.

Basil Ransom undermines women's movement as "the position of women is to make fools of

men" (53). Just as Olive reveals many of the views which are held in the North, he shows

strong affinity to his land. Thus, the tension between Olive and Basil Ransom arises to

establishing one's own ideology.

Ransom refuses to speak about social and political conditions of the South.

Hereforth with the Southern perspective Basil assesses Northern society. Basil follows the

code of chivalry. He is also ruled by passion, but his passion arises from the need to possess

and rule Verena.

Ranosm's greatest love is for the South and its ideology. The narrator describes his

deep attachment to the South. Furthermore, he does not want to ruin the South ideologically,

too. The narrator underscores:

He had a passionate tenderness for his own country and a sense of intimate

connection with its which would have made it as impossible for him to take a

roomful of Northern fanatics into his confidence as to read aloud his mother's

or his mistress's letters. To be quiet about the Southern land, not to touch her

with vulgar hands, to leave her alone with wounds and her memories, not

prating in the market-place either of her troubles or her hopes, but waiting as a

man should wait, for the slow process, the sensible beneficence of time. (75)

 The terms such as "passionate tenderness" and "intimate connection" also reinforce the profound relation between Basil Ransom and the South. Ransom's relationship with the south makes it impossible for him to love Verena. Hence her beliefs are opposite to Ransom's Southern beliefs. Ransom tells Verena that her relationship with Olive is unreal, accidental and illusionary thing in the world. Ransom says that the elements of the women's movement which he dislikes are delightfully arranged in Verena.

Ransom knows that Verena cannot be the part of Ransom's vision of the South. Whatever it may lead to, Ransom desires to possess Verena which means, Basil Ransom instinctively desires to conquer and reign the North as represented by Verena. To some extent, Ransom is also puzzled by the women of the North.
Verena, Olive and her sister are the female types who do not fit into Ransom's categories of women. He is unsure about the North.

Unlike the other men interested upon Verena, Ransom dwells upon the internal aspect of Verena and professes his love for her. The narrator presents us with a very sensual description of Ransom:

> He saw that he could do what he wanted, that she begged him, with all her being, to spare her, but that so long as he should protest she was submissive, helpless. What he wanted, in this light, flamed before him and challenged all his manhood, tossing his determination to a height from which not only Doctor Tarrant, and Mr. Filer, and Olive, over there, in her sightless, soundless shame, but the great expectant hall as well, and the mighty multitude, in suspense, keeping quiet from minute to minute and holding the breath of its anger from which all these things looked small, surmountable, and of the moment only. (12)

Finally, Verena becomes submissive figure and Ransom tries to be the dominant one. Their roles are further reinforced as Verena is not liberated even at the end of the novel.

This is the way Verena falls in the web of patriarchy where she loses her freedom and identity. In the novel Verena does vacillate between choosing the life offered either by Olive or Ransom. Her emotions are constantly changing. Verena's passion for the women's movement is replaced by her greater passion for a man in her life. Thus, again we see a conflict in Verena's internal and external self. Verena is shocked by the realities of marriage and Ransom's character.

In a nutshell, Verena is caught between these two polarities of the North and the South in which culture puts Verena in an estranged position and such struggle for freedom is moving back and forth. The issue of Verena's identity is subverted as an ambivalent woman.

Jadine's Estranged Identity

Tar Baby projects a kind of laboratory where racial, familial, class, and gender expectations can be tested. Set on a remote island in the Caribbean Sea, the main characters represent the two cultural concepts. The characters of this novel can be divided into the following groups: Valerian Street, the rich candy manufacturer from Philadelphia, and Margaret Street, his wife, the members of white American society whereas Jadine, Sydney, Ondine and Son belong to the black community.

The main character, Jadine Childs, has been educated with the financial support of Valerian Street; a wealthy white American estate owner is uprooted and oppressed. According to Zia Gluhbegović, Jadine is a "yalla, a motherless and rootless mixed-blood" (Morrison, 3). At first Jadine faces physical orphanage. She has no parents, family and home. The novelist has revealed her orphanage as:

> They educated me. Paid for my travel, my longings, my clothes, my schools.
>
> My mother died when I was twelve; my father when I was two. I'm an orphan.

Sydney and Ondine are all my family I have, and Valerian did what nobody

else even offered to do. (118)

Jadine gets support from Valerian Street for her education as well as for her upbringing. Her

father and mother died at her early age. Only Sydney and Ondine are her family members.

