

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

UNIVERSITY OF 8 MAI 1945 / GUELMA

جامعة 8 ماي 1945/قالمة

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

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قسم الآداب واللغة الانجليزية



Option: Literature

**Growing up an Afro-American Woman: A Psychoanalytic and Feminist
Reading of Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Anglophone
Language, Literature and Civilization**

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June 2017

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my thesis to the names mentioned below, and I want to thank you all from the deepest point in my heart for supporting me with prayers, wishes, and encouragements. I am honored and blessed to have you all in my life:

To the most ambitious person I know; sorry your name is not supposed to be written on this page!

To my beloved mother, whose dreams am realizing!

To my father; I am on my way to make you proud dad!

To my beautiful older sister: Naima, Sorry for keeping the lights on while you were sleeping! And I can see it through your eyes how proud of me you have been!

To my middle sister Bibeche: my first English teacher, thank you is not enough! I will never forget how you made me love English!

To my brother Halim, and his beloved wife Samah: I will always remember your efforts to make me happy.

To my sister Noor: We were not sisters by birth, but we knew it from the start. Thank you for your endless prayers and encouragements!

Special dedication to my husband, Amir Atif HEZAME. Thank you for encouraging me whenever I got tired of everything. The way you have believed in my capabilities and my writing meant the world to me.

To my cousin Wafa: ... I just felt that your name must be on this list!

To my dearest, closest, coolest, and funniest friends I have ever met: Imane, Sara, Roumaissa, Nabila, Manal, Amina, Ahlam. Spending the five years together is one of the most beautiful things that have ever happened in my life.

To all the readers: May you live in happiness!

May Allah blesses you all, and give you more than what you have wished for me!

Acknowledgements

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All thanks and praises be to Allah, the first and foremost Guider who has helped me with his great mercy to accomplish this work. Peace and salutation be upon the greatest prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon him, his family, companions and adherents.

My sincerest appreciation and thankfulness go to my supervisor Miss Khawla BENDJEMIL, for her honest, valuable and generous and guidance, and for her patient and kindhearted role in assisting my work.

To all the teachers of the English Department at the University of 8 Mai 1945 who taught me in the past five years, thank you for your support and both your direct and indirect contribution in making me reach this level.

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Abstract

Growing up an Afro-American woman in the twentieth century has been one of the hardest challenges that black women have had to handle. Hence, this study is an attempt to analyze from both the psychoanalytic and the feminist perspectives the stages of Janie Crawford's growing up as well as her quest for feminine power and assertion in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching* (1937). The study attempts to investigate the relationship between Hurston's life and her novel's events. Therefore, the study aims on one hand at scrutinizing the protagonist's journey of giving up her role as a submissive and indecisive woman to adopt after long painful experiences the role of a strong woman who fights for her feminine voice against patriarchy and domination, and on the other hand it aims at portraying how Hurston embalms her painful memories and experiences in the novel as a tool for healing her scars. The results of the analysis prove that the novel is highly feminist, in view of that, Janie Crawford can be seen as an example like all Afro-American women who have suffered from sexism and have emerged in spite of that independent and self-liberated.

المخلص

لقد كانت نشأة امرأة أمريكية من أصل أفريقي في القرن العشرين من أصعب التحديات التي وجب على النساء السود مواجهتها. بالتالي، إن هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لتحليل مراحل نشأة جاني كروفورد وكذلك سعيها وإصرارها للحصول على السلطة الأنثوية في رواية زورا نيل هيرستون، عيونهم كانت تشاهد الرب (1937) وذلك اعتماداً على نظرية التحليل النفسي الأدبية والنظرية النسوية يحاول البحث دراسة العلاقة بين حياة هيرستون وأحداث روايتها لذلك تهدف الدراسة، من جهة، إلى التدقيق في رحلة بطلة الرواية للتخلي عن دورها كامرأة خاضعة ومتردة لتتبنى بعد تجارب مؤلمة طويلة دور المرأة القوية التي تحارب من أجل صوتها الأنثوي ضد السلطة الرجولية والهيمنة. وتهدف من ناحية أخرى إلى تصوير كيفية تحوير هيرستون لذكرياتها المؤلمة وتجاربها في الرواية كأداة لشفاء ندوبها. نتائج التحليل تثبت أن الرواية هي نسوية للغاية، في ضوء ذلك، يمكن أن ينظر إلى جاني كروفورد باعتبارها مثل لجميع النساء الأمريكيات من أصل أفريقي اللواتي عانين من التحيز الجنسي وظهرن على الرغم من هذا مستقلات ومتحركات ذاتياً.

Abstrait

L'émergence d'une femme Afro-Américaine au vingtième siècle a été l'un des défis les plus difficiles que les femmes noires ont eu à gérer. Par conséquent, cette étude tente d'analyser à la fois les perspectives psychanalytiques et les perspectives féministes, les étapes de la croissance de Janie Crawford ainsi que sa quête du pouvoir et de l'affirmation féminines dans *Une Femme Noire* (1937) de Zora Neale Hurston. L'étude tente d'étudier la relation entre la vie de Hurston et les événements de son roman. Par conséquent, l'étude vise, d'une part, à examiner le cheminement du protagoniste pour abandonner son rôle d'une femme soumise et indécise à adopter après de longues expériences douloureuses le rôle d'une femme forte qui lutte pour sa voix féminine contre le patriarcat et la domination, et sur l'autre part, il vise à dépeindre comment Hurston embauche ses mémoires et expériences douloureuses dans le roman comme un outil pour guérir ses blessures. Les résultats de l'analyse prouvent que le roman est hautement féministe, à cause de cela, Janie Crawford peut être considérée comme un exemple comme toutes les femmes Afro-Américaines qui ont souffert du sexisme et ont émergé malgré toutes des femmes indépendantes et libérées.

Introduction

Writing is not only filling papers with words, rather it is blowing breaths from the soul and emotions to the words to create a thriving product. As a matter of fact, Zora Neale Hurston as a black writer witnessed many forms of oppression as any other black woman. She wrote *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) to embalm her feelings in it, not only to resort to writing as a tool for healing her scars, but also to shed light on some of the most important concepts that African American literature has been dealing with like sexism and patriarchy. Originally, African American literature focuses generally on issues of racism, classism and sexism. Through literature, black intellectuals in general carried a common objective which is fighting back all the stereotypical images that the whites constructed about them to live with their own identity that glorify their African heritage and to enjoy their freedom. However, black females had to adopt an independent movement to defend the black woman who was doubly oppressed for being black and being a female, and marginalized from the social entourage. Accordingly, Hurston as a leading figure in Harlem Renaissance created a revolutionary effect on the status of the black women within the general context of the United States and within the black community itself; by portraying the sexual assault and exploitation that the black woman had to live with under the domination of men. In view of that, Hurston's novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, comprises the exact theme of black woman's suffering within a patriarchal community. It is important to note that this study makes use of the 7th edition of MLA.

