

## Chapter I: Introduction

Walt Whitman, a writer of American Renaissance and an American romanticist, was born at West Hills, near Huntington, Long Island, May 31, 1819, the second child of Walter Whitman and Louisa Van Velsor, of English and Dutch descent. Whitman received a rudimentary education during the six years he attended the public schools in Brooklyn, beginning about 1825. His mother taught him the value of family ties, and Whitman remained devoted to his family throughout his life, becoming, in a real sense, its leader after the death of his father. Whitman inherited the liberal intellectual and political attitudes of a free thinker from his father, who exposed him to the ideas and writings of the socialists Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen, the liberal Quaker Elias Hicks, and the deistical Count Volney.

He was bred an enthusiast for the unity of his country. In contrast to Emerson, Thoreau, and Melville, he was an American and an expansionist on a new model. Less wedded to class or region, he saw America as a whole. One advantage of living in Brooklyn was that Whitman saw many of the famous people of the day when they visited nearby New York City. Thus, he saw President Andrew Jackson and General Lafayette. The latter visited Brooklyn on July 4, 1825 to assist in laying the cornerstone for the Apprentices library there, and six years old Walt was chosen to be picked up and carried by a hero of the American Revolution. Whitman's formal education ended in his eleventh year, when he went to work as an office boy. In his sixteenth year, Whitman moved to New York City to seek work as a compositor. But Whitman's move was poorly timed: a wave of Irish immigrants has contributed to the already unruly behavior in the city's streets; anti-abolitionist and anti-Irish riots often broken out; unemployment was high; and the winter was miserably cold. Whitman could not find satisfactory employment and in May, 1836, he rejoined his family, now

living in Hempstead, Long Island. Whitman became journalist so work on different magazines and finally became a poet. His favorite topics were education, music, advice to apprentices, temperance, and manner's politics were avoided.

Walt Whitman belongs in the period of American Renaissance, which often identified as the Romantic period in America, covers the span 1828-1865 from the Jacksonian to the Civil war, marks the full coming of age of a distinctively American literature. American Renaissance is the title of F.O. Matthiesson's influential book about its outstanding writers– Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne. It is sometimes called the Age of Transcendentalism, after the philosophical and literary movement, centered on Emerson, that was dominant in New England. In all the major literary genres, writers produced works of an originality and excellence not exceeded in later American history. Emerson, Thoreau and the early feminist Margaret Fuller shaped the ideas, ideals, and literary aims of many contemporary and later American writers. It was the age not only of continuing writings of major established poets but also of the novels and short stories of minor poets and the southern novelist William Gilmore Simms, and others. Walt Whitman was the most innovative and influential of all American poets belonging in American Renaissance.

Walt Whitman further developed Transcendentalism, the philosophical and literary movement, prevailed before Civil war. Transcendentalism, a philosophical and literary movement, centered in Concord and Boston, which was prominent in the intellectual and culture life of New England from 1836 until just before the Civil war. Walt Whitman, an American romanticist involves in this philosophical and literary movement being influenced by Ralph Waldo Emerson. The term "Transcendental" as Emerson pointed out in his lecture "The Transcendentalist" was taken from Immanuel

Kant the German philosopher, who has confined to "Transcendental Knowledge". The concept of "Transcendental knowledge" was extended to include an intuitive cognizance of moral and other truths that transcend the limits of human sense experience. The intellectual antecedents of American Transcendentalism, in addition to Kant, were many and diverse and included Post-Kantian German Idealists, the English thinkers Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle, Plato and Neo-Platonist, the occult Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg, and some varieties of oriental philosophy. All Transcendentalists, in common, opposed to rigid rationalism; to eighteenth-century empirical philosophy of the school of John Locke, which derived all knowledge from sense impressions; to highly formalized religion, especially the Calvinist orthodoxy of New England; and to the social conformity, materialism, and commercialism that they found increasingly dominant in American life.

Transcendentalism in America was inaugurated in 1836 by a Unitarian discussion group that came to be called the Transcendental club. It included at one time or another Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, Frederick Henry Hedge, W.E. Channing and W.H. Channing, Theodore Parker, Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Peabody, George Ripley, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Thoreau, and Jones Very. Transcendentalism was neither a systematic nor a sharply definable philosophy, but rather an intellectual mode and emotional mood that was expressed by diverse, and in some instances rather eccentric voices. Whitman, a transcendentalist, assimilated the basic concepts and values of Transcendentalism and later echoed in writings by Henry James and other major American authors and continued to re-emerge in latter-day America. The Transcendental movement, with its optimism about the indwelling

divinity, self-sufficiency, and high potentialities of human nature, did not survive the crisis of the Civil war and its aftermath.

Whitman, being a transcendentalist, desires to unite his individual self with universal self so as to transform, purify and divinize his inner self. To attain the fullest development or realization of the self, one must transcend his personal singularity by a dialogue with other identities. Beyond the time and space one who awakens oneself from the limited knowledge of singular self to realize the spirit of all selves of the world can absorb everything and can contain the whole universe within himself or herself. At that level, an individual gets perfection by merging his self with universal self.

The most remarkable period in the life of Walt Whitman, the poet, was the years between 1850 and 1855. Intellectually and spiritually, these were the most exciting and adventurous years that Whitman had experienced, for during this half-decade he wrote and printed the first edition of his *Leaves of Grass* and thereby created a new epoch not only in American but even in world literature.

Whitman paid for the publication of the first version of *Leaves of Grass* and even set some of the type himself. It was a slim volume, containing a preface and twelve poems, each several pages in length, sprawling across the pages, and looking quite unlike the neatly rhymed and metered poem than popular with readers. Whitman revised and expanded the book six times and reprinted it twice more. The final and most complete version of *Leaves of Grass*, published while Whitman was on his deathbed, including hundreds of pages and dozens of poems. Through its various versions, *Leaves of Grass*, always remained a unified whole and several themes and stylistic innovations remained constant.

*Leaves of Grass* was one of those documents of the human spirit which appeared at intervals in time, and which arose both violent opposition and unmeasured praise. It is the first great nineteenth century work in English in what has come to be called free verse, poetry without obvious rhyme or meter. Whitman believed that his lyrical epic poem about a new land required a new voice. *Leaves of Grass* represents a major innovation in poetic form. Free verse long lines and loose rhythmic structure-become the perfect vehicle for poems with themes of identity, nationality and transcendence.

The first *Leaves of Grass* contained a brilliant preface, stating a theory of poetry for democracy and for America. It contained also twelve poems of which the first, "Song of Myself", was obviously an attempt to describe a symbolic man of the nineteenth century. This symbolic man named in the poem, Walt Whitman, although there was no author's name on the title page of the book.

A second edition was published the next year 1856, with new poems, some of them among Whitman's best, such as "Salut on Monde!", "Song of the Broad Axe", "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry", "Song of the Open Road", in which, his scope is notably extended. This edition failed with the buying public as completely as the first. In 1860, Whitman issued a much more extensive volume, heavily revised, and with important additions, especially under the headings of "Chants Democratic", "Enfans d'Adam?", dealing with the core of women and "Calamus" inspired by the love of men. The Civil war, however, found its best expression in literature in "Drum-Taps", of 1865 and the Lincoln poems, both groups included in an edition of 1867. In 1876, three years after his paralysis, he published the sixth edition of the *leaves of Grass*, containing the farewell poems of his creative period "Passage to India", "Prayer to Columbus", and "Songs of the Redwood Tree", with other new poems. In 1881, the

*Leaves of Grass* was given its rearrangement in a definite edition, and in 1892, the year of his death, got it as final text in a ninth edition. Even this briefest of bibliographical notes should make it easier to understand the unusual composition of the *Leaves of Grass*. It is not at any time, even in its ninth edition, a complete, articulated work. It is a becoming, in which the imaginative concept of the whole is to be found in the beginning, a whole expands and gains power and control like a man's body, and which ceases, not because there is no more growth possible, but because death ends it.

“Song of Myself” was first published as the untitled opening poem of *Leaves of Grass* in 1855. The author's name does not appear on the first edition's title page, but it is mentioned in the poem: "Walt Whitman, an American, one of the roughs, a Kosmos". The idea behind “Song of Myself” is that individual identity is temporary but transcendent. The dominant tone of “Song of Myself” is joyous and mystical. The cycle of life renews itself constantly, and so conquers death, if each person absorbs this knowledge, each may feel kinship with all life, and so gain a sense of victory over mortality.

“Song of Myself” includes many modulations of tone as it moves towards its climax. To work out the theme of endless renewal, the fifty-two sections of the poem move back and forth between general and specific, between description and emotion, between the body and soul. “Song of Myself” is a powerful-sometimes shocking-poem of physical identity. Sexuality is a part of common humanity, and Whitman ignores pretense in order to reach the universal truths of human identity, including the truths of the body.

