

Tribhuvan University

**Ethical Rendition of the Other in Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible***

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English  
in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English

By

Karishma Kumari Lamichhane

Symbol No: 000537

Regd. No: 9-2-207-16-2010

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

December 2017

Tribhuvan University

Central Department of English

**Letter of Recommendation**

Karishma Kumari Lamichhane has completed her thesis entitled “Ethical Rendition of the Other in Barbara Kingsolver’s *The Poisonwood Bible*” under my supervision. She carried out this research from September 2017 to December 2017. I hereby recommend her thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

.....

Badri Prasad Acharya

Supervisor

Date: .....

Tribhuwan University

Central Department of English

**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “Ethical Rendition of the Other in Barbara Kingsolver’s *The Poisonwood Bible*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuwan University, by Karishma Kumari Lamichhane, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Internal Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Head

\_\_\_\_\_

Central Department of English

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: .....

## **Acknowledgements**

I am very much indebted and grateful to my respected supervisor Mr. Badri Prasad Acharya, Lecturer in Central Department of English, for his guidance, inspiration and suggestion. Without his continuous supervision and intellectual guidance, this research work would never have come in this present form. In this regard, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to him.

I am also thankful to Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, head of Central Department of English, for the approval of this research work. I would like to extend my gratitude to all other respected Lecturers and Professors who inspired me to materialize my dream of Masters of Arts in English Literature.

Unconditional affection and inspiration of my mother, Uma Lamichhane, my father Narayan Prasad Lamichhane and my husband Nabin Poudel have played pivotal role for the smooth completion of my research. My special gratitude goes to my friends for their continuous suggestions and motivations.

December 2017

Karishma Kumari Lamichhane

## **Ethical Rendition of the Other in Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible***

### **Abstract**

*This thesis is a critical discussion of Barbara Kingsolver's novel The Poisonwood Bible from the perspective of ethical humanism. With the help of the reference from text, the researcher finds out that Kingsolver deploys the characters influenced by both modern and postmodern ethics. There are few characters who follow Kantian rational morality and while some other characters follow postmodern ethical humanism. The major characters are other centered. Liberal humanist characters like Nathan, Elexroot and Joseph Mobutu are egomaniac, self-centered, ethnocentric and rational. They disregard the feelings of others, they dehumanize human sentiments. In contrast, characters like Leah, Anatole, Orleanna, Adah, Ruth May, Mama Mwanza and Brother Fowles focus more on sensibility, responsibility and empathy. They respect the otherness of other. The novelist intends to say that rational universal morality is no more a moral ethics, it fails to address the current necessity of understanding the other. Hence, the concept of auto/ethno continuum is appropriate in order to understand other. Ethical humanism focuses on the other, it is other centered. It is only possible when one abandons his pride and prejudices, biases and open oneself for change. Ultimately, in the novel characters who were rational earlier change themselves in the course of time and develop a mature self which respects the Other, feel responsible towards other and have genuine empathy towards other. Hence, the ultimate goal of ethical humanism is to establish harmonious and respectful relationship between self and other.*

**Key Terms:** Auto-ethno continuum, Understanding Other, Humanism, Liberal Humanism, Ethical Humanism, Responsibility, Empathy, Rationality, and Sensibility.

## **Ethical Rendition of the Other in Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible***

This research studies Barbara Kingsolver's novel *The Poisonwood Bible* as an exposure of how the immature rational self of the characters changes and becomes mature, sensible and responsible towards the others. The researcher analyzes the text from the perspective of ethical humanism. It carries the notion that ethics should not be based on self-centered rationality because it disregards the sensibility and sentiments of others. The novel deals with the tussle between two different cultures and two different perspectives regarding life, religion and ethics. These two variables are: reason based ethics and emotion based ethics. Reason based ethics creates hierarchy between self and other, it is self centered. However, sensibility based ethics deconstructs the hierarchy between self and other, it is other centered and it is essential in order to establish healthy relationship between self and other.

The researcher finds the concept of ethical humanism quite relevant in order to analyze the text. Kingsolver deployed the characters carrying two different attitude and perspective towards other. Except Nathan Price, other Price family members develop their positive attitude towards other. Depicting such transformation in characters, Kingsolver is trying to show the importance of sensibility over rationality. Her portrayal of Nathan's death is an example of the failure of rationality. In this regard, researcher juxtaposes the liberal humanist concept of Immanuel Kant with Levinasian Derridian idea of other centered humanism in order to justify the implicit appeal for ethical humanism by the novelist.

The story is about a missionary family, apparently living in Georgia and preparing themselves for the mission to African nation Congo. The entire family members are busy on packing seemingly necessary tools for civilized life, which might not be available in Congo during their stay. According to the Baptist minister

they are heading towards the Congo in order to spread the light of civilization, enlightenment and to save the cursed souls of Africans. Hence, it is a journey from Sanderling Island, Georgia to Congo, Africa and their nine years long stay at Kilanga village in Congo. Among the six family members, father head Nathan Price is the only male in the family and rest of the members consists of mother Orleanna and her four daughters; Racheal, Leah, Adah and Ruth May. During their stay in Congo the female members of Price family develop the mature self and accept the responsibility towards others, whereas the only male member self-declared Baptist Nathan Price remains unchanged and later gets a pathetic death due to his egomaniac and theomaniac nature.

As soon as the missionary Price family reaches Kilanga village of Congo it receives a very warm welcome by the villagers. The pious feast is organized in the downtrodden Church. The family is welcomed so heartily and warmly that the natives prepare the best that they can afford for their guest. As per the norms, church head is asked to offer the gratitude to god for the meal, but Nathan Price starts his sermon by dehumanizing the natives and inferiorizing their culture. He insults the native women over there for not wearing the dress as they are worn in western part of the world.

Leah is a fourteen year girl when the family goes to Kilanga, at the beginning she is a blind folded disciple of her father. But after living with Congolese people in their culture, she gradually develops the understanding of Africans. She departs from her early faith and starts questioning her father's words which he used to call 'God's Word.' She embraces the local culture and broadens her mind set; she further finds African culture and religion more pious and humanitarian, and the major influence for her is local school teacher Anatole. Hence, characters like Adah; Leah's identical twin

sister, Leah herself, ex-baptist minister - Brother Fowles and mother Orleanna shows deep understanding of African culture.