The story of Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching* revolves around Janie Crawford, the protagonist of the novel who suffered unmeritedly throughout her life in search for her true identity and self-fulfillment. Though she lived with her grandmother whose perspective about women's freedom was restricted to submission and men's protection, she always questions her role in life and refuses to accept the imposed traditional concept of a

dependent woman, and that's why she manages to create her own concept and live by it. Consequently, Janie has to marry three men before she becomes a fully independent woman. With the first two husbands Logan Killicks and Joe Starks, each time she make herself believe that he would endow her with feelings of love and appreciation, but she always get disappointed as she finds out that they are just different faces of the same coin, that is oppression. However, with Tea Cake the third husband, things are different as he seems liking her twin soul that loves her and appreciates her femininity along with making her experience the true feeling of freedom, the thing that strengthens her to hold tightly onto her life and self by doing whatever it takes to own them and let nobody controls them again. For that reason, she gives up the love of her life by killing her husband Tea Cake at the point where her life is threatened. Although the situation is hard for her, eventually the whole thing is a blessing in disguise as she grows up after all the sorrow a strong black woman who is ready to overcome male supremacy and dominance. As a matter of fact, she finally emerges as a model for the strong black woman, who regard herself as an example for all women who are still under the commands of their husbands. For she recounts her story to her friend to celebrate her independence and to deliver the message to all suppressed women that they always have the chance to stand up with their voice in the face of racism and sexism.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to discuss the stages of the protagonist's personal metamorphosis, and which characteristics made her capable of overcoming all internal and external barriers that she thought they would prevent her from emerging as an independent woman. Hence, the study endeavors to interpret the protagonist's psychological and emotional growing-up in light of all the conditions that surround her through applying appropriate psychological theories of Freud, Eric Ericson, and Karen Horney. To provide an exact explanation of the ways in which events of the novel take place, and also serve as a conception to the behaviors of the main character to provide a subtle explanation for different

decisions she makes throughout the novel. Furthermore, the study is discussed as well from a feminist perspective since the novel conforms to certain feminist aspects like fighting forms of oppression, rejecting patriarchy ... among others, as far as the protagonist's journey of self-discovery and fighting male oppression are concerned.

The study is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is a theoretical foundation of the general context of the novel, and the theories that are used in the analysis. The chapter is divided into three sections; the first section introduces a general overview of the African American community in the twentieth century to portray how females were subjugated and alienated from a society ruled by men, which will help in understanding the context of the novel. The second section discusses the rise of feminism in the United States by providing the history of its waves of development in order to highlight the concepts that this movement implicate, which in turn help in discussing the feminist features present in the novel. The third section deals with the evolution of the psychoanalytic literary theory and the different sub-theories related to it. It also identifies the psychoanalytic theories which are used in analyzing the characters and the events of the novel, in addition to highlighting the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature of the blacks.

The second chapter, subsequently, is an extension of the previous one as it discusses how the feminist and psychoanalytic features shape the novel. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section is discussed from a psychoanalytic perspective by discovering how Hurston's life is projected into the novel's story by means of Freud's theory of the Unconscious. The second section is discussed from a feminist perspective by analyzing the different feminist aspects that characterize the novel and makes it conformant to the ideals of the theory. The third section analyzes the character of the protagonist to give a general understanding of her vision of life. The fourth section uses Freud's theory of the Id, Ego, and Super Ego to study the protagonist's important decisions that shape her life. Finally, the fifth

section portrays how the patriarchal black community oppresses women and controls them by taking Janie Crawford as an example.

The third chapter entails the previous chapters to study the process of growing-up of Janie Crawford, both from the feminist and psychoanalytic perspectives, and it is divided into three stages. The first stage deals with the early teenage period when she was still a dependent and submissive girl who did not know much about life. This stage is discussed in two sections: the first one discusses, from a feminist perspective, the traditional gender roles that were imposed on Janie Crawford by her former slave grandmother, while the second section goes in parallel with the previous section but from a psychoanalytic perspective to discuss Janie's unbalanced adolescence, and her identity confusion by means of Eric Ericson's Stages of psychosocial development, particularly the stage of Identity vs. Role Confusion. The second stage studies Janie's first signs of revelation where she started to take serious decisions about her own life according to her needs. This stage is discussed in two sections: while the first section depends on Karen Horney's theory of Neurosis to analyze Janie's need for love and appreciation and how she is driven by these needs, the second one depicts Janie's decisiveness to prevent any form of oppression from controlling her life. This stage also represents the period of transition, as how Janie moves from the first stage to the third stage. Finally, the third stage deals with Janie's capability to assert her feminine power and emerge as a strong black woman that stands in face of oppression and sexism. Two sections are devoted to deal with this stage. The first one deals with how Janie was driven by the appeal of love to her husband, Tea Cake, by means of Eric Ericson's stage of Intimacy vs. Isolation; to explain how her intimacy with Tea Cake helped her in becoming even stronger. The second section deals with the special marital relationship with Tea Cake, with whom she fulfilled her needs for appreciation, love and freedom.

This study aims also to join the collective researches about Hurston's novel through the provided analysis in order to enrich on one hand the subject matter in the general scope of Afro-American literature, and on the other hand to unassumingly provide an opposite opinion against the criticisms of this novel, which claim that it does not fall under the type of the feminist novel, and that the protagonist does not represent the ideal feminist character because she shows dependency on men.

Chapter One: Theoretical Foundation

The first chapter represents the general framework of the whole study since it includes all the theories and concepts that are going to be mentioned in the upcoming chapters. This chapter aims at providing an overall view on all the aspects related to the subject matter in order to familiarize its use in the analysis. The chapter is divided into three sections; the first section introduces a general history of the African American community since its establishment until the twentieth century. So this overview does not only clarify the reasons behind the way females were subjugated and alienated from a society, but also helps in understanding the contextual background of the novel. The second section discusses the evolution of the feminist theory in the United States to shed light on its concepts that are used in analyzing the character. The third section, however, deals with the psychoanalytic literary theory. It also identifies the psychoanalytic theories which are used in analyzing the characters and the events of the novel, in addition to highlighting the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature of the blacks.

I. Overview of the Afro-American Society in the Twentieth Century

Alice Walker once said “Healing begins where the wound was made.” (qtd. in Huskey 75). African Americans struggled a lot to proclaim their rights in the land where their ancestors were enslaved by force in 1619 to work for the white masters’ factories and lands to support the United States’ economy. So, theoretically the coming generations were supposed to become the legitimate citizens of the country, but practically this did not become the case during the 17th and 18th centuries. However, the mid 19th century brought many changes to the political status of African Americans, the thing that ultimately affected their social life. Blacks at this phase were free from the shackles of slavery. Although the majority of their rights was not yet recognized, African Americans started to be considered legitimate citizens, and they

determined to create for themselves opportunities to live comfortably. After the abolition of slavery acts in 1865, free Afro-Americans continued to suffer from discrimination in public places, and were not treated equally as the other American citizens. This lasted till the first half of the twentieth century when the black community started to grow continuously; the United States had a serious shift in the internal social structure due to the Great Migration of black people from 1916 till 1970, who moved from the South to the Northern areas escaping the miserable conditions and looking for better ones. Since then, Africans took another way for resistance through creating political, social and literary movements calling for liberation, anti-discrimination, equality ... and many other rights. As a result, the Harlem Renaissance was the fruit of this revolution as a literary movement formed by some influential voices of black intellectuals mainly W. E. B. Du Bois focusing on identity, pride and celebrating the African heritage. The movement was toughened with other political and economic movements to ensure stability and unity in the face of racism. Consequently, the black community flourished financially and started to gain international recognition and support from both white Americans and the other blacks in Diaspora through literary production, music and dancing. (Great Migration)