Like the rest of *Leaves of Grass*, “Song of Myself” is in free verse, or poetry without regular rhyme or meter. Free verse was a perfect form for Whitman to use to

explore the themes of identity, nationality, and transcendence in a free country. The division of the free-flowing untitled poem into fifty-two numbered sections, like the addition and subsequent revision of the title, proves more significant, for this overt structuring appears to add a sense of order and progression that the poem originally seemed to lack. This is not to say that the 1855 text was formless, or that structure is something Whitman arbitrarily imposed. Not identifying himself by name until section twenty-four and even then in half-biblical, half-comical fashion, as "Walt Whitman, a Kosmos, of Manhattan the son". The poem presents not merely a mind thinking or a voice speaking, but an entire body reclaiming on the ground, leaning and loafing, "observing a spear of summer grass". Radically democratic and explicitly sexual, "Song of Myself" goes well beyond even the extended bounds of Transcendentalist thought in its celebration of the relation between physical and spiritual, individual and universal.

"Song of Myself" is one of the two strongly personal and autobiographical poems in *Leaves of Grass*. However, the poem as it appeared in the first edition of 1855 was untitled and did not possess the intense personal expression of later editions. From its original untitled condition, the work became "A poem of Walt Whitman, an American", then simply "Walt Whitman". In 1881 the poet established "Song of Myself" as the final title. It should be remembered that the group of poems called Inscriptions and the single poem "Starting from paumanok" did not appear in the 1855 edition. Their composition and unification as a group and as a long single poem did not occur until later. "Song of Myself" appeared at the beginning of the anonymously published book of verse as an inventory of themes without the clear direction contained in Inscriptions or the even bolder assertions of the "paumanok" poem. While a prose preface to the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* asserted much of the poet's intention, it could not provide the necessary poetic growth and movement of thought leading to "Song of Myself", even though it was clustered and thickly populated with ideas and sensations. The excursion into "Song of

Myself’ required a poetically artistic preparation. When many of the ideas found in the 1855 preface materialized in *Inscriptions* and in "paumanok", the proper avenue of entry was provided. Whitman's first edition version of "Song of Myself" lacked the system of numbered divisions upon which he later settled. This poem encompasses almost all the themes- democracy, sexuality, superconsciousness and Transcendentalism- found in all of his books.

This research intends to subvert the fundamental assumptions about Whitman who has been labeled as an apostle of American democracy and seems to ensure the unalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of underprivileged groups- blacks, slaves and poor writers-by fraternizing with them especially concerning in their problems, hardships and difficulties. But, by preparing a poisonous democratic feast, with the creation of discourse of democracy, being labeled as the bard of democracy, he traps normal people in his own network of power politics by illuminating them as he seems to favor normal people and opposes the domineering traditions of elitists and capitalists, with the help of figurative use of language. With the help of figurative use of language, and the use of many jargons and terminologies, he puzzles common people due to being them incapable to understand what these jargons and terminologies refer as they are uneducated and cannot approach to the meanings of these words actually. As the result, underprivileged groups are misguided and distracted by the Whitman, an elitist, who shelters in the resort of transcendentalism being indifferent to the political turmoil of the 1850s, by generating the different forms of discourses-discourse of democracy, discourse of sex to superconsciousness and the discourse of Transcendentalism- to justify their abnormality and to inferiorize underprivileged groups in the purpose of uplifting their status as equal to God and for the intention of sustaining the hierarchy, prevailed before Civil War, forever.



## Chapter II: New Historicism

The New Historicism arose in 1980 in the reaction against many older interpretive methods and schools that tend to see historical and literary texts as autonomous entities. The much acclaimed critic Stephen Greenblatt developed it and for which he coined the name "poetics of culture" that seeks to reveal the relationship between texts and their socio-historical contexts. Later, Michael Foucault along with other remarkable new historicists: Louis Montrose, Goldenberg, Jerome McGann further accelerate it by generalizing certain assumptions of it. The age old demarcation between history and fiction is blurred and this merging of historical actuality and fiction parodies the search for 'objective truth' in the history. In *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, M.H. Abrams asserts, "New historicists conceive of a literary text as "situated" within the institutions, social practices, and discourses that constitute the overall culture of a particular time and place, and with which the literary text interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes" (183).

New Historicism always attempts to contextualize texts so as to negate the universal meaning or truth in history and even takes history as a kind of human fabrication like fiction. Louis Montrose, in the relation of this issue, defines new historicism as "a reciprocal concern with the historicity of text and textuality of history". This is a fundamental assumption of new historicism. History, therefore, is always contaminated, oblique and subjective. The assumptions such as neutrality of language, absence of domineering ideologies and narrating voices are contested by New historicism. It's view of history stresses on the impossibility of an all embracing and totalizing account of the past.

New historicists do not attempt to write history but choose to write histories, and accept Foucault's argument for "ruptures" or discontinuous history. That is because of their recognition that historian is a part of the historical process too. In "Nietzsche, Genealogy and History", Michael Foucault argues that "history becomes "effective" to the degree that it introduces discontinuity into our very being – as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself" (93). New historicism, therefore, negates any kind of unified or homogenous history and culture, viewing both as harboring networks of contradictory, competing and unreconciled forces and interests.

Taking the stand above interdisciplinary approach, New historicism dissolves established canonicity accompanying with transdisciplinary and cross disciplinary approaches developed in the contemporary time of new historicism. In *A Glossary of Literacy Terms*, Abrams remarks:

A literacy text is said by new historicists to be "embedded" in its context, and in a constant interaction and interchange with other components inside the network of institutions, beliefs, and cultural power, relations, practices, and products that, in their ensemble, constitute what we call history. New historicists commonly regard even the conceptual "boundaries" by which we currently discriminate [...] formations. (184-185)

Dismantling the boundary between literacy and non-literary text is obvious from these lines because both of these texts are the products of socio-cultural context. New historicists are overly seeking to politicize the humanities and undermine allegiance to traditional scholarly ideals. The new historicism also empowers literature which helps construct a sense of reality for the reader. New historicists intend mostly to despise

elitists, and instead prefer underprivileged, marginalized and subjugated groups of people.

As a revisionary methodology, it destabilizes earlier prevailed canonicity by exposing the deception and politics while creating canonicity due to its contextual reading. So, New historicism opposes the older interpretive methods and schools's motto of 'art for art's sake'. It brings earlier marginalized texts and its writers- blacks, females and proletariats – in the foreground and equals them with so called canonical writers who undermine the works of other subjugated writers. But through contextual reading, their canonicity had been dissolved because different factors – social, economic and cultural – play the role to expose politics behind its canonicity.

### **Poetics of Culture**

Stephan Greenblatt, the much acclaimed critic, inaugurated the currency of the label "new historicism". This critical movement purports to present an entirely new way of reading and interpreting texts by subverting the earlier prevailed textual based methodologies: new criticism, structuralism, post-structuralism and deconstruction that alien text from socio-political factors. Stephan Greenblatt, a notable critic, developed new historicism and labeled it poetics of culture as his hermeneutical enterprise. Poetics of culture seeks to reveal the relationship between texts and their socio-historical contexts. Cultural poetics assumes that text not only documents the forces that inform and constitute history and society but also features prominently in the social processes themselves which fashion both individual identity and the socio historical situation. He has elaborated, in his books, the various aspects of this poetics of culture such as the circulation of social energy, the dialectics of totalization and differentiation and the process of self-fashioning.

Greenblatt believes that meaning is not an innate center of a text. The strict severance of the text from its socio historical context is severely criticized by Greenblatt, not in an attempt to ban the distinction but in an attempt to show that the relation between the textual and other forms of social production are more complex. Poetry and history are both forms of *poiesis*, a creative force, that pervades all domains of human activity. Meaning, therefore, comes out from the synthesis of textuality and contextuality.

In his essay entitled "Towards a Poetics of Culture" what he was naming when he coined the phrase in an introduction to a 1982 issue of genre was "a practice rather than a doctrine, since as far as I can tell (and I should be the one to know) it's no doctrine at all" (1). As a "practice" the new historicism appears to be constructed on the principles of a resistance to self – definition.

Greenblatt's detailed and perceptive analysis emphasizes that a text is informed by the same cultural dialectics as society at large. A text reflects as well as supports this dialectic or, to put it differently, a socio historical context conditions its textual representations and likewise a text informs and sometimes even conditions the historical process. In this discussion of the text as social practice we have confined ourselves to the relationship between text and what might be called the macro-level of the context, namely society.

In the similar manner, Greenblatt refutes any form of essentialist humanism which regards man as an autonomous, free transcendental essence. The human self is a construct, not an essence. Relating this issue, in the essay "The New Historicism of Stephen Greenblatt: On Poetics of Culture and The Interpretation of Shakespeare" Jan R. Veenstra states, "This is one of the two major presuppositions that recognizes as essential to the movement. The second is that the historian or critic is the product of

his or her historical moment and only capable of knowing historical alterity through the framework of the present" (3).

Greenblatt has avoided any emphasis on ideological motives and seems to take a more balanced view of the dialectics of totalization as argued by Jameson and differentiation of Lyotard. This dialectics that govern the relationship between the individual and the text or between the individual and discourse are elaborated in a book called *Renaissance Self – fashioning*. In the essay "Invisible Bullets" Greenblatt remarks:

A self is formed, first, in submission to an "absolute power" or authority (such as the church, the state, or the family) and, second in relation to the Other, the stranger, a category other than authority and branded by the latter as demonic, heretical, subversive, marginal, and so forth. As a result, the stranger is either encapsulated and deprived of his otherness or destroyed.

