

ISSUES OF RACISM IN TA-NEHISI COATES BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME: A POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

Abid Ullah

BS in English language and Literature, Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan

Email: abidullah2288@gmail.com

Dr Sajid Anwar Chairperson

Department of English Language and Literature Gomal University DI Khan

Email: sajidanwar@gu.edu.pk

Nizar khan

Bs in English, National university of modern languages, Islamabad

Email: nizarahhtar8@gmail.com

Chahat Shah Zeb

M.Phil in English

Chahatshahzaib@gmail.com

ORCID ID: 0009-0004-0939-3602

Abstract

The issue of racism has been a matter of consideration on postcolonial studies because it reveals the perpetual suffering of the discriminated groups. The miseries of the Black community experienced in the past can be analyzed in different ways and be used as a reference to a nation which is democratic and attentive to the rights of people. Using the textual analysis as the method of analysis through the prism of the critical race theory, this paper will analyze Between the Word and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates to understand the factors that influence the Black community and the effects of racism that they have to bear. With the sufferings of the Black community as the central subject, the chosen text illuminates the problem of racism- a problem that nurtures fear, anger, prejudice, and cultural conflicts- between the Blacks and the Whites in general but against the Blacks in particular. The speaker employs symbolic counter-stories, his or the experiences of other people due to their races, to show the racially prejudiced American society. The current work thus, is trying to concentrate on the topic of racism and sheds light on the effects of racism on the Black community through the characters in Between the World and Me. The paper also tries to comment on the corrective actions introduced in the text in order to overcome the racial problems.

Keywords:

Postcolonialism; Critical Race Theory; Racism; Counter-Storytelling; *Between the World and Me*

1. Introduction

Racism is a sensitive topic in postcolonial studies as it reveals the historical injustice, neglect, and trauma inflicted upon and suffered by certain communities. The long legacy of violence, discrimination, and exclusion against African Americans profoundly shaped their existence and cultural identity within the boundaries of the United States. Coates' *Between the World and Me* (2015) is the perfect portrayal of a memoir that embodies the core of America's racism. Coates addresses his son throughout the book, weaving together personal as well as historical narratives and counter narratives to explain the plight of Black people. His writing captures the shameful cultural and sociological life of America and the protracted racism institutionalised within it. His work acts as a form of defiance as well.

Coates' work narrates racial injustices and attempts to reframe the dominant narratives that center Whiteness in the American racial experience. *Between the World and Me* illustrates how individual acts of racism are structural in nature. Coates' work also emphasizes the inequality of power as a system of oppression.

Also, the story has a profound connection to the *Frost v. American history Institute*, like police violence, the denial of someone's humanity, and self-hatred. Coates employs counter-stories

to debunk American exceptionalism and reveal the disconnect between the ideals and practice of democracy regarding race. Coates explains the dominance of the White race and the fear the Black race has and the strain it puts, physically and psychologically, on the Black race. Coates speaks on the struggle to preserve self and the fight, and it absolutely must be said, the self is quickly offered up, no other sacrifice is demanded. It is the cause of violence to be owned, controlled, used, and defended, and more importantly defended.

This is why this work will examine the book *Between the World and Me* through the framework of Critical Race Theory. It will examine the underlining racism, and its impacts on the Black people, and the responses that are formed in the narrative. It contributes to postcolonial and critical race scholarship, as well as speaks to other contexts of societies struggling with systemic racism. It Coates' work in interdisciplinary contexts that elevates the claim of this study, that literature serves as a site for both defiance and renewal in the fight against racism.

1.1 Research Questions

1. How is racism reflected and perpetuated in Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* through the lens of Critical Race Theory?
2. What solutions or corrective strategies does Coates propose in response to the racial injustices depicted in the text?

1.2 Objectives

1. To examine the representation of racism and its effects on the Black community in *Between the World and Me* using Critical Race Theory.
2. To identify and evaluate the corrective strategies and counter-narratives presented by Coates to resist systemic racial oppression.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the growing body of scholarship that examines literature as a powerful medium for exposing and resisting systemic racism. By analyzing *Between the World and Me* through Critical Race Theory, the research highlights how counter-storytelling functions as both testimony and resistance. The findings are significant not only for literary studies but also for sociological and cultural analyses, as they shed light on how racial hierarchies are normalized and contested. In Pakistan and other countries, the postcolonial research will benefit from this study, as it introduces new angles on oppression, identity and the resistance of oppressed people. It underscores that post-Black Coates's racism is, indeed, framed in America, but has parallels in other countries dealing with deep-seated structural disparities and hegemonic relationships.