Although it is a novel where major white characters are living with blacks in Africa, researcher finds the failure of white supremacy in the text. The only static character Baptist Nathan Price who is the only white to carry 'white man's burden' over his shoulders finally fails in his mission and gets a pathetic death. It was his chosen mission which badly fails even after his frequent attempts. But rest of the Price women grow up and accept the change, for instance mother Orleanna, crippled Adah, and materialistic Racheal left Kilanga with positive attitude toward Congolese, whereas Leah who had developed high political consciousness about Africa, she decides to stay in Africa and made various efforts in bringing independence back to Congo. The researcher attempts to analyze how Kingsolver as well as her characters find useful insights in other and in other's culture for the reformation of their self.

Many critics have examined *The Poisonwood Bible* from different perspective. It covers a large area. Some critics claim the novel as a "neo-domestic," some other take it as a experimentation on narrative, and some critics believe it as a challenge to conventional western view on disability. In this regard, Nathan Kilpatrick points out the religious hybridity in Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible*, he claims this novel, ". . . attempts to interpret the historical events in parable form. This parable takes the form of "political allegory," or Kingsolver creates novel that uses the religious mission of the fundamentalist preacher Nathan Price as a metaphor for Western domination of the Congo" (83). In this manner Kilpatrick asserts the religious hybridity through the American cultural imperialism. Nathan Price's hard core attempt to baptize the Congolese is an example of attempt to hybrid the religion.



Anne Marie Austenfeld finds narrative technique interesting as well a highly experimental. She finds narratology different from conventional narrative technique; it is not only different in its form rather the purpose behind using the multiple voices is also praise worthy. Austenfeld affirms, “[B]y examining Kingsolver’s work in light of narrative theory, we find that it is precisely the personal, revelatory tone of the five narrative voices that marks *The Poisonwood Bible* as an important milestone in contemporary narrative practice” (294).

Although the remote control is in the hand of Nathan Price, only male of the family, he is not given the voice, Austenfeld postulate the sound discussion over narrative technique in Kingsolver’s *The Poisonwood Bible*.

However, Jenna Fusion White highlights the use of disability in Kingsolver’s *The Poisonwood Bible*. According to her, Kingsolver has challenged the established notion of normativity. White focuses more on the use of physicality and disability in her review.

Kingsolver cannot escape the use of disability as metaphor; it represents qualities of character as well as larger social and cultural forces. She needs Nathan's disability to intensify her indictment of the colonization of Africa by white men who could not see beyond their own cultural context. Adah’s disability allows her to reject Nathan’s language which is formed through oppressive cultural narratives, recasting her body as a site of oppression but as one of resistance. Kingsolver’s larger social critique is augmented by the impairments of each of these characters. (141)

The egomaniac Baptist Nathan Price; who believe himself to be chosen by God is a one eyed and one legged. He is depicted disable not to show his physical disability rather to show his mental and spiritual disability. Similarly, Adah ishemiplegic, left

part of her body is paralyzed by born. She is not a crooked character, she has her own faith and religion, and though she is physically crippled she has a living soul. She distinguishes right and wrong, she is the one to challenge the God's word. She intentionally stay silent; her silence is the resistance of Nathan's oppression. Even she acknowledges that what is consider as disability in her American cultured society, in Africa it is not treated as such, they consider it normal. Adah discovers her actual self in Africa. Adah describes African way of treating disability, "[H]ere, bodily damage is more or less considered to be a by-product of living, not a disgrace. In the way of the body and other people's judgment I enjoy a benign approval in Kilanga that I have never, ever known in Bethlehem, Georgia" (88). Adah finds her new self in Kilanga village. She finds difference in treating disability in West and in so called Dark Continent.

Furthermore, Kristin J. Jacobson read this novel as a neo-domestic fiction. As per him, the novel deals with the domestic or the private sphere, American female experience in Africa and along with female experience the remnants of history. Hence "*The Poisonwood Bible* as a 'neo-domestic novel,' or a revision of the nineteenth century domestic novel, and merit attention for what this revision reveals about American domesticity, the domestic novel, and white women's privilege" (105). Jacobson does not find the novel much different from the Victorian novel. However, the researcher finds it far more different from the novels written in nineteenth century and the novel written by Kingslover. They are different not only in terms of the era, but also in terms of the theme, voice and the issue of humanity. The chosen novel is overwhelmed by the ethos of humanity. Humanitarian values are given much priority in the text. Instead of disregarding 'others' existence many characters accept the different identity of others.

Although the critics earlier provided the variety of lens to see the novel from different angles, researcher finds the issue of understanding other quite interesting and relevant for present research. There are various incidents that drive researcher to conclude the text as an ethical text. The incidents like the tussle between western and nonwestern culture where westerners like Nathan Price find his culture superior to the cultures of others, and hence tries to impose his culture upon others, whereas the non western African people do not show such judgmental behavior over the westerners. Although the early self of many white characters was self-centered, biased, rational and immature, but among them Leah, Adah, Orleanna and Brother Fowles develop their mature and responsible self in course of living with those Congolese. Especially Leah has the great influence of a black character Anatole. He is the one who has disillusioned Leah from her early belief and her biased rational self. Hence, blind folded disciple of Baptist minister Nathan Price, Leah Price converts herself to the religion called humanity through Anatole's humanitarian philosophy. In addition, except Nathan price other characters of his family find the so called minor culture very rich in humanity during the famine. The helping hand of those poor Africans was really a blessing for the family to survive in such a critical situation. In this manner, various such incidents drive the characters to develop their mature self, show empathy and feel responsible towards other. Therefore, researcher finds the concept of ethical humanism quite relevant in order to exhibit the relationship between self and other in the present text.

This research paper analyzes the playing of 'self' and 'other' in the novel *The Poisonwood Bible* by American novelist Barbara Kingsolver. With the reference to the biography of the author, we are able to view the vivid and clear picture of the then Congo. As per the baseline of the novel, it is narrated from the perspective of

five female characters of a Price family. Regardless of same family we can find two different perspectives, considering the gender; male member is more on Kantian 'rational' line whereas rest of the family members who are female, they are more on Levinasian path. Nathan Price believes in law and order and always attempt to control each and everything around him. He considers himself rational and rest of the entire people emotional, barbaric, savage and uncivilized. Hence, he thinks it is his duty to save as much soul as he can. He assumes he has 'the white man's burden' and he has the responsibility to educate and to enlighten the Africans. That is his ultimate goal to visit Kilanga.