I.1. Status of Afro-American Women

By the time when the black community was getting more stable than before, the status of women was not part of the change. Although females were part of the same community, they were considered generally as weak creatures with less importance, and occupying the status of no more than a householder as cited by Mahassen Mgadmi in her article, "Black Women's Identity: Stereotypes, Respectability and Passionlessness (1890-1930)" that, "Black women were conceived and pictured as primitive, lustful, seductive, physically strong, domineering, unwomanly and dirty. There was a breadth of stereotypical perceptions of Black women, which placed them outside the enclave of delicacy, femininity,

respectability and virtue.” (40). Hence, females of all ages were dependent on men in every aspect of life since their freedom was bound to submission and obedience. By considering the fact that black women usually worked on tobacco, sugar plantations and other exhaustive jobs that Collins describes as “economically exploitative, physically demanding, and intellectually deadening—the type of work long associated with Black women’s status as ‘mule¹’” (48). It is noticed that women were important for serving others but they had no importance for themselves. This position was firmly shaped by acts of racism and sexism, which were for black women bitter truth that they had to accept anyway. Additionally, black females were doubly oppressed on one hand within the white society in which the white supremacy managed to devalue and dehumanize them. On the other hand, the black society which sought a patriarchal community where there would be no louder voice than the voice of men. Although sexism was as cruel as racism, sexism for black women seemed to be more enduring whether psychologically or physically since they were abused by people from the same race, region and social class. However, racism for women, though it was a cruel way to dehumanize them, it was a matter of time until they got over it, especially after the abolition of slavery and the black movements that circulated at the end of the nineteenth century. Black women became aware of how to accept it as a fact that could not be erased from the minds of those who believe in it unless they change their perception about blacks; they just knew how to manage their existence within them. So what really remained a challenge for them was the black man's supremacy that kept them subordinated within the same community sharing the same social circumstances. It was hard for them to handle the level of complexity the black men reached because of the amount of humiliation they received out of racism. Eventually, they became thirsty for power and control; they needed someone with less power to compensate the feeling of manhood that was denied at a certain point in time.

I.2. Black Women Struggle against Racism, Sexism, and Classism: The Tripartite System of Oppression

Because new beginnings always bring about new changes, black females who were born during the late years of the nineteenth century were destined to continue the path of freedom along the twentieth century. Women started to challenge the stereotypes, unequal political laws, social constraints and mainly sexist decisions that assumed them to have a subordinate position, because it was the last thing that would prevent them from living as normal as all other women. Accordingly, while black females worked hand in hand with black males to resist racism, they found themselves following a different path because they realized afterwards that this resistance actually started in favor of the whole black community but turned towards constructing a patriarchal society, in this regard Bell Hooks claims:

Although black women and men had struggled equally for liberation during slavery and much of the Reconstruction era, black male political leaders upheld patriarchal values. As black men advanced in all spheres of American life, they encouraged black woman to assume a more subservient role. (4)

According to A. D. Morris (1984) “a tripartite system of oppression is the system of dominance in the south that protected the privileges of the white society” (qtd. in Foster and Tillman 27). He assumes that in the shadow of this system Afro-Americans were “controlled economically, politically and personally” (27). This means that when the whites dominate blacks financially, the social and personal aspects are to be controlled unwillingly. In view of that, blacks were concentrated in the cities with low paid jobs, and most of black women in the southern states were either holding domestic jobs or working in the plantations, while the whites were highly positioned in jobs and enjoying a better working condition and status; This class paradox was in favor of the whites since it empowered them to control who is lower than their position, however, for the blacks it urged them to revolutionize against this inhuman

inequalities, and as far as women are concerned, this generation of submissive and silent women who internalized racism and got used to invisibility started to fade with the rise of a new generation which held definite objectives, believing in the cultural rebellion which was basically build on hope. Black women of the late 19th century started resistance primarily by understanding what it takes to become free and to get out of the silence zone, they knew that liberation is not only confined to rejecting sexist ideas within black society and just sit there waiting for a miracle to set them free, rather they believed in their ability to participate in social movements calling for women rights and eventually this was the case; black women participated in the women's right movement with female figures such as Anna Cooper, Maria W. Stewart, Sojourner Truth and others, and although they emerged gradually alongside men to make a change in the way blacks were perceived by the other, activists from both genders emerged having the same objectives, for some reasons men's voice seemed to receive great importance in comparison to females. In this regard, in the equal rights convention Sojourner Truth² delivered her famous speech saying:

There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights, and not colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before. So I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring; because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again. (Hooks 4)

Furthermore, in the period when there was an ongoing activism about defending blacks' suffrage, white men agreed on giving the blacks the right to vote and censure the promotions of black women's rights. At this moment all what was kept under wraps was revealed as black men celebrated the decision and supported the whites in denying the role of black women. Hence, the internal sexist nature of black men was clear, as they sought a pure patriarchal society alienating women from the political spectrum.

Eventually, the black community was split because of gender roles, as the black men enjoyed the right to vote and gained more political power, black women were ambivalent to choose which direction to follow. On one hand, if they advocate women rights this means that they consent themselves to amalgamate with white females who declared publicly their positive attitudes towards racism, the thing that led black men to accuse them for betrayal to the whole black community and offending to black men in particular. On the other hand, if they reject such decision they fall under the commands of black men and put their destiny in their hands, which means celebrating the emergence of another patriarchal society with more legitimate power (Hooks 3). Therefore, black women were torn between the black men's sexist intentions and white females interpretations who sought to "romanticize the black female experience rather than discuss the negative impact of that oppression" (Hooks 6). They tried to describe them in a way that seemed more idealized than it really was, through describing them as strong black females who were an example of bravery and their capability of change, but what was hidden behind that perspective, was that they regard a strong black woman the one who knew how to survive with oppression and sexism, and accepted her fate as it was, but the reality was that:

Black women were told that we should find our dignity not in liberation from sexist oppression, but in how well we could adjust, adapt, and cope. We had been asked to stand up and be congratulated for being "good little women" and then told to sit down and shut up. No one bothered to discuss the way in which sexism operates both independently of and simultaneously with racism to oppress us. (Hooks 7)

Hence, that perception completely disaccords with the real ambitions of black women who see freedom only through overcoming any kind of oppression whether racism or sexism as far as they both articulate in the same way, for the same purpose, and by the same people. The latter word means the white superior who manages the lower social classes which consider

both black men and white females, with no slight consideration to black women. However, the whites' representations of blacks in their literary works failed to reach the expectations, as they were convinced that the problem was due to racism and not sexism. They were unable to see the reality because they were not put in the same position as black women (Hooks 6). Consequently, black females were encouraged to write their experiences from their perspectives to convince the world that they were manipulated by means of racism and sexism. Thus, they try to look for transformation and self-retaliation from within to overcome any kind of oppression from its roots.