1.4 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is the textual analysis of Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* (2015). It does not seek to perform a historical overview of American racism, nor does it analyse all the works of African American literature. The analysis is limited to the application of Critical Race theory, with emphasis on the permanence of racism and counter-storytelling. While the broader historical and cultural contexts are invoked for the purposes of interpretation, the analysis is centered on the text in question and its themes, narrative, and ideology.

2 Literature Review

The scholarly engagement with Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* has most prominently pointed out the testimonial aspect of the text and how it serves as a contemporary account of the African American experience. Chatterjee (2019) posits that Coates' narrative serves as an autobiographical letter and constituent of individual trauma and collective memory, rendering the psychological and bodily violence wrought by systemic racism on the Black populace. It weaves personal accounts with wider socio-political issues, placing the Black body within the historic frameworks of slavery, segregation, and mass incarceration.

The skeleton of Coates' work has been analysed through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Ladson-Billings (1998) points out that, per CRT, racism is a constant and ubiquitous reality of American society, a reality that Coates' offers when he states, it is a nation rife with institutional and mythical racism. Research such as Delgado and Stefancic (2017) describes how counter-storytelling is used to resist dominant tales that sanitizes and shield the racialised social system. In this sense, *Between the World and Me* serves as a counter-narrative that disrupts the dominant society's version of achieved equality and progress by revealing the enduring, albeit concealed, structural inequities underneath the lofty guaranteed democracy rhetoric/

Some other scholars see Coates' use of narrative as a form of resistance and survival. Rabaka (2021), for instance, contends that the text bearing witness to the oppression of the people also highlights the importance of reclaiming one's agency through knowledge, struggle, and cultural pride. Coates' evocation of the Black intellectual and cultural tradition places him alongside Baldwin, Du Bois, and Malcolm X, illuminating how literature functions as a site of critical pedagogy. This aspect reinforces the power of narrative to oppression and the shaping of racial consciousness across generations.

Lastly, comparative scholarship focuses on the transnational implications of Coates' insights on race. Fassin (2020), for example, argues that although Coates' narrative is situated in the United States, its themes are relevant to the contestations of racialised inequalities globally, which makes it an important text for grasping the transnational dimension of systemic discrimination. This transnational dimension extends the relevance of critical race theory beyond the United States' race paradigm to the study of subordination and marginalisation of other societies, including those of a postcolonial nature. Coates' text, then, can be situated in a and justice, alongside the discourse on equality and human dignity.

3. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative design and textual analysis centred on the study of the representation of racism in literature. It concerns the close reading of Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* (2015) through the lens of Critical Race Theory. The study employs a critical interpretive framework to elucidate the ways in which racism is narrated, perpetuated, and resisted within the text. The methodology emphasises the narrative's thematic, stylistic, and ideological cores, which enable the examination of how Coates employs counter-stories to disrupt prevailing racial order.

3.1 Tools for Data Collection

The primary tool for data collection in this study is the selected literature text, *Between the World and Me*. Additional sources include scholarly articles, books, and peer-reviewed journals that deal with racism, CRT, and African American literature. These secondary sources aim to situate Coates' narrative and construct a theoretical and critical framework for analysis. Data collection comprises systematic reading, annotation, and thematic classification of relevant excerpts that address the key facets of CRT, such as counter-storytelling and the permanence of racism.

3.1.1 Rationale

The selection of *Between the World and Me* is supported because it is critically praised for the particular narrative technique it employs, and for the way in which it confronts the issue of racism in modern-day America. It supports the relay of a CRT intergenerational voice, historical memory, and past events. Moreover, the choice of performing textual analysis is justified because of the nature of the research questions, which aim to explore the narrative absences and resistances of racism, instead of quantifying them. Therefore, the methodology remains within the boundaries of the aims of literary studies, as well as the focal points of CRT.