As an orphan, Jadine has been brought up by Sydney and Ondine Childs, the hard-

working proud Philadelphian Negroes. Their niece, Jadine is Valerian Street's protégée. He

finances her Paris education which unquestionably enables her to establish a successful

modelling career.

The European White education has an enormous influence on her development. Now

she is a successful fashion model who wants to "be only the person inside not American not

black just me" (45). Jadine reveals that she is neither purely black nor white. She is the

amalgamation of black root and white culture. Jadine's desire clearly proves that she longs

for discovering her authentic self.

However, Jadine has a prolonged unfulfilled desire for her physical and cultural

home. Her desire to fulfil herself is explained as Evelyn Louise Audi in *Exile, Home, and*

Identity in Toni Morrison proclaims "as a desire to go home". "Jadine's home is not Africa,

nor can it wholly be America or Europe" (5). In this sense, we can speak about Jadine's

homelessness. Jadine is rolling between African and European in terms of her culture and

home. Jadine lives somewhere in-between.

Jadine has seen much of the world owing to her occasional migrations. She has

traversed across Paris, New York, Eloe and on the Isle des Chevaliers. While being at Isle des

Chevaliers, the narrator observes how Jadine feels ambivalent:

She had not accomplished anything, was more at loose ends here than

anywhere. At least in Paris there was work, excitement. She thought she had

> better go to New York, do this job, and then return to Paris and Ryk. The idea
>
> of starting a business of her own, she thought, was a fumble. (159)

The ambivalent Jadine cannot decide where to settle. Sometimes, she thinks of going to Paris as there is an excitement. But she cannot make any bold decision in matter of her job.

Jadine is alienated from her original self and betraying her roots "drifting, in trouble, [with a] desire to 'make it' that may be self-destructive" (qtd. in Kirkpatrick 33). Paradoxically, she calls Baltimore, Philadelphia, Paris and New York City home, "she was more at loose ends [on the island] than anywhere" (Kirkpatrick 34). Jadine falls in conflict with herself as she cannot preserve a single sense of identity.

Jadine feels entirely removed from home and rooted identity as she finds out a true connection to home and culture is unreachable for her. She feels humiliated and unhappy. Accustomed to modern style of fashion capitals throughout Europe and the United States, Jadine feels appallingly trapped in the white culture and community.

Jadine is such a character who lives everywhere such as New York, Paris and Isle des Chevaliers. Particularly, she belongs to nowhere. Moreover, Jadine embodies the modern Anglo-American white woman, though she belongs to the black community.

Furthermore, Son, a black man, starts flirting with Jadine. Jadine has hatred and sense of negation to the black culture and its people. Jadine has an astonishing and disturbing white, racist perspective. She becomes very critical to Son in this manner:

> You ugly barefoot baboon! . . . A white man thought you were a human being
>
> and should be treated like one. He's civilized and made the mistake of
>
> thinking you might be too. That's because he didn't smell you. But I did and I
>
> know you're an animal because I smell you. (121)

By doing so, she conforms to the Anglo-American culture in which she is immersed. She regards white culture and community superior to African culture and community. She ranks the blacks in the category of the animals. Thus, she connotes Son, to the "baboon."

Additionally, she has a dream with black dream images which she does not share. Instead, she is haunted by a nightmare she first experiences in Eloe. In this nightmare Jadine is visited by a group of African-American women, among them Th´er`ese and Ondine who take her by horror. The narrator projects Jadine's divided sense here:

> …each pulled out a breast and showed it to her. They stood around in the
>
> room revealing one breast and then two and Jadine was shocked. "I have
>
> breasts too," she said or thought or willed. But they didn't believe her. They
>
> just held their own higher and pushed their own farther out and looked at her.
>
> (258)

Jadine confronts a group of African women who insist her to follow black culture as well as motherhood. These women themselves reveal their feminity which shocks Jadine.

Analogously, Ondine professes Jadine to be a real woman by being good enough to the child, man and other women. Only hours before she leaves back for Paris, Ondine advises her:

> A girl has got to be a daughter first. She has to learn that. And if she never
>
> learns how to be a daughter, she can never learn how to be a woman. I mean a
>
> real woman: a woman good enough for a child; good enough for a man – good
>
> enough for the respect of other women. You don't need your own natural
>
> mother to be a daughter. All you need is to feel a certain way, a careful way
>
> about people older than you. A daughter is a woman that cares about where
>
> she comes from and takes care of them that took care of her. . . . I don't want
>
> you to care about me for my sake. I want you to care about me for yours. (283)

Despite of nightmarish threat and Ondine's advice to be a woman, Jadine makes an arrangement to leave Eloe along with the black culture. She does not want to stay at Eloe anymore.