When mentioning racism and sexism, classism would be missing from the equation since it is the tool to exercise both of them; it is the social and economic structures that guarantee an absolute power. The fact of being black, Afro-American, poor, and a woman was a challenging position, especially when black men already got a political power; Women were in the lowest level in social hierarchy, the socio-economic condition of America imposed a great heaviness on the shoulders of black women as they didn't have a solid base that would assist them to resist, all because they were looking at the black community as a whole and thinking that working on the status of women would bring a double power to raise a strong black community. Thus the patriarchal society coalesced with the rising capitalist system³ in America which was built at the expense of the other; colored women were working for the people holding power who in turn kept devaluating them by providing any health care or assurance besides working with low wages in comparison to white women. In addition to the exploitation of black females bodies through investing in pornography, dancing and also in cinematic works; The latter, under what is known as blaxploitation⁴ portrayed blacks in general and women specifically in a negative way, the thing that intensified the recurring stereotypes about them, the situation was build on exploitation of the harsh conditions that black women were going through. However, in the face of all these circumstances black

women were able to build for themselves a social life through establishing their own businesses, they invested their own aspirations to take chances in any working opportunities that may make their conditions go better, they turned to writing their experiences, jazz music ... and similar arts.

II. Feminism in the United States

Feminism looks at women from different perspectives, so feminists tended to rely on insights of sociology, psychology and philosophy among other disciplines to tackle sensitive issues concerning women in nineteenth century who struggled from stereotypes, neglecting and dehumanization. The term Feminism has existed since the 17th century, and though the period did not have a great significance in comparison to the modern one. The thoughts and literary production played a major role in shaping the way the feminist theory of the 19th century until the 21st century works. The modern feminism emerged in the form of waves that flourished in light of the development of women's status through time and the contextual surroundings. It flourished gradually as the strongest theory for defending women's rights and seeking their liberation from racism, sexism and classism that dominated their lives and prevented them from doing their roles in society. The basis of the feminist theory is self-liberation, as an initial step towards liberation, women must be aware of the need to have a voice and status in society. It is a kind of a revolution that touches the social, political, cultural aspects to ensure no exclusion and inferiority of women in the social life. It is based also on equality in gender roles between men and women within the black community, and equality between whites and blacks regardless to their race in the white community, hence, feminism tends to overcome any kind of subjugation from different dimensions.

II.1. The First Wave of Feminism

The first wave expanded from the late 19th to early 20th century, prior to this period women were taken for granted, they did not enjoy any effective roles in society except being a

housekeeper. Hence the movement of this period called for an unlimited freedom, equal opportunity, and rights in the social and political aspects like the right of education, the right to work under better condition and with fair wages. However, it focused predominantly on women suffrage since the period was characterized by the rise of liberalism as a universal political doctrine which puts the responsibility on the government to protect and ensure the freedom of individuals, and no one else has the right to deprive him from having the right to practice anything private to him. Paul Kelly in this respect claims that “Political Liberalism is a moralized political theory; it derives from a recognition of the equal moral worth and standing of all individuals” (Kelly 3). This system grew a feminist activism in the United Kingdom and the United States, in the former women were a question of debate whether to be enfranchised in the political affairs through voting or not, because “women are unreasonable, that they are governed by their emotions, and that they are unable to understand politics” (Russell 281). Until a group of “Suffragettes” run campaigns for granting women the right to vote, through forming the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) women resisted for suffrage until 1928 when all women were granted the right to vote by the age of 21. This current was evident in United States as feminist leaders such as Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone among others were organizing campaigns to end what is left of slavery and in 1833 Lucretia Mott was elected the first female anti slavery society in Philadelphia (Adams 7). Later in 1848, 300 American suffragettes lead by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton met in the first Women Right's Convention in which they declared “it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise” (Kuersten 203).

This resolution alluded explicitly to the need of women to vote and from that moment the interest in women suffrage in America started to grow and they pushed their ambitions to ratify an amendment in US constitution, but it was quite disappointment when the fourteenth

amendment was passed granting Afro-American males the right to vote in 1868 and one year later, Wyoming was the first state to grant an unrestricted vote for all women. So as a reaction, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1890 was formed and helped through years to authorize women suffrage in the majority of the states in 1916. However, in 1971 the 26th amendment was ratified granting all women in all the states the right to vote by the age of 18.

II.2. The Second Wave of Feminism

The second wave is considered as a continuation to the first wave of feminism, stretching from 1960's to the late 1970's. Unlike the latter which its interest was politically oriented, the second wave was socially oriented centered around women's liberation movement, as feminists tended to deal with social aspects such as inequality, discrimination, marginalization and sexuality; in this regard the liberal feminist, Betty Friedan, published her work, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), in which she discussed such experiences, the thing that made her work as one of the first markers of the beginning of the second wave. In this book she depicts how women were brainwashed by media, and were taught a misleading concepts about femininity, she states "They were taught to pity the neurotic, unfeminine, unhappy women who wanted to be poets or physicists or presidents. They learned that truly feminine women do not want careers, higher education, political rights" (Friedan 15-6). The work changed the way American women thought in the sixties, because she explained logically with evidence how things should be. Therefore, the book was an appeal to the capabilities of women outside their houses, and to make them understand the source of their feeling of isolation and inferiority, which Friedan calls "The problem that has no name"; the expression was used to describe how women were afraid or uncomfortable to admit that they were not happy with their life, a life which has been designed by media basing on stereotypes that push women to occupy compliant roles, and serve the men who protects the country. Furthermore,

after having the legal right to be politically enfranchised as one of the major results of the first wave, women of this wave moved their personal problems to another level under the slogan “The personal is political” an expression which was used by the feminist activist Carol Hanisch as a title to her 1969 essay, and since then the expression has been always coined with the second wave of feminism and one as of its principles (Burriss 4). Because usually problems that face women were seen as personal problems that women should take care of individually. However, feminists regarded their personal problems as important as any other political matter and that must be taken seriously and require a wide scope attention.

~~The Rise of Black Feminism~~

In this phase, women from different minority groups joined the flow of resistance and started to be defined, blacks particularly emancipated from the shackles of silence and determined to end oppression from the roots; they burst publically as a feminist power full of passion, determination and newness making the movement more famous and prosperous with the support of the civil rights movement, and other social organizations such as The Black Panthers Party of 1966. Most black feminists managed to work hand in hand with the white feminism activists “but both outside reactionary forces and racism and elitism within the movement itself have served to obscure our participation” (Nicholson 64). This means that the white feminism movement was backed up with other racist and upper class women who affected the role of blacks within the general framework of feminism. So, in this case black feminists managed to defend their problems by their own terms and principles appealing the freedom of black females as the principle goal. Blacks insisted on this principle for two reasons; on one hand, because they found themselves inferiorized because of their gender to the ideals of the Black Liberation Movement, which turned to be calling for the liberation of the black male only, regardless to black women. And on the other hand, because the feminist movement was dominated by white females, so their participation was not effective. As a

result, women of color created an autonomous movement called the National Black Feminist Organization 1973 which came directly as a reaction to the dominant movements which held biased principles against black women; the movement embraced focused and direct standards dedicated straightforwardly to issues of sexism mainly, and also racism and classism as it was labeled by Kimberle Crenshaw as Intersectionality, in an attempt to describe the inseparable link between racism and sexism, and how black women could not resist sexism in isolation from racism. Hence this intersectional problem has been always linked primarily to the black feminist thought within the movement; Patricia Collins in this respect claims that:

If intersecting oppressions did not exist, Black feminist thought and similar oppositional knowledges would be unnecessary. As a critical social theory, Black feminist thought aims to empower African-American women within the context of social injustice sustained by intersecting oppressions. Since Black women cannot be fully empowered unless intersecting oppressions themselves are eliminated. (22)

Therefore, the inclusion of the term Intersectionality to the movement of black feminism led to the emergence of the term Womanism⁵ which was first used by Alice walker in her work *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*, in an attempt to describe the black feminism in a focused way. And since then Womanism was an extension to black movement that distinguishes it from the white feminist movement by including issues of racism and sexism on the move.