(21)

These above lines suggest that self – fashioning takes place in a double relationship to authority on the one hand and alterity on the other hand, and is governed by the now familiar oscillation between totalization and differentiation.

Greenblatt stresses that human fashions, are fashioned and are aware of being fashioned by discourse. In *Renaissance Self- fashioning*, Greenblatt states:

The power to fashion the self is an aspect of the power to central identity, a power exercised in the sixteenth century by the state [. . .] must be defined three ways: (1) as the manifestation of the behaviour

of the author (the object of biographical studies); (2) as an expression of the codes that govern behaviour ( the object of those who seek to expose dialogical substructures); and (3) as a reflection on these codes ( the object of those who study art as an autonomous supratemporal phenomenon). (183)

These aforementioned lines portray that Foucault's ideas of expounding initially the strategies and operations of power in discourse have proved very useful to Greenblatt, who, when interpreting texts, constantly seems to depart from or to arrive at a totality of power that means to confirm itself.

According to the Greenblatt, Interpretation and self- fashioning are, of course, two aspects of the same process. Narratives and especially historical anecdotes are imbued with a disturbing and alienating otherness that defies abstraction and generalization and that refuses to be embedded in a larger structure or totalizing history. Historical and literary texts may engage the whole of socio-historical political context, but they will most certainly engage the most immediate element of this context- the self of the reader. In this regard, according to Ricoeur, a text is something other than a simple fixation of speech; a text may actually displace an interlocutor. The texts set metaphor on which interpretive encounter takes place. Inscription is marked by distanciation.

Greenblatt sees the "world of the text" in ideological terms, or in terms of Foucault's concept of power, which does not allow of a dissociation of the world of the text" from the world of the socio-historical context. Discourse is never free from the social structure in which it is embedded and in which it acquires its meaning, Emancipation of the text, for Greenblatt, is unacceptable not because he believes that world of author and reader are not separate spheres in the first place; self and society

are to profoundly interrelated to allow such a separation. In denying the autonomy of the text, Greenblatt more radically politicizes reading and interpretation, making it an aspect of social practice and identity formation, which in itself is also more radical. In the opening chapter of *Shakespearean Negotiation* entitled "The Circulation of Social Energy" Greenblatt argues, "A text, however is neither mimetic, in that it simply reflects the world of the dead, nor essentialist, in that it testifies to the confrontation between a "total artist" and a totalizing society" (20). From these lines it is clear that reading texts will involve a moment of self- abnegation, of self- fashioning. It instills in us the awareness that we are not the authors of our identity.

From the discussion of the relation between text and context it will become clear that Greenblatt's poetics of culture refutes the text as an autonomous and transcendental entity. Instead, it gives primacy on the historicity of consciousness; the urge for contextualization; the idea that a text is not simply a thing in itself, but that it exists in and as its effective history. The idea that a text figures prominently as a process of self-fashioning is the prominent characteristic of this enterprise. Texts, therefore, are parts, of this symbolic production and so are all social artifacts, including history. The social energy that can circulate freely in this symbolic order at the same time constitutes the basis for the existence of this symbolic order. It functions not only as currency but also as an "Under currency". According to a now-naturism argument in Greenblatt's essay "Invisible Bullets", the ability of the dominant order to generate subversion so as to use it to its own ends marks "the very condition of power" (45). These lines clarify that dominant order generates subversion that has been resulted with the help of power. Thus, a generalized argument for the "Containment of Subversion" is itself subversive of arguments for the agency of subjects, which it reduces to the illusory and delusive effects of a dominant order. The

binary logic of subversion- containment produces a closed conceptual structure of reciprocally defining and dependent terms that are complementary and mutually complicit.

### **Network of Discourse, Power and the Subject**

Michael Foucault, philosopher and historian, further developed new historicism with his own creation of three terminologies: discourse, power and the subject which are intricately related with each other. By creating discourse, power has been gained and through power subject is created with distorted representation. So, these key terms create a cycle that is durable for some times until power has been transformed to another institution. Network of power, truth and discourse empowers certain institution which subjugates or encircles other powerless institutions that are represented according to the desires of so called power having institution with the creation of distorted images. So, power having institutions that exercise power by creating discourse with the domineering ideologies that even enhance to formulate 'Truth' so as to dominate or sideline other institutions.

His main thesis is that discourse is intricately related with power that even enhances to create truth so as to impose it upon innocent people. He opines that discourses are rooted in social institutions and that social and political power operates through discourse. New historicism's oppositional nature subverts earlier monopolized tendency of the works and of certain institutions. So, Foucault with the help of New historicism attempts to negate official history because it documents information in linear order by sidelining other hidden information that later may become the core medium to expose politics of official history. Opposing official history, Foucault argues, " Effective " history however deals with events in terms of their most unique characteristics, their most acute manifestations" ( "Nietzsche, genealogy and history",



94). Foucault, therefore, prefers genealogical technique to unearth significant facts so as to make history complete, meaningful and instead rejects archaeological history.

That's why, Foucault, desiring dispersion or discontinuity of history, purposes to use genealogical technique to make history senseful with the amalgamation of different marginalized voices or information and foregrounded information which are in favour of power having group. Taking the help of the image 'state' he prefers to expose the intricacy of power, discourses and truth. The powerful state formulates discourse or contains ideology so as to establish truth, consented by all, that enable state to acquire power. But, there emerge resistance and transforms or dissolves earlier network and creates new too. So it is transferable.

The terminology 'Genealogy' comes to be applied by Foucault through the influence of Nietzsche who even negates absolute truth and assumes that truth is created with the tropes of language as said by Derrida. Nietzsche denies facts and essences and celebrates plurality of interpretation and fragmented self. While regarding truth, he says that it is subjective and enmeshed with politics. "Everything has become: there are no eternal facts just as there are not absolute truth" (Nietzsche 5). Historical facts are only interpretations determined by power, language misrepresent truth because language, for Nietzsche, is presented through a mobile army of metaphors, metonymies and anthropomorphism. He further says, "Truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they are illusions" (336). That's why, history and literature are not two extremes- as if one presents the truth and other the lies.

However, Michel Foucault claims that text is time and space bounded or, in another words, he endeavors to make a link between the texts and the external world. All texts are discursive formations for him. Discourse, the ordering force, set by the powerful group to subjugate or govern grass-root people with the applications of their

domineering ideologies. Politically motivated discourse shapes others in its own ideologies through misrepresentation. In *A Glossary of Literary Terms* while regarding about Foucault's discourse, M.H. Abrams remarks:

Discourse of an era, instead of reflecting preexisting entities and orders, brings into being the concepts, oppositions and hierarchies of which it speaks; that these elements are both products and propagators of "power", or social forces; and that as a result, the particular discursive formations of an era determine what is at the time accounted "knowledge" and "truth", as well as what is [. . .]. (183)

These aforementioned lines clarify the formation of discourse as propagator of "power" and document of knowledge and truth.

Adopting the view of Nietzsche, Foucault believes that it is impossible to gain an objective knowledge of history" because historical writing are always entangled in tropes" (Selden 102). Discourse has been produced in the real world of power struggle. It has been taken as a means to possess or sometimes to subvert power. For Foucault, discourse is a central human activity. He is interested in the process how discourse practices change overtime. Relating the discourse as a means of acknowledging human experience in a specific way, Lois Tyson, in *The Critical Theory Today*, states, "A discourse is a social language created by particular cultural conditions at a particular time and place, and it expresses a particular way of understanding human experience" (281).

Discourse is not the means by which a human subject expresses itself or accomplishes something but also embodies certain condition in which subjects can

form. This nature of discourse can be shown in *A Foucault primer: Discourse, power and the subject* by Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace:

Discourse is not simply the means by which a human subject existing prior to the discourse- expresses itself or accomplishes something. Rather the discursive condition (rules and criteria) set up specific places or positions in which subjects can form as for example, 'patients', 'doctors', 'preverts', 'schizophrenics', 'criminals' and so on.  
(48)

Foucault thinks of discourse in terms of bodies of knowledge. It is closer to the disciplines than to the linguistic system or grammar. For Foucault, disciplines have two sense: one, it refers to scholarly disciplines such as science, medicine, psychiatry and so on and two, it refers to disciplinary institutions such as prison, school, hospital and so on. For Foucault, rationalizing of a society is a mythical process. Therefore, Foucault's idea of discourse can be established as the historical relationship between scholarly disciplines and institutions of social control. Discourses, according to Foucault, are produced in which concepts of madness, criminality, sexual abnormality and so on are defined in relation to sanity, justice and sexual normality. Such discursive formation formulates and determines the forms of knowledge of a certain era.