3.2 Sample

The sample for this research is deliberately constrained to Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* (2015), which serves as a purposive sample. It has been selected due to its counter-narrative nature, its contemporary racial realities, and its stature as a pillar of African American literature. The primary analytical focus excludes all other writings by Coates and other authors in order to enhance the clarity and concentration of the analysis.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

The research utilises Critical Race Theory (CRT) as its framework. Although CRT was developed from legal studies, it has been widely used across the humanities and social sciences. CRT theorists, like Delgado and Stefancic (2017), argue that our society is permeated and undergirded by racism, which is neither an anomaly nor a superficial concern, but rather an integral part of our culture, narratives, and systems, including the law. This research is informed by two essential tenets of CRT. First, the notion of the 'Permanence of Racism', which argues that racial inequality is a deeply rooted and unremitting aspect of social relations. Second, 'race' and 'counter-storytelling', which emphasizes the need to listen to the voices of the oppressed. This tenet is vital in dismantling hegemonic narratives. With the above principles, CRT offers the critical framework needed to assess how Coates articulates the Black experience and embodies resistance to racial subjugation through narratives.

4. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the researcher aims to address the research questions outlined earlier. The chapter is organized as follows: First, it explores how racism is depicted (if at all) in *Between the World and Me*. Second, it examines the impact of racism as presented in the text. Third, the researcher investigates the solutions offered in the text that may help overcome racial issues.

4.1 Racism in *Between the World and Me*

One of the core principles of Critical Race Theory is the idea of the "permanence of racism." In this framework, racism is seen as a fundamental and enduring aspect of American society. This perspective is also reflected in *Between the World and Me*, where the speaker's profound grief and sorrow highlight the central role of race in his awareness of the world. For example, the text emphasizes, "Americans believe in the reality of race" (Coates, 2015, p.7), underscoring this notion. Similarly, Delgado and Stefancic extend, "Because racism is an ingrained feature of our landscape, it looks ordinary and natural to persons in the culture (Martinez, 2014, p. 19). From the afore-mentioned notion, it can be inferred that in America the racism is rooted very deeply in the society and it has become part of their psyche. This concept of assimilated racism can be seen in the text of *Between the World and Me* when the speaker mentions, "indubitable feature of the natural world (Coates, 2015, p 7).

To them-the Whites racism means, "the need to ascribe bone-deep features to people and then humiliate, reduce, and destroy them" (Coates, 2015, p. 7). On the basis of the white color, whites believe in superiority and social hierarchy. As Barksdale (1989) study found, the Supreme Court held that Blacks were not citizens under the Constitution but were property of the slaveholders (p. 367). They believed in racism by which they mean to humiliate, reduce, and demolish the oppressed group of people and consider racism as the innocent daughter of Mother Nature (Coates, 2015, p. 7). This description shows the justification of their racial discrimination that racism is something that is natural and is beyond the man's control like other natural phenomena such as earthquakes, floods, tornados, etc. Those who considered themselves white believed that slavery was their weapon and had a right of possessions. White group of people always try to raise their vital rank over the inferiors (black, brown, etc.) Both father (the speaker) and son go into that inferior group of people.

Imperialism is a strategy in which stronger community controls the inferior community through dictating, ruling and dominating them culturally, socially, politically and economically Behind

racism of colonization/colonialism, the ideology of imperialism is known as the driving force through which the whites build their empires. In *The White Man's Burden*, Rudyard Kipling (1899) says:

Take up the White Man's burden__

Send forth the best ye breed__

Go bind your sons to exile

To serve your captive's need (n. p.)

The above-cited lines strengthen the assumption that the whites think that they are the drives of the world. So, it is their responsibility to force the non-whites to accept and adopt the white way of life. Only then can the non-whites come into the white's circle of acceptance. Only they (whites) have the right to save the other races by controlling and dictating them to imitate the whites. As they have propaganda that non-whites are, "sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child" (Kipling, 1899). They instilled into the minds of the inferior races to imitate the whites, because this belief will label them as a civilized human and recognize them in a society. This vision of racial superiority can be seen in the text of *Between the World and Me* that one has to "believe in the preeminence of hue and hair" (Costes, 2015, p. 7). This notion of hue and hair which signifies the main concept that white's attributes, white's living white's features makes them superior over others. If someone wants to rank higher they have to adopt white's life styles. Alike, Bhardwaj (2016) found that Toni Morrison, a famous personality in African-American literature, in her well-known novel *The Bluest Eye*, and discuss the themes of oppression and internalized racism of black Afro-Americans who were living in America. Morrison, through her character 'Pecola', tries to represent the internalized racism that all the Black girls wanted to be like the White girls, for example, blue eyes, straight and blond hair, and white skin (p.107). Therefore, it can be said that in America racism of hue and hair is settled so intensely in the black Americans. As in *The Bluest Eye*, "all the world had agreed that a blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned doll was what every girl child treasured. "Here" they this beautiful, and if you are on this day worthy you may have (Morrison, 2007, p. 20-211). This thinking of incorporated race and racism can be seen in the text when the speaker clarifies these new people who accept the white's beliefs are the modern (C, 2015.p-72 They are the followers of the bleach-skinned fashion. So that before that mom invention' they were something else- African, Catholic, and Jewish etc. Who in search acknowledgement in the America a world that is dominated by the whites. These modern planted individuals have lost their originality in order to fulfill their hopes and desires. To survive a healthy and respectful life within the white dominated society, they have to change is to something that is acceptable by the whites who always play the role of oppressor/superior/master. When these modern individuals accept and join the whites constructs then they are considered civilized. For example, this can be soon in this line of the text when the speakers reveals, "the men who needed to believe themselves white, the bodies were the key to social club" (Costes, 2015, p. 104).

