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The Language of Silence: A Study of *Winerburg, Ohio*

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By

Kamal Raj Poudel

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled "The Language of Silence: A Study of *Winerburg, Ohio*", submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Kamal Raj Poudel has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

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Kamala Raj Poudel

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Abstract

The present research is an attempt to prove that existing aspect of human life is rather less effectively communicated through words than without them with reference to Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*. Silence is complementary to verbal language when what is left unsaid is interpreted, but when what cannot be said with words is conveyed with silence, it becomes supplementary to speech. So that it is a part of language, which had previously seemed nebulous and vague, or else shameful and unmentionable. The communicative value of silence can be extended to the use of silence in art and many other discourses. So that it has become a tool in Anderson's *Winesburg Ohio* too. Character's ineffability communicates the given predicament they are in and no language seems to be as handy for them as the language of silence. In this study I have tried to develop ways to interpret the expressive silence set against speech, the silence that is communicatively a significant tool and silence that enhances the meaning and effect of verbal language.

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CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

Life and works of Anderson

Sherwood Anderson, American novelist, poet, playwright, short story writer and news paper editor was born on 13 September 1876 in Camden Ohio to parents Mcllain Andreson and Emma Jane Smith. He was their third child. Anderson hated his father because of the lack of love shown to his mother and resented his father because of the humiliation and poverty that his father caused. The poverty of his family was perhaps the chief reason why he quit school at the age of fourteen and got a job. Therefore, many years he worked at a great variety of jobs (all requiring manual labour), first in Clyde and then in Chicago. Leaving school before graduating in 1896 Anderson left Clyde for Chicago where his brother Karl was living. He worked as a manual laborer until enrolling in the army for service in Cuba during the Spanish-American war.

After the war, he again followed his brother who had taken a job as an artist for the Crowell Publishing Company in Springfied, Ohio. In September of 1900, Anderson attended the Wittnebery Academy. Earning his food and lodging as a "chore boy" at the artists boardinghouse, Anderson encountered a highly cultured environment. Ironically, the influence of the artists was most important to Anderson for his advance in the business world. The Crowell advertising manager secured him a job in Chicago as a copywriter. He was highly successful in this position. In 1904, he married Cornelia Lane, the daughter of a wealthy Ohio wholesaler. Although he hoped to become an artist, he lived as a bourgeois husband and father of three children for a couple of years. He left Chicago for Northen Ohio in 1906 and over the next six years, he managed a mail- order business in Cleveland and then two paint manufacturing firms. Yet, Andrson increasingly spent his free time in writing. On

November 27, 1912 he disappeared from his office and was found four days later in Cleveland, disheveled and disoriented, having suffered a mental breakdown. In later writings, Anderson often referred to this episode as a conscious break from his materialistic existence and many younger writers picked up on this, praising his heroic spirit.

It was a dramatic and memorable moment; nothing quite like it had happened before in our literary history: a successful businessman abandoning his business at the age of thirty- six in order to devote his life to writing. In course of quenching the thirst of writing, he divorced Cornelia and married Tennessee Mitchell in 1914. The same year his first novel was published entitled *Windy Mc Person's Son*, which deals with a boys life in a drab Iowa town, his rise to success as a manufacturer, and his renunciation of this life to find truth. This was followed by another novel, *Marching Men* (1917), Set in the Pennsylvania coal region, and showing the failure of a mystical movement to organize the workers in order to free them from oppressive routine.

Anderson is best known for his classic collection of tales, *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919). It is a peculiar work, part novel and part collection of short stories which made him a talented modern American author. In it, twenty-four sections are interconnected that focus on various inhabitants of Winesburg, a sleepy Midwestern town, around the turn of the century. These stories of small-town life voice the philosophy of life expressed in all his later works. Adopting a naturalistic interpretation of American life, he believed that the primal forces of human behavior are instinctive and not to be denied by the standardization of a machine age. His characters are puzzled, groping, baffled and possess no vision of order or channel for directing their energies against the frustrations of contemporary existence.

Regardless of the success of his short stories and desire to find a looser form, Anderson felt pressure to write novels and *Poor White* was published in 1920. It is a novel of the midwest, the town was really the hero of the book. What happened to the town was more important than what happened to the people of the town. When the machine came to the town, the beauty and significance of the town have gone away. The same theme and attitude of mind are evinced in subsequent books: *The Triumph of the Egg* (1921) *Horses and Men* (1923) and *Many Marriages* (1932). In the novel *The Triumph of the Egg*, (1923), Anderson shows different aspects of frustration and maladjustment. Likewise, in *Many Marriages* (1923) a businessman attempts to escape from routine life.

Anderson made unsuccessful attempts at poetry, the first being a free verse collection entitled *Mid-American Chants* in 1918. He saw himself as part of the literary tradition of Whitman, Twain, and Dreiser, who had appreciated the common American. His influence affected many of the upcoming writers such as Hemingway, Faulkner, Steinbeck, Fitzgerald, Wolfe and Saryan. He was given the first Dial Award for distinguished service to American Letters in 1922 but soon was derided by the same publication when his popularity waned.

In 1922, Anderson separated from Mitchell and married Elizabeth Prall. He published the novel *Dark Laughter* (1925), which became a bestseller. In the story the disillusioned protagonist travels down the Mississippi. Like the Protagonists in the novel, Anderson moved to New York for sometime, and from there finally to Virginia where he built a country house and worked as a farmer and journalist. After another failed marriage, Anderson married Eleanor Copenhagen with whom he finally appeared happy.

They traveled many parts of the country and studied social conditions. Among his publications concerning their Journey in the 1930 were 'Death in the Woods' and other; *Puzzled America*, a book of essays; and *Kit Brandon*, a novel that he finished in 1936. Though his influence was dying out during this period, very significant American passage of prose exist in his writing through the very end. Many of these passages have been overlooked because of their place within a large faulty work. Later, he has been rediscovered and appreciated as idealizing the modes of thought and societal themes. Anderson died of peritonitis in March of 1941 on his way to visit Panama. His last work is an extensive essay entitled *Home Town* (1940).

Like Theodore Dreiser and Emile Zola, Anderson was a master of literary naturalism, offering a harsh and pessimistic assessment of the human condition. While Dreiser and Zola situated their unhappy characters amid the brutality of industrial cities and mining towns, Anderson finds unhappiness, alienation and despairing in what one might suppose a gentler, more innocent place the rural, picturesque setting of a typical American small town. Almost Characters in his novels and stories are trapped themselves in their own psychological webs that made it impossible for them to lead anything but sad unfulfilled lives.

Although largely self-educated, Anderson was a serious thinker, and he read widely. He was among the earliest to respond to the new Freudian psychology, and was convinced that much of human behavior is a reaction to subconscious realities and to experiences hidden in the forgotten past of the individual. His characters grope unsuccessfully to discover the reality within themselves, while with equal frustration they confront the complexities of the machine age and the conventionality of urban and small town life. If they escape at all, even briefly, it may be through the experience of sex, although this escape also is often blocked by brutalizing

debasements. Another resolution is sometimes found, as in *Dark Laughter* (1925), when man is able to identify himself simply with the primitive forces of nature.

Thus, Anderson's influence upon later American writers, especially those who wrote short stories, has been enormous. Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner both praised him as a writer who brought a new terror of feeling, a new sense of introspectiveness to the American short story. Anderson often wrote of other people's misery in his short stories and used it in ironic ways. After reading several of his stories and reading several biographies of his life, it is more clear that his life experiences greatly influence the method in which he wrote them.

Critics on Anderson's *Winesburg Ohio*

Sherwood Anderson's popular book *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), a Collection of connected short stories has received wide ranging responses from different perspectives since its publication. Besides various other themes, it deals with the theme of isolation, loneliness, and cultural failure. Silence functions as dominant role as language itself in the system of communication. Hart James in Oxford companion to English Literature describes the book *Winesburg, Ohio* as the philosophy of life. It remarks:

The stories of small - town life in *Winesburg Ohio* voice the philosophy of life, characters are puzzled, groping, baffled and possess no vision of order or channel for directing their energies against the frustration of contemporary existence. (30)

As described by James Anderson, it highlights the sense of frustration and depression of the characters and their inability to come out from such situation. Waiting in vain for a self - made fantasy to realize, Alice Hindman the central character in the story 'Adventure' sacrifices a meaningful life within society. Alice's

outward existence appears to run steadily downhill into dull meaninglessness, her inward life climbs with increasing intensity toward a climax of desperation and hysteria. The intensity, a passionate restlessness, forces Alice to realize that she cheated by fantasy and must face the bitter truth about life. She sheds her clothes as if they were her lost dreams and erroneous ideas and runs naked outside. At the end of the story, she wakes up and to face bravely the fact that many people must live and die alone, even in Winesburg. Similarly, Emory Elliot in *The Columbia History of America Novel* comments on the book:

The high modernistic prototype of this neogothic mode of fiction was created by Sherwood Anderson, Who wrote his 'Book of the Grotesque' a collection of tales of hidden, anguished, small town lives published as *Winesburg, ohio* (1919). (327)

Here, Eliot appreciates the book as it being a true representation of alienated people. The theme of loneliness and isolation are expressed by describing the characters as grotesque. The grotesques are the people who have become obsessed with an idea or mannerism, such that, they have lost contact with their fellow man. The first chapter 'Hands' involves the sad story of Wing Biddlebaum. Because Biddlebaum is accused of having molested students that he taught, his hands embody the shame that he carries. Fearing that the presence of his hands will be misinterpreted, Biddlebaum hides his expressive hands. By creating the symbol of hands in this chapter, the theme of isolation is dealt very successfully.