Foucauldian concept of discourse has been produced with the components which are identifiable: objects (the thing any discourse produce or studies) concepts (the terms which constitute the unique language of discourse); theoretical options ( the assumptions on which discourses are formulated) and operations (Techniques to treat object). Each component determines the network of power, truth and subject and even changed in the courses of time because these factors are transferable. So, discourse is

in a process of formulation, circulation and transformation, which takes place after a certain epoch. His concept of discourse is obviously very different from the Anglo-American conceptions that connect discourse only to language or social interaction.

For Foucault, discourse refers to well bounded areas of social knowledge and this social knowledge is reflected in discourse which manipulate power according to the desire of the manipulator who brings others in illusion by imposing his ideologies. These ideologies have been formulated as laws, rules, knowledge and truth through which power having groups take other in their subjugation. But discourses themselves are neither true nor false. Foucault argues, "Truth is linked in circular relation with system of power which produces and sustains it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it" (H. Adams 1145). Thus, Foucault sees truth as a product of relations of power and it changes as systems change. He claims that all texts are no more than mere interpretations or narratives and they are in the form of discourses. Effacing the demarcation between literature and history, he presents all texts as discourses, entangled with power relations, through which ruling class seeks power and dominate underclass people.

Truth, for Foucault, is deceptive and is linked to power and even created by misrepresenting the actual reality so as to make ruling class ease to impose upon innocent people. Foucault believes that truth has been cloaked with the tropes of language for political purpose. Truth is the creation of power and for powerful only but others take it as a deceptive strategy and discursive formation. Truth has been imposed upon innocent people by formulating certain ideologies that deceive powerless people. Truth, for Foucault, is enmeshed with politics so, it has political motive behind its creation.

The indispensable factors (components) power, truth and discourse formulate a network, that misrepresents the subject in the regard of their political purpose. Saidian 'Orientalism' and Gramsci's 'Hegemony' have been identifiable with the network of power, discourse and truth. Orientalism, a discursive formation, having certain ideologies establish the truth that west is civilized and east is barbaric, with the political motive of orientalizing the orient. Likewise, Gramsci 'Hegemony' parallels with Foucauldian discourse due to its deceptive motive of dominating people with consent. People are consented to be ruled because they have been imposed by certain ideologies. That's why, discourse cannot be alien from truth and power, with the help of them, they generate subject.

Power, according to Foucault, is repressive and always demonstrates 'no'. Foucault's conception of discourse is indispensable for an understanding of the role of 'power' in the production of knowledge-including, importantly, self-knowledge. Power has both repressive and pervasive natures which have been embedded within it. In the regard of pervasive nature of power, in *Critical Theory Today*, Lois Tyson comments:

Power does not emanate only from the top of the political and socioeconomic structure. According to French philosopher Michael Foucault, whose ideas have strongly influenced the development of New historicism, power circulates in all directions, to and from all levels, at all times. And the vehicle by which power circulates is a never-ending proliferation of exchange: (1) the exchange [...] a culture produces. (281)

Foucault explains that power has repressive purpose that enables to dominate or control powerless people and always says no. Foucault resonates such nature of

power. In the book *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, power and subject*, Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace further clarify: "power is nothing more and nothing less than the multiplicity of force relations extant within the social body" (84).

Power, in the intricate relation with truth and discourse, generates a subject with distorted representation so as to accomplish the political motive behind it. Attempt to subject an individual becomes successful with the help of knowledge. To subject an individual means to compel someone else to be under control or dependent and to tie a conscience to his own identity. The subject, therefore, is always placed in a net-like organization of power, knowledge and representation, all of which produce and revolve around the subject.

Hence, the network of power, truth and discourse unalienated with each other formulates a subject by revolving around it having political dimension so as to subjugate it. Imposition of discourse with certain ideologies establishes truth that eases ruling people to possess power for controlling and dominating 'Others'. But the resistance emerges from within the network, can transform prevailing network and generate new with different discourse, truth and power so, subject or an individual never be free from the discursive formation of truth, power and ideologies but can transform within it. Network of power, truth and discourse, therefore, is transferable rather than dissolvable with new discourse and new group emerges a powerful group who attempts to subjugate or manipulate another group according to their own motive, intention or desire. So, the complete liberation of subject is impossible but only the transformation of earlier power relation can be possible. They can, according to Foucault, "promote new forms of subjectivity through refusal of this kind of individuality that has been imposed on [them] for several centuries" (*Subject and Power* 336). But the subjects are sure to fail if they attempt to formulate another

essentialist notion by opposing the earlier one. So, it is better to them to develop the 'critical attitude' as they will not be governed, without attempting to generate next essentialist notion, by prevailing system that imposes to them. In conclusion, we can say that no individual be alienated from the network of power, truth and discourse but can generate another essentialist system by revolting or resisting prevailing one.

### **Amalgamation of "Politics" and "Poetics"**

Another prominent American new historicist Louis Adrine Montrose emphasized on the parallel reading of literary and non literary texts, usually of the same historical period. That is to say, New historicism refuses to privilege literary text as well as non literary text but gives equal weight to both of them and constantly inform or interrogate each other. This 'equal weighting' is suggested in the definition of new historicism offered by the American critic Louis Adrine Montrose who defines it as "a reciprocal concern with the historicity of text and textuality of history" (Abrams 183). That is, history is conceived not to be a set of fixed, objective facts but a text is concerned as a discourse which reflects an external reality and consists representations of the historical conditions specific to an era. In the essay entitled "New Historicisms" Louis Adrine Montrose remarks:

All texts are ideologically marked, however multivalent or inconsistent that inscription may be. And if the ideological status of texts in the literary canon is necessarily over determined and unstable, it is so precisely as a condition and consequence of their canonicity [...] textual space-an always- occupied space that signifies to a historically and ideologically sited reader- so many cultural codes converge and interact that ideological coherence and stability are scarcely. (405)

These lines clarify the ideological nature of text that is unstable too. His coupling of "Politics" and "Poetics" indicates succinctly Montrose's contribution to the new historicism.

Montrose opines that representations are engaged in shaping realities and truth, as well as constructing the world according to the intention of the Interpreter. The cultural and ideological representations in texts serve mainly to reproduce, confirm and propagate the power structures of domination and subordination. In his essay "New Historicisms", Montrose says:

The focus of such work had been on a refiguration of the socio cultural field within which now canonical renaissance literary and dramatic works had been originally produced, on situating them in relation not only to various other genres and modes of writing from beyond the literary canon but also to other cultural domains, including the social practices and political institutions of early modern England [ . . . ]. (397)

The issue of de/canonization has been highlighted by relating text with the context in which text generates. Literary works are both what a culture produces as well as what reproduces the ideology. Relating this issue, Laclan and Mauffe have asserted that "every object is constituted as an object of discursive insofar as no object is given outside every discursive condition of emergence" (Montrose's essay "New historicisms" 412). There is no clear-cut distinction between discursive and non- discursive.

Literary text, according to Montrose, acts out the concerns of ruling class by reproducing and renewing the powerful discourses which sustain the system. He focuses on the refiguration of the socio- cultural field within which now- canonical



renaissance literary and dramatic works had been originally produced, on situating them in relation not only to various other genres and modes of writing from beyond the literary canon but also to other cultural domains. Montrose focuses on how Elizabethan culture in values bringing oppositions and otherness into visibility so as to reinforce the norms of the dominant Elizabethan power. This type of cultural structure is dispersed across a whole range of texts from literature to travel writing.

According to Montrose, "we live in history and that the form and pressure of history is made in our subjective thoughts and actions, in our beliefs and desires" (394). History is no more than subjective formation of our thoughts and feelings. New historicism, therefore, can be characterized by, as Montrose says "a shift from history to histories" (411). This is to say that history is not a homogeneous and stable pattern of facts and events. It is in fact, a subject of interpretation which is heterogeneous.

Hence, his belief on histories, rather than history, equals with Foucault's claim of dispersion or discontinuity of history in which a text has been imbedded and so become ideological product, and decanonizes the renaissance canons by relating it with the context in which it has been produced or received.

### **Romantic Ideology**

Jerome McGann, another new historicist, especially prioritizes his political reading in romanticism and remarks that the organicist synthesis of romanticism in line of Coleridge has already collapsed because of the severe knocks it have received from cultural studies. For him, Romantic poems are most subtly subversive and deeply ideological. There are no such things as non-historical forms; there are only those forms which ignore history.

What McGann is quick to note is that while some critical methods take their

subject as ideologically transcendent, the subject itself is often emphatically self-reflexive about its own historical position. In his *The Romantic Ideology* McGann challenges a daunting array of philosophers/critics-from Coleridge, Hegel, and Marx in the nineteenth century to such influential contemporary critics and theorists as Abrams, Wellek and Meller, Peckham, Hartman, Althusser, Mackery and Eagleton. As such a catalogue suggest, this work is the culmination of McGann's rigorous and extensive study of Romantic texts- the history surrounding their production, reception and transmission as well as of multifarious past and present schools of western literary criticism and philosophy.