II.3. The Third Wave of Feminism

The third wave was backed up by the experiences of the first wave and the benefits of second wave. Young feminists by early 1990's had better opportunities and were going through a time of social and political stability; females were strong, determined, and having more social and political freedom. They focused on ending stereotypes related to women, and worked on changing the way females and mainly black females were represented in works of

literatures and also media. The third wave came as a reaction against the inadequacies of the second wave which focused mainly on the upper middle class white women neglecting the fact that women come in different colors, ethnicities and races. While in some aspects it came as a continuation to the second wave with concepts as Intersectionality which was on its highest peaks. It is important to mention that Rebecca Walker was first who used the term Third Wave in 1992 to distinguish black women movement from the white “Rebecca Walker uses the term emphasize both that feminism is not dead and that a new generation of feminists is beginning to mobilize. As she states ‘I am not a postfeminism feminist. I am a Third Wave’” (Henry 25).

III. The Psychoanalytic Theory

Jessamyn West once said “Fiction reveals truth that reality obscures” (Goodreads). Psychoanalytic literary theory or criticism is a concept emerged in the 20th century used to analyze literary works to reveal truths behind its composition, investigate some psychological matters related to the author like his background and its effect on the novel, and also it expands to touch the reader as well who establish a “transactive engagement” (Julia 437). Between what is written and his suppressed desires that shape the way he perceives the story. This aspect is known as the Psychological Reader Response⁶. Therefore, by focusing on the psychology of the author and/or the characters of the story, psychoanalytic criticism depends on the psychoanalytic theory which is a system of investigation to different personalities of humans. The theory was lead by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) who developed a theory upon observations made on his patients, Freud came up with a theory which asserts that the conscious of humans is split into three parts: Id, Ego and Super Ego that work together to shape the personality of humans; the Id represents the unconscious mind which is the hidden part behind the conscious, it is the most important aspect because it is made up of desires, internal conflicts and complexities that were repressed and accumulated since childhood

leading to an unwilling influence on the way humans function during adulthood. However, the Superego functions as the social and moral values and norms that regulate and direct the human behavior, while the Ego functions as the sensor that balances the Id and the Superego to form a regular behavior. Furthermore, psychoanalytic criticism is based on certain Freudian concepts that impact authors and their works. These concepts can be applied on specific aspect whether the author, the characters and even the reader, which are the Iceberg theory of the Psyche, Dreams are an expression of our conscious mind, The relationship between Neurosis and Creativity, Infantile behavior is essentially Sexual, and The Primacy of the Unconscious. The latter is considered as the most important aspect because it is the essence of the psychoanalytic theory, and this makes it a common point between all the other concepts. So, in one way or another, the unconscious is an indispensable part in each aspect, and plays a crucial role in understanding and investigating different aspects related to the human psyche. Hence, this makes it the focus of this study. Freud defined the unconscious as “the unconscious comprises, on one hand, processes which are merely latent, temporarily unconscious, but which differ in no other respect from conscious ones and, on the other hand, processes such as those which have gone undergone repression” (122). Thus, the relationship between psychology and literature is reciprocal. Since literature can provide conceptions to particular psychoanalytic theory while the latter is used to analyze literature in the first place. In other words, the literary criticism is the bridge between literature and psychology.

Particularly, the psychoanalytic literary theory tends to shed light on the real life experiences of the author to understand his personality which in turn helps in understanding the way the characters of the story are made up, and for what reasons. However, it may take another perspective by isolating the author from the written work and deal with language as the sole aspect that can reveal important truths about the characters. Such idea belongs to Jacques Lacan who extended the Freudian theory of interpreting dreams and added the element

of language, he states that “the unconscious is structured like a language, he opened a royal road between literature and the unconscious” (Stoltzfus 5). For him language can express facts that can be traced beyond what is written, through decoding symbols that may depict a deeper idea that cannot be seen superficially, “Language structures the unconscious retroactively, creating an unbridgeable chasm between what can be said and what is impossible to say, or as Lacan terms it, between the Symbolic and the Real” (Gasperoni 103). In simpler words, language is the key to unconscious feelings; it opens the door to what is impossible to be expressed.

III.1. Psychoanalytic Theories Used in the Analysis of the Novel

III.1.1 Freud’s Theory: Primacy of the Unconscious (I moved this element from the second chapter to here)

It happens when humans spell random words unwillingly instead of the appropriate ones, this incident is influenced by the unconscious which refers to the processes that function in the mind of humans and articulate automatically out of control. The unconscious is made up of repressed thoughts, memories, and aspirations, desires ... to name a few, which are hidden somewhere in the mind and held back possibly since childhood. The unconscious is characterized by an absolute intelligence that nurtures from the different aspects of life, thus anything stabilized in the unconscious mind whether good or bad makes great efforts to come out in practice. In other words, thoughts will in one way or another find a way to burst in reality (Feis 24). In this respect, Bion defines the unconscious as “product of social pressure” (qtd. in Civitarese 84). For this reason, written works of literature are strongly bound to the writers’ psychological aspects that shape the way they are written; writers as any other humans are exposed to social and personal experiences that leave impressions in their personalities, however, they tend to express such experiences in their writings in the form of symbolism, figuration, motifs and other figures of style. In this regard, Feist in his book

Theories of Personality claims that “Unconscious processes often enter into consciousness but only after being disguised or distorted enough to elude censorship” (30). Hence above all, primacy of the unconscious thought of writers will determine at certain extent the course of events and characters.

III.1.2. Eric Erikson’s Theory of Psycho-social Development

Erik Erikson is one of the theorists whose names have been always related to psychoanalysis. Erikson studied the development of human’s psyche through successive stages by taking into consideration the social context; “Erikson was an ego psychologist. He emphasized the role of culture and society and the conflicts that can take place within the ego itself” (McLeod). Meaning that, Erikson focuses on the Ego because it is the branch that manages the conflicts of the Id and the Superego. In other words, it is on this level where individuals can take decisions about what would be positive or negative throughout their stages of development. His theory is regarded as a continuation to Freud’s Psychoanalysis, in order to provide a “new way of looking at things” (qtd. in Feis 243). Basing on the belief that humans go through eight stages of psychosocial development starting from childhood to adulthood and named as follows: Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation, Generativity vs. Stagnation, and Ego Integrity vs. Despair. These stage are totally in continuity but not subject to replacement, because during each stage individuals face a certain psychological crisis or a conflict that shapes somehow their identity and personality construction in two ways; either negatively if the individual loses control over the Ego, the thing that allows that conflict to submerge on him causing eventually a traumatic personality. Or positively, if the individual can control the Ego and manage his attitudes and decision, the thing that enables him to overcome that conflict and grow up in harmony within society. In this case, he becomes susceptible to move on to the next stage. In this respect, Feis states that “Erikson held that our

ego is a positive force that creates a self identity, a sense of “I.” As the center of our personality, our ego helps us adapt to the various conflicts and crises of life and keeps us from losing our individuality to the leveling forces of society.” (246). Moreover, Erikson focused on society for two reasons; on one hand because the social factors are an inseparable part of the ego, and on the other hand he believed that most of the conflicts or crises that individuals face are from and within society, “For Erikson (1963), these crises are of a psychosocial nature because they involve psychological needs of the individual (i.e. psycho) conflicting with the needs of society (i.e. social)” (McLeod). And thus society is definitely indispensable for personality construction.