Considered to be his masterpiece, *Winesburg, Ohio* is a collection of short stories that is now considered to be a novel in form. Malcolm Cowley describes this work as a work of love, an attempt to break down the walls that divide one person from another, and also, in its own fashion, a celebration of small-town life in the lost

days of good will and innocence. Critics have debated whether or not to classify Anderson as a regional, or a local color author, because of his colorful descriptions of specific areas such as in Winesburg, Ohio. Cowley makes a strong argument against this by stating:

Within the oral tradition, Anderson had his own picture of what a story should be. He was not interested in telling conventional folk tales, those in which events are more important than emotions The moments he told in his Midwestern drawl were not incidents or episodes, they were moments, each complete in itself. (25)

Anderson himself may have strongly argued against such confining labels himself. Instead, his work spans regions and may universally be appreciated for the "moments" he left behind in his tales of human emotion.

Winesburg, Ohio is a perfect distillation of everything that is intangible and is a beautiful fiction. A series of twenty or so stories rattle off in quick succession, all essentially leading nowhere and breaking off suddenly. In the end, however, these fleeting episodes all converge into the swirling experience of young news reporter George Willard as he takes the first bold steps into adulthood.

Sherwood Anderson's style is so simple and plain that it does not draw any attention to itself at all. His sentences are short and decisive and his descriptions consistent and clear as White Ray describes in his book *Winesburg, Ohio An Exploration*. White argues:

This stories depict the underbelly of American life, reflecting the private terrors and yearnings beneath the wholesome veneer of life in Middle America. In addition to creating his own eccentric characters, Anderson also had a style all his own. (43)

As described by Ray, Anderson did not have the formal training or education typical of most respected writers of the time; indeed he used everyday words in simple sentences as his trademark. In his memories, Anderson explains his word choice, "There was the language of the streets, of American towns and cities, of the factories and warehouse where I had worked" (13). In short, Sherwood Anderson wrote stories of the American experience that all people could appreciate.

The most completely naturalistic story Anderson wrote, and one of his few masterpieces, is 'Death in the Woods'. Horace Gregory observes the work as a celebration of small-town life as he argues, "Death in the Woods is a better example of Anderson's skill in giving the so called common experiences of familiar, everyday life, an aura of internal meaning" (26).

It is the tale of an old woman who struggles to keep food in the bellies of her worthless husband and son. When she dies, alone and defeated, in the woods, the dogs who have scented the food she carries perform a kind of ritualistic dance around her. But in death she is beautiful again, as she must have been as a young girl.

Anderson's implied purpose in all his works is to express something for his characters to release them from their frustration and loneliness through his art. The plight of the characters in Winesburg can be traced to their inability to communicate with one another. It does remain to be shown how thoroughly Anderson explores the theme of human communication in Winesburg, how his treatment of that theme is linked to his attitudes toward silence, words, and talk, and how these attitudes are in turn related to the strong, single idea which runs through all of his work: the loss of human significance in America with the onset of urban, machine civilization.

Although the Andersonian dilemma over the actuality of roaring, word-ridden cities versus the dream of pastoral stillness is delineated and dramatized most

successfully in Winesburg, a firmer understanding of that work may result from a brief look at the writer's treatment of these concerns within his other early books. *Windy Mc Pherson's Son* (1916), *Marching Men* (1917) and *Poor White* (1920). All explore the meaning of American life for the searching individual whose life spans – as Anderson's own life did – the 'watershed' of history, the changeover from agrarian to urban culture. Sam Mc Pherson, of Anderson's first novel, leaves his boyhood town not merely to seek his fortune in the city but primarily to escape the humiliation of being the son of "Windy", the fool of words, the irresponsible and empty boaster of the town. Although Sam succeeds in Chicago, he is finally sickened by its shrill and disintegrative values and resolves, however shakily, at the end to reject the great world in favor of wife and family in a quiet village on the Hudson.

As described by Horace Gregory all of Anderson's writing is remarkable for its sensitivity to movement as a characteristic mark of American life. Gregory further comments the book *poor white*:

No novel of the American small town in the middle west evokes in the minds of its readers so much of the cultural heritage of its milieu as does *poor white* nor does Anderson in his late novels ever recapture the same richness of association, the ability to make memorable each scene in the transition from an agrarian way of living to a twentieth – century spectacle of industrial conflict with its outward display of physical comfort and health. (50)

Hugh Mc Vey of *Poor White* is, like Mc Gregor, another silent, significant type, a deep one, whose farm – machine inventions are the products of Mc Vey's compassion for the field workers, but more particularly of his frustrated desire to

communicate, an attempt to break down the barriers of misunderstanding where most of the men die in silence and unnoticed behind the walls.

Anderson makes a clear distinction – important in Winesburg as well as other works-between silence born out of frustration, and silence signifying purposeful inner strength. But Mc Vey's silence comes finally to be too closely identified with the insensate and unresponsive utility of the machines which he creates. Anderson's lifelong antipathy toward machine civilization cannot even by the considerable act of will which *poor white* represents, be finally separated from his mechanical man hero. It is this ambivalence which we are left with at the book's conclusion in which the quiet evening sounds of the natural world are interrupted by shrill noises from the nearby factories.

Thus, the novel *Poor White* is as described Gregory of a novel where comfort and ethics quarrels with each other. Gregory further criticizes the book, "*Poor White* belongs among the few books that have restored with memorable vitality the life of an era, its hopes and desires, its conflicts between material prosperity and ethics" (55).

Anderson's remaining work of the Winesburg period is *Mid American Chants*, a series of prose poems published in 1918, the year before Winesburg. The chants are perhaps Anderson's most insistent expression of loss and purposeful quietude. Critics like American David appreciates Anderson's style of presentation in it. He says:

Mid American chants is the book of verses in prose, the last of the prose poems in A New Testament, and thought its external form is plainly that of a story, its internal structure of that of poetry; it has the power of saying more than prose is required to saying it in the fewest words. (39)

Although the chants fail as memorable language, they do express, besides Anderson's search for his artistic form, the same pastoral antidote for the city's stridency, and the same concern for purposeful communication which we find in the early novels.

Anderson sees American made up of lonely, frustrated individuals who cannot communicate with each other and who form a procession of the living dead. They had learned the trick of quiet. It affected their whole lives and made them significant. The prose Anderson employs in telling these stories of quiet characters with their pastoral life, may seem at first glance to be simple: short sentences, a spare vocabulary, uncomplicated syntax. In actuality, as described by Irving Howe, it is full of artful style which later impressed Earnest Hemingway and Willam Faulkner. Howe says:

Anderson's influence upon later American writes, especially those who wrote short stories, has been enormous. Earnest Hemingway and William Faulkner both praised him as a writer who brought a new tremor of feeling, a new sense of introspectiveness to the American short story. (17)

Though critics have interpreted Sherwood Anderson and his work from various view point, the main focus of this review section is to point out the diverse view that are especially centered on the rhetorical significance in the projection of loneliness and frustration. Therefore, Glen A Love who sees silence as an essential part of communication in Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* seems to be meaningful. Love comments the book as: "... the significance of stillness, has not received the attention it deserves, even where it finds its most memorable expression in Anderson's Masterwork, *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919)" (39) .

As Love states, the central insight in the book concerning human relationship is that each man lives according to his own truth and that no one can understand and express fully the truth for someone else. Sometimes the characters do not understand each other or sometimes they do not get opportunity to understand each other. For example, 'Paper Pills' is the second chapter of the novel and deals with another cause of isolation, the inability to communicate thoughts. Because Doctor Reefy is afraid of communicating directly to another person, he writes his thoughts on little pieces of paper to prevent his thoughts from being misinterpreted. Because Reefy cannot find an appropriated avenue of communication, he allows these repressed thoughts to become products of his hands by throwing the pieces of paper, which have hardened into little paper pills at his friends. The intensity of his isolation is magnified through the absence of isolation in brief periods. For example, the short moments of embrace is shared between him and Elizabeth Willard.

While commenting Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* in the light of rhetorical significance with reference to the character's position and the language they use, David Stouck states:

As the tales unfold, the act of speech becomes strained and frustrated almost beyond endurance. The verbs related to speaking reveal this most dramatically. Characters do not simply speak; they cry, they stammer, or mutter, or whisper, or ultimately, are altogether silent.

(125)

The aura of loneliness and frustration in *Winesburg*, which every reader has noticed, must, to a great degree, radiate outward from advice unheard or unuttered, from words shouted to empty fields and sky or whispered in lonely rooms as Alice Hindman in 'Adventure' and George Willard and Helen White in 'Sophistication'. In the darkness

they played like two splendid young things in a young world. "... Helen tripped George and ... he squirmed and shouted ... she took his arm and walked beside him in dignified silence" (225).

An outstanding feature of Anderson's writing is character's ineffability which better communicates the given predicament they are in and no language seems to be as handy for them as the language of silence like David Lee Mark comments about the book, "... one such type of language that Anderson uses is the language of silence . Some of Anderson's characters use it to convey alternately complex, lonely, joyful, strange lives of the inhabitants of the small town of Winesburg" (47) .

Anderson's characters are completely cut off from human contact, like Wing Biddlebaum, an ex-teacher in hiding after being accused of molesting a student, or Enoch Robinson, who fills his New York apartment with imaginary friends. Others, especially women, are simply starved for love, like Alice Hindman, jilted by her only lover, or Elizabeth Willard and Louise Bentley, both stuck in loveless marriages. Again and again, characters reach out to other people, hoping to quell their loneliness through love or companionship, and again and they are disappointed and ultimately silenced as Peter B. High comments, "... All of the characters live in the same small town. Almost all of them are lonely people they are cut off from other people and cannot communicate what is in their heart" (119). In the story "Queer", Elmer was oppressed by his Sense of being different from everyone. He goes on a walk together with George but he cannot explain himself to the reporter. He tried to talk and his arms began to pump up and down. His face worked spasmodically. He seemed about to shout. Having failed to communicate to anyone, Elmer decides to run away from the town. Once again he tries to explain but still speechless and he breaks in to a dumb silence.