Due to the fixity of the concept of race and racism in so-called civilized American's culture/society, 'Whiteness' is considered as valuable and precious. In Critical Race Theory. Whiteness as property is another major belief. The whites want their control and power over their subordinates by controlling and changing their minds. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), according to Paulo Friere, "Indeed, the interests of the oppressed lie in changing the consciousness of the oppressed more easily they can be dominated" (p.47). In brief, it can be said that only the White individuals have the right of superiority, ownership, possession, satisfaction, segregation, elimination, etc. (Hiraldo, 2010, p. 55). In other words, it is known as the 'social construction of race'. The social construction of race is not natural, rather it is synthetic (man-made), in which individuals are divided into groups on the basis of their color,

physical appearance, etc. In this group or race division, the White group of people is considered as the dominant one in all respects. For example, we have an indicator of the above-mentioned impression and can be seen in this line of the *Between the World and Me*: "America believes itself exceptional, the greatest and noblest nation ever exist, a lone champion" (Coates, 2015, p 8). These words shows that the white believe they are incomparable in the world. Although, "American history" (Coates, 2015, p. 6) is full of violence, of looting, and "pillaging of life, liberty, labor, and land (Coates 2015, p.), still the so-called civilized America believes itself the alone defender and guardian of the world.

The second main tenet of the Critical Race Theory is the 'counter-storytelling', which proves the permanence of racism the first tenet of Critical Race Theory in the American society. Counter-storytelling helps the black people speak back. According to Hiraldo's (2010), counter-storytelling is a framework that legitimizes the racial and subordinate experiences of marginalized groups" (p. 54). It gives opportunity to tell the world about the untold personal as well as historical experiences of racism. It gives strength to the vote of be racially discriminated people. Through which they can expose the reality before the world and present the effects of racism. In the following lines we can so the examples of the racial injustice by recounting the murders of the black people. That how easily the black people can lose their life without doing anything that can be referred as agent their (White's) will or laws.

The speaker tells his son:

You saw Eric Garner choked to death for selling cigarettes, because you know now that Renisha McBride was shot for seeking help, that John Cranford down for browsing in a department store. And you have seen men in uniform drive by and murder Tamir Rice, a twelve-year-old-child whom they were oath-bound to protect. And you have seen men in the same uniforms pummel Mariene Pinnock, someone's grandmother, on the side of a road. And you know now, if you did not before, that the police departments of your country have been endowed with authority to destroy your body (Coates, 2015, p. 9).

As it is mentioned earlier that counter-storytelling is a tool used to express the reality le this text of *Between the World and Me*. the research observes the Michael Brown's murder an indicator of the racially prejudiced American society. The speaker talks about Michael B killers, the men who had left his body in the street like an awesome declaration of their inviolable power would never be punished" (Coates, 2015, p. 11). This is a historical fact and Mitchell and Williams (2016) have also quoted this incident in these words

On 9 August 2014, 18-year-old Michael Brown was shot and killed by Darren Wilson, a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Brown's body was then left facedown and uncovered in the street for four and a half hours. This shooting and the uprising in Ferguson that followed brought forth a national movement for black lives and against police brutality (p.2).

Between the World and Me: The Way Forward to Overcome Racism

Firstly, the speaker expresses his feelings and wants from his race to be controlled intelligent, and beyond the fear" (Coates, 2015, p. 35). The speaker says that if it could be possible to choose or design the flag back, then he would embellish it with the description of Malcolm X. The portrait of Malcolm X who is wearing a business suit and a tie and holding a rifle and this will represent the whole intellectual and their ability and the fearless nation as well. Therefore, by giving reference of Malcolm X and his message, the speaker stresses on that, "Don't give up your life, preserve your life" (Coates, 2015, p. 35). It shows that the black lives are as valuable as any other It shows that the blacks have the right of possessions as any other have. It shows that blacks have their own likes, dislikes, values, and customs eve as any other have So, it is not the right way to hide or simply lose once on identification so accept other's ideology just to get recognition in a man-made society.