In contrary, the female members of the Price family have different point of view. Although they were also in an illusion regarding the Africans and their way of life, later they encounter several incidents that make them realize their assumption were false and gradually developed their mature self. The Price women find themselves responsible towards others. They have genuine empathy to the people of Congo; they have hearty respect to others culture. It shows that they are in Levinasian-Derridain ethical line. Levinas's approach to moral is based on sensibility. Sensibility comes first. As the Price women also consider 'sensibility' prior to 'rationality' it shows that humanity has still filled their heart with love and empathy towards others.

The proposed research would be library based research. It would focus on the cultural concept of understanding other especially based on post-modern ethics and philosophy 'ethical humanism.' In addition, some wonderful insights will be borrowed from Richard Johnson et al, Chris Barker and Tilly Warnock as well. Furthermore, other critics who have reviewed on these writers as well as in their text would also

come into consideration. Richard Johnson et al concept of auto/ethno continuum is also fruitful in order to understand self and the other.

According to Simon Critchely, “[T]he basic principle of Kant’s ethics is autonomy” (*Deconstruction and Pragmatism* 28). Here, the individual self is at the center and other remains at margin. As Immanuel Kant’s basic concern is in the establishment of supreme and ultimate principles of morality which establishes the civilized society. As per him, human beings have the intellectuality and they have to act with reason. On this basis, he classifies human being from other living beings. It gives priority to own self, and disregard the self of other. It creates hierarchy, inequality and domination. It usually seeks the center.

In *Otherwise than Being*, Immanuel Levinas talks about the responsibility towards other as he states, “[I] am responsible for the responsible moves of another, for the very impact and trouble with which he approaches me. To be responsible before another is... to put oneself in his place, not to observe oneself from without, but to bear the burden of his existence and supply for its wants” (Lingis xiv). It shows that self is inseparable from other. One is not opposite to other, rather complementary of the other. We have to accept the existence of the other in order to establish our own identity. Similar philosophy is acquirable from his another book *Totality and Infinity*, he further asserts” [T]he other person as he comes before me in a face to face encounter is not an alter ego. Another self with different properties and accidents but in all essential respects like me” (Introduction 13). In this manner, we can find Levinasian ‘ethical humanism’ plays significant role in order to develop genuine understanding of the other, and can unfold positive attitudes towards other. Thus, Levinas’ concept of ethical humanism is very implacable in terms of understanding other.

In addition, Jacques Derrida's concept of Deconstruction is also applicable in understanding other because deconstruction deconstructs the central seeking tendency. It breaks the each and every hierarchy made under various norms. Deconstruction offers the equal platform to everyone regardless of difference. Unlike other ideas and theories it celebrates the 'difference. Therefore, Levinasian- Derridian 'ethical humanism' is other-centered, which problematizes the self- centered liberal humanism. All in all, to understand other, we need to feel 'responsible,' empathetic,' and 'ethical' towards other. On the same foundational ground is; Paul Ricoeur, philosopher best known hermeneutics; study of interpretation, his one of the book *Oneself as Another* is an exemplary book for understanding other. As per the review on Ricoeur's book, critic Kevin J. Vanhoozer asserts, "one is not oneself without one's body, one's relation to other people, and one's conscience" (369). He has also highlighted the self without other and vice versa notion on reading Ricoeur. His notion of 'hermeneutical ethics' gives equal emphasis to self and other. The transformation in self and other is two-way traffic; 'other' can influence the 'self' at the same time it can be influenced too. Hence, Ricoeur appeal for the empathy and respect to maintain harmony between self and other.

And finally, Tilly Warnock and Joseph Trimmer in their edited book, *Understanding Other: Cultural and Cross Cultural Studies and the Teaching of Literature* compiled form of essays, basically deals with the cross-cultural subjectivity. It helps to acknowledge the positive as well as negative side of reading as well as writing cross cultural subject. As in the essay "Teaching Multicultural Literature" by Reed Way Dasenbrock, he addresses the general assumption:

When dealing with texts situated in another culture, we feel that what is needed is someone knowledgeable about the cultural and historical contexts to

the work. The proper interpreter of an African novel is therefore an expert about Africa, and in practice this usually leads to the conclusion that the proper interpreter of African literature is an African. In fact there have in fierce- if inconclusive – debates in the criticism of African literature about whether non-Africans should be writing about African literature at all. (36)

Dasenbrock attempts to clarify the notion of understanding other, since for him it is not mandatory to be someone similar to understand the culture, nature and emotion of the other. Being different in various aspects also we can have the proper understanding of the other, the only thing required is genuine sensibility. We need empathy instead of sympathy; we need to feel responsible instead of feeling burden. Henceforth, there will be harmony between ‘self’ and ‘other.’ It is very important to consider different culture as ours then only we can avoid our prejudices i.e ‘to put oneself into the shoes of other.’ *The Poisonwood Bible* written by an American writer, but still there is the criticism of U.S government, still there is the glory of African culture over American culture. Kingsolver proved the major argument of Dasenbrock, being an American she has pictured African in a more justifiable manner. Hence, writer like Barbara Kingsolver and critic like Tilly Warnock are making an attempt to fill the ditch, which was dug down long ago by cultural imperialist and ethnocentric people.

Although this paper makes significant use of concept developed in Cultural Studies, it does not offer a comprehensive analysis of complete cultural theories rather, the paper will stick to the notion of auto/ethno continuum; understanding other. Since the major objective of the study is to explore the interrelationship between self and the other, the paper does not put more emphasis on the comprehensive aspect of cultural studies.

Auto-ethno continuum basically refers to the combination of autobiography and ethnography. This novel is not an autobiography or ethnography as such but we can find the playing of self and other. Richard Johnson et al in *The Practice of Cultural Studies* have explained the importance of the methodological combination; furthermore they have suggested the combination of auto/biography and ethnography in order to justify the relation between self and other. The concept of auto/ethno continuum is very fruitful in terms of understanding other. Auto/ethno continuum gives equal emphasis to other as it gives importance to self. It shows the indispensability of other in order to understand self and vice versa. In this regard, Richard Johnson et al explains the three possible approaches to the relationship of self and other on the basis of Paul Ricoeur's discussion on self and identity in his book *Oneself as Another*. According to Paul Ricoeur, first approach belongs to Edmund Husserl and as per him 'self is at centre, other is just the consciousness of self,' similarly second approach is of Levinas, he says, 'we must have ethical responsibility, (unlike Husserl) he insists on the fact that it is the other that give essence to self' and finally Ricoeur's hermeneutical approach combines Husserl and Levinas, he gives emphasis on interpretation and he believes self is changeable (*The Practice of Cultural Studies* 207).