After reading different views presented from varying perspectives this study tries to explore the issue of silence which is more significant in the text as it communicates better than the language itself. This issue though hinted, has not yet been analyzed in a greater detail. So, my study aims at probing in to it.

Critical Synopsis on Winesburg, Ohio

Sherewood Anderson published this collection of short stories in 1919 all set in fictional town of Ohio. Even though it is written in the third person, it is told through the narrative voice of George Willard, the town reporter, who shows up in most of the stories, sometimes taking on active role and at other times just telling a story.

There are the young lovers who don not quite connect; there is an old man so observed with religious fervor that he attempts to sacrifice his grandson; there is a married man who regrets it all and tries to warn a younger man of future unhappiness; there is a doctor and a sick woman who try to connect. The book is full of such people who toil all their lives and never achieve happiness. It is obvious that the writer loves these people, and is frustrated at the isolation and unhappiness of their lives, even though he makes it clear that they hold within themselves everything needed to make them happy.

Anderson has a wonderful sense of place and the town of Winesburg in the early part of the 20th century. These people were not poor or disadvantaged in the usual sense of the word; they did not suffer fire, floods or famine. Instead, they trapped themselves in their own psychological web that made it impossible for them to lead anything but sad unfulfilled lives.

Winerburg, Ohio is an idiosyncratic work, falling somewhere between a novel and a collection of short stories. Its twenty-four sections all involve the inhabitants of

Winesburg, and all are connected, though not directly linked as the chapters of a novel would be. The only framing device that Anderson provides of this succession of vignettes is the peculiar prologue entitled 'The Book of the Grotesque', in which a nameless old man envisions caricaturized individuals observed with various truths. This vision provides a key to the rest of the work, since each one of the subsequent twenty-four sections can be interpreted as a portrayal of a grotesque human being.

Nevertheless, the connection between the old man's grotesques and the inhabitants of Winesburg is clear. Wing Biddlebaum, the first character introduced, bears an element of the grotesque in his odd relationship to his remarkable hands, which are the root of all his troubles. By means of flashback, it is revealed that his hands have stripped him of his teaching career and isolated him from the rest of humanity, even to the point of making him change his name. Though Biddlebaum's isolation and pitiable qualities, Anderson begins his exploration of the book's central themes: loneliness and alienation. Nearly all of his characters are alienated in some way, either physically or, emotionally, from the rest of society. The major exception is George Willard, the central character, of the book. He does not bear the burdens that life has pressed on the backs of the other characters, and he feels no sense of alienation.

The book opens with a prologue, describing an old writer who has hired a carpenter to rebuild his bed, so it will be level with his window. After the work is completed, the old writer lies in bed and thinks about death. As he nears sleep, all the people he has ever met pass slowly before his eyes. He sees them all as "grotesque", some amusing, some terribly sad, and some horrifying. Immediately after this experience, he climbs out of bed and writes everything that he saw down in a book, which he calls "The Book of the Grotesque". In this book, he conjectures that the

world is full of different truths, all of them beautiful, but when a person seizes on and tries to live by only a single truth, that person's life becomes distorted. The old man writes on this subject for hundreds and hundreds of pages, his obsession almost making himself a grotesque; in the end, he never publishes the book.

The first chapter entitled 'Hands' tells the story of Wing Biddlebaum, a recluse with remarkable hands that he cannot control, who has fled from false accusations of molesting a boy in another town. Biddlebaum's horror stems from his past as a school teacher in Pennsylvania, where he was named Adolph Myers. He was very often careers the shoulders and heads of his pupils, and one boy accused him of molestation. The school teacher barely made it out of town with his life, changed his name, and moved to Winesburg, where he lives in a seclusion broken only by his friendship with George Willard.

The second, "Paper Pills," is about Doctor Reefy, an aging medical man who marries one of his young patients but could be happy only for few months. Like Dr. Reefy in the 'Paper Pills', Wash Willams in the story 'Respectability' also has a bitter experience in his life regarding women and marriage. Willams has no friends in town, and particularly he hates all women calling them bitches. He had a wife and loved her very much. When he found her cheating him by establishing secret relation with other men, he left her immediately. But after several months the girl's mother invited him to their house and tried to reconcile the couple. She told Wash to sit in the parlor and sent her daughter, stark naked, into see him. Being shocked he attacked his wife's mother with a chair. Since then, he has had nothing to do with women, considering them to be uniformly deprived and deceitful.

The following story, "Adventure" depicts the loneliness of Alice Hindman, an unmarried woman whose true love (as she considers him) left Winesburg years ago

and never returned back. She does nothing but wait, wait and wait. One rainy night, she comes home from work and goes upstairs to get undressed. Seized by a strange urge, she runs outside in the rain naked and accosts an old man who is passing on the sidewalk. Suddenly ashamed, she rushes back inside and lies down to face the wall and accept bravely the fact that "many people must live and die alone" (120).

Enoch Robinson in 'Loneliness' move from Winesburg to New York, where he populates his apartment with imaginary friends, only to have them move out when he tries to tell his female neighbor about them. Likewise different characters like Seth Richmond in "Thinker", Hal Winters in "The Untold Lie", Tom Foster in "Drink", Elizabeth Willard and Doctor Reefy in "Death" face problem in communication. Therefore, they all are least capable of expressing themselves to others, either in their life gestures or in their art.

In the final section of the book, 'Departure', George Willard is leaving Winesburg. He gets up early and walks around town in the morning silence, and then makes his way to the train station. People gather to shake his hand, and he boards the train hastily, just missing Helen White (his beloved) who has come to say good bye. As the train pulls away from the station, he leans back in his seat and remembers little details of life in Winesburg. When he looks up, the town has disappeared and has become but a background on which to paint the dreams of his manhood. When, in the last story of the novel, George takes the train away from Winesburg, the reader goes with him, leaving behind the grotesques to their futile search for love and happiness in the silent and unfeeling world.

CHAPTER II: SILENCE AND SILENCING

The Language of Silence

Human communication involves both verbal and non-verbal pattern of language. What we hear, write and speak are the qualities of verbal language whereas the rest is silence. The language of silence is as important as the verbal one in order to understand the total essence of a literary text. Ordinary people can communicate with, and respond to inarticulate fear, joy, grief and innumerable other shades of feelings of other human beings. That exciting aspect of human life is rather less effectively communicated through words than without them. Therefore, as described by Carlyle in his essay 'symbols' - "speech is of time, silence is of eternity (574).

In fact, silence is complementary to verbal language because what we can't express through words is conveyed through silence. Unlike verbal signs, silence can't exist in isolation but it is always implied in linguistic context and is materialized in human communication. Words provide only 'surface truth' but it is the language of silence that reveals the 'inner truth'. It links the articulated words with the unarticulated ideas. Dots, hyphen, silence, physical gestures, pause become the source of articulation. Even at the absence of certain linguistic signs, the language of silence is more ambiguous and metaphorical in its essence. Human communication transcends the boundary of verbal language because depth of human experience can't be penetrated through words alone. Therefore, George Steiner in his work *Language and Silence* says, "it is only by breaking through the walls of language that the visionary observance can enter the world of total and immediate understanding" (31).

Silence structure our speech and helps us to convey more meaning because pauses or silences help the speaker organize their speech and in turn helps the listener to grasp the meaning in a very comfortable manner. Silence functions as dominant

role as language itself in the system of communication. It can reveal internal turmoil and frustration as well as external joy and sensation. It demonstrates domination and oppression as well as warmth and love. Like language itself, silence too provides diverse meaning in course of communication. Cheung in his work *Listening to Silences'* says, "Language can liberate and heal, but it can also distort and hurt, and while silence can smother and obliterate, it can also minister, soothe and communicate" (114).

Gaps and silence play vital role in the process of interpreting and analyzing the text. A text captures only the partial reality because it is the gaps and silences that covers the rest.

Ferdinand de Saussure came with the idea that a linguistic sign consist of two inseparable components, the signifier and the signified and the relationships between them is arbitrary. Hence, linguistic sign can be meaningful in certain system or convention. But the post structuralist came with the notion that no absolute system of structure can account for the process of signification in the human language. As Derrida says that the language is "a system in which the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences" (1119). Since the sign can't represent what it signifies, thus, the meaning is defined out of the domain of silence i.e. beyond words.

Silence is the background to all verbal language: words function only when placed properly against what may be called the page of silence. Linguistic units are separated by and recognized against pauses or silences. But pauses or silences themselves add to the rhetoric effect of speech, make poetry poetic and dramatize drama. Silence can be foregrounded against speech to make it work like speech itself. Silence in itself can be empty of meaning, but the context, the intention of the

addresser or the expectation of the addressee makes it meaningful. Besides the intentional use of silence to mean something that could have been said in words, silence is used for indicating attention, alertness, reverence, resistance and defiance, and to convey nuances of emotion, thus often accomplishing functions that words can not. Silence is complementary to verbal language when what it left unsaid is interpreted, but when what can not be said with words is conveyed with silence, it becomes supplementary to speech. Mental states and emotions, especially in their extremes get communicated without the use of words. When silence occurs during speech, it opens up paths for meaning even beyond the reach of words. Silence is an essential part of communication because speech is "not always necessary, sufficient or easy to use" (Jaworski 50). At times, speech fails and things go better unsaid, leaving silence to communicate. However, silence usually goes together with speech. So silence, not only as the absence of sound but also that of words, works with words in its background.