McGann's crucial point is that Romantic poetry is uniquely self critical and self-analytical precisely because of its elided self-awareness; the "romantic imagination emerges with the birth of an historical sense which places the poet and then the reader at a critical distance from the poem's materials" (79). Wordsworth's poetry more persistently employs the techniques of visible estrangement from historical fact. As a result his poems are more deliberately "ideological" than those of any other Romantic poet. In *Romantic ideology*, he asserts:

This poetry supplies a reflection of the world . . . , but the image is generated from the poetry's 'reflex' or response to that world and it's own act of observation. In this way the poetry draws itself into the world it is 'reflecting'. The process forces the poetry [. . .] in (and upon) the poetry itself". (130)

These lines portray that romantic poetry is the product of certain historical context because it reflects the ideologies of certain time and space.

Romantic poetry at its best is poetry of loss, tragedy, and despair precisely because it is extraordinary self consciousness. McGann encourages a historical

criticism that passes judgement on ideology, which for him "is of necessity false consciousness, because the very notion of a collective culture or idea running through an individual is what he attacks in addressing Romantic Ideology" (Ferguson, *Romantic Studies* 107). In *Rethinking Romanticism*, McGann's fury is particularly directed at "Wellek's Position [which not only] flattens out the rough terrain of the cultural formation we call romanticism . . . [but it also] fails to map the phenomena comprehensively because it is a specialized theoretical view derived from a Kantian/ Coleridgean line of thought (736). Valorization of generality preferred by Rene Wellek has been opposed by Jerome MC Gann who valorizes particularity or singularity. In conclusion, we can say that romantic poetry at its best, is the poetry of loss, tragedy, and despair precisely because it is extraordinary self consciousness, as claimed by McGann.

All in all, new historicism, a transdisciplinary method, enhances to unearth the politics and deception on the behalf of the creation of certain ideologies and discourses, negating the prevailed textual based methodologies, by encompassing the contextual, political and discursive headings of the text. No text becomes untouched from its socio-economic contexts but the apparent negation has been revealed as deceptive when new historicism, exposes the politics found in romantic poetry and claims that it is imbedded in the socio-political context.

### **Chapter III: “Song of Myself” as a Political Testament**

No writings can transcend the socio-political contexts but they are the products of these contexts, as claimed by Jerome McGann, though it seems to negate these contexts inclines beyond mundane world. Romantic poem focuses primarily on the nature, mysticism, ancient tales and gothic tales. It means they are departed from the actual practical life and instead concern beyond from practical life. They are the creation of hypothesis, but cannot be free from the ideologies prevalent in the society. Romantic poets embed these ideologies in their poem in such manner that apparent reading cannot unearth these ideologies apparently, but detail study makes it possible. They are indifferent about the problems, suffering and difficulties of common people who are suppressed on the one hand but on the other hand, elitists practice their useless practice of Transcendentalism.

Political, social and cultural contexts are the base on which every writings have been generated having some glimpses of these contexts, so every writings either poem or other genres conceive or be inseparable from these contexts. These contexts make every writing political with the distorting made in these contexts as ideologies which are embedded in the context and taken as a means to charge on the common people. The amalgamation of ideology and context enhances to make poem political. So, the claim of romanticists incline towards aestheticity to make poem non-political is totally false. Because every writing, to some extent, hide the ideologies of the writer due to the impact of his own environment and culture on which he has been reared.

Despite being favorable to some junior groups, his writing cannot uphold the whole tendencies, values, norms, traditions of the common people because they cannot avoid their elitists behaviors- domineering attitude towards common people.

So, their elitist behaviors has been embedded on their writings unconsciously, and make his poem deceptive with false representations, though, these false representations can be either knowingly or unknowingly.

Walt Whitman, an American romanticist, writer of American Renaissance, apparently seems to favor the underprivileged groups: blacks, slaves, females and poor whites, but, when we plunge into the depth of the poem, he is liable to label as elitist and capitalist rather than an apostle of American democracy who indirectly left no stone unturned to enhance the contribution towards capitalism. Superficial reading of the poem unearths Whitman as a poet of minor people who gives his voices for their justice and dismantles the demarcation between upper and lower, superior and inferior. Seemingly, he sings the songs of innocent people to whom he parallels with grasses over shoes that denotes the image of powerful groups. This disempowerment signifies the subjugation, domination and exploitation of underprivileged people and he seems to oppose such tendency. But there lies politics behind his eulogization of the grass root people and their song. He seems to accompany with blacks, slaves, prisoners and other poor people but his elitist manners and, sense of mastery and superiority have been exposed in his apparent accompaniment with them when we sink in the poem. In "Song of Myself", he remarks; "I speak the password primeval, I give the sign of democracy/By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms"(24).He prepares a poisonous democratic feast to trap poor people by tempting them towards it.

He is a pure white man and elitist due to his own birth and reared within the domain of the environment of white people. His psyche has been shaped accordingly due to his acknowledgement of the cultures, norms, values and the tendencies of white people. White people's norms, values, traditions oppose the cultures, norms,

values and traditions of black slaves. Especially, their cultures have been loaded with exploitation or subjugation. They intend to negate their rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, at the consequence, emerged Civil war having the target of regaining their basic unalienable rights. Civil war, to some extent, enhances to afford them to have their basic rights so, Whitman being a white man engages in such domineering culture and becomes, at the consequence, equals with them because he cannot alien from such cultural tendencies.

American Renaissance was the time when American poets negated the social, economic and cultural aspects, and instead sheltered in the resort of Transcendentalism. Transcendentalism, as a theory or ideology, had been originated by Ralph Waldo Emerson and further practiced it by other white elitists American poets such as Whitman, Emerson, Poe, Melville and others.

Transcendentalism, a departure from socio-economic factors, is a deceptive discourse of the elitists who prioritize it for seeking inner self. But it misguides underprivileged by illuminating them that it is a superior practice. So, Whitman, as other white men, has same psychology as gained by other white elitist. His seemingly empowering of the underprivileged is deceptive or entangled with politics. Elitists give indifference to the needs and values of innocent, grass root people who have already exploited by elitists and capitalists. Whitman actually refuses to give concern to the needs and basic demands of grass root people, and takes resort of Transcendentalism by assuming it as a means to seek inner self of human life. The aim of the poet is, clearly, transfiguration, purification, spiritualization of the physical self. This is no more than his deceptive policy. In this poem, he asserts;

In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-corn

Less,

And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them,  
 I exist as I am, that is enough,  
 If no their in the world be award I sit content,  
 And if each and all be aware I sit content. (20)

Whitman's adoption of the theory of Transcendentalism is the deceptive discursive formation that enhances the elitists to hegemonize the underprivileged people. At the result, they have been trapped by, the elitists white people, in the elitists' network. Slowly, elitists attempt to lead poor people in their target of exploiting them by consenting them in their trap of discursive formation. Underprivileged people are consented to be governed by the power governed forces. Their consent of being hegemonized is resulted due to their dependence on the power-governed People by whom they are permitted to do in the case of gaining benefits from underprivileged people. Their dependency comes out from their inability of facing challenges whatever emerged to them. Consequently, they are labeled as "others" in the purpose of inferiorizing them.

Walt Whitman valorizes certain ideologies rather than practical aspects as done by other white elitists who introduce particular ideologies through which they brainwash minor people so as to undermine them. Ideas are discursive formations of elitists who formulate them for the purpose of exploiting and subjugating them. Formulation of ideas is in the favor of them with political purpose of undermining others. Elitists want to see other groups inferior rather than superior, so that, they can use them in their own purpose. Unearthing the politics on the behalf of his concept of democracy falsifies his formulation of his concept of democracy. In the surface, he seems to sing the songs of minor people but actually it is his own song sung by

himself. From the beginning to the ending, he eulogizes himself. In this poem, he sings:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,  
 And what I assume you shall assume  
 For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you I loaf and  
 invite my soul,  
 I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass. (1)

Extolling oneself and undermining minor people is the policy of the elitist on the behalf of the creation of discourse. They negate purposes, demands, needs and opportunities of minor people and further attempt to suspend their demands, needs, and opportunities. Subjugation, exploitation and domination are the ultimate targets of creating discourse which is a bundle of deceptive ideas. Deception is the main policy of their politics on the behalf of formulating discourse.

Whitman engages in his self-eulogization instead of upgrading minor people who are always the slaves of elitists. Whitman, as other elitists, equals himself with the God and puzzles minor people that he is no lower than God himself. By equaling himself with God, he wants grass root people to praise him as their god. So, that he can motivate them as he desires. It is the trick or technique of elitists to create discourse that unearths their sense of superiority and mastery by equaling himself with God. In “Song of Myself” he valorizes himself:

Walking the old hills of judaea with the beautiful Gentle God by  
 my side,  
 Speeding through space, speeding through heaven and the stars  
 Speeding amid the seven satellites and the broad ring, and the  
 diameter of eighty thousand miles,



Speeding with tail'd meteors, throwing fire-balls like the rest,  
 Carrying the crescent child that carries its own full mother in  
     its belly,  
 Storming, enjoying, planning, loving, cautioning,  
 Blacking and filling, appearing and disappearing,  
 I tread day and night such roads. (33)

These aforementioned lines suggest that discourse is the creation of elitist to motivate or to inferiorize underprivileged groups, so that he can expose his supremacy. Whitman, a white man, never wants to see minor people in his own level, rather, he prefers to push them backward. Because, they can create problem for elitist or can react upon them if they know the politics of elitist's discourse that is to exploit or subjugate them. By creating discourse, they make minor people dependent upon them so that they can circulate their power with the creation of false truth. Elitists always inferiorize minor people, in the consequence, minor people can never see themselves above elitists.