Secondly, the speaker tries his best to remind his people through the technique of counter-storytelling "Black is beautiful" (Coates, 2015. p. 35). This statement is one of the suggestions, which have been pointed out in the text. This declaration by the speaker proves or in other worlds a black speaker tells to the white's world that the black race is not less than any other race (here in this case: white race). The speaker values the black body. We can say that this statement is an advice to the black people to defend and save their race against the against the racial discrimination because their lives, their blood are as precious as any others, the Things Fall Apart (1994) Okonkwo says, "If a man comes into my hut and defecates on the floor, what do I do? Do I shut my eyes? No! I take a stick and break his head. That is what a man does" (Achebe, p. 112). Similarly, in this text we have an example where the speaker takes a stand against that woman who represents the superiority of her race. For instance, when the speaker says "someone had invoked their right over the body of my son, I turned, and spoke to this woman, and my words were hot with all of the moment and all of my history. She shrunk back and shocked (Coates, 2015, p. 94). To support that whine woman another white mat came, then what we see is that the speaker, "pushed him away" (Coates, 2015, p. 94), be the same case, where on one side we see black's role to raise voice against racial injustice, on the other side we can observe both the white lady's as well as that white man's behavior that typically represents the western belief about the black as inferior and discriminated race as the west think that the blacks are low-graded and uncivilized. Like, Praveen's (2016) study found that EM Foster in A Passage to India represents such stereotype of western thinking about Indians as rapists and uncivilized (p. 49).

The speaker declares his race as the most beautiful and alive race. He says that the black body's physical gorgeousness is what they all have Black beauty is historical and cultural, Incarnate" (Coates 2015, p. 49). With the help of counter-storytelling technique, the speaker describes that their world is full of happiness, joy and bliss. The speaker has quoted the lines from Amiri Baraka's poem Ka Bain the text and presented before the readers to tell them that African people are beautiful. They have their own distinctiveness, uniqueness with their African eyes, and noses, and long arms. They have their own world that is full of happiness, lively cultures, music and dances. But still they are suffering from the issues of humiliation, hatred, racism and results in the destruction of the black race. In those lines the poet Amiri Baraka tell us that "their" "world is more lovely" (Coates 2015, p. 111), more beautiful, and more any others' Africans as a whole are beautiful ("poem Analysis, "n.d). The blacks are valuable crystals, which are not for sale. The speaker through this works to inform his people that lives bodies of backs are not made for those dangerous streets, la short, we that the blacks are not the way the whites de present them. So, there is to send for the Hacks trying in change their selves any more by accepting their superiors so called told stories belief and histories, or there is no need to change their originality due to the fear. We ser that the speaker claims that black (black body) is beautiful. It seems that the speaker wants raise his guard the original black hair against the dye. Maintain the black skin against the bleach. Protect their noses and mouths against the modern surgery. All the black lives are beautiful and gorgeous. So, never ever bend before anyone and must not give or surrender their originality before any other.

According to the Critical Race Theory, the western world turned itself exceptional and considered itself greater than the rest of the world. Therefore, the third suggestion, which has pointed out, it when the speaker through this work tries to convince and tell the black people that now it is time. It is time to burn those white-made stories or histories and to make "a new story, a new history", (Coates 2015, p. 44) by using the lens of counter-storytelling. He wants his race to follow their own Dream-"Dream of a black race (Coates 2015, p. 45) where they have their own free will, where they have their own heroes who have their deep African past, where they authored their operas, established the secret algebra, raised flamboyant walls, rods,

pyramids, bridges, and many other inventions that meet the criteria for the positions of civilization. Like, Bell in *And We Are Not Saved* "expands the minds of his readers by exposing them to a nontraditional interpretation of United States history-a Black construction" (Barksdale, 19 364) Ahmed Sekou Toure said,

We should go down to the grassroots of our culture, not to remain there, at so be Isolated there, but to draw strength and substance there from, and with whatever additional sources of strength and material we acquire, proceed in set up Form of society raised to the level of humas progress (as cited in Evans, 2017).