In works of literature, silence induces multiple meanings as a reader reads the verbal text. "Poetry, apparently the most verbal form of art, is very powerful because of what is left unsaid" (Jaworski 143). Any literary text can not be said to be understood unless the reader has transcended the written words and has begun to grasp the unstated. Reading and interpretation of literature slips into domains of silence through the gaps the text leaves for the reader.

Some scholars have argued that silence is a different language. S.H. Ganguly claims that "Silence is silence and completely different from any kind of language" (200). Such essentialist point of view can not be adopted simply because nothing more can be said about an entirely 'different' language in terms of the language we use for the most. But much of the silences that make a part of human communication can

be understood with the use of elaboration of verbal language. For without the presence of language along with it, silence in communication becomes meaningless and dysfunctional. Much of the meaning of silence can be decoded within the framework of the study of the context of communication and with the same pragmatic tools as those of verbal language. It is, therefore, fruitful to opt for a goal-oriented vision and project rather than make essentialist claims of any kind. The linguistic equivalent value of silence can more or less be pragmatically understood and interpreted.

The study of silence can open up doors to several sciences and disciplines outside of language. Painting, meditation, code language, and even the act of writing or reading are silence modes of communication among many others. The object of this study is to make an exemplary analysis of silence in a work of literature by developing arguments on how it can be meaningfully interpreted. Since literature is a linguistic and cultural construct, it is relevant to extend the arguments from the linguistic to its cultural system, which give both words and silence their meaning.

Politics of Oppression and Silence of Resistance

Nature determines sex, but it is culture that determines gender and hierarchy between voiced and silenced. The dominant gender (group) always silences the weaker one that is called politics of silencing the silences.

Literature provides the work of art that either reveals the silences or exposes the process by which dominant force silences the expression of weaker groups. This process of silencing the voice takes place not only in literary canon and critical traditions but also in the formation of cultures, customs, manner and mode of social institution. The stronger one establishes the social norms and pattern according to his/her own benefit whereas the weaker gets systematically deranged. This very

politics of silencing the other places the privileged group at the centre whereas the weak and vanquished are marginalized declaring their voice as uncultured, unacknowledgeable and, thus, of little value. The strategies they use to voice themselves are those that they use to silence others. In fact language is the arena where politics of power and silence find their free play side by side.

A voiced language becomes a silence one when it undergoes the linguistic subjugation as channelized by the dominant groups. In such situation the oppressed one gets systematically scrutinized and dismissed. The politics of domination operates in the formation of language itself. At the primary level man wants to penetrate the status quo by silencing the voice of women through the patriarchal structure of sexism. Where as at the secondary level one dominant group or community silences the voice of the oppressed one by the constructed pattern of racism. Definitely the language formed in such situation served the privileged group or community. It is what we see in the study of Racism and Feminism but our concern here in present study is more than that. The voice of the oppressed, either the women or someone else, gets silenced because there is no one to hear them. More than this, language too can't fully or adequately capture the essence. In such situation as Steiner says "silence is an alternative" (74).

To remain silence is not only by the cause of domination and suppression but for its resistance also. When language fails to operate the sense of agony and despair, it is only through silence the character empower their anger and protest. Therefore, silence becomes the ultimate response to them.

In society, men are defined as uppers and women are lowers, reinforced by socially embedded gender roles, by power structures and by the bottom line that men are taller and stronger can shout louder. The lack of verbal language does not render

women powerless. History, Reality, and Truth are desire and relative to power. Feminists do not want to have power in the sense men have defined it - domination, violence, and bloody revolution. Speech is not only the measure of Truth, Reality, and History. There is a politics at work here. In an andocentric world, male power is power over, enactable by a man via whatever mode he chooses. The talkative male has power not only to express himself but also power over her female addressee. But, there is another politics alive underside to the perception above, that is, a silent women can express whatever they like and have power over their male counterpart through any strategies they wear. Because, sometimes the silent one feels under assault by the other's speech. Sometimes, the talkative one feels assaulted by other's silence. Thus, the talkative one can be taciturn, the silent one can be loquacious. Feminists want to strike the male notion of History, Reality and Truth and want to have equal share and power.

The speech captured inside the text can't alone measure history, truth and reality because there is politics of oppression at work. In the history of American literature women are perceived as marginal, invisible and worthless not only because their experience are unwritten but because language too fails to communicate their realities. The centuries of suppression can be noticed in their closing lips and innocent eyes than in the described text because it bears more meaning.

Creativity on behalf of women is also observed with a reserved eyes. A woman becomes the matter of critical gossip if she approaches in social arena in her creative exposure. Olsen in her work *Silences* beautifully quotes Dr. Samuel Johnson saying "sir a woman preaching is like a dog dancing on its hind legs" (229). It illustrates how female voices are silenced under the patriarchal hegemony. Such discrimination is the product of not only socio-economic and political structure but

also the inherent biased reasoning shaped at the very foundation stage. This prejudiced perception of class, color sex and caste has created a deep wound in the lives of oppressed groups which they are compelled to heal through the language of silence.

Language, which is the primary means of different arena, affects social change and is affected by the power structure of the society. The politics of power finds expression in language and linguistic. Religion, history, law and literary field, especially the parts of which remain written, pass on to generations and express the prerogatives of the powerful. But when they voice the prerogatives of the dominant, they also reveal how they have 'not spoken' of the dominated. Thus all discourses are parts of the practice of cultural politics of silencing. If listened to intensely, meaningful silences are to be heard within the strident discourse as well as in the relatively silent ones.

What is most interesting is to observe this politics in the simplest and unconcealed sides of social life, where the simplest guarantee for the powerful is to wipe out the mind through language and culture. Higher discourses of law and literature, history and religion implicitly brainwash people as they conceptualize and put into practice the very methods of how the power group silences the minor groups. And in the long run, as Adam Jaworski notes:

The silencing of a group may take very subtle but ... effective forms: brainwashing, indoctrination, and negative stereotyping, which all lead to the creation of a group's self image as a powerless, submissive, inferior body. (118)

The language of any discourse that is biased in one way or the other is a tool of the almost inexplicable web of politics whose hub is the power that maintains all

discourses and their relative power structure. The generation of all meaning is inevitably influenced by silences imposed by social groups which have the power to manipulate the government, jurisdiction, culture, law, morality and every other kind of institution in the human society. Language can be seen as the arena where all 'politics' – of power and resistance, and of silence and suppression – incessantly go on taking place.

Silence in Communication

A text is never complete in itself. Writing is in fact a half communication and the rest is responded by the reader. Gaps and silences play vital role in the structure of the text because it helps to clarify the unstated ideas and meaning. The creative and responsive reading is the only way to demonstrate the silenced voice hidden inside the text hence, the texts is produced under the mutual collaboration of the consciousness of both the writer and the reader. Sartre is of the opinion that text comes to life when readers approach it otherwise, it is dead or is in the form of black and white.

Likewise, George Pullet adds that a text is never complete, there are always gaps and are filled by the consciousness of reader. The interaction between the consciousness of reader and writer determine the existence of text.

It is because silence represents what is unsaid and unspoken and unsayable and to speak is to say less and imply much. Silence can be as indispensable to linguists as it has become for feminists. So, recent linguistic philosophy assigns a special function and prestigious authority to silence. The difficulty with silence is that many critics (anti-feminists) do not accept silence as a mode of communication and they value only speech and they say that speech is what is language. but such claim is less observed today and thus has gone less effective. Silence as part of communicative interaction can be one of the forms a speech act may take filling many functions. So

that, it should be considered along with the production of sentence tokens as a basic formational unit of linguistic communication. Because most of the modern critics are of the opinion that silence is also a mean of expression that can carry meaning in the act of communications. It is a part of language, which has previously seemed nebulous and vague, or else shameful and unmentionable. Susan Sontag says, "silence remains, inescapably, a form of speech and an element in a dialogue" (11). So, linguists and critics have taken it as a proper domain of study.

Speech is noise with meaning. The lack of noise, which is generally called silence, need not be the lack of meaning. Language is a system of meaning rather than that of signs alone. When signs are absent but meaning is present, the resulting silence becomes language. Language, in this sense, encompasses silence that has meaning. It is meaningless noise that is equivalent to meaningless silence. Meaningful silence is language without being 'speech'. One must, therefore, distinguish between the meaningless and the meaningful in both speech and silence. Both speech and silence form language to be meaningful.

Silence is equivalent to speech whenever and wherever it communicates or even when it miscommunicates ideas. Every language user uses and more or less intuitively understands silences that speech indispensably entails. The intuitive process can be a viable and interesting subject for critical and intellectual study for the linguist, the critic or the behaviorist. More efforts need to be put to decode silence, for silence can be more ambiguous, and especially in works of literature, even more polysemic than words. The study of silence may attempt to translate silence into words to the extent words can grasp its meaning and also explain how ideas beyond the reach of verbal communication are conveyed with silence. George Steiner has

emphasized on the supplementary value of silence in his classic work, *Language and Silence*. He says:

The highest, purest reach of contemplative act is that which has learnt to leave language behind it. The ineffable lies beyond the frontiers of the word. It is only by breaking through the walls of language that the visionary observance can enter the world of total and immediate understanding. (31)

This study does not mean to advocate skepticism against the communicative how human communication has a range that extends beyond the reach of words alone. In fact, it is because silence can carry out functions that are supplementary to those of verbal language that it has become one of the almost universal ways of expressing condolence, the inarticulate grief.