1850s was the time to economic boom when there was the rapid growth of economy and, Industrialization as well as mechanization helped to develop economy in America in the contemporary time. Capitalism was prevalent all over the country and capitalists were eager to accumulate money by hook or crook.

Whitman being an elitist white man cannot be untouched from this tendency or tradition so, he enhanced capitalism indirectly or unconsciously because he left no stone unturned to support capitalism of the contemporary time. In his "Song of Myself"; "I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love/If you want me again look for me under your boot soles"(52). The metaphor "grass" is the emblem of common people or underprivileged people to whom Whitman prefers. That is known

from the superficial reading of these lines, but, if we plunge into the lines deeply, he has positioned boot over grass. So, we can interpret grass as nature and the representative of common people and boot soles of capitalism. As capitalism usurped the unalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of common people in his own time, that's why, he had depicted such condition in sympathetic manner, but, in reality, he preferred such condition and desired to undermine common people because he couldn't be untouched from such manner. But it might be differ in context in comparison to other white capitalists.

In Whitman's time, America was materially progressing and it was certain that one capitalist helped another capitalist. As every capitalist, he never wants minor people to come at fore, though, he seems to sympathize over them. Since, the political climate of his time was a bit in a confused state, common people, or black and white marginalized people were getting their right of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness which the capitalist white rich people couldn't accept. That's why, his psyche was also like a rich capitalist's psyche and never wanted them to come in his own level. To maintain his prevalent dignity for a long time, he started to formulate discourse through his writings. So Whitman's Writings were not democratic but rather intended to maintain status-quo. Being an educated and well read person, he knew their problems, seemingly sympathized them and achieved power, after achieving power he began to create discourse through his writing and started to circulate amidst the common people. From the detail study of his writings, he wanted to maintain the hierarchy already prevalent before civil war. In his contemporary time of economic boom, common people's sentiments, feeling and emotions were mechanized and commodified. Human beings had been taken as the cogs of machines, their feelings were suspended. In this poem, he remarks:

The quadroom girl is sold at auction-stand, the drunkard nods  
     by the bar room stove,  
 The machinist rolls up his sleeves, the policeman travels his beat,  
     the gate –keeper marks who pass,  
 The young fellow drives the express-wagon, (I love him, though  
     I do not know him;)  
 The half-breed strapson his light boots to compete in the race,  
 The western turkey-shooting draws old and young, some lean on  
     [...] his piece. (15)

These lines impart the sense that human being is a good of selling and buying for the capitalists who do not hesitate to sell human being at auction and utilize them as the cogs of machine, at the result, there sentiments, feelings and emotions are suspended. In the consequence, they become suppressed and poorer day by day since their basic necessities cannot be accomplished due to being them replaced by machines. Internally, Whitman's psyche cannot be distinct from other white elitist's psyche that always strives to exploit others, because of the impact of his own parental elitist behaviours.

His use of authoritative and domineering language subverts his earlier image as a bard of democracy and falsifies his apparent ensuring of the unalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness to the underprivileged group. He seems to speak for blacks, slaves, poors and marginalized people but it is not so because his own language cannot represent the sentiments, feelings and emotions of poor people. It is the politics of elitists who takes his own language to speak for others so that they can guarantee their domination over them. One thing always haunts that if the poor people get agency, they will go against capitalism and their supremacy. So, they never let

them agency. Whitman, in surface, seems one of the representative person of the common people and is uttering the plea for democracy. But his plea is enveloped by his domineering psyche. In “Song of Myself”, he expresses:

I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dogs,  
 Hell and despair are upon me, crack and again crack the marksmen,  
 I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore dribs, thinn'd with the  
       ozze of my skin,  
 I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become  
       the wounded person. (33)

Fraternizing with slaves, blacks, orphans and other marginalized groups is his politics of accumulating knowledge of them, so that elitists can formulate discourse as they need to have so as to exploit or dominate over them. It enables them to create discourse according to their own desire.

Most of the time, Whitman utilizes abstract and paradoxical words, as one of the polices of discourse formation by elitist, at the result, his art in highly rhetorical, symbolic and suggestive, though apparently seems formless. With the use of paradoxical and abstract words, he puzzles common people who cannot understand perfectly what the discourse intend to say actually. So they become confused and helpless and elitists take the benefit of such situation by handling them according to their own intention and desire. In the similar manner, they impose their own authority over them, can circulate power in their own network by falsifying the exact truth or by formulating false truth. In this poem, he asserts:

The smoke of my own breath,  
 Echoes, ripples, buzzed whispers, love-root, silk thread, crotch and  
       vine,

My respiration and inspiration, the beating of my heart, they pass-  
 ing of blood and air through my lungs,  
 The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and  
 dark-color'd sea-rocks and of hay in the barn,  
 The sound of the belch'd words of my voice loos'd to the eddies  
 of the wind. (2)

Not only words or phrases but also sentences are puzzling and ambiguous, so that common uneducated people couldn't get what actually these lines meant. At the result, elitists got opportunities to exploit marginalized by formulating discourse. Whitman brings abstract words and vast references so the people about whom he is writing cannot understand and they do not pay attention and they just feel content that he is writing about the pains and suffering of minor people.

Elitist and Capitalist cannot directly impose their own authority due to upcoming the possible reaction from the common people and it will harm themselves. So, accompanying with different means, they dominate indirectly in such manner that minor people cannot feel of their domination. It is not a matter to deny that common people were coming at the fore whether Whitman wanted it or not. So, he didn't want to break their heart rather he wanted them to be hypnotized in his writing. So, Hypnotization, through language is only possible for elitists. In this poem, he says:

Through me forbidden voices,  
 Voices of sexes and lusts, voices veil'd and I remove the veil, voices  
 indecent by me verified and transfigured  
 I don't press my fingers across my mouth  
 I keep as delicate around the bowels [...]  
 Death is. (24)

Here, the word 'press' is notable because it exposes the arrogant egotism and domineering tone of elitists if we peep into these aforementioned lines. He doesn't directly press his finger across the common people's mouth but do it indirectly or unknowingly to prevent from the possible revolution of common people. His apparent sympathy to them proves false because his sympathy is repleted with inferiorization.

His poetic form was a definite stumbling block in the way of his popularity his technical complexities and innovations can be appreciated only by the few with the accumulation of so many jargons and terminologies, he makes his poetry more complex so, common people cannot approach the exact meaning of the poem and rather distracted. Only heaping the unfamiliar jargons, terminologies and phraseology interfere them in understanding his poetry.

Rather than concerning on the political turmoil of the contemporary time and the pitiable conditions of the common people, he rather extols himself. Whitman, resorting in Transcendentalism, privileges soul over body. Being fond of such elitist practice, he negates the demands of the society and needs of marginalized people but rather illuminates common people with formulation of discourse that glorifies the elitist norms, values and traditions. They get the benefits of this puzzling time and become empowered so as to overpower common people within the acquisition of power which helps to falsify truth. It is futile practice of elitist in the pretension of purifying the self and even a deceptive practice. They spread the illusion that they are equal to God and should be worshiped.

He is not down to earth regarding the problems, he just tries to fascinate the poor, slave, orphan etc. by his dreamy discourse and never tries to make them feel equal in reality. By unraveling the nulls of ordinary being, the poet becomes librated and unlimited. He reaches to become one with supreme power, leaving the pairs of

opposites as play things. He places himself at the center of cosmic drama shoring the omnipotence and omnipresence of Godhead. The poet tries to go beyond the empire of God and accepts them as his equal. He is jealous at common people's arrival at the fore. So he is hurrying to make him equal to the God. In this poem, he remarks:

Walt Whitman, a Kosmos, of Manhattan the son,  
 Turbulent, fleshy, sensual, eating, drinking and breedings,  
 No sentimentalist, no stander above men and women or apart from  
     them,  
 No more modest and immodest  
 Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever  
 I touch or am touch'd from. (24)

His equaling ownself to god overpowers common people psychologically because they have already hegemonized to do whatever elitists want.

“Song of Myself” is a fictitious piece of writing, the best and fullest account of himself- and, also, of course of everyone else, rather than a realistic drawing. It is his discursive formation of extolling himself as equal to God. Apparently, this poem seems as the realistic presentation of the contemporary social life and socio-political contexts of that time, but it is quite opposite of what it seems to be. It is the ideology of the elitist through the means of which, they motivate common people to take them in his own grip.