In the novel *The Poisonwood Bible* the characters are able to find their actual self after encountering the other, especially the 'other' belonging to another different culture. For instance, Leah gets disillusioned about her belief, her culture only after she encounters Anatole. Similarly, Adah also finds her inner self when she rushed out to save her life during the driver ant attack in Kilanga. Then after she realizes that she too can love her life, she too can care to survive and can make hard afford for her living. In the same lineage, mother Orleanna also turns bold and active woman during



her stay at Kilanga. Earlier she was submissive, docile, fragile and passive, she used to be a domestic creature but soon after she lost her youngest child; Ruth May she turns violent to her suppressive husband and takes a bold decision to lead her daughter's as well as her life on her own. And finally she leaves Kilanga with her daughters, leaving Nathan Price alone there. She abandons the place with heavy heart because she has received a lot of love, respect and warmth from the villagers. She feels genuine empathy towards those villagers and discovers responsible herself for their suffering just because she shares her national identity of being American. As in the *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* Derrida says, "Levinas indeed speaks of the survivor's guilt but it is guilt without fault and without debt, it is, in truth, an entrusted responsibility" (6). Orleanna feels guilty for two things; first, for Ruth May's death because she thinks she could have saved her if she has revolted against Nathan before it was too late. Second, for Congolese suffering, she knows that the hard won independence of Congo was snatched by the America's conspiracy and as being an American she thinks she too is guilty for that crime. She is the spokesperson of the author. She is the only character who discloses the harsh and corrupt reality of American politics, due to which many innocent nations have to face hardcore sufferings.

Nathan Price is a typical ethnocentric person. He believes his religion, his culture and his way of life is superior and best of all, and to be cultured enough everyone should follow him. According to Matthew Arnold, "[C]ulture is the best way that has been said and thought in the world" (*Culture and Anarchy* 6). As per him culture should be the one that is superior to all. Nathan Price is also in Arnoldian line. He believes his culture is the best that has been said and thought in the whole world. Furthermore, he is more on Kantian rational line. As Kant argues the foundation of a

moral life lies in the idea of universal law. He says, “. . . I should never act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law”

(*Grounding for the Metaphysics of Moral*14). Rachel presents the first incident that took place soon after their arrival in Kilanga village. She says:

He (her father, Nathan Price) pointed at a woman near the fire. Her big long breasts lay flat on her chest like they'd been pressed down with an iron . . . she looked around nervously, for every pair of eyes in the place had followed Father's accusing gaze straight to her nakedness . . . (he said) Nakedness . . . and darkness of the soul! For we shall destroy this place where loud clamor of the sinners is waxen great before the face of the Lord. (33)

He came to Kilanga with such preoccupied mindset which is universal for him. He underestimates the unconditional hospitality of Congolese. He concerns only about the nakedness and the poverty of the natives, but he disregards the efforts that the African people have made in order to welcome the new Baptist in their village.

In this regard, Derrida differentiates between conditional and unconditional hospitality. As per him, conditional hospitality is greed guided hospitality where one respects the guest because of proximity and relationships. But unconditional hospitality is selfless hospitality and it is also called absolute hospitality in Derridian terms. He talks about the unconditional hospitality and he says, “. . . absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner . . . but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other” (*Of Hospitality* 25). The Price family was absolutely unknown to the natives, they were different in various aspects, nevertheless natives display their unconditional hospitality to the Price family. Rachel Price narrates the event and says, “[T]hey were busy with the animal in the fire, pulling it to pieces now and mixing it with something steaming in a pot . . . (they say) Welcome! We welcome you” (29). Such warm welcome was offered by the

Congolese to the white price family. Despite of these efforts Nathan called them naked and darker soul. Nathan neglects the hospitality of natives and soon he starts his mission of civilizing them. Due to this attitude he never tries to understand their culture so he failed to adjust in the society. Although the other characters and the narrators of the novel too have such preconception regarding the Congolese and their culture, but they were open for the change and accept the transformation.

Adah, who seems completely disable, she is eagle-eyed. She observes everything in depth. She is the first to observe the cultural difference. She notices that for African women their legs are internal organs which are supposed to cover nicely. As she informs:

Whenever a woman leaves her wide-open-to-the-world yard to work her field or saunter off on an errand, first she must make herself decent. To do this, even though she is already wearing a wraparound skirt, she will go and get another large square of cloth from the house, which she wraps around her first skirt-covering her legs right down to the instep of her foot-into a long, narrow sarong tied below her bare breasts. (37)

As for westerners to cover their genitals is a social taboo, similarly for Congolese to wrap their leg is a taboo. Such differences are completely ignored by the Baptist but characters like Adah accepts such difference and make affords to understand other. Out of six family members, five Price women show respect to the local culture and ethnicity, whereas family head or the Baptist Minister denies the originality of local culture and attempts to impose the Christianity; civilization enterprise.

Orleanna Price is a submissive domestic woman, who lost her true self long long ago. As per her, she herself is ‘conqueror’s wife . . . a captive’ she has no other way to get rid of her captivity, because oppressed are not supposed to rebel against the oppressor. It is an unlawful act. And in addition she is a woman after all, she is made

for oppression. It is because they are prone to be suppressed by the male dominated society. Kant argues against the resistance, he believes it is an immoral act. In this regard, Paul Guyer claims, “Kant argues against the possibility of right to rebellion” (*Kant* 284). After her marriage to Nathan Price she lost her actual self and turns out to be what Nathan keeps making her. Hence she confesses, “I’ll live or die on the strength of your judgment, but first let me say who I am . . . maybe I’ll confess the truth, that I rode with the horsemen and beheld the apocalypse, but still I insist I was only a captive witness. What is the conqueror’s wife, if not a conquest herself?” (10). In this manner we can call her a victim of European enlightenment. It is because when people have turned too rational they dismissed the sensibility. They disregard the emotions, feelings and human identity of others.