Thus, Jadine stands as the personification of modern black women who integrate themselves on the feminist movement. She even opposes the traditional gender roles. For being black, Jadine faces the dilemma whether she has to look for her identity in her own race or in gender. So this dilemma leads Jadine in the distressful state.

Jadine: An Outcast

Jadine, the black protagonist, feels isolated from her own black cultural origin. Through her relation with the black boy Son, she wants to stay connected with her cultural roots. As soon as she comes to the part of Caribbean Island, she cannot posses this culture to be her own. Instead, she has the feelings of negation towards it. Additionally, she hangs between the two traditions of Caribbean and Paris. Jadine has good reputation and so many men in Paris want to marry her. She does not have "even a spit of an African woman" (Morrison 44). Therefore, Jadine feels like an outcast in her own black culture and family.

In her two months stay at Caribbean, Jadine is unable to think of anything to do or say. She undergoes series of disappointments and embarrassments. There is complex nexus of cause and effect in her feelings of disappointments:

> She started to stand several times, but each time something held her to the rock. Embarrassment at the possibility of overreacting, as she told her aunt and uncle they were doing. More awful than the fear of dander was the fear of looking foolish-of being excited when others were laid back of being somehow manipulated, surprised or shook. (126)

Thus, on her arrival to the Caribbean, Jadine undergoes fighting hunger, anger and fear. Due to her ambivalent situations of black origin and grown up in white mainstream culture, she

finds everything awful there. Therefore, Jadine suffers because her black self and assimilation of white culture.

While being in Caribbean, Jadine meets Son-a black boy, who has been homeless for eight years. He too like Jadine feels secluded to his culture. But he perceives Jadine as a white girl. This is revealed through the dialogic conversation between Jadine and Son: "Where is your home?" "Baltimore. Philadelphia. Paris." "City girls" "Believe it" (Morrison 174). Jadine does not truly state Caribbean as her hometown. After her arrival on this part of the island which is formerly colonized, Jadine feels ambivalent in promising and confessing her identity.

At Eloe, Jadine and Son react to the dark tar they see there. Jadine's disability to understand tar can be taken as her disability to understand her black identity. The narrator reassures here:

> "What the hell happened to you? He ran to her and put the bottle on the seat.
> She didn't look up, just wiped her eyes and said, "I took a walk over there and
> fell in." "Over Where?"
>
> "There. Behind those trees."
>
> "Fell in what? That looks like oil."
>
> "I don't know. Mud I guess, but it felt like jelly while I was in it. But it
> doesn't come off like jelly. It's drying and sticking." (185)

At first, Jadine looks at tar differently. She cannot understand tar which she guesses to be mud, oil or jelly. Analogously, Jadine cannot perceive her own real identity as well as falls in inconsistency.

She does not understand the exceptional femaleness. Jadine is preoccupied to change herself. She plans to escape from the island and settle in Paris ultimately. As a black woman in the white and black society, Jadine falls in the complexity of vision.

Jadine in Spatial Ambivalence

The novel *Tar Baby* rests on the microcosm of European and American culture. Particularly these two places represent white or the standard and civilized culture, and black or the inferior and uncivilized culture as they are stereotyped.

Literally Jadine falls in the ambivalence about her space. Jadine has deep love for urban mobility and individual freedom of New York and Paris. As soon as she approaches to Eloe with Son her attitude is revealed:

> New York made her feel like giggling, she was so happy to be back in the
>
> arms of that barfly with the busted teeth and armpit breath. New York oiled
>
> her joints and she moved as though they were oiled . . . if ever there was a
>
> black woman's town, New York was it. (223)

Her confrontation with the traditional black community in Eloe is deeply traumatized. For Jadine, New York feels like home, a place where she can be free and happy whereas Eloe symbolizes the racial, cultural and sexual constraints she has attempted to flee.

Choosing to escape this cultural bondage, Jadine shows her decision to break with the past and move on to a better life in her parting remark to Son: "You stay in that medieval slave basket if you want to. You will stay there by yourself. Don't ask me to do it with you. I won't. There is nothing any of us can do about the past but make our lives better" (271). Before being to Eloe, Jadine had a strong desire to come there. No sooner had she come than she had disgust over this place. She wants to escape as soon as she can. Hence, she cannot pursue happiness there.