III.1.3. Karen Horney’s Theory of Basic Anxiety

Karen Horney contributed in the domain of Psychoanalysis with a new theory called the Psychoanalytic Social Theory; although Horney was a follower to the Freudian theories, she managed to develop a new psychoanalytic theory from a new perspective based on social and childhood background, as the most important aspects that shape the human personality. Along with Freud, they both insisted on giving a great focus on the childhood distressing memories; the only difference was that Freud focused on biological features like the unconscious and the sexual drives, while Horney focused on the social and cultural features that surround humans, including the environment, parental care, relationships... and the like. This theory considers a healthy environment as the one characterized by overwhelming the child with the necessary feelings of love and safety, in order to make him feel a sense of belonging and importance. The thing that generally makes him emotionally and psychologically satisfied, in this regard she claims in her book, *Self-Analysis* (1942), that:

Under all conditions a child will be influenced by his environment. What counts is whether this influences tunts or furthers growth. And which development will occur depends largely on the kind of relationship established between the child and his parents

or others around him, including other children in the family. If the spirit at home is one of warmth, of mutual respect and consideration, the child can grow unimpeded. (43)

The theory holds that if individuals do not receive the sufficient feelings of love and affection from their parents, or receive an excessive overprotection from them; they will develop a neurotic behavior known as *Basic Hostility*. This behavior stands against the parents or the unpleasant circumstances that surround the interpersonal relationships in general. Individuals “repress[ing] their hostility toward their parents and have no awareness of it” (Feist 168). The thing that intensifies the hostility to become what is known as a *Basic Anxiety* due to his feelings of dissatisfaction, regression and inferiority. Karen Horney defines the term in her book *Neurosis And Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization* (1950) as “a feeling of being isolated and helpless in a world conceived as potentially hostile” adding “The cramping pressure of his basic anxiety prevents the child from relating himself to others with the spontaneity of his real feelings, and forces him to find ways to cope with them” (18). Meaning that the child will be forced to adopt new behaviors that he thinks it would be appropriate to adapt with his feelings of helplessness, distortion, humiliation or basic anxiety in general. And this happens through fulfilling the neurotic needs which Horney classifies into ten categories implicated within three trends as follows:

a. Moving towards People

In this trend the individual approaches to certain members of his society in search for acceptance and belonging; to have on one hand a feeling of homogeneity and common interests with them, and on the other hand, to lower the feeling of inferiority and helplessness, because his compulsory needs urge him to look for compassion, pleasures and a strong sense of security. Horney describes this trend as “a whole way of thinking, feeling, acting a whole way of life” (qtd. in Feis 172). Accordingly, the individual is driven

by two sorts of needs which are: the neurotic need for affection and approval and the neurotic need for a powerful partner.

b. Moving against People

In this trend the neurotic person expresses a tendency towards hostility, which is dominated by aggressive tendencies and behaviors characterized by refusal to interact with people. Also, thinking that society is a battle field where the stronger controls the weaker, along with refusing to admit his fear of the other and showing instead the character of tough and strict person. His primary concern is to seek his own profits, so he adopts individualism. Feis claims on this idea that “They automatically distrust other people’s feelings and intentions, and they rebel in whatever way they can” (172). Accordingly, these behaviors are driven by the neurotic need to restrict one’s life within narrow boundaries, neurotic need for power, neurotic need to exploit others, neurotic need for social recognition or prestige, and neurotic need for personal admiration.

c. Moving away from People

In this trend the neurotic individual bents for isolation and alienation from the people, probably due to the loss of sense of emotional experience. Hence they move away from public gatherings, social events as an urgent need for them, and also they seek a complete independence through self-sufficiency and self-independence from the others, especially those who restrict them. It is worth mentioning that this trend can come up with benefits to the individual if used in a normal way. However, “these needs become neurotic when people try to satisfy them by compulsively putting emotional distance between themselves and other people” (Feis 173). Meaning that these needs become neurotic if the individual sees that completely alienating and isolating him from people in his society, is the one and the only solution to satisfy his need to feel independent. In simpler words, too

much of something is good for nothing; accordingly, individuals using this trend are driven by the neurotic need for ambition and personal achievement, neurotic need for self-sufficiency and the neurotic need for perfection and unassailability.

Horney believes that these needs are irrational solutions to basic anxiety, and she insisted on explaining that these needs are not indications to psychological problem solely. Rather, each person has the tendency to use them whenever he wants to feel affection, love or appreciation, since none of these needs are abnormal or neurotic in their recurrent use in daily life. What makes them neurotic is the intense and compulsive persistence on covering a certain need as the only way to solve the basic anxiety (Horney, *Self-analysis* 60). For Horney these needs “represent a way of life enforced by unfavorable conditions. The child must develop them in order to survive his insecurity, his fears, his loneliness” (*Self-analysis* 45). It is worth mentioning that this temporary state of satisfaction will not help the individual to achieve tranquility, but it only benefit in helping him to escape the pain of anxiety

III.2. Psychoanalysis and Literature of the Blacks

Literature of African-Americans is commonly known by its richness in depicting the shared interests of all black people through themes like racism, sexism inferiority, loss of identity and the like, which are more or less related to the fact of being part of the whole American nation. Therefore, African American literature is born out of suffering and agony, the thing that makes it highly expressive of the inner problems of blacks and the exhaustion that they have felt out of bad experiences, starting from early 19 century through what is known as slave narratives. Consequently, this genre of literature attracted many psychoanalysts to analyze and draw conclusions about the complexities of black people that they came up with by living with the whites, as Fanon states “A normal Negro child, having grown up within a normal family, will become abnormal on the slightest contact with the

white world” (143). So according to the Freudian concept, bad experiences are repressed in the unconscious mind leading to serious internal conflicts and complexities that blacks tried to hide for a long time, which will eventually come out through creative production. Historically speaking, the study of psychoanalysis was introduced first in Freud’s work *The Interpretation of dreams*(1900) where he discussed the way dreams reflect human’s inner desires and wishes which were repressed by the ego, here he incarnated the model on literature as they function in the same way.

Black intellectuals observed the effect of psychoanalysis in fostering and enriching the white literature. Thus in the era of Harlem Renaissance there was an ongoing interest and concentration on the field and they used it for expanding the scope of their literature from 1920s to 1950s as far as it represents the repressed feelings of racial and sexual prejudice. Ahad suggests that “psychoanalysis emerged within black intellectual and literary history as stratagem to trouble racial logic and interpret racial dialects unique to United States” (5). In the sense that psychoanalysis provided earlier authors strategic insights that helped them to understand the roots of racism and sexism and the emotional damages that can result from them, she adds “ black subjects persistently engaged with psychoanalytic thought that has been integral to the working out and working on matters of race, gender, and sexuality” (156). In the earlier appearance of the psychoanalytic theory, it was highly devoted to the study of whites and their literature, until the 1920s when blacks managed to turn the tide to their favor and used it by their own terms to understand primarily the complexity of the notion of blackness and then investigate the effects of racism on their pride, then continued to use the approach in their writings for decades.