Fourthly, the speaker encourages his race by saying that if the whites have their champions, then we must have ours" (Coates 2015, p. 45). Here, this way of encouragement seems to be firstly, one of the main suggestions in which the speaker tries tell his people to be proud of their race. Secondly, it is a try to tell to the world (white world, especially) shout some of the famous and remarkable personalities and glimpses from the black past. And for this reason, he recounts some of the famous writers and historic personalities from the black noble canon to tell the world about the blacks that they have their own history. Therefore, the study searched about these personalities and presented a brief introduction of these personalities in support of the suggestion that the blacks have their own history as well as in support of the research that black race is real and original and "mattered" (Coates 2015, p. 45)

Such as, Chancellor Williams- the author of *The Destruction of Black Civilization* (1971)-was a historian, novelist, and an economist, an editor of a newsletter, whose center of attention was the achievements and self-sufficient civilizations of Africans before the European or Asian manipulations and control. The Black Academy of Arts and Letters honored Chancellor Williams for his efforts His aim was to learn, to research, to explore, and so understand the African history independently from their own the blacks' own perspective Chancellor Williams said. "As long as we rely on white historians to write Black History for us, we should keep silent about what they produce" (Chancellor Williams, n.d.)

Then comes J. A. Rogers, a journalist, novelist, and historian, who spent most of his time in exposing racist portrayals of African people as well as admiring the past dignified black personalities across the world (Simba, para. 1). Similarly, the wealthiest person in history was a black, an African emperor Mansa Musa of Mali from 14th century remains the richest person in history (Morgan, 2018).

Likewise, Shabaka the King of Egypt was a black. In the same way, YaaAsantewaa of Ashanti was a black as well. YaaAsantewa was the gatekeeper of their ancestral sacred Golden stool. The British colonial governor Frederick Hodgson insisted to allow him to sit on that sacred Golden stool as a representation of the British authority. Before the British demands, some of the Ashantenese were going to surrender. On that occasion, Queen Mother Nana YaaAsantewa said,

I must say this, if you the men of Ashanti will not go forward, then we will. We the women will. I shall call upon my fellow women. We will fight the white men. We will fight till the last of us falls in the battlefields ("YaaAsantewan."n.d.).

Similarly, this study sells about Queen Nzinga. A pitiless and prevailing African leader from the 17th century of the Ndongo and Matamba Kingdoms was Quero Nzinga who courageously and skillfully fought against the Portuguese for the freedom and progress of her empires, who were trying to colonize them (Engel, 2012), The speaker narrates the story of the Queen Nzinga's power when she was tried to humiliate by the Dutch ambassador by refusing her a seat. She ordered her advisors to make a human chair for her. This seems to me that by giving the glimpses from Queen Nzinga's powerful past the speaker warts such kind of bravery from his race. At this point, it seems to me a suggestion because by knowing once own blacks own) past- a heroic past-one (black) will be proud of his/her rice. Then one (black) will was that type

of dignity, supremacy and control from his/her race before any other (whites) Blacks have their self-respect. They have their pride. So, no one is or will be allowed to humiliate the black body/race

Fifthly, another suggestion, which the study highlights in the text, is the struggle, a struggle for the identification of his race. If one rejects the existence of other, then stand for the due rights against their rejection, fight against their negative response and humiliation, struggle against their refusal, and try to prove their selves. That is what the speaker wants to address indirectly his black people to refine the white-made binary oppositions of white Black superiority/Inferiority, stronger weaker, higher lower, master slave, etc, because all these history oppositions are the reasons that divided the human beings into two categories. It is stated that, "Among the most important kinds of power knowledge brought by the colonizers was the construction of the concept of 'race and more specifically the racial binary opposition of white and other be that other "black", "yellow", "brown", "red" (Klages, 2008, p. 157). In short, reject and stand against the permanence of racism towards the blacks and refuse the so called belief of the Whiteness. And tries to prove that black are beautiful with the power of recognition. In the text we see that the speaker insists on to struggle and tells his son that struggle is in his name The speaker's son's name 'Samori' is an indicator in this regard The speaker describes before his son that even his name has a meaning and a message of 'struggle His name has a story- a story of struggle. His son is named after that great warrior who fights back against French colonizers for the right to his own black body" (Coates 2015, p. 68) Samori Tourers, the name of one of the great. African rulers and warriors who fought for freedom against the French colonizers several times (Dr. Y. 2011).