Growing up in L'Arbe de la Croix, an Eden-like residence on an isolated island in the Caribbean, and later getting an education in the cosmopolitan city of Paris, Jadine has little knowledge of the colonial history of the island. She does not have any predicament of the present-day black community. She shows no interest in knowing about these cultural and

historical burdens. On her arrival to Eloe, she undergoes a sense of the primitiveness and inferiority of black culture. "Little matches of embarrassment burned even now in her face as she thought of all those black art shows mounted two or three times a year in the States. The junior-high school sculpture, the illustration-type painting" (74). In spite of her occasional awareness of her blackness, Jadine is characterized as a black girl who ironically possesses a white self. She has a strong fondness to white identity and culture. She fantasies to be purely white. So, Jadine travels between Caribbean Island and Europe. Her movement between these two places reflects Jadine's vacillated attitudes to the culture.

Indecisiveness as a Catalyst between Jadine and Son

The indecisiveness developing along with Jadine and Son functions as a catalyst. Jadine wants to convert Son to her world of material grandeur. Similarly, Son wants to engage Jadine at Eloe, i.e. black community and culture. Therefore, the relationship between Son and Jadine is based on a mutual desire to change the attitude of the other. When Jadine visits Son's town later on, she has a parallel reaction to that of her lover in the City: Eloe is like a nightmare for her, a lifeless, "rotten, burnt-out place" (259). In the end neither Son nor Jadine changes. Son reaffirms his ancestral beliefs when he tells Jadine, "You're not *from* anywhere. I'm from Eloe" (266) and Jadine finally goes back to Paris. As Terry Otten puts it, "The contraries cannot coexist, though, and neither character proves capable of integrating the opposite" (75). However, after her departure Son experiences a slight fluctuation in his deeply rooted cultural premises and, because of his love for her, he even thinks of giving up everything to follow her. Soon Son forgets Jadine after she goes to Paris. Instead he loves to stay at his home in Eloe. Son's choice represents symbolic re-birth after his momentary indecisiveness.

Verena and Jadine: Culturally Vacillated Women

Verena and Jadine, the protagonists of *The Bostonians* and *Tar Baby,* are the culturally oscillated female archetypes. They initially become anxious for the change in their social milieu while at the same time, they become the ambassadors of the change. The economic recession, political protests, the effects of colonization are the key factors which have settled in both characters' fate.

Verena agrees to support feminist movement. And she stays with Olive Chancellor, travels far and wide with the help of her payee, Olive. Verena grows up in Boston and gets involved in the feminist issues. However, she falls in the hands of the southerner, Basil Ransom. Agreeing to marry Basil, Verena finally deserts Olive Chancellor. Thus, Verena falls in ambivalence due to the growing changes in Boston, her travel with Olive in New York, and the clash between Northern and Southern ideology.

Likewise, Jadine Childs who grows up under the care of Valerian Street suffers ambivalence due to African root and homelessness. More precisely, Jadine's identity, home and culture are the spheres of ambivalence for her. Jadine does not want to identify with her own culture, i.e. black culture. Kibble suggests that "Jadine has little relation to her black heritage". So, *Tar Baby*, reveals the problem of "in-between-ness" in Jadine. Her home and heart are neither in Africa nor in Europe.

Both Verena and Jadine cannot represent true, single and parental culture. Due to various changes that take place in the social historical contexts, contact zones and multicultural identities, they have been mixed up in different cultures. In this way, they have revolted against hitherto existing culture but fallen in the state of ambivalence.

CHAPTER FOUR

Flimsy Cultural Domains and Changing Paradigms of Women

Both the novels *The Bostonians* and *Tar Baby* explicitly depict the changing paradigms of women as par with the transition in their cultural domains. Instead of following the traditional and patriarchal roles, the female protagonists, Verena and Jadine in these novels come out of restriction and oppression. Particularly, ignoring the traditional culture and ideology, they accept the new modes of living. They do not want to restrict themselves in the social connections within marriage and motherhood.

Verena is basically a demure character of the novel. She falls under Olives' charm and becomes a newly enlisted speaker for women's rights. James beautifully weaves Verena's contradictory and complex nature as the plot develops. First of all, she is the spokesperson of feminist issues. Later on, she becomes the lover of the man Basil Ransom, who disregards feminist beliefs. This implies that Verena is the victim of social conventions. Even though Verena wants to prove that a woman can live on her own without the help of man, she fails along this ideology when she falls for Basil Ransom. Basil comes from the South and therefore, he has southern perspective on marriage, money, power and women. He gets surprised by the ethos of Boston marriage. He wants to possess Verena by all means.

