



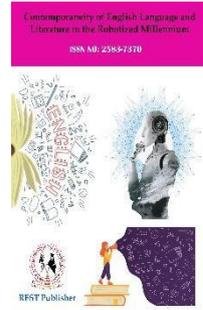
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# The Racism and Domination in Zora Neale Hurston's "their Eyes Were Watching God"

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**Abstract.** The paper The Racism and Domination in Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God", deals with how the female protagonist Janie Crawford is suffering from the racial discrimination and domination and how she is always trying to break her barriers by her cleverness and sense of the presence of the mind. She faces many struggles and barriers to break her survival difficulties and tries to built a life as she desires from the beginning itself.

**Key Words:** Racism, Domination, Marginalisation, Suppression.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is an art of study of human being, natural elements and all the creatures of the Universe. It helps us to enrich the power of learning throughout the world. It is involving not only in the life of literature bluebloods but also in the life and lifestyle of rustic people. It can increase the level of values and ethics. It teaches us how each and everyone should follow the values and ethics to live a good and valuable life. By reading the books of literature, we the people can develop the knowledge and skill as well and can get thorough knowledge of culture and tradition in worldwide. The culture and tradition may vary from country to country, continent to continent and even state to state. When the people wish to learn and increase their knowledge in study of human mind and soul, it is necessary to get the ideas about the universal culture and tradition as keen. When we seek the knowledge of our own nations' tradition and foreign lands' tradition and culture, it is absolute necessary things to know about worldwide problems and difficulties to overcome in this society. The major problems and difficulties such as poverty, race, domination by the upper class, corruption, bribes, dowry system and etc... They are still occupying in the mind of each and everyone. Among the above issues, the race is the major problematic issues and it leads us to the level of domination. Everybody wants to suppress everyone in the name of domination as directly or indirectly. It is let the space to grow the inferiority complex against to arise the voice for protection and for the basic amenities such as food, clothes and shelters. By the power of domination, the rich can become richer and poor can become poorer. The rich people always want to crush the people, those who are really in their below level. The racism fully invades the maximum space of the entire world. It is the form of white and black. The White people blindly believe themselves that they are the special creation of God and they are only having the power to rule over the world. But actually they never consider the black people even as human beings, They are really ignore them to provide the basic rights such as right for the education, right to the equality, right to the secularism and right to the vote. Still the black people are struggling to get all those above rights and feel so difficulty to break through the obstacles which are made by the white people against the black people in the world. In Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God", we the spectators can easily understand that how the female protagonist Janie Crawford is suffering by the racial discrimination and domination and how she is always trying to break her barriers by her cleverness and sense of the presence of the mind. She faces many struggles and barriers to break her survival difficulties and tries to built a life as she desires from the beginning itself.

The novel "Their Eyes Were Watching Gods " pleads us about the life of the protagonist Janie Crawford and her marriages with various kinds of three men. At first she reveals her past life and hard journey with her friend Pheoby Watson. Throughout that we the readers can understand the major causes which made her to live in the ups and

downs of the life. As the human beings, everyone must ready to face the difficulties of the life and ups and downs of the life as well. These hardships can teach us the different levels of experience in each and every situation. It can help us to learn them. By learning them we can shine a better and respectable life in the society. Sometimes it leads us to bitter and malice situation. Especially the major causes like racial discrimination and domination are put us in the reality of the underworld. When the novel begins with its flashbacks, Janie Crawford has sexual awakening with a local boy named Jhonny Taylor. She reciprocates her love and sexual desires with him. One day when Jhonny kisses Janie Crawford, Nanny witnesses both and worries very much about her future. Nanny is the grandmother of Janie Crawford who finds the relationship between them and strict warning to them. She imagines her past life, which is totally destructed by her owner. She thinks about the future of Jannie as follows,

" Old Nanny sat there  
rocking Janie like an infant and  
thinking back and back. Mind  
pictures brought feelings, and feelings  
dragged out dramas from the hollows of  
her heart" ( TEWWG 2.57)