In 1958, French leader General De Gaulle visited Guinea, where Sékou Touré, one of Samori Touré's grandsons, addressed him with the following words:

"We have told you bluntly, Mr. President, what the demands of the people are... We have one prime and essential need: our dignity. But there is no dignity without freedom... We prefer freedom in poverty to opulence in slavery" (as cited in Evans, 2017).

Similarly, the speaker in *Between the World and Me* expresses a comparable sentiment when he asserts, "We will never willingly hand over our bodies or the bodies of our friends" (Coates, 2015, p.17). This can be interpreted as advice, where the speaker conveys to his people that none of them are destined for slavery. They were not born to endure racial injustice. They did not create the street violence, nor do they fund it. The researcher points out that the speaker's central message is that, although they may not be able to control their enemies, what they do have control over is their "togetherness." What they can control is their unity: to live as one, stand as one, and speak as one. In alignment with Sékou Touré's perspective, he affirms that it is better to live in poverty with freedom than to live in wealth under the oppression of slavery (Dr. Y. 2010). On another occasion, Sékou Touré further emphasized this stance.

Children do not acquire racism, and they do not have negative thoughts about people of different races. Africa learned racism from European countries, and people associate facial features with racism. Given the colonial experience, which is inherently tied to racism, as discussed by Evans (2017), as citing Evans.

One can observe that throughout the text, the speaker consistently refers to his son. Although the analysis suggests that the style in which the speaker attempts to offer advice to the reader/Black people is a reverse narration of critical race theory. Through this reverse narration, he depicts the experience of racial discrimination on a personal level and in the lives of other Black people affected by it. With this technique, it seems to me that the speaker is aiming for a transformation of his people, encouraging them to grow into full awareness (awareness of the interests that have been phantasmagorically created by white people). One can observe that by hoping to speak directly to his son, the speaker is actually trying to remind both the child and

his race that they should bring their feelings, emotions, actions, and reactions closer together. They should not apologize for their existence, for their long limbs, for their smiles, for their skin, or for their bodies. There, you have the seventh piece of advice, which is taken from the line of text, "Don't limit yourself to the comfort of others" (Coates, 2015, p. 108).

This passage can be interpreted as advice from the speaker to his people, urging them to reject the imposed constructs of the white establishment that seek to repress their identities. He encourages them not to limit themselves, not to accept false narratives, and not to accept the status quo. Black individuals are not born to serve others or endure oppression. They should not accept the lies about their own identities as constructed by whites for the benefit of whites. There is no need to be part of a world that serves only white interests. Black people must awaken to the reality of racism and strive to live in a world where all races are equal, a world created by God's beauty, not by man-made divisions of race.

In the text, there is another powerful statement from the mother of a black boy who was murdered by a white man for simply listening to music that the white man found disturbing. She tells her son:

"You exist. You matter. You have value. You have every right to wear your hoodie, to play your music as loud as you want. You have every right to be you. And no one should deter you from being you. You have to be you. And you can never be afraid to be you" (Coates, 2015, p. 113).

These words affirm the significance and value of Black lives. They assert that Black people have the same rights as anyone else and that their existence is just as beautiful and worthy. In a similar vein, Sékou Touré emphasized:

"I don't know what people mean when they call me the bad child of Africa. Is it that they consider us unbending in the fight against imperialism, against colonialism? If so, we can be proud to be called headstrong. Our wish is to remain a child of Africa unto our death" (as cited in Evans, 2017).

The colonizers imposed their own culture, religion, and race upon the colonized, teaching them to accept these as superior. The most significant constructs of the colonizers were the concepts of race, and the binary opposition of 'white' versus 'other.' According to Saussure's theory of language, "Each term has meaning only in reference to the other and only as what the other is not" (Klages, 2008, p. 55). In this light, whiteness exists because of blackness—just as brightness is defined in contrast to darkness. The same can be said for the concept of "up" as defined by "down" and "present" by "absence." Thus, without the concept of blackness, there would be no concept of whiteness. This is captured in the line, "There is no them without you" (Coates, 2015, p. 105), which highlights the interdependence of the two concepts.

The speaker emphasizes that the way to lift the Black race out of the madness of racism and the belief that they are inferior is through struggle. Through struggle, Black people can reclaim their true identity, which has been distorted by the false representations of whites. The speaker asserts, "They made us into a race" (Coates, 2015, p. 149), referring to the way whites have historically constructed the concept of race in order to oppress Black people.