Basil dwindles to see the two grown up women staying together independent of men. The manipulative and self‐ confident Basil desires to find a way to confirm Verena's identity as an angel in the house. The victorious Basil favours the traditional concept of marriage. Nevertheless, the women characters, Verena and Olive make remarkable endeavors to challenge the nineteenth century patriarchal expectations of women. They deliver speeches, travel out of their hometown, and intermingle with the cultures of Cambridge, New York, Boston, Paris etc. The heroines Verena and Olive remain the scapegoat of patriarchy. As the location determines the identity of a person, Verena, as the purely Bostonian, has the radical

view on feminist cause. But with her travel to different parts such as Cambridge, New York and Paris, she gradually changes. To be more precise, Basil, the Southerner, remembers the past glory of his origin. He has many claims to manhood. He is captivated in the southern influence upon him. Basil obtains his release from the South by conquering the North. At the Boston Music Hall, he confronts with Verena and Olive which displays his dominance over Verena. Basil wrenches Verena away from the Music Hall by using his masculine force and claims his victory over Olive, Verena and the Boston society. Verena is seen as a new woman who has a great desire to pursue true love, happiness and freedom, even though she has some feminist beliefs. She is someone who awakens to find physical joy and feminist grounds. In a true sense, Verena falls in the ambivalence of her own feminist identity.

Morrison's Jadine is an African American woman. She is in a cultural-familial orphanage. Jadine feels uncomfortable because of her specific familial history. As an orphan, raised by Ondine and Sydney but educated and patronized by Valerian, She has never had a true family that could tie her down and teach her the complex sets of obligations and responsibilities that make up a family life. Jadine lacks a sense of home. She cannot locate her hometown among Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Paris. She is equally uncertain about her relationship to the three different layers of the world on the island. As soon as Jadine leaves Paris and comes to L'Arbe de la Croix, Son the black man likes her and wants to possess her.

Jadine represents white American-European culture. She loves Paris more than Carribean part of L'Arbe de la Croix whereas Son loves his hometown Eloe. By having two main characters move among different social settings Paris and Eloe, Morrison creates the inbetweenness Jadine undergoes. This portrayal also emphasizes Jadine's absence for a sense of home. She does not feel drawn toward any of her hometown. Neither she is willing to stay at anyone place for a long time nor to follow any particular culture. The women in Eloe insist that Jadine should accept her role as a nurturer and propagator of the black race. Jadine

rejects this role of motherhood along with her blackness. The morning following the dream, she rejects Eloe's ties to the past as well when she reflects that Eloe is not full of life and does not have a future. Jadine does not want to look back. She wants to look forward, be free to create her own identity outside the confines of nature, race, sex, and history. Throughout *Tar Baby*, Jadine clearly remains between feminine identity of nurturing, domesticity and racial identity of blackness, black community and culture.

Both the female protagonists suffer a lot due to the existing male chauvinism and cultural clash. Verena and Jadine have to challenge the males Basil and Son respectively. Both of the male characters do their utmost to subvert the existing conditions of the girls. However, Verena and Jadine know their selves better and feel determined to get success in their mission. Verena leaves Boston with tears. Her ambivalence apparently leads her to lose the battle. But, Jadine is homeless, rootless and in culturally estranged position, even though she is determined to change and challenge. She rejects motherhood and domesticity as well as Son and Eloe. Thus, she makes her way towards Paris where she finds much joy. However, Jadine travels twice to the Isle des Chevaliers in search of her home and identity. In this way, Jadine falls in duality of her position.

These protagonists fall in the ambivalence of culture too. Their involvement in political movements as well as their dialectics with their male counterparts becomes assuring yet equally destructive. The characters remain in the ambivalent position of love and hatred. Integrated in their culture, regardless of their economic and social contexts, they are defeated by men in their own families as well as white society. The feminist revolution Verena leads turns out to be self-delusionary for her personal life. Similarly, the racial ideology, Jadine perceives, turns out to be the destruction of her life. A sense of reality is inherently dialectical in multicultural, Afro-American and European-American societies. Thus, Verena and Jadine

are products of multicultural and ideologically colonized societies, where the subjectivity

constantly keeps on changing its paradigms.

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