Successful communication requires proficiency in a complex set of emotional, inter-personal and social strategies along with the competence of verbal language. The knowledge of the verbal components alone is insufficient to explain the complex process of social interaction that governs the lives of individuals and whole communities. Non-verbal elements ranging from gestures, body movements, facial expressions, posture, tone and tempo of speech, pauses and silences and other subtle nuances of emotion contribute to the total effect of communication by complementing and supplementing to the function of verbal language.

Silence in Many Faces

Taken broadly, "silence has many faces" as Adam Jaworski discusses in his book *The Power of Silence* (24). As a part of human communication, it does the "linkage function" of keeping or breaking up relations, the "affecting function" of healing or hurting, the "revelation function" of exposing or concealing ideas, the

"judgmental function" of indicating assent or dissent, and the "activating function" of signaling thoughtfulness or mental inactivity. It may conceal or "outward truth" of spoken word or express the "inner truth" that can not easily be given words. It may express affection or hatred, satisfaction or embarrassment. Examining its pragmatic force and relevance along with those of the adjacent verbal components can disambiguate its ambiguous nature, which can often create communicative misfires (66-68). Jaworski notes: "Silence per se is neither communicative nor non-communicative", but it can be "communicatively relevant or irrelevant" (67). But this feature is also "obviously typical of speech" (95).

Silence is gradable because it is not absolute. That is why there are several metaphors denoting its qualities. It is treated as a "substance," and is attributed various physical qualities like long, intense, cold, warm and hard (as in "a wall of silence"), and even loud. It is also attributed more abstract qualities like bomb-like, deadly, or golden – as in "Silence is golden" (Jaworski 81-82). Its definition and its studies, like its cognition, will have to be gradable, and they are to be relative to speech context, verbal language and communicative-pragmatic frameworks.

It is difficult to arrive at any categorical and unconditional conclusions about definitions and theories of silence. for instance, it must be accepted that silence can sometimes communicate things beyond the reach of words, supplementing to the use of verbal language. But the study of silence in linguistic terms can demonstrate the internal nexus where the articulate connects the inarticulate. The present study is an attempt to develop ways to interpret the expressive silence set against speech, the silence that is communicatively a significant tool that has indeed extended the range of language beyond that of words, and silence that enhances the meaning and effect of verbal language when used together with it.

First, silence that is commonly conceived to be the absence of audible sound can carry meaning when it is intended, expected or is functional in a specific speech context. Second, it is a versatile tool and writers create and use when they leave gaps in the text. Thirdly, silence as a part of human discourses has been seen as a means of, and against, repression. Its causes and consequences spread in all discourses. There is a common denominator to all these theses: silence can be a meaningful and versatile means of communication.

CHAPTER III: LISTENING TO SILENCES IN THE WINESBURG, OHIO

Winesburg, Ohio and the Rhetoric of Silence

The silence, in *Winesburg, Ohio* is multivalent which not only conveys the horror of domination but also the problem of human communication felt by the frustrated and isolated person in Modern America. To the reader familiar with Anderson's work, these judgements indicate a central tension with which he was engrossed throughout his career. His misgivings about the drift of modern America, his concern about the isolation of man from nature and from his fellow man, his aversion to noise – and especially the noise of words and talk – are set in uneasy balance against his preoccupation with, and reverence for, the psychic states associated with the natural world, with pastoral life, and with silence as a measure of inner significance.

The plight of the characters in Winesburg can be traced to their inability to communicate with one another. It does remain to be shown how thoroughly Anderson explores the theme of human communication in Winesburg, how his treatment of that theme is linked to his attitudes towards silence, words, and talk, and how these attitudes are in turn related to the strong, single idea which runs throughout all his works.

In the setting of Winesburg, the fields and farms and the simple round of town life are to be found the sources of the book's undeniable evocation of lost goodness. The setting expresses the essential unity of country life, linked to the natural cycle of crops, to the weather, and the slow turning of the seasons. Here is a world organic and yet impervious to time. It's calmness and stillness indicate the silence of self-sufficiency, full of promise and significance. Balanced against this green world are threatening, disintegrative forces. Implicitly, there is the city, which stands on the

horizon of Winesburg's scenes and events, and emblem of irresistible progress and of little-understood forces which threaten to alter forever the life of the town.

Almost characters at first are attracted by the facilities in town but later they get nothing but silence caused by their repent. The town life has attracted the smart young village boys like Nad Currie, and it has turned back queer souls like Enoch Robinson and Doctor Parcival. These grotesques, unfit for the city, provide an explicit counterforce to the natural self-sufficiency of the setting, from which they are cut off almost as completely as from the great world on the horizon:

When he was twenty-one years old Enoch wanted to be in the New York City and was city man for fifteen years. He studied French and went to an art school, hoping to develop a faculty he had for drawing. In his own mind he planned to go to Paris and to finish his art education among the masters there, but that never turned out. Nothing ever turned out for Enoch Robinsons. (167)

The silence caused by the failure of their dreams is a measure of twisted "sweetness", their significance, is not the purposeful silence of their surroundings. Rather, it is a threatening muteness, stretched out over a tremendous pressure to communicate. While they are like to remain almost wordless until the moment at which they attempt to reveal their truth, a few, at the other extreme, sputter uncontrollably, talking feverishly to anyone who will listen, like Joe Welling, in *A Man of Ideas*, who cannot restrain himself when caught up in one of his schemes, "Words rolled and tumbled from his mouth Pouncing upon a bystander he began to talk" (103). Doctor Parcival, in "The Philosopher", is another compulsive talker, who watches from his office window until George Willard is alone in the newspaper

office where he works, then hurries in to tell the boy his tales. Later, in self-disgust he says, "What a fool am to be talking" (154).

The common feeling of all the grotesques is suggested in the plight of Enoch Robinson, in "Loneliness" who wanted to talk, but didn't know how. Thus both the mute grotesques and the sputtering grotesques manifest a sickness which is in conflict with the quiet benignity of the setting. The verbal incapacity of these figures who cannot love, who cannot draw sustenance from their surroundings is suggestive of their crippling inner wound. The first paragraph of the opening story, "Hands," establishes Anderson's sure control of his form and quickly sets forth the elemental conflict:

Upon the half decayed veranda of a small frame house that stood near the edge of a ravine near the town of Winesgurg, Ohio, a fat title old man walked nervously up and down. He could see the public highway along which went a wagon filled with berry pickers returning from the fields. The berry pickers, youths and maidens, laughed and shouted obiosterously. "Oh, you Wing Biddlebaum, comb your hair, it's falling into your eyes", commanded the voice to the man, who was bald and whose nervous little hands fiddled about the bare white forehead as thought arranging a mass of tangled locks. (27)

A closer look reveals that the opening two sentences, both describing Wing Biddlebaum, are, in the grammatical term, periodic. In each of them the main clause containing the narrative material introducing the main character is arrived at only after rather lengthy, introductory prepositional phrases within which are presented those details of scene which suggest the half ruined life, the blighted hopes of Wing, the subject of the main clause. The first action attributed to him ("walked nervously up

and down") presages his muteness and the repetitive quality of his behavior. With these few details the essential qualities of Wing Biddlebaum's grotesqueness are established.

Unlike the youths and maidens who laugh and shout, scream and protest, and even command, Wing remains silent and acquiescent. He can only watch, or listen, or pace up and down, or fiddle with his hands in a series of futile efforts at self-expression. Wing is an outsider, cut off from the sustenance of his surroundings. He did not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town where he had lived for twenty years. His hands give hint away, fluttering nervously, alarmingly. He wanted to keep them hidden away and looked with amazement at the quiet inexpressive hands of other men who worked beside him in the fields, or passed, driving sleepy teams on country roads. These quiet, inexpressive hands proclaim their oneness with the natural setting:

Wing's hands, conversely, are called, Piston rods of his machinery of expression, equating their compulsive move-meats with the sterile, repetitiveness of a machine. Or, in a corresponding image of futility and frustration, they are compared to 'The beating of the wings of an imprisoned bird'. (28)

The gulf between dream and reality in Wing Biddlebaum's life establishes still another tension in the story. He advises George Willard to close his ears to the roaring of the voices and to begin to dream, and his own ideal is expressed as a dream:

Out of the dream Wing Biddlebaum made a picture for George Willard. In the picture men lived again in a kind of pastoral golden age. Across a green open country came clean-limbed young men, some afoot, some mounted upon horses. In crowds the young men came to

gather about the feet of an old man who sat beneath a tree in a tiny garden and who talked to them. (30)

The dream is one of the perfect communications among human beings, set, significantly, in a pastoral golden age. The Socratic instructor of youth is clearly Wing's idealization of his own former role as teacher. But, like the contrast between Wing's inhibitions and the easy sensuality of the youths and maidens, the dream of the revered teacher in the golden age setting is placed against the nightmarish incidents of his actual life, in which, like Socrates, he had been attacked as a corrupter of youth. Wrongly suspected of homosexuality in the town where he had been teaching as a young man, he had been run out after being beaten by the saloon-keeper, father of one of the students, and latter nearly lynched.

Anderson's treatment of these events—the saloonkeeper's rage, his hard fists, the insect-like scurrying of the children, the rain, the darkness, and the sticks and balls of mud which are thrown at the screaming figure of the terrified schoolteacher—emphasizes sharply the ironic opposition between the ugly reality of misunderstanding and the idealized dream of perfect communication, and between the agonizingly repressed and isolated grotesque and a setting of freedom, innocence, and love.