The research notes that the speaker consistently rejects the idea of white superiority. Like Anita Desai's *Bye Bye Black Bird* (1971), where Dev rejects European life and aligns more with his Indian roots, the speaker in *Between the World and Me* rejects the constructed superiority of whites. He is not willing to accept or conform to this hypocrisy. As he states, "I did not care" (Coates, 2013, p. 94). For him, his own race is superior, beautiful, and real. Through counter-storytelling, the speaker presents the struggle as the solution to overcoming the consequences of racism, giving the Black race the opportunity to be respected and valued in every area of life. This is evident in the line, "You are called to struggle, not because it assures you victory but because it assures you an honorable and sane life" (Coates, 2015, p. 97).

In short, the struggle to make Black people equal to whites, to make them as respectable as whites, will give them the confidence to “live free in this black body” (Coates, 2015, p. 12). The struggle is necessary to make the Black race visible and to break free from the falsehoods created by a racist society. As the speaker states, “We made ourselves into a people” (Coates, 2015, p. 149), he wishes for the Black race to be “proud” (Coates, 2015, p. 119). Similarly, Sékou Touré said:

“People of Africa, from now on you are reborn in history, because you mobilize yourself in the struggle and because the struggle before you restore to your own eyes and renders to you, justice in the eyes of the world” (as cited in Evans, 2017).

Finally, the researcher would like to reference Leonce Gaiter's message from his book *Whites Shackled Themselves to Race And Blacks Have Yet to Free Ourselves* (2017). He emphasizes that it is time for Black people to free themselves from the mental and physical shackles imposed by whites. It is time to dismantle the racist social constructs that have held Black people down. Black individuals must learn to love themselves, teaching both themselves and others who Afro-Americans truly are. This can only be achieved by looking at history through their own eyes, understanding their accomplishments, and teaching each other their true history, rather than waiting for others to teach them.

5. Findings and Conclusion

5.1 Findings

The analysis of *Between the World and Me* reveals that racism is portrayed not as a temporary aberration but as a permanent and systemic feature of American society, consistent with the core tenet of Critical Race Theory. Coates illustrates how racism infiltrates institutions, narratives, and everyday life, rendering the Black lives perpetually vulnerable. Instances of police brutality and the looming threat of violence underscore the embodied consequences of racism, as the Black body is marked as disposable within a White-dominated social order.

Another important finding is the counter-narrative in the text. Coates' direct address to his son transforms the text into both a personalized testimony and a collective testimony that challenges the dominant narrative of American exceptionalism. Coates bases his reflections on experience and history to dismantle the myths of meritocracy and equality. In doing so, the text reclaims interpretive authority and centers Black voices, which in itself is an act of resistance and continuity.

This study also finds that Coates traces the transmission of racial trauma across generations, connecting historical struggles with the present. Writing to his son is both a warning and a legacy. He highlights the need for awareness and resilience in the face of ongoing racial injustice. This focus on intergenerational dialogue illustrates the persistence of racism, but also the buried and active memory and knowledge of preservation and resistance.

In light of the above observations, cultivating something like self-awareness, critical consciousness, and active engagement in struggle would result in highly valuable outcomes from the perspective of maintaining self-defense, carefully constructed self-knowledge, and self-knowledge beyond one's relationship to oneself through the thickness of the white veil. Coates' ideas echo the Challenger's focus on counter-narratives, asserting that resistance begins with reclaiming one's story and refusing to be absorbed into hegemonic structures. Yes, there is racism, and Coates' story demonstrates the possibility of survival, enduring, and acting as an agent within oppressive structures, but most importantly, this story emphasizes the dignity that one can maintain.

5.2 Conclusion

As demonstrated, Coates' work, *Between the World and Me*, focuses on core aspects of Critical Race Theory, including the nature of “sustained” and “structural” racism, as well as the power of counter-narratives. Racism is portrayed as a permanent and structural reality that threatens

the existence of Black lives. However, at the same time, Coates' narrative also creates a specific space for resistance, survival, and identity construction. He himself proposes a series of non-systemic solutions but emphasizes the assertion of silenced, colonized, and marginalized voices in the process of restoring their systemic erasure. Counter-narratives, reclaiming the narrative of civilization, life, and Black history, are the key strategy of the liberating counter-narrative. This text is both a testimony and a critique that, in addition to the politics of race in America, also illuminates the condition of oppressed people wherever they are. The findings also highlight the continuing importance of literature to expose acts of injustice and to keep the struggle for equality and dignity for all people alive.

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