Rationality is imposed upon the five years old Ruth May, she has different opinion regarding Africans. She believes the Africans are the cursed tribes so they are dark and slaves to whites. It is very obvious to have such mentality in her early childhood because her birth and her upbringing are on such community where ideas are grounded on practical reasoning. Kant, the pioneer of enlightenment rationality, advocates for pure reason. In this respect, Hilary Putnam explains, “Kant grounds ethics not in empathy but our common rationality” (*Levinas and Judaism* 35). Ruth May does not show any empathy towards Africans, though she feels sorry for them because she thinks the tribes have made mistake and due to that cause they are suffering. She mentions her understanding of the Africans: “[G]od says the Africans are the tribes of Ham. Ham was the worst one of Noah’s three boys: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Everybody comes down on their family tree from those just three, because God made big flood and drowned out the sinners” (23). Furthermore she states that Ham is a cursed child of Noah because once he had seen his father pig-naked which

he find so funny that he laughed out loud. “So Noah cursed all Ham’s children to be slaves forever and ever. That’s how come them to turn out dark. Back home in Georgia . . . the man in church said they’re different from us and needs ought to keep to their own. Jimmy Crow says that, and he makes the laws. They don’t come in the White Castle restaurant . . . or the Zoo. Their day for the Zoo is Thursday. That’s in Bible” (24). She states about both canons The Bible and the discriminatory Jim Crow Law, which are actually responsible for racial disparity. Though she is just five, she is taught about that racial discrimination.

She has deep faith on her father and what he had taught her, but unfortunately the prescriptive knowledge remains for a short period of time. When Ruth May actually reaches Africa along with her family she was the first one to establish friendly relationship with the natives. Therefore it is true to admit that it is not the reason that drives human being to perform as a social creature rather it is a human bolding that automatically magnetize towards others and the driving force is none other than human sensibility. Hence, sensibility based Levinasian-Derridian ethical humanism is othercentered and open for everyone. Levinas believes, “[M]orality is not a branch of philosophy but first philosophy” (*Totality and Infinity*304). In this respect, Critchely rightly remarks, “[L]evinasian ethics is not therefore an obligation toward the other mediated through the formal and procedural universalization of maxim or some appeal to good conscience. Rather, and this is what is truly provocative about Levinas, ethics is *lived* in the sensibility of an embodied exposure to the other” (*The Cambridge Companion to Levinas* 21). Although she is preoccupied with such biasness, Ruth May cannot stop herself making friends with whom she considers to be cursed. As Leah asserts, “Ruth May was the first one among us to get her way. That should have been no surprise, as Ruth May appears to

be capable of leaping tall buildings with the force of her will. But who'd have thought of five year old could establish communications with the Congolese?" (129). Here, Leah calls that racial barrier "tall buildings" which is not easy to leap up, but Ruth May succeeds to jump out of those tall buildings walls. Even Leah (Ruth May's sister) is amazed to see her little sister establishing herself to a new culture. On the basis of Ruth May's example, what we can understand is that we need heart to understand other, not the mind. Though she is taught various things when she was back in Georgia, but when she finds herself in the place about which she had heard and taught, she finds it different from her understanding. Hence she takes her steps forward in order to establish a healthy relationship with Congolese.

Leah observes her father and her mother; she finds them different to each other. Although she is influenced by her father, she cannot deny the reality that her mother talking about. Her father finds only darkness and broken body and souls in Africa. But her mother Orleanna Price finds it difficult to ignore the fact that the Africans have to use their body as a tool to feed their family. Although she does not argue with her husband in any issues but when Nathan comments badly about the Africans she makes instant reply. In this regard, Levinas explains about the ethical relationship with 'alterity' in his terms. Levinas deploys, "[T]he relationship with alterity is finding oneself under a bond, commanded, contested, having to answer to another for what one does and for what one is. It is also finding oneself addressed, appealed to, having to answer for the wants of another and supply for their distress" (*Otherwise than Being*xxii). Orleanna feels obliged to speak in favor of African with whom she share some attributes. Though she is a citizen of a well developed nation, she is a dominated human being. In this manner, she speaks against her husband in

order to just the Africans and Leah reports the hot debate between her father and her mother:

Father said, “[T]hey are living in darkness. Broken in body and soul, and don’t even see how they could be healed.”

Mama said, “[W]ell, maybe they take a different view of their bodies.”

Father says the body is the temple.

“Well here in Africa that temple has to do a hateful lot of work in a day... why, Nathan, here they have to use their bodies like we use things at home—like your clothes or your garden tools or something. Where you’d be wearing out the knees of your trousers, sir, they just have to go ahead and wear out their knees! . . . Well sir that is just what it looks like to me. That is just my observation. It appears to me their bodies just get worn out, about the same way as worldly goods do.” (64)

It provides the vivid description of two different perceptions of Leah’s mother and father, regarding the issue of body. Leah’s mother Orleanna Price seems very positive towards the natives.

On contrary, Nathan has very negative attitude towards Congolese. As per him, body is a temple; it should be just perfect in its shape and size. But considering the fact, most of the people in Kilanga village they are differently able by one way or the other. So the Baptist minister assumes as their bodies are injured and damaged, so are their souls. However, Orleanna scrutinizes the fact that their body is their ‘tools’ and ‘weapons’ for their survival. Congolese uses their body as Americans uses tools while doing works. Hence, Nathan seems very objective towards Congolese whereas Orleanna expresses her empathy towards the natives.

Self criticism is also a significant aspect of understanding other. Until and unless one is not aware of his/her biases and prejudices, one is unable to respect other. Therefore, self-critique is also an important factor for understanding other. According to Levinas, “. . . self criticism can be understood as a discovery of one’s weakness or a discovery of one’s unworthiness- either as a consciousness of failure or a consciousness of guilt” (*Totality and Infinity* 83). Nathan Price is a static character; he remains unchanged till his death. Neither had he tried to understand the feelings of other nor he opens up his heart and mind for others. However many Europeans and Americans change their early self and show empathy towards the marginal native Africans. Among one of them is the Belgian Doctor in Leopoldville, Nathan encounter him during the treatment of Ruth May. Nathan and the doctor have different feelings towards the Congolese. Doctor feels very excited when he thinks of Congo’s independence. As he asserts, “We Belgians made slaves of them and cut off their hands in the rubber plantations. Now you Americans have them for a slave wage in the mines and let them cut off their own hands. And you, my friend, are stuck with the job of trying to make amens” (148). The unnamed Belgian doctor is not only criticizing the Americans but also himself. He is a self critical man. He acknowledges the fact that how harsh Belgian Government had been with Congolese. Hence he shows genuine empathy towards the natives.

In addition to Belgian doctor, Brother Fowles, ex-baptist minister prior to Price family has come to visit the village. Brother Fowles and Nathan Price are two extremes poles, though they belong to the same profession. They do not share any attributes of each other. Although, Brother Fowles is dismissed from his post he has heartily connection with the natives. He was dismissed for consorting with natives. As Rachel states in her narration, “That brother Fowles! The minister who had this



mission before us and got kicked out for consorting with the natives too much” (299). He has different perspectives towards the villagers. He shows deep respect to the chief, Tata Ndu, whereas Nathan is opponent to the chief. Everyone in Village respects to Brother Fowles, in contrast no body count Nathan as a Baptist and he is there for the welfare. Natives have less expectation from Nathan, because he is in the mission of imposing religion.