George Willard, in whom Wing Biddlebaum and many of the other grotesques find the opportunity for verbal release is the genius loci of the Winesburg landscape, the attendant spirit of the town. He provides also a kind of synecdoche for the village, standing, Janus-like, between innocence and experience, youth and maturity, rural past and urban future. Many of the grotesques seem to sense the boy's connection with the spirit of life in the village, and they reach out for contact through him. That he also harbors feelings of loneliness and inadequacy seems not to occur to them, so that

whether or not he actually shares in the aura of hope and life which interfuses the natural setting becomes less important than their belief that he does.

Seth Richmond envies George's apparent link with the town and its people:

"George belongs to this town It's different with me. I don't belong" (137).

Similarly, Wing Biddlebaun does not think of himself as a part of Winesburg, although he has lived there twenty years, but with George Willard, Biddlebaum the silent began to talk striving to put into words the ideas that had been accumulated by his mind during long years of silence.

George Willard is further identified with the setting in his characteristic silence-not a frustrated and barren silence, but a cornfield, silence full of meaning and promise. His mother whispers proudly to herself, "He is grouping about, trying to find himself He is not a dull clod, all words and smartness" (43). Recognizing his promise, the grotesques fervently declare their truths to him. Wing Biddlebaum urges him to forget the roar of yokes and to dream. Doctor Parcival tells him, "Everyone in the world is Christ and they are all crucified" (57). Wash Williams declares, "All women are dead I tell you there is something rotten about them" (124). Kate Swift warns him that he "must not become a mere peddler of words" (163). To these and all the other revelations George Willard remains silent, but it is the silence of assimilation. He is more than a good listener. The reader senses, along with the boy, that these confessions are precious, that out of them will grow the insight and awareness which must accompany his development as a writer. The extent to which George Willard realizes all this is revealed in "Loneliness," when Enoch Robinson, in the midst of his fumbling statement of his truth, suddenly breaks off, telling the boy that he no longer wishes to talk. "George Willard shook his head and a note of command came into his voice. Don't stop now. Tell me the rest of it', he commanded

sharply. "What happened ? Tell me the rest of the story" (177). The youth's insistence suggests that his usual silence and passivity during the unburdening of a truth really mask the receptive and assimilative mind of the young artist.

While the grotesques are driven, in their frustrated attempts to communicate, to silence, or spluttering, or to physical outlets like hitting someone, or running, or crying, George Willard is alone in being able to play with words and to be interested in them for their connotation and texture. These repeated professions of verbal inadequacy encourage the reader to doubt the power of words and serve to intensify the verbal failures which occur within the stories themselves. As the tales unfold, the act of speech becomes strained and frustrated almost beyond endurance. The verbs related to speaking reveal this most dramatically. Characters do not simply speak; they cry, they stammer, or mutter, or whisper, or, ultimately, are altogether silent.

The most characteristic and important verb in the book is "whispered", which appears twenty-one times. The soliloquy-like characteristics of oral discourse in Winesburg is further strengthened by the high number of reflexive pronouns following verbs of speech ("said aloud to himself", "muttered to himself" etc.)

Finally, verbs which express the normal give and take of discourse, such as "answered", "replied", and "responded", are almost totally absent in Winesburg. The unusually large proportion of these verbs of strained communication cannot help but permeate the texture of the entire work. The aura of loneliness and frustration in Winesburg, which every reader has noticed must, to a great degree, radiate outward from advice unheard or unuttered, from words shouted to empty fields and sky, or whispered in lonely rooms.

Perhaps the book's final pessimism over words is expressed in the last tale, "Sophistication", which takes place just before George Willard's departure for the

city. Beset by the words and advice of others and saddened by the death of his mother, George Willard walks out one harvest evening with Helen White, and in a wordless scene the two young people reach an authentic awareness of their newfound maturity. Preceding events in the story heighten this moment of silent significance. Earlier in the evening, George Willard had tried unsuccessfully to express to Helen in words his sense of a change in his life, "'Well', he explained, 'that isn't the point. Perhaps I'd better quite talking'" (236). Later, overhearing the boasting of one of the townsmen he says angrily to himself, "old windbag Why does he want to be bragging ? Why don't he shut up ?" (238).

Similarly, Helen White had felt oppressed by the pompous words of a college instructor who is a guest in her house, and she had run out into the night. "It seemed to her that the world was full of meaningless people saying words" (239). As the story reaches its climax, George and Helen come to realize that perfect communication is rooted in the feelings, in a common bond of human sympathy. Through words a person can attempt to convey his truth to another, but it cannot become the other's truth. "It's just as well. Whatever I told him would have been a lie", says Ray Pearson of the truth with which he had planned to advise his young friend. The words of Ray Pearson are a final comment upon all the tortured utterances of the tales. The myriad failures at communication in Winesburg are to be traced to the futility of human speech, the Andersonian credo that man has been defeated by his ability to say words. Kate Swift has tried to tell this to George Willard in "The Teacher", when she advises him to stop fooling with words and study people's thoughts if he would be a writer. But, ironically, words fail to convey even this truth, and George Willard fails to grasp it. "I have missed something", he thinks to himself later. "I have missed something Kate Swift was trying to tell me". (It is significant that this is the only revelation in all

the stories which he admits having missed). But in "Sophistication" he understands at last what it is that he has missed. The lesson of "Sophistication" towards which all of the preceding stories seem to be directed is that one must ultimately turn away from talk, from words, and toward thought and feeling in one's search for meaning and communication. Arising early on the morning of his departure for the city, George Willard walks one last time on Trunion Pike, the road leading from Winesburg out into the country:

All through his boyhood and young manhood George Willard had been in the habit of walking on Trunion Pike. He had been in the midst of the great open place on winter nights when it was covered with snow and only the moon looked down at him; he had been there in the fall when bleak winds blew and on summer evenings when the air vibrated with the song of insects. On the April morning he wanted to go there again, to walk again in the silence. He did walk to where the road dipped down by a little stream two miles from town and then turned and walked silently back again. (245)

Here, in George Willard's silent farewell to Winesburg, Anderson completes the pastoral frame begun in the opening paragraph of "Hands", the story, and expands all earlier descriptions of setting into a diapason of countryside and seasons, reinforcing the harmony between the young man and the natural world, reasserting his significant silence, his "organic" nature, in opposition to the static quality of the grotesques. The sterile, unchanging quality of their words and actions has been a constant counterpoint to the growth and change of the young man. Their repetitiveness and rigidity suggest, finally, spiritual atrophy and death, just as George

Willard's change and growth are linked with the natural world's health and quiet vitality.

Paradoxically, the lesson of silence which George Willard finally learns may be the beginning of the means by which the walls of thwarted communication which surround the grotesques will be finally broken down. He may become the hope-for connector between these lost souls and the great world. Filled with his vague dreams, he is inevitably drawn to the city, where, having finally immersed himself in that destructive element, he promises to become the artist whose heightened understanding arid craft of language may counteract the limitations of words, whose fragmentary wisdom he new possess. And the sort of artist which he will become has been suggested all along.

Thus, for George Willard, Anderson's platonic self-realization, articulateness can never be enough. Nor can significant silence, a logical impossibility for the artist of words. What the writer is left with is a rhetoric fused out of reverence and humility before the inenarrable subject, tempered by the doubt that, in the end, words can communicate anything but our final isolation from one another.

Silence As Protest in *Winesburg, Ohio*

In terms of the discussion made in chapter two, the silences of the less expressive characters in the *Winesburg, Ohio* can be seen as the locus of many hidden meanings in it. The dominant group always silences the weaker one that is called politics of silencing the silences. That is what we see in the stories in *Winesburg, Ohio*. Miss Grimes, in 'Death in the Woods', for example, is not able to speak out about German's adultery nor she raises a single voice against the domination by her husband, Jake and her own son who always treat her not as a human being but as an object. The relationship between Grimes and the rest illustrates these facts:

She knew no one. No one ever talked to her in town. When it was winter she had to gather sticks of wood for her fire, had to try to keep the stock fed with very little grain ... one day she went to the butcher and he gave her some liver and some dog meat. It was the first time anyone had spoken to her in a friendly way for a long time. (539)

Grimes's situation presented here is more meaningful. She has neither good family, nor friends, neither any hope nor any ground where she could rest and consider for future. She has nothing to lose but the whole patriarchy to win. She could not remain happy even in her family and searched for work which could procure her a means of a livelihood. But she goes on facing torture one after another.

German – her master, Jake Grimes – her worthless husband and her selfish son have been taken as an oppressor, and have done something very wrong caring only for their enjoyment. They think Grimes as a sexual commodity only, not as a human being. So, there is a vast discord between what her conscience called for and the life she is leading. Jake Grimes treats her as if she is born to be subjected and she should always be subjected to him. He wants to rule over miss Grimes according to his interest but she wants to glorify her own independent identity through rejecting him. So that she begun to work in German's farm.

Jake Grimes and all other males in the story are guided that their tradition prospers by mitigating women's sphere. The whole patriarchy wants to sacrifice women at the altar of animal passion. This is where the true foundation of patriarchy resides. But this tower of power however proves to be ineffably, unstable and insecure as miss Grimes in 'Death in the Woods' dares to reject all through her silence. As women often respond to male violence with silence, miss Grimes was disgusted with them but could not express her disgust in language, for she understood the

inadequacy of language to carry her emotion. She could not communicate the incommunicable. Poverty of language is at the heart of victim's inexpressiveness.