Chapter Two: Feminist and Psychoanalytic patterns shaping Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

This chapter aims at highlighting the different feminist and psychoanalytic aspects that characterize the novel; through providing a detailed description and analysis of the writer, the main character, and the social context of the story. To establish on one hand a general understanding of the novel and on the other hand to provide a base on which further examination and analysis relies on. Hence, the first section is dedicated to explore through psychoanalysis the relationship between Zora Neale Hurston and the general context of the novel basing on Freud's theory of the Unconscious, the second section however is dedicated to explore the features that make the novel a feminist one, as for the third section, it analyzes the unique personality of the protagonist in respect to the theory of feminism, the fourth section examines psychologically the mechanisms that shape the protagonist's decisions throughout the story by means of Freudian psychoanalysis, and finally the fifth section sheds light on the role of the black community in restraining women and particularly the protagonist.

I.1. The Relationship Between Zora Neale Hurston and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

The concept of the unconscious says that what is repressed will be expressed; right at the point when the unconscious is transformed into something visible it becomes a conscious. Therefore, it helps in revealing the hidden and mysterious facts of the writer's personality, since it facilitates the investigation of the written work's composition and go further to understand its other aspects including the use of symbols, the characters, major events, the setting ... among others. It is worth mentioning that writing the unconscious does not only reveal some important truths, it also heals the scars that accommodated from earlier times and curbed by the suppressive society.

Particularly, the African American writer, Zora Neal Hurston, is considered in this study as an archetype of the other black writers who escaped to literature as means to express their struggle. Mainly because of her expressiveness of what she really feels, as Langston Hughes describes “she could make you laugh one minute and cry the next” (qtd. in Rayson 40). The study focuses on demonstrating her historical background to celebrate her creative spirit that marked her works in the history of literature; since she managed to be “an expert witness to her time” (Patterson 7). As she focused on demonstrating the life of black folks’ community in the south, especially the social relationship between black men and women, other than subjects related to white’s oppression or racism. This detail led to accusing her of ignoring the most important parts of black history because at that period of time “African American writers had a tendency towards writing about the confrontations between the two races and how the African Americans suffered from the racist laws and behaviours” (Qashgari 33). But the fact is that Hurston did not want to inevitably link the black heritage with the whites; rather she wanted to discuss blacks on their terms, including more serious matters like that of sexism and patriarchy.

In her autobiography *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942) she claims “Like the dead-seeming, cold rocks, I have memories within that came out of the material that went to make me. Time and place have had their say” (11). Her claim proves that some of her works were the fruits of her unconscious memory and her reliable experiences she went through in her life; for instance, in the opening of her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* she writes “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” (1). Hurston here stresses the determination of women on realizing their dreams which men expect them to be forgotten by describing how they refuse to forget their dreams as far as they do not want to, and how they would rather live their dreams in their memory than forgetting, this

represents her ambitions in life, and how she wants women to look forward in their lives. Additionally, place played a prominent role in shaping events of her works, in the same novel she used Eatonville as the principle setting where the protagonist lived most of her life. Hurston carried proud to this city because it was the place she grew up experiencing different atrocities that characterizes that period, it was also the place where she established her career and lightened the old fashioned city, the same way the protagonist renewed the city with her second husband, though she was dominated and treated as an object, she had at least a financial privilege that paved the road to her liberty. Hence, the novel is more or less a depiction of her life mainly through the protagonist which holds some personal characteristics similar to hers. To say nothing of Eatonville from a historical point of view, as the first and only incorporated self-ruling black town. For this reason, it is known by the spread of male domination and patriarchy along with minimizing the role of women and excluding them from social life, the reason why Hurston tackled such issues in her novel and challenging them believing that “location was a historical agent and a producer of culture” (Patterson 10).

Two major real events in the life of Hurston have a clear effect on the story of the main character. Besides their remarkable contribution in rendering the novel extremely expressive combined with her vibrant style, Hurston made it apparent to the audience the importance of these two events in her life and the profound feeling she must have felt by experiencing them. Accordingly, she blew breaths from her pained soul in the words leaving the audience overwhelmed of sympathy, Sheila Hibben in her review of the novel appreciated Hurston’s way of “[writing] with her head as well as with her heart” and for her “warm, vibrant touch” in rendering “a flashing, gleaming riot of black people, with a limitless sense of humor, and a wild, strange sadness” (qtd. in Bloom 16). Beginning with her mother’s death, nine years old Hurston had to deal with the devastating death of her mother and the hasted marriage of her father. For this reason, she did not know much about motherhood

that's why she excluded the role of the mother in her novel and replaced it by the grandmother. In spite of that, she held her mother's wishes on her deathbed in her heart pushing her to "Jump at de sun" (qtd. in Porter 16). By the early age of her teenagerhood she left her home following her dreams and life goals, similarly, Hurston through the novel expresses the hidden power inside any woman by demonstrating how they can turn their pain into power to command their own lives, she states in her aforementioned autobiography in this regard "If there is any consciousness after death, I hope that Mama knows that I did my best [to carry out her wishes]. She must know how I have suffered for my failure" (Hurston, *Dust Tracks* 176).

Hurston had to marry three times in her life before she got divorced in her forties and lived a passionate love story with a boy whom she referred to in her autobiography as P. M. P; the latter was younger than her but their relationship surpassed all the limits describing it as "the real love affair of my life." (Hurston, *Dust Tracks* 207) she recounts that her lover wanted her to do nothing except looking after him and begged her to give up her career and run away with him. Hurston really wanted to be the typical woman that he wanted her to be and she wished if she could do whatever he wanted from her except that thing, she states "It was not just my contract with my publishers, it was that I had things clawing inside of me that must be said" (Hurston, *Dust Tracks* 207). Her dreams were bigger than her love and so she chose her life; she felt that herself was the most important thing that was left for her and that it was worth sacrificing for, she described this feeling as "My real self had escaped him" (Hurston, *Dust Tracks* 208). Likewise, Hurston projected her pain in the story, as the protagonist escaped two failed marriages, but the last one though it came lately in the forties it was the most significant marriage because it was the only time she felt true love, but in the same way, she had to give up her love as soon as her life was threatened; the protagonist at that instant was her own leader of her life, and thus she lost everything but won herself.

According to the Freudian psychoanalysis, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a projection of Hurston's life; the story was a container where she poured the important events that overwhelmed her, and she even confessed that by her own words in her autobiography saying: "The plot was far from the circumstances, but I tried to embalm all the tenderness of my passion for [P.M.P]" in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*" (Hurston, *Dust Tracks* 210). Meaning that she dispensed all feelings of sadness after their breaking up in writing the novel; this sort of Projection is one of Freud's mechanisms of defense by which the individual attributes his repressed thoughts and feelings to someone else, Freud defines projection as "a mechanism of defense in its own right, i.e., as the defensive attribution of unwanted thoughts, wishes, feelings, and relate mental contents to some other persons" (qtd. in Sandler 2). And in this case, Hurston projected herself in Janie Crawford the protagonist of the novel as refuge to reach a psychological balance and diminish her unpleasant feelings. Moreover, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* proves to be a product of Sublimation for the writer; which is an additional mechanism of defense characterized by being the finest and the noblest mechanisms associated to the elite intellectuals and writers, who transform their negative vibes and feelings into a productive and creative piece of work. In this respect Kevin Jones in his article "Sublimation, Art and Psychoanalysis" claims on behalf of Freud that "Artists worked on the raw material of their own unconscious conflicts through the art materials which allowed the audience to identify with these unconscious conflicts embodied in the artwork and rendered in culturally acceptable symbolic form" (1).