Leah and her father flee to Stanlyville to witness the newly arrived independence of Congo and the newly elected Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba. As they reach there, Leah hears the roaring crowd and a strong, influential voice of Prime Minister. He addresses:

My brothers, Mes frères, we have suffered the colonial oppression in body and heart, and we say to you, all of that is finished. Together we are going to make a place for justice and peace, prosperity and grandeur. We are going to show the world what the homme noir can do when he works for freedom. We are going to make the Congo, for all of Africa, the heart of light. (225)

The expressions used in the dialogue are not innocent enough. Allegorical expression such as ‘the heart of light’ is directly targeted to the text of Joseph Conrad *The Heart of Darkness*. The setting of these both novels is same, only difference is the way of representation. Joseph Conrad presents Belgian Congo as a dark place, where people are barbaric and primitive, whereas Kingslover presents the so called dark continent as a place of enlightenment for many characters. The figure of speech used in this extract are not apolitical rather it is an attempt to deconstruct all those cliché made upon Africa and Africans. The Prime Minister is consoling his people about justice, peace, prosperity and grandeur, which rational people believe it is beyond their (blacks) capacity. The country and the entire Africa continent are known for its

darkness but the reality behind the curtains is worth considering. There are various incidents are mentioned about the conspiracy made by American in order to chase the independence away from Congolese. Patrice Lumumba is a political figure; he is portrayed as he was. His presence provides the historical touch to the story. The date and the historical characters in the novel are not turned or twisted for any case. They are presented as they were. The plot covered the huge period of time, about of twenty-five years. Therefore it covers the enormous change in characters and politics.

Adah is a cunning girl. Her findings are beyond the ability of average character, she is extraordinary. No one might have noticed why the natives are so afraid by the sermons spelled by the reverend. But Adah has pinpointed the problem of pronunciation with Nathan Price. Nathan is an egomaniac, ethnocentric person. “[T]o communicate is indeed to open oneself, but the openness is not complete if it is on the watch for recognition. It is complete not in opening to the spectacle of or the recognition of the other, but in becoming a responsibility for him” (*Otherwise than Being* 119). He refused to learn the language and the culture of Congolese. So he needs translator to translate his sermons, and sometimes he attempt to speak Kikongo in English accents, he mispronounce the word and deliver wrong meaning. Nathan has never realized his mistake, so he kept mispronouncing the words due to which instead of increasing the number of followers they decreases day by day. As Adah presents it with example:

Tata Jesus is Bangala! Declares the Reverend every Sunday at the end of his sermon. More and more, mistrusting his interpreters, he tries to speak in Kikongo. He throws back his head and shouts these words to the sky, while his lambs sit scratching themselves in wonder. Bangala means something precious and dear. But the way he pronounces it, it means the poisonwood tree. Praise

the Lord, hallelujah, my friends! For Jesus will make you itch like nobody's business. (331)

Nathan's arrogance and ignorance are the major obstacles for his mission. He attempts to be clear to the natives but he misuses those words. Actually he wants to make things clear so he tries to speak Kikango but he never makes any effort to learn the language and its implied meaning. He just understood 'Bangala' means precious, so calls it in the same manner when the term 'Bangala' means poisonwood. He puts stress on wrong syllable so the natives understand it as poisonwood, and decreases the number of Church goers. Hence, when Baptist minister himself is declaring Jesus to poisonwood, how would be the illiterate and innocent natives will allow themselves to convert into a poisonwood religion. In this respect, the title also throws some light over the theme of the novel. The poisonwood Bible, one may wonder how Bible can be poisonwood, no offense is made upon any religion in the entire text, but the way Nathan Price assumes Christianity to be pious and superior to all is poisonwood

Anatole's ability to understand other is astonishing. He is the man of grace and intelligence. He has the ability to understand the feelings of other without stating by them. He believes everyone has right to choose better for them. So he translates the sermons of Nathan Price. He has his own ethics and they are very similar to Levinasian ethics. According to Levinas everyone has their own individual existence, further he says, "[H]is justified existence is the primary fact, the synonym of his very perfection. And if the other can invest me and my freedom, of itself arbitrary, this is in the last analysis because I myself can feel myself to be the other of the other" (*Totality and Infinity* 84). Anatole believes in freedom of choice, he wants to be the one who provides variety of options to other. Therefore when Leah and Anatole have sound discussion over Nathan Price and his sermons translation, he says he is just

trying to let his people to decide which religion is better for them. He is not imposing anything to anyone unlike Nathan Price. It was not early before Leah was disillusioned regarding her faith towards her father. She is very eager to know, why Anatole translates the sermons for her father, even after the disrespectful behavior from him. Here is the detailed conversation between Leah and Anatole, regarding the sermon translation:

“well, but still. I don’t think you are very keen on what my father aims to accomplish here.”

“I don’t entirely know what he aims to accomplish here. Do you?”

“ Tell the stories of Jesus, and God’s love. Bring them all to the Lord.”

“And if no one translated his sermons, how would he tell those stories?”

“That’s a good question. I guess he’d keep trying in French and Kilongo, but he gets those mixed up pretty bad. People probably never would get it straight what he was doing here exactly.”

“I think you are right. They might like your father more, if they couldn’t understand him, or they might like him less. It’s hard to say but if they understand his words, they can make up their own minds.” (343)

Anatole and Nathan have opposite characters, if we consider Anatole as a hero of the novel, Nathan is the villain. Anatole shows respect to Nathan but Nathan has no respect for Anatole. He is an orphan; he has better understanding of other. He translates the sermons just because he wants his people to decide for them. He is not like Nathan one who imposes everything upon other. He believes in free will, freedom of choice. As the natives are incapable of understanding English bible, he has to translate it for the sake of providing opportunity to have better understanding of others culture. The natives follow their own pagan God but still they are looking for

better God; one who can free them from all the poverty and injustice. But when they were seeking more favorable God they got nothing, they remain as same as they were. So they decide to remain stick to their own tradition and culture.