He praises grass root people to the point of greatest height and intentionally lets them fall or he pushes them from there causing great injury in their part to show that they never deserved such height. He ennobles them in such a way that they tend to believe that he is really superior than common people. His superiority and mastery,

and arrogant tone have been seen in his every description of common people and their residents. In this poem, he remarks:

The negro holds firmly the reins of his four horses, the block swags  
 underneath on its tied-over chain,  
 The negro that drives the long dray of the stone yard, steady and  
 Tall he stands pois'd on one leg on the string-piece,  
 His blue shirt ample neck and breast and loosens over  
 his hip-band  
 His glance is calm and commanding, he tosses the slouch of his  
 hat away from his forehead,  
 The sun falls on his crispy hair and mustache, falls on the black  
 of his polish'd and perfect limbs. (13)

The terminology 'negro' uncovers his arrogant egotism and their domineering attitude towards blacks to whom Whitman derogatively labels as 'negro'. 'Negro' is the derogative term named by white people and this naming make the issue of debate before enacting the Slave Law Act.

Similarly, his bossy attitude and domineering tone can be exposed in his apparent fraternization with under class people. In “Song of Myself” he boasts:

A call in the midst of the crowd,  
 My own voice, orotund sweeping and final  
 Come my children,  
 Come my boys and girls, my women, household and intimates,  
 Now the performer launches his nerve, he has pass'd his  
 Prelude on the reeds within. (42)



Whitman, a Transcendentalist, seems to sing the song of inner self but this apparent singing is quite opposite due his interest in bodily pleasures. Superficial reading shows that they negate mundane world and enjoys transcendental world, but when we plunge into the depth of the poem, we find this assumption quite opposite and, instead, shows them as materialists rather than transcendentalist. He has been justified as a materialist due to his concern on the issue of sexuality. In this poem, he remarks:

I believe in the flesh and the appetites,  
 Seeing, hearing, feeling, are miracles, and each part and tag of me  
   is a miracle.  
 Divine am I inside and out, I make holly whatever I touch or  
   am touch'd from,  
 The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer,  
 This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds. (24)

These lines imparts that he is fond of enjoying bodily pleasures as well, along with the aesthetic pleasures in the pretense of purifying the inner self because he claims himself as a poet of body and soul.

Romantic poets have a preference towards nature, beauty of nature, normal life, traditions, values, customs, and normal people. Whitman seems to favor the normal life, traditions, values, and customs but actually he is ignorant towards them and instead uplifts his own elitist's norms, values and traditions. He rather undermines under class people. He also says all people are divine but at last he puts himself at the top and unknowingly people conceive his discourse, without understanding his politics. This is his policy. In this poem, he asserts:

I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each

moment then,  
 In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face  
 in the glass,  
 I find letters from God dropt in the street, and everyone is sign'd  
 [...] for ever and ever. (48)

The frequent use of 'I' also relates with his politics. He wants to speak all people's voice, making them dependent upon him, and dumb forever. It is the tendency of the capitalist to speak of all voices, through his own language so as to subjugate others by creating discourse. This tendency helps further to inferiorize others and to uplift their own ideas.

His narcissistic discourse of extolling himself also plays vital role in his poetry because he extols himself from beginning to the end of the poem rather than concerning on common people's problems and the political disturbances of that time. In this poem, he asserts:

I am the poet of the body and I am the poet of the soul,  
 The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are  
 with me,  
 The first the grant and increase upon myself, the letter I translate  
 into a new [...]  
 I am the poet of women the same as the man,  
 And I say it is great to be a woman as to be a man,  
 And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men. (21)

In the regard of the issue of sexuality, he becomes freaky and liberal and even tries to justify his excessive interest in sex is also good. His significant concept of sex to superconsciousness is remarkable in his justification of his interest in sex.

Whitman celebrates sexuality as a means to embark on a journey of superconsciousness. He enjoys bodily, and fleshy pleasures rather than spiritual pleasures. He is enthusiastic to accomplish his carnal and animalistic desires and creates this discourse with the main assumption of sex to superconsciousness so as to justify his interest in sexuality. It is the nature or tradition of elitists to create discourse so that they can justify their abnormality. The powerful people are permitted to do anything whatever they want because they have power and can impose it indirectly by formulating discourse to verify their abnormality. Discourse makes the fictitious truth in order to illuminate common people unknowingly. In this poem he says:

If I worship nothing more than another  
 It shall be the spread of my own body or any part of it,  
 Translucent mould of me it shall be you!  
 [...] Hands I have taken, face I have kiss'd mortal  
 I have ever touch'd it shall be you!  
 I dote on myself, there is that lot of me and all so luscious,  
 Each moment and whatever happen thrills me with joy,  
 I cannot tell how my ankles bend, nor whence the cause  
 Of my faintest wish,  
 Nor the cause of the friendship I emit, nor the cause  
 of the friendship I take again. (25)

These lines uncover his celebration of the fleshy pleasures rather than spiritual pleasure by formulating discourse to verify his abnormality.

Capitalist as well as elitist have enjoyed the carnal or animalistic desire, so they indulge in such romantic activities of enjoying, celebrating and feasting being

indifferent to the hardships of underclass people. That's why he formulates discourse with the concept of superconsciousness. Outwardly, what he seems to say is all deceptive because he is quite opposite of what seems to be. Elitists's nature of pleasing themselves is the product of their useless time and their blank mind. Whatever they do is approvable and labeled as normal activities, and the activities of grass root people are labeled as abnormal activities. Their justification of their abnormal behaviors with the creation of discourse is due to being them as powerful. To strengthen the point of abnormality it is better to take the following lines from the poem "Much Madness Is Divinest Sense" by Emily Dickinson:

Much madness is divinest sense-  
 To a discerning eye-  
 Much sense- the starkest madness-  
 'Tis the majority  
 In this, as all, prevail-  
 Assent- and you are sane-  
 Demur-you're straight way dangerous  
 And handled with a chain. (1-8)

Emily Dickinson refutes the decision of majority or power governed people who even justify their abnormality and undermines minority's normality as abnormality. Whitman, as a powerful white man, justifies his abnormal behavior of having interest in animalistic desires by creating discourse of sex to superconsciousness he takes sexual copulation as a means of embarking to superconsciousness.

He, instead of, preferring churches, bibles, prayers and all the creeds, he prefers the scent of these arm-pits aroma that is the center point from where he embarks on transcendental journey of super consciousness. In the poem "Song of

Myself", he asserts, "the scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer/ this head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds" (24). He likes to indulge in animalistic desires rather than spiritual pleasures.

The word 'divine' he has used repeatedly in his entire poem suggests his obsession in the word 'divine' as the capitalist's interest in divinity. As all capitalists sympathize to the grass root people and want to show themselves as omnipotent and omnipresent since they want them to subjugate forever in their clutch. They want to get respect, honor and so called dignity and above all worship from the common people by equaling himself with God. Replacing in the place of God, Whitman also is exposing his arrogant psyche. It is because of his nostalgia of the hierarchical society prevailed before civil war. In that time underclass people's rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness were utilized in the uplifting of white people and rich people used to think themselves as a God, and took pride of taking authority over common people's lives.

Whitman never likes to see them as equal rather, he desires to see them under his clutch and undermines them. To verify his abnormality, which the society could not digest as divine, and to upgrade him at the top level and undermine all the common people, he creates the discourse of democracy.

In the regard of democracy, he seems to befriend with blacks, slaves and underprivileged people, and speaks for their betterment and uplifting their status from the miserable conditions. Apparently, he seems to speak in their problems, difficulties and hardships, so, he bestows his voices to provide justice and ensure their basic rights but underlying reading oppose what it seems to be and discover his arrogant psyche hidden in these lines. In this poem he remarks:

Through me many long, dumb voices,

Voices of the interminable generations of prisoners and slaves,  
 Voices of the diseas'd and despairing and of thieves and dwarfs,  
 Voices of cycles of preparation and accretion,  
 And of the threads that connect the stars, and of wombs and of  
 The father-stuff,  
 And of the rights of them the others are down upon,  
 Of the deform'd, trivial, flat, foolish, despised,  
 Fog in the air, beetles rolling ball of dung. (25)

But, as we go beneath the surface of his poem we come across his politics. The remarkable point is that he speaks for all common people but the language he used is his own domineering language enveloped the capitalist psyche. His language has the glimpses of capitalist's rites, rituals, cultures and their own aristocratic systems and misrepresents the sentiments, feelings and emotions of grass root people. Whitman does not love society as society. Capitalist arrogant tone and domineering attitude can be exposed in his language. He takes the advantages of his misrepresentation of common people and their hardships.

One recent study has argued that the escalating crisis of the union in the time of 1850's allowed Whitman to discover the healing role so central to "Song of Myself". Such studies have made absolute the wide spread view that in the 1850s Whitman detached himself from practical politics in order to advocate a purely spiritual democracy. Whitman spoke on behalf of "all freeman north and south the whole population of the 31 states who have no human property."

In "Song of Myself", Whitman adopts an equalizing perspective that was inconceivable for any contemporary politician. In this poem he asserts:

I pass death with the dying and birth with new wash'd babe,

and am not contain'd between my hat and boots,  
 And persue manifold objects, no to alike and everyone good,  
 The earth good and the stars good, and their [...]  
 For me the sweet-heart and old maid, for me mothers and the  
 mothers of mothers,  
 For me lips that have smiled, eyes that have shed tears,  
 For me children and begetters of children. (7)

His apparent equalizing perspective is totally misleading and incredible due to embedding his politics in his writings.