Women's silence, on the other hand, in a male-dominated world can indicate not their passivity but their pent-up power. Let us take the following excerpt for an example:

She had to scheme all her life about getting things fed, getting the pigs fed so they would grow fat and could be butchered in the fall. When they were butchered her husband took most of the meat off to town and sold it. If he did not do it first the boy did. They fought sometimes and when they fought the old woman stood aside silently. (537)

There is silence where both father and son are dismissed. Miss Grimes has nothing to listen since she already has listened to their voices as well as their practices. She has experienced their onslaughts upon her physicality as well as her intellect. She looks upon them as a subject looks upon an object, dispassionately. A woman who is silent is an addressor and at the same time she is the subject. It is because she gives or expresses quietly. She is the subject and a man who is loquacious becomes a deaf addressee, who receives only, therefore, becomes an object. Subjects always act and control rather than be controlled and acted upon. Thus, her position deconstructs historical hierarchization that women is always on the side of passivity. Miss Grimes threatens culture. It becomes possible through her silence. Silence has many strands of meanings. Tradition prepares us to take it as a token of approval and trains us to untie it accordingly. But, silence is more pronouncing as time is going afresh and as it is gaining impetus from the outpourings of literary theories and it takes from as a code of negation against patriarchy.

Though Miss Grimes is forced into shame and silence, her efforts suggest that she is simultaneously resisting. Sometimes she speaks through imagery and most of the time speaks being silent. This silence is in the form of protest against the male domination. Therefore, it is not always what matters is sound but sometimes gap and what is not said deserves measured notice.

As a matter of fact. 'Death in the Wood' continues to be hunted by the vastness of the problem of violence against women; but it also asks us to imagine 'a world without victims'. The silence in the story, is multivalent which not only conveys the horror of sexual violence but also the loneliness of the apparently sudden resolve to flee. It also articulates the unarticulated by which the victim arrives at her decision. Though Miss Grimes is born free she was caught by her mother's anger, was brutally betrayed by her lover, bore troubled birth-pang which perished, was enslaved, and was removed and silenced by the abuse of her surrounding. Miss Grimes had many reasons to feel repressed about relating the story of her sexual exploitation to even the most sympathetic companions inside the prison. Her persistent efforts to avoid her exploiter in spite of the difficulties reveal her extraordinary commitment not to speak but to be heard:

Jake Grimes was away and the son and his woman ordered the old woman about like a servant. She didn't mind much; she was used to it. Whatever happened she never said anything. That was her way of getting along. She had managed that way when she was a young girl at the German's and ever since she had married Jake. (540)

Though she is forced into shame and silence, her efforts suggest that she is simultaneously resisting. Sometimes she speaks through imagery. As Toni Morrison reminds us, "culture, whether silenced or monologic, whether repressed or or

repressing, seeking meaning in the language and images available to them" (208). She is speaking being silent, and this silence is in the form of protest against German, Jake and her son. Grimes desperately wants to reveal her traumatic through her silenced stature.

Miss Grims is a unique character who, except when forced, has not accepted any consent and counsels of her master, German. Non-cooperation with the oppressor is her silent protest. She does not forgive him as well. She forms the onset rebelled against his domination. If one wants to strike the oppressor, he could be best hit where he seems to be tormented the most. And the way to torture the oppressor is to reject his demand. First, German demands to hear him that Grims denies to do so. He asks for forgiveness, but he is not forgiven. He requests her to speak that she rejects to do so. He proposes to marry her, but he is rejected. So, non-cooperation is another way of punishing the seducer. It is analogous to rejecting to give poison to a mortally wounded. Thus, her every activity is equipped to triumph over his discourses and designs. She is so committed upon her decision that all her bitterness against him and the desire to be revenged upon him, even if she should perish takes precedence of her activities. Her commitment she could not utter in voice rather her silence excelled. Grims never forgets the pain she was subjected to, so that she took every step seriously.

Most of women who forcibly get victimized remain silent, because they dread the consequences of a violent outbreak or fear reprisals. They fear speaking about sexual abuse for it can destroy a family as well as subject them to physical torture. Thus, Miss Grimes, however, forbear constant oppression, her soul revolts against mean tyranny. But where could she turn for protection? There was no shadow of law to protect her from insult, from violence. She found herself unprotected from either

the existing law or the community. Therefore, she has used non-cooperation by remaining silent, as the surest weapon to take revenge and to assert the ownership of her body. She soon learnt to utilize power of negation through silence. Thus, her silence is finally triumphant and rejects all kinds of subordination.

Silence of Gestures in Winesburg, Ohio

Silent characters in *Winesburg, Ohio* harbor a deep discontent that appears in occasional and quickly stifled flashes their eyes. Biddlebaum is seen less with speech, he involves with gestures because gestures and actions speak for the most. Silence is not a pejorative expression but a longed for goal. What characters speak, through words is not what he wants to say. He best communicates with his gestures. What is not heard is supplied by, gaps and gestures that forces us to acknowledge the radical potential of stillness and silence. So it is not to words but the quietness of character's gestures, and gaps within their speech that readers must listen in Anderson's masterpiece *Winesburg, Ohio*. The first chapter tells the sad story of Wing Biddlebaum, an eccentric, nervous man who lives on the outskirts of the town of Winesburg, Ohio. Despite having lived in Winesburg for twenty years, Biddlebaum has never become close to anyone, with the exception of George Willard, a young reporter of the *Winesburg Eagle*. As he paces, he fiddles with his hands, which are famous for their dexterity and wanton behavior. Like unto the beating of the wings of an imprisoned bird, he has difficulty in controlling his hands, which have a tendency to wander inappropriately of their own accord. The last time he was talking with George, he jerked back in horror after finding himself starting to caress the young man's face:

Biddlebaum forever frightened and beset by a ghostly band of doubts, did not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town where he had lived for twenty years. For a moment he stood, rubbing

his hands together and looking up and down the road, and then, fear overcoming him, ran back to walk again upon the porch on his own house. (28)

Biddlebaum's lived isolated from town life. He would hear ghostly voices and spoke closely only with George Willard. Wing tried desperately to hide his hands. One day, wing revealed his hands without noticing and caressed George's shoulder while talking. Suddenly, wing ran quickly home. Wing had previously been a school teacher named Adolf Myers who was loved by the boys he taught. He spoke of dreams and touched their shoulders and heads. Accusing him of molestation, the town drove out Adolf. He moved to winesburg and was ashamed by his innocent hands.

There are varying forms of resistance to oppression expressed by the oppressed. Where violence is opposed, resistance may not be conscious as shown in the story 'Hands'. On the other hand, conscious anger is not necessarily productive. It may simply be reactive, a lashing out which is harmful for self and others whereas constructive anger may not be direct. The anger that fuels the act of breaking through silence need not express itself explicitly in words. It can be explicit without being voiced: expressed non-verbally, or communicated without overt politeness. It is what we see in the expressive hands and shared silence of Wing Biddlebaum. "The berry pickers, youths and maidens, laughed and shouted boisterously ... a fat little old man walked nervously up and down" (43).

A closer look upon the above excerpt reveals that unlike the youths and maidens who laugh and shout, Biddlebaum remains silent and goes on protesting the blame of being homosexual. Biddlebaum could not mention his oppression directly so

he does not speak against domination but he engages in speaking against domination and monologisms and his wishes are shown as cloaked in various activities:

When he talked to George Willard, Wing Biddlebaum closed his fists and beat with them upon a table or on the walls of his house. The action made him more comfortable. If the desire to talk came to him when the two were walking in the fields, he sought out a stump or the top board of a fence and with his hands pounding busily talked with renewed ease. (45)

The torture inflicted upon Biddlebaum comes to the reader not through his voice but through his gestures, bodily expression and through the words of others. Thus, he does not speak directly of abuse. Biddlebaum's hands are overlaid with a cloud of anxiety and full of anger and always express profound humiliation and disgust as though he was lost and afraid of what lay ahead of him. Biddlebaum talks much with his hands. The slender expressive fingers, forever active, forever striving to conceal themselves in his pockets or behind his back, came forth and became the piston rods of his machinery of expression.

Thus, the story of Wing Biddlebaum is a story of hands. Biddlebaum tends towards indirect ways of expressing his thoughts. He uses his hands to notify his message and also uses them to communicate what he is really wanting. Therefore, his activities can be read and make out meanings. Biddlebaum would have been spoken if he had not been burdened with grief and coercion, hence he uses the language of silence to communicate.

In other cases, silence may be a means of survival, or of subversion, disguise, and masking "warrior duplicity" (Ellis 90). Examples of subversive silence appear frequently in the life of Alice Hindman of the story 'Adventure'. She waits her lover

Ned Curre for a long time but he never comes. Ned view her as a sexual commodity only not as a human being. However Alile is both stunned and silent when he gives tension enough to her:

We will have to stick to each other now. The words echoed and re-echoed through the mind of the maturing woman. Tears came into her eyes. Sometimes when her employer had gone out and she was alone in the stores she put her head on the counter and wept. "Oh, Ned, I am waiting", she whispered over and over, all the time the creeping fear that he would never come back grew stronger with her. (116)

Alice Hindman was disgusted with him but could not express her disgust in language for she understood the inadequacy of language to carry her emotion. She could not communicate the incommunicable. Poverty of language is at the heart of victims inexpressiveness. Alice finally withdraws from speech and stays calm enough. There is a kind of silence where Alice is dismissed. She does not accept further meeting with Ned rather her whisper wants to terminate her desire to be with him. Ned, before they parted, has promised to marry her but as he forgets his promises, her Silence works as a decision of being alone. The final silence of Alice shows that no speaking third alternative was possible for her. Her silence emerges from her contemplation of the past and the determination for the future and the hope of future. Her anger and rebellion against all forms of injustice comes in the form of silence that she undergoes finally. The poster of stillness deserves her inner suffering more better than any words can. She could not mention his deception directly so she does not speak against it but her feelings are shown as cloaked in various activities. Thus, the torture inflicted upon Alice comes to us not through her voice but through her bodily expression.