There are many villagers who are in favor of Price family. Although their heart is big enough, their houses are empty and their stomach always in hunger. Everyone of the villagers has to struggle for their survival. But in order to feel responsibility one do not require any worldly goods, an genuine empathy is enough to help other in need. In this respect, in *Otherwise than Being Or Beyond Essence*, Levinas states, “[R]esponsibility is enacted not only in offering one’s properties or one’s possessions to the other, but in giving one’s own substance for the other. The figure of maternity is an authentic figure of responsibility” (Lingis xiii). It does not matter how much one can offer in order to help other, the only ethical aspect of help that counts is; the genuine feelings to help other in need. Mama Mwanza, one who has lost her both legs and walks as well as works with her hands, she has burden of her family. Apart from all those circumstances she offers food to Price when they have nothing to eat. She is a true neighbor of Price family. She is not only crippled but also one-eyed. She is obliged to fetch water from miles far, she carries water jar in her head and walks with her palms. Recently she has lost her two kids, she herself is such a pathetic character, she has gone through so much of suffering but still she feels sorry for Price family who are hungry at that mean time. It shows she has really big heart where she can manage space even for strangers. Hence, Leah admits:

Mama Mwanza from next door was the only one who felt sorry for us. She made her way over on the palms of her hands to give us some oranges, independence or not. We told her we didn’t have a thing to give her back, but she just waved up at us with the heels of both her hands . . . whenever you

plenty of something, you have to share it with the fyata, she said. (And Mama Mwanza is not even Christian!) Really you know things are bad when a woman without any legs and who recently lost two of her own kids feel sorry for you. (249)

The innocent Leah was supposed to believe that only Christians are benevolent. But when she finds Mama Mwanza helping them, she realizes humanity is not a crown of religion. Rather it is a selfless sacrifices, where people do not expect something in return. In this way, she was disillusioned about her early belief and understanding. Another well wisher of Price family is Anatole. He used to send food and other stuff to the Price family. Once he offers a sack of dead rabbit. Leah's response was suprising. She asked, "did you kill it yourself?" and Anatole respond in a funny way, and it seems like he is trying to flirt with Leah. He answers, "I would like to say yes, so you would think your friend Anatole is a good hunter. But alas. A new pupil brought in this morning to pay for his schooling" (270).And further Leah expresses her true feelings, when she actually receive a rabbit for her meal. Along with Leah, her entire family was in joy because it was long ago the family had something delicious to eat. She further asserts, "I looked in the sack. There it was with it's small, furry had curled unnaturally backward due to a broken neck. It had been trapped, not shot. I clasped the sack to my chest and looked up at Anatole sideways" (271). It was the joy and happiness of getting something to eat. Leah influences by the ideas of Anatole as well as his helpful mannerism.

During their stay at Kilanga, every character has gone through difficulty. But the major casualty was of Ruth May's death. Price family lost their youngest family member in Congo. Every member of the family as well as neighbors was in shock due to the untimely demise of Ruth May. The entire crowd was silent; they have no words

to define their sorrow. But the father figure Nathan Price speaks about the event and expresses his feeling. He uttered, “She wasn’t baptized yet.” In this regard, Critchely rightly remarks, “Kantians are self-legislators” (*Deconstruction and Pragmatism* 28). Nathan is self centered and self legislator. He has to do nothing with his family; he is concerned only about his self governed mission. When Leah heard the expression she feels hatred towards her father and at the same time she feels pity to her father, not because her father lost her child, it is because he needs help, he needs psychiatric treatment. She asserts:

I looked up when he said this, startled by such a pathetically inadequate observation. Was that really what mattered to him right now- the condition of Ruth May’s soul? Mother ignored him, but I studied his face in the bright morning light. His blues eyes with their left-sided squint, weakened by the war, had a vacant look. His large reddish ears repelled me. My father was a simple ugly man. (439)

Leah admits that her father is a ‘simple ugly man’ and this is the epiphany to many characters. Characters like mother Orleanna, Leah and Adah, and Rachel decided to leave village only after the death of Ruth May. Ruth May’s death open up the ways for entire female Price. Leah feels pity towards her father for having so little emotions. Orleanna finds her different self; she became more courageous, active and revolutionary. Ruth May being youngest, she has played very significant role in other price woman’s life.

Adah also illumine the facts that after Ruth May’s death, all white characters except Nathan, has drastic change in their attitude and character. Adah states:

There is no stepping in the same river twice. So say the Greek Philosophers, and crocodiles make sure. Ruth May is not the same Ruth May she was. Yam

Htur. None of us is the same: Lehcarr, Hael, Hada, Annaelro. Only Nathan remains essentially himself, the same man however you look at him. The others of us have two sides. We go to bed ourself and like poor Dr. Jekyll we wake up changed. (331)

Adah's statement is self sufficient to claim the change in characters. As per her, they all have biased and self-centric self, but in course of time they all have gone through the change. Unfortunately, such humanly change did not occur to Nathan Price.

There are five narrators and they all are white American women, and surely enough the history unfolds in the novel is an alternative history. The good thing about the multiple narrations is that readers are able to see the same subject from various perspectives. In this regard, Austenfeld asserts:

The narrative tool used is what I will call a revelatory narrative circle of five character-narrators, who speak by turns in an orderly way, each filtering events, themes, and dialogue throughout the novel. The five female, American narrative voices offer a feminist alternative, first, to historical writing, which tends to be male-centered, focusing on political and military events and key public figures, second, to male-written and narrated European fiction about Africa, typified by Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and third, to the technically conventional use of a third person narrator found even in thematically African works such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*.(294)

As Austenfeld aforementioned, it is not only to challenge the conventional way of narration rather, various reasons were there to imply multiple female voice. First purpose was to give voice to the voiceless, similarly, another reason was to present the alternative history of Africa and finally it was also to present history from the female perspective. The same history may differ if it narrated from the side of women



instead of men. We cannot even imagine what kind of history would be told from the Nathan Price if he was given voice in the novel.