Anger erupts occasionally into the poem "Song of Myself", where he is ironic at the expense of slave-catchers, greedy capitalists, and self-serving politicians, but he is no more distinct from them because he is liable to categorize in the same class who undermines grass-root people and glorifies union rather than disunion. "The union" he describes as "always surrounded by blatherers and always calm and impregnable" (7). So, his claim of glorious union is quite deceptive because he likes the power centralized single state in order to sustain the prevailed demarcated society before civil war.

Sectionalism and Nativism are the two dangers for Whitman due to his favor on so called glorious union. Union or America as single state, cannot ensure the basic rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness to all people especially common people like slaves, blacks and other marginalized group. In such state, marginalized groups are exploited by power having white people because power has been centralized only to single group. Federalism and nativism are such system of government in which certain group can ensure his own basic rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, as well as freedom and liberty have been guaranteed. No interferences and

obstructions disturb them in their own works. In "Song of Myself" he remarks: "one of the nation of many nations, the smallest the same and the largest the same" (44).

Having provided the allegorical key to his synecdochic catalogue, he goes on to counteract both sectionalism and nativism, two of the greatest dangers to the union in the 1850s. he is therefore "a southerner soon as a northerner" and "not merely of the new world but of Africa Europe or Asia", in short, a true American.

Another characteristic device in Whitman's style of union is what we might call redundant metonymy that he uses figuratively to represent personal, especially erotic, union which also has political implication for the poet. For instance, his depiction of the soul as a sexual body, "you settled your head athwart my hips and gently turned over upon me" (33), uses the metonymy of the container (the body) for the contained (the soul), with his soul and body interpenetrating shows himself to be a non-hierarchical being. Substitution one term in the place of another is the policy of elitists, through which they can deceive and exploit common people. Here lies the politics of domination.

Metonymies, redundant and other figurative, use of languages is chosen to represent the glorious union or to represent the America as a single state. So that, they can brain-wash common people by imposing them to believe that America is a single state, at the result, they can utilize their own authority and monopoly over them. By monopolizing them, they can impose their own order and handle them according to their own intentions and desires. Unconsciously they have been habituated in the situations, created by the elitists and shape their mind accordingly. Gradually and slowly, they become habituated to tolerate the domination and exploitation of elitists because they depend upon them slowly, they are consented to be ruled by others as



proposed by Antonia Gramsci because their demands, needs are only fulfilled by elitists.

Walt Whitman conceals his politics on the behalf of his apparent approval towards common people and their life style. While reexamining his theory of democracy we can evaluate it as a discursive formation formulated for the purpose of making poor people consented in it. Discourse of democracy and a democratic man is just only the illusion on the base of which Whitman rather makes them confused instead of guaranteeing their unalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. Whitman by creating the discourse of democracy and a democratic man, he creates truth that is he is provider as equal to God and demands honor and respect from them. With the help of this truth, he acquires power and circulates it amidst underclass people according to their own desire, and by imposing power, he can motivate them to fulfill his ultimate aim of inferiorization and exploitation

Amalgamation of personal attitude and the reality of the social life makes it fictitious or hypothetical. Whatever it seems apparently is not the perfect copy of society but a discursive formation formulated in his own favor. This can be done indirectly or even unconsciously because of the impacts of the rites, rituals, norms, values and the traditions of elitist on which Whitman has been reared. So, "Song of Myself" is the product of socio-cultural context of certain society because of the coupling of personal perspective and social reality. That's why; "Song of Myself" is the amalgamation of historicity and textuality.

Taking the chimera of American Transcendentalism that focuses on the purification of the inner soul as well as the Transcendental world, beyond mundane world, the world of veil of Maya. Elitists who practice such practice to have solace to their inner soul and become ignorant towards the practical life. It is the deceptive

ideology of the elitists who deceive common people by consenting them that they are as superior as God. So that, they can maintain the prevailed hierarchy forever and can handle them according to their own intention. Further, they can subjugate them. And, he, later, spreads illusion of that is he is equal to God, omnipotent and omnipresent. This is the ideology of the elitist to undermine common people. Resorting to Transcendental world is the hypocritical nature of elitists who are indifferent to the political turmoil of that time as well as the social life of marginalized groups.

All in all, Walt Whitman, an elitist and capitalist reared in the traditions, norms, values, rites and rituals of the elitist's society and shaped his psychology accordingly, rather misrepresents the sentiments, feelings emotions and social realities of the common people due to the impact of his own parental elitist traditions and formulates this poem in his own favor. Although the surface reading exposes that he is a bard of democracy who fraternizes with blacks, slaves and other marginalized groups and attempts to provide the unalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. But, as we go beneath the surface of this poem, we come across the politics on the behalf of creating the discourse of democracy that is no more than discursive formation through which he subjugates and exploits them by falsifying truth and acquiring power, which in whole make their network as a weapon of exploitation.

### **Chapter IV: Conclusion**

Political reading of the poem “Song of Myself” dismantles the earlier notoriety of Walt Whitman as an apostle of American democracy, who apparently seems to fraternize with underclass groups- slaves, blacks and poor white people, and unearths him as a doctrinal devotee of elitism and capitalism who uplifts and valorizes the elitist white American’s norms, values traditions, cultures, rites and rituals being alphabetic towards poor people and their destitution due to the impact of the domain of his own elitist parental environment on which he has been reared. In the regard of capitalism, he left no stone unturned to enhance the capitalism in the contemporary time of America.

Apparent reading uncovers Whitman as a singer of hymn for grass root people and their hardships, as well as labeled as a bard of American democracy who seems to ensure the unalienable rights of common people demarcating the split between black and white, rich and poor, upper and lower, and slave and owner. But, when we peep into the depth of the poem, we get him being enamored of embedding his politics in the formulation of his discourse of democracy which he receives as a means of undermining and inferiorizing them intentionally. His seeming ennobling to normal people has been enveloped by his politics of illuminating and deceiving them.

“Song of Myself” is not a photocopy or realistic drawing, but it is, nevertheless, the best and fullest account of himself with self extolling. He poetizes and politicizes everyone and everything with the utilization of certain phraseology borrowed from unfamiliar sectors by wording them randomly, at the consequence, common people misunderstand what he writes about. In the similar manner, he borrows unfamiliar jargons and terminologies that interfere them to understand exactly. He even embeds his norms values, traditions, rites and rituals in his writings

either prose or poetry , but his way of embedding is comp[lately indirect. He does so unconsciously due to the brain washing of his mind accordingly with the impact of his own elitist manners. His style of poetization , with the use of metaphors and metonymies, as policy of elitist, bewilders normal people, distracts them from understanding of his writing and elitist takes the advantage of this situation .

Sense of superiority and mastery, and arrogant egotism have frequently been found objectionable from beginning to the ending of this poem. Sense of superiority and mastery, and arrogant egotism have been uncovered when he equals himself with god and enamored of being worshipped by them. To sustain the hierarchy prevailed before civil war, Whitman attempts to hegemonize underclass groups so as to make them dependent upon him. By making them dependent upon him he makes them consent to be ruled and inferior than himself. Hypnotization, a writing strategy of elitist, enhances Whitman to accomplish his target of inferiorizing grassroot people. In his poem, he hypnotizes poor people by revealing his sense of superiority and mastery over them with the figurative use of language or tropes in order to make poor people misunderstood what he writes. Hypnotization is the political strategy of Whitman through which he hegemonizes under privileged people .

Sex to super consciousness, one of his main assumptions, bestows sex a sacred touch at his hands because sex, for him, as a means of embarking on journey towards superconsciousness. But by bestowing a sacred touch to sex, he attempts to justify the vulgarity and liberal nature towards sexuality as practiced by white Americans. He divinizes sex with the formulation of discourse sex to superconsciousness through which he misleads common people having pantheistic belief towards sexuality that takes him, first, to the stage of beatitude and then, to the pantheistic stage, the level of perfection. But all of this are the processes of elitist's

ideology to deceive poor people.

Sectionalism and nativism, the two obstacles for Whitman, interfere on his proclamation of glorious union that he prefers most due to his own enthusiasm to remain the country as a single state so that they can maintain the hierarchy prevalent before Civil War by centralizing power on powerful groups rather than decentralizing power to other federal states.

To sum up, it is uncovered that Whitman is an elitist and capitalist rather than a bard of American democracy who politicizes everyone and everything, negating the contemporary problems of common people and the country. To accomplish his motto of inferiorization, resorting in the Trancendentalism having the pantheistic belief which leads him to the level of perfection, Whitman formulates discourses- the discourse of democracy, the discourse of sex to superconsciousness and the discourse of Trancendentalism- to mislead underclass people to maintain the segregation prevailed before Civil War. Moreover, he instead uplifts the elitist's norms and values which are revealed most of the time in the poem.

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