Silence as a Means of Survival in *Winesburg, Ohio*

Sherwood Anderson's implied purpose in *Winesburg, Ohio* is to express something for his characters, to release them from their frustration and loneliness through his art. Characters, like the old man in the introductory sketch and like Enoch Robinson in "Loneliness", are among those least capable of expressing themselves to others, either in their life gestures or in their art. The old man in "The Book of the Grotesque" is a pathetic figure preoccupied with fantasies about his possible death. He has a vision of people in a procession and a theory about the truths that make them grotesques; but he does not publish the book he is writing about these people, for he realizes it would represent only his truth about them, that is not possible to express the truth for someone else. Enoch Robinson, the pathologically shy painter, tries to reach out to others through his work, but his paintings fail to make even his fellow artists experience what he has thought and felt.

The central insight in the book concerning human relationships is that each man lives according to his own "truth" and that no one can understand and express fully that truth for someone else. Or, put another way, every human being in this world is ultimately alone.

In each story when the character reaches an ultimate point of insupportable frustration or recognizes that he can never escape his isolation, he reacts by waving his hand and arms about, talking excitedly, and finally comes to the state of silence and looks as if dead.

The first story, "Hands", tells about Wing Biddlebaum whose unfulfilled life typifies the other life stories recounted in the book. From his little house on the edge of town Wing can watch life pass by:

... he could see the public highway along which went a wagon filled with berry pickers returning from the fields. The berry pickers, youths and maidens, laughed and shouted boisterously. A boy clad in a blue shirt leaped from the wagon and attempted to drag after him one of the maidens, who screamed and protested shrilly. The feet of the boy in the road kicked up a cloud of dust that floated across the face of the departing. (27)

By contrast Wing Biddlebaum ventures only as far as the edge of the road, then hurries back again to his little house. He lives in the shadows of the town. Yet, like the berry pickers, his figure is always in motion, walking nervously up and down only in his half decayed veranda. His hands especially are always moving and are compared to the beating wings of an imprisoned bird. He cannot express himself completely; he begins to wave his hands about helplessly and breaks into silence. And ultimately finds his existence no better than dead, "Forever frightened and beset by a ghostly band of doubts, did not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town where he had lived for twenty years" (43). Biddlebaum is the silent consciousness of the family. He bears an element of the grotesque in his odd relationship to his remarkable hands, which are the root of all his troubles. By means of his abnormal behavior, it is revealed that his hands have stripped him of his teaching career and isolated him from the rest of humanity, even to the point of making him change his name. His silence can always be listened through his waving hands. We know what he has been up to even though he cannot speak up. His final flashing fingers before he collapses opens up the subway back to his silences all along:

A few stray white bread crumbs lay on the cleanly washed floor by the table; putting the lamp on a low stool he began to pick up the crumbs, carrying them to his mouth one by one with unbelievable rapidity. In the dense blotch of light beneath the table, the kneeling figure looked like a priest engaged in some service of his church. The nervous expressive figures, flashing in and out of the light, might well have been mistaken for the fingers of the devotee going swiftly through decade after decade of his rosary. (50)

We remember his uneasily trying to make something clear about his hands. Here, Biddlebaum is trying not to conceal the reality about his hands but to reveal. Unfortunately, the situation does not favor him. The more he tries to be cleared, the deeper he falls into the crisis. Here, the context shows that Biddlebaum fails to express his inner emotion but being silent he is telling to us that working hands is not his fault but a habit.

In "Drink" Tom Foster, a gentle passive boy, is described as living "in the shadow of the wall of life". Like Wing Biddlebaum he watches the parade of life pass him by. But he conceives an affection for the banker's daughter Helen White, and one spring night he goes for a long walk and gets drunk on a bottle of whiskey. He becomes a grotesque figure moving along the road: "his head seemed to be flying about like a pinwheel and then projecting itself off into space and his arms and legs flopped helplessly about" (218). He tries to tell George Willard that he has made love to Helen White, but the reporter won't listen because he too loves the banker's daughter. They take a long walk in the dark. Tom raises his voice to an excited pitch to explain that he wants to suffer because everyone suffers, but George does not

understand him. Because of this behaviors of George, Tom turns out to be a tragic fellow and goes on suffering in the dreadful silence:

I wanted to suffer, to be hurt somehow. I though that was what I should do. I wanted to suffer, your see, because everyone suffers and does wrong. I thought of a lot of things to do, but they wouldn't work. They all hurt someone else. (219)

Except at a few moments, we can seen Tom Silent and helpless. He remains silent again until he finally collapses with the burden of love he did for Helen White.

In the story 'Queer', George does not get an opportunity to understand Elmer. Being oppressed by his sense of being different from everyone else, Elmer resolves that he will be like other people. He goes on a long walk in the country where he encounters the half-wit named Mook Walking up and down and waving his arms, he tells Mook that he wont' be queer any longer, and whom he sees as typifying the town and representing public opinion. They go on a walk together but Elmer can not explain himself to the reporter, "He tried to talk and his arms began to pump up and down. His face worked spasmodically. He seemed about to shout" (198). Having failed to communicate to anyone, he decides to run away from the town, but as he is leaving on the train he calls George Willard down to the station to try once again to explain. Still speechless he breaks into a silence:

Elmer Cowley danced with fury beside the groaning train ... with a snarl of rage he turned and his long arms began to fly on the air. Like one struggling for release from hands that held him he struck out, hitting George Willard below after blow on the breast, the neck, the mouth. (200)

Elmer is silent in the manifest level but in the latent level we can see the locus of many hidden meanings in it. He has used silence as a means of soothing. The role of this speechlessness, the kind of which are always ignored in criticism, is in fact indispensable to the understanding of the text. Therefore, the character of Elmer can be interpreted as a metaphor of the silent people suppressed by the frustration and loneliness.

In some of the stories George Willard does not appear except of course as implied narrator; the characters nevertheless are pictured as breaking into silence at the peak moments of frustration or loneliness. In 'Adventure', Alice Hindman, who has been waiting for years for the return of her lover, one night runs out naked on to the lawn in the rain. Alice had not felt so young in years and she wished to run through the streets naked. She wanted to make contact with another lonely human so deaf and did not hear her clearly. In her embarrassment, she fell on the ground, trembling. After he had remained silent. This extremity of emotion brings her down fall. She becomes mad and talks with her created self in her fantasy:

I am his wife and shall remain his wife whether he comes back or not
 When she got into bed she buried her face in the pillow and wept
 broken heartedly "What is the mater with me ? I will do something
 dreadful if I am not careful", she thought, and turning her face to the
 wall, began trying to fore herself to face bravely the fact that many
 people must live and die alone, even in Winesburg. (120)

The unstated ideas look more profound than what are stated in her case. Her speech alone can't capture her agony of being alone because it is too deep. She has spent a decade waiting her Ned but neither he came nor he sent any letter to her. Therefore, deep agony that Alice undergone can never be expressed through words.

Instead she tries her best to express them from the language of silence. And she utilizes it as a means of survival.

Therefore, what we need here is to leave the words and interpret the unsaid, verifying it against the context. The surface clues work as access to the deeper levels of meaning in the text. Each character has a motive of their own and their own desire to fulfill which go beyond words are felt both by the characters and audience during their Silences.

CHAPTER IV :CONCLUSION

The silences of the less expressive characters in the *Winesburg Ohio* can be seen as the revelation of many hidden meanings in it. The novel is really a collection of loosely interrelated short stories, or perhaps even a series of character sketches, but the value here is in the individual images and insight that each character possesses, not in any emergent plot. Most of the human encounters in the stories are incomplete and utter failures – few of the characters only can properly make a small talk. But every one in a while spark in flares suddenly, and with such intensity, that the human soul is bare, naked before the reader. Biddlebaum, for example, in 'Hands' tries to hide the tale of his banishment from a Pennsylvania town, a tale represented by his hand. In 'Adventure' lonely Alice Hindman impulsively walks naked into the night rain. The figure of Elizabeth functions as a perfect example of life in death. She has become used to long periods of sitting silently and staring, because of an obscure disease. Her lack of communication with the world mirrors a living death. George is the only one who has a chance to germinate and revitalize her dashed dreams in life as it is for Biddlebaum, Dr. Parcival and Helen white. Threaded through the stories in the view point of George Willard, stands witness to the dark and despairing dealing of a community of isolated people and their silent response for the situation.

George Willard as a round character appears in most of the stories, providing a connection for people who feel they lack connection and a voice for people who feel they lack a voice. Therefore, their encounters with George Willard is more meaningful and symbolic.

Silence in *Winesburg, Ohio* bear testimony to the deepest layers of characters' sense of victimization and oppression and to the most scarring memories. Their memory is also the record of the mens life long struggle for power against social

forces of domination, intolerance and violent abuse. So that, *Wivesburg Ohio* helps to direct our attention beyond what is said, to the struggle of what was still for their unsayable. The novel reminds us that they are Biddlebaum, Greems, Elizabeth, Alice Hindman and Heleve White who respond to the unspeakable pain of unjust punishment, betrayal, humiliation and rejection by silencing themselves. Their silence images frame the novel's moments of hope and the determination and of courage. These characters, in spite of obstacles, of physical and psychological coercion worked themselves in the struggle of liberation. They, as a matter of fact, rejected every domination and torture not using violence but silence as a means to live freely, the life of their own choice.

Wivesburg, Ohio is filled with and founded upon silences, which peak as profoundly as the actual text about language and power. Thus, the text opens itself up for speculation, for beyond what character and text itself say. Thus, they, however silent, are speaking their story full of tortures, stories not only of being victimized but also of survival and strength, resistance and renewal. Thus, silence is then in possession of meaning in *Wivesburg Ohio* and this silence speaks and says all there is to be said.

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