The early self of Leah was totally in rational line, but when she encounters the ground reality of culture and religion she steps ahead and starts respecting 'others' culture and way of life. She is the only character who decides to stay for forever in Congo. There she searches of light and hope. She flights to get independence back to Congo, which was overthrown by the Joseph Mobutu, an African by birth but a pet of America. Nonetheless, the entire credit goes to Anatole, Leah's husband. He is the one who has influenced hugely in her transformation, it was Anatole's love for Leah that has brought significant change in her inner self. In this regard, Levinas says about love, "[L]ove remains a relation with the Other that turns into need, and this need still presupposes the total, transcendent exteriority of the other, of the beloved. But love goes beyond the beloved" (*Totality and Infinity* 254). It means love makes people to love more. Here in the case with Anatole and Leah, their love for each other does not remain limited to them rather it extended to the other. They spread love and respect to the entire community. Regarding Leah's transformation, she confesses, "[B]y Anatole I was shattered and assembled, by way of Anatole I am delivered not out of my life but through it. Love changes everything. I never suspected it would be so. Requited love, I should say, for I've loved my father fiercely my whole life, and it changed nothing" (474). Here, she compares her two love of her life; her love for her father and her love for Anatole. Her love for her father was love of fear, discipline and knowledge. She has some boundary and limitations regarding her love for her father. She was like a caged bird; that receives food and water but cannot spread its wings. But when she fell in love with Anatole, she receives all freedom; freedom of speech, choice, and so on. Therefore, Anatole's love has changed Leah's life and her inner

self. Anatole and Leah follow Levinasian ethical humanism, but they are not extremist. Both of them have different stand point in this regard we can call them Ricouerians, because as Riceour presents the third modality they fits perfectly in that frame. As we know Kantians are self centered and self legislators, whereas Levinasian – Derriadian ethics is ethics for others, entirely other centered. In this regard, Paul Ricouer offers the third modality of otherness, “namely being enjoined as the structure of selfhood” (*Oneself as Another* 354). However, it is not only Anatole who highly influences Leah, Leah also influences Anatole in a great deal. Both of them have some biases regarding other’s culture and religion but as they started teaching each other they both grow a mature self in them.

To sum up, the other centered ethical humanism is prior to self centered liberal humanism. Kingslover herself is a civil right activist and her characters employed in the text are also ethical to Others. Implicitly she has applied characters of two different nature. Nathan Price represents the self centered rational being and in addition he is the representative of the then America which believes itself to be God father to all. Nathan’s bumptiousness is the reflection of American arrogance and self centeredness. Kingslover has attempted to critique the so called rationality of America via Nathan Price.

However, many characters are portrait in an ethical manner. Although not all the characters were as ethical as Levinas suggests one to be, but most of the characters gain their mature self in course of time. Characters like Leah, Adah, Orleanna, Anatole are open for the change, hence they develop their mature self abandoning their early biased, self-centric self. Furthermore we can conclude they are not as rigid as Nathan, Nathan is an egomaniac and ethnocentric person. He is more rational, he disregards the originality of Other. However, rest of the other character show deep love, concern, respect and understanding to Other.

As a liberal humanist Nathan Price run after the universal law, he tries hard to maintain that law for him, his family and targeted group. But he failed badly in his mission and died pathetically. Whereas, Orleanna rebel against her husband's suppression and finally lead her daughters to new life. Similarly Leah gets epiphany through Anatole, she realizes her assumptions were false regarding the culture and life of Congolese. Gradually she learns various hidden facts about her nation and its corrupt nature, and then she starts working in favor of marginal and against her own nation's conspiracy. Leah is in Levinasian Derridean ethical humanism line, she contributes selflessly for the sake of other. Anatole is an epitome of humanity. He not only helps his own people, moreover he assists to them also those who are absolute other to him.

In this way, the liberal humanist self centered ethics is a failure of humanity; it does not offer space to Other. However, ethical humanism enhance humanity to the another level. It provides enough space to the other; it is also called other centered humanism. Hence, writer has deployed the concept of ethical humanism in many major characters. They are guided by the notion of understanding other. Characters like Orleanna, Mama Mwanza, Anatole, Nelson, Leah and Adah are more guided by sensibility which is the binding force for humanity. If people started searching logic in their relationship with other, then very little relation will exist, and rest of the other will be 'Othered.' Therefore, being human we have to prioritize sensibility over rationality and this is the main agenda of the text. Nathan's death is the death of rationality, and so called universal morality. In the postmodern era, postmodern ethics is more contextual and more justifiable in order to establish harmony between self and the other.

## Works Cited

Arnold, Mathew. *Culture and Anarchy*. Ed. J. Dover Wilson. Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Austenfeld, Anne Marie. "The Revelatory Narrative Circle in Barbara Kingsolver's 'The Poisonwood Bible.'" *Journal of Narrative Theory*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2006, pp. 293–305. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/30224649](http://www.jstor.org/stable/30224649).

Bernasconi, Robert and Simon Critchley, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Emmanuel Levinas*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Critchley, Simon. "Deconstruction and Pragmatism." *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, edited by Chantal Mouffe, Routledge, 1996. 19-40.

---. *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*. Edinburgh University Press, 1992.

Derrida, Jacques. *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*. Trans. Pascale Anne Brault. Stanford University press, 1999.

---. *Of Hospitality*. 1997. Trans. Rachel Bowlby. Stanford University press, 2000.

Desenbrock, Reed Way. "Teaching Multicultural Literature." *Understanding Others: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Studies and the Teaching Literature*. Ed. Joseph Trimmer and Tilly Warnock. Council of teachers of English, 1992. 35-46.

Guyer, Paul. *Kant*. Blackwell, 2006.

Jacobson, Kristin J. "The Neodomestic American Novel: The Politics of Home in Barbara Kingsolver's 'The Poisonwood Bible.'" *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2005, pp. 105–127. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/20455213](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20455213).

Johnson, Richard et al. *The Practice of Cultural Studies*. Sage, 2004. Print.

- Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morale*. Trans. James. W. Ellington. Hakett Publishing company, Inc, 1993.
- . *The Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Kilpatrick, Nathan. "Singing a New Song from the Conquerer's Music: Religious Hybridity in *The Poisonwood Bible*." *Religion & Literature*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2011, pp. 83–106. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/23347089](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23347089).
- Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Poisonwood Bible*. Harper, 1998.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. 1974. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991.
- . *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. 1961. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1979.
- Morgan, Michael. *The Cambridge Introduction to Emmanuel Levinas*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Putnam, Hilary. "Levinas and Judaism." *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*. Ed. Bernasconi and Critchley. Cambridge University Press, 2004. 33-62.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Oneself as Another*. Trans. Kathleen Blamey. The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. "Oneself as Another by Paul Ricoeur and Kathleen Blamey." *Religious Studies*, vol. 30, no. 3, 1994, pp. 368-371. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/20019705](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20019705).
- White, Jeanna Fusion. "The One-Eyed Preacher, His Crooked Daughter, and Villagers Waving Their Stumps: Barbara Kingsolver's Use of Disability In *The Poisonwood Bible*." *South Central Review*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2009, pp. 131–144. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/40645991](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40645991).