He treated her as a slave. Being a black woman, she even could not able to protect her virginity and chastity. Nevertheless she is filled her womb with no objection. We can witness the mixed race there. Throughout this cause Nanny is given birth a female child named Leafy. She has a well built house after the American civil war. After Leafy is grown up a beautiful young woman, she is seduced by a school teacher and forsaken immediately. It is made her to worst and driven to mania. She is started to drink and committed in worst behavior. It leads her to given birth of Janie Crawford. Leafy finally left Janie Crawford with Nanny ran away somewhere. Where everyone notices the fact the racism causes Nanny as a slave. It would be the core reason for child's fatal life. As she failed to teach a moral life lesson to her child Leafy and it makes her to become a forsaken woman by a school teacher. He too betrays her for the one and only reason, which she is a mixed race woman. Meanwhile Nanny is afraid of the life of Janie Crawford whether it will become good or bad. She tries many times to Janie Crawford that she wants give her happy and luxurious life. She knows that she is already failed in her duty as a mother for her beloved daughter Leafy. But in the case of Janie Crawford, she wants to be a good grandmother and wish to grant her a luminous, prosperous and sophisticated life. So that she insists Janie Crawford to marry an older farmer. Logan Killicks who is looking for the bride. Nanny believes that he can look after Jannie after her death. Finally Janie Crawford marries the old farmer Logan. He doesn't want a partner for his better half but he needs a better assistant to cultivate his farm. But Janie Crawford is failed to do so and she is very much interested with the human life and desires. She wants to fulfill by her husband. In opposite he is also failed to do the duty of the husband.

She becomes so depressed, feel lonely and bittered about her life and wants to run away from her house. Nanny is died due to her aged, when she searches a right way to escape from the cruel treatment of Logan Killicks. She finds a person, named Starks. He takes Janie Crawford to the city of Florida, where they wish to live happily and freely. In the relationship between Janie Crawford and Logan Killicks, they both have different types of dreams and beliefs. They try to dominate each other in all the way. That is the main reason for their segregation. Killicks dominates her as a labor. Janie Crawford needs the freedom and wants to fly over sky with free wings. After she marries Starks, he thinks that she is his trophy wife. He doesn't allow her to do anything individually. Starks treats her like Killicks. She truly finds the difficulty to survive normally. She even fails to find a man to fulfill her desire. Being a mixed race lady, she suffers more and more and searching for a good man to understand her. But Killicks and Starks treat her like a slave. Even though Starks thinks that she is his trophy wife. He doesn't let her to speak even a word and not allows her to meet him when he is in dead bed after his kidney failures. In that time also she seeks the free wings to fly over the sky. She wishes to get freedom to live in the society. But she always thinks herself that she is marginalised by the male domination. As she thinks,

" Ships at a distance have  
every man's wish on board.  
For some they come in with the  
tide. For others they sail forever on the  
horizon, never out of sight, never landing until  
the watcher turns his eyes away in  
resignation, his dreams mocked to death by Time.  
That is the life of Men.  
Now women forget all  
those things they don't  
want to remember and remember

everything they don't want to forget. The  
dream is the truth. Then they act and do  
things accordingly" (TEWWG 1.1-2)

She wants to overcome and tackle these worse situations. Her core concept is to strengthen her short life with much desires and aims. After the death of Starks, she meets a gambler Tea Cake, who is so affectionate on her from the beginning of the novel. At first, she suspects him for his love and affection because she is older than him. She is already settled with the assets of Starks. Meanwhile she falls in love with him and decides to marry him. While she is harvesting beans in her lands and gained much profit by her individual efforts and strengths. Tea Cake is look after her with most care and love. But he has an intention that he seeks the right time to usurp her assets and wealth. Janie Crawford blindly believes and loves him the most but it leads to vain in the end. Janie Crawford is much clever and has gained much support from all the women around her place. But at the same time, they face a hurricane named OKEECHOBEE in Everglades. But at that time Tea Cake is bitten by a dog while he tries to save Janie Crawford from drowning in the floods. In the end of the novel, he tries to kill Janie Crawford by having a great suspect on her. He makes a plot against Janie that he has already hidden a pistol under the pillow in his bedroom and eagerly waiting for the arrival of Janie. Fortunately, Janie finds out the plot of Tea Cake. She shoots him immediately for the sake of protect herself from him. He dies with the massive wound. The reader can understand the dominations in various ways such as Tea Cake tries to dominate her and he decides to marry her for her money and wealth. He pretends like a gentleman with love and care. Even this time the protagonist feels very much that she doesn't able to rise her voice against him. Thus, the novel shows the racism and domination of three various types of husbands. To sum up, the racism and domination must be avoided one in this society. We, the readers must eradicate the racial discrimination and domination in the world.

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