II. Feminist Features in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Hurston was one of the leading figures in the Harlem movement, and she contributed in the literary explosion during that period by writing many articles and short stories all celebrating the black heritage. In 1937 she wrote *Their Eyes Were Watching God* in a period of six weeks; in this period she was going through a condition of emotional instability

especially when she started writing it right before she broke up with the love of her life. Moreover, the novel carries certain feminist aspects that encourage women's freedom of racism, marginalization and especially sexism, through depicting the social circumstances that surround women in the 20th century including patriarchy, classism and sexism.

Through *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston identified her objective behind writing such works. She considered them as a legacy for those who came before her and a model for those who are coming after her; stemming from her experiences, she hoped to raise a free generation enjoying their femininity without fear and without a man dominating their body under the pretext of male superiority. Also, she called women to find their true selves and identity as a first step towards emerging as independent as any other woman in the world. Hence the novel is a depiction of a woman's process of maturity considering the physical and psychological changes she goes through as she grows up an Afro-American woman and her ability to achieve a great triumph in turning her desires a reality "The novel is seen as a vehicle of feminist... It is seen as a quest through which the heroine, Janie Killicks Starks Woods, achieves a sense of identity as a self-fulfilled woman and, through her own self-realization, becomes a leader of women and of her community" (Jordan 108). For this reason, the novel is considered widely as a feminist product recounting the story of a poor black girl named Janie Crawford who was raised by her grandmother Nanny under strict traditional ethics; Nanny symbolizes one of the core themes of feminism, since she represents the struggle against the traditional gender roles and the difficulty to divert from the regular norms, she was careful in raising Janie the same way she was raised, but her inner desires contradicted her actions as she called Janie to realize the importance of herself and her identity; She tended to recount her old stories and her mother's to make her aware of the importance of her identity as a black woman and so she deserved to live respectfully. Nanny carried self pride under her black skin but she couldn't take off the belief that a woman needs

a man to be protected regardless of love, and this was the case as soon as Janie discovered her sexuality she was forced to get married under the pretext of protection from sexual exploitation like what happened to her mother, her Nanny convincing her “Ah don’t want no trashy nigger, no breath-and-britches, lak Johnny Taylor usin’ yo’ body to wipe his foots on” (27). But after her marriage Janie discovered that marriage was not how she expected, because her relationship with her first husband Logan Killicks the old land owner was everything but loving; he rather expected her to share with him the labor in exchange of food because for him taking care of his land was much more important than maintaining his marriage, to say nothing of him abusing her verbally and physically, in one of the scenes he tells her “T’aint no mo’ fools lak me. A whole lot of mens will grin in yo’ face, but dey ain’t gwine tuh work and feed yuh” (36). Here Logan Killiks is offending Janie with the distressing past of her family, he tells her that she might be liked by other men, but if anyone knows her past he would not bother to marry her and work to feed her. Maria J Racin in her article “Voice and Interiority in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*” claims that “Logan and Janie speak peripherally and their conversations are not intimate in a loving fashion. Instead that their discussions focus on daily living activities like chopping wood and peeling potatoes” (284).

Logan Killicks represents the struggle from patriarchal society and the domestic violence practiced on women, he also symbolizes men’s narrow view of women that prevents them from enjoying their sexuality and femininity, for Janie, the dreamer of love whom her vision of marriage has been always characterized by romance, Logan is a boring old man that knows nothing about romance “she knew now that marriage did not make love. Janie’s first dream was dead, so she became a woman” (Hurston, *Their Eyes* 30). At this stage Janie recognized that no one would tell her what to do, she felt her maturity and her capability to take decisions about her life by her own hands so as a result, she run away with Joe Starks in

search for the love he promised her; Starks was a charismatic and passionate young man who was thirsty for political control, so he took her to Eatonville, a town of solely black people where he aspired to develop and control. Janie thought that encouraging and helping him in fulfilling his dreams would make her happy and her dreams would be realized as well, but again Joe's interest towards her started to fade whenever he got higher in position, he eventually started to treat her as a property and a puppet that must obey the rules or get beaten. When recounting to her friend Pheoby, Janie says " 'Ah always did want tuh git round uh whole heap, but Jody wouldn't 'low me tuh. When Ah wasn't in de store he wanted me tuh jes sit wid folded hands and sit dere. And Ah'd sit dere wid de walls creepin' up on me and squeezin' all de life outa me" (123-33). What is more is that Joe wanted Janie to cover her head with a rag only because one of his friends was touching her long hair; through this act Joe did not only deprive Janie from enjoying the most important symbol of femininity which is her hair, but also underestimated her beauty because his perception about women was that "women, like animals, have no ability to think and decide what is best for them and therefore they should be controlled by men and their thoughts and decisions" (Qashgari 36).

Despite the financial and social status that Janie got from marrying Joe, he was unable accept the idea of sharing with him the same social position and he stopped her from talking or giving her opinion, in one of the official occasions he said " Thank yuh fuh yo' compliments, but mah wife don't know nothin' 'bout no speech-makin' . Ah never married her for nothin' lak dat. She's uh woman and her place is in de home "(51). Killicks wanted Janie to be visible only for him, the thing that symbolizes the society's incapability to see women in higher positions. At this stage again, Janie does not find what she has been looking for; love and respect. Obviously, Janie knew from the beginning what she has to look for, given that she was naturally open to find what she deserved as a woman so that she would act according to that. So, Hurston's image of Janie is a unique one because usually submissive characters

take longer time in reclaiming their voice and they lose more than they win, but Janie is an example of an intelligent black woman that knows exactly what she needs and nothing would stop her from taking it. She is an unusual girl with an advanced way of thinking by considering what she has been through. In view of that, right after Joe Killicks fell in deathbed, his power, money, and position all shifted to Janie and in the last minutes of his life she challenged him face to face telling him that he was not the same man she knew from the beginning and that he wanted anything but her. Janie intended to take chance while he was dying for two reasons, first because it was the only time she was sure that he was going to listen to her, and second because she wanted to torture him emotionally by his weakness, as if she wanted to remind him that he was no longer powerful and dominant, and that made him pathetic. Lester describes Joe's death as "he 'dies twice—metaphorically and then shortly thereafter quite literally' because he refuses to be looked at with pity by others" (qtd. in Qashgari 37). Then right after his death "She went over to the dresser and looked hard at her skin and features. The young girl was gone, but a handsome woman had taken her place. She tore off the kerchief from her head and let down her plentiful hair. The weight, the length, the glory was there" (104). Janie found out that many years were gone but her femininity was still there.

Hurston apparently wanted to deliver a hidden message that male oppression does not necessarily kill the beauty of women; they still can emerge even in their last breath. Also, that power of women proves to be invincible if ever underestimated. After having all the requirements of a free woman, Janie was still looking for love; her next relationship was with Tea Cake a migrant worker twelve years younger than her. Janie's relationship with Tea Cake surpassed all the social and ethical limits; the funny and passionate boy saw in Janie what her previous husbands couldn't see, he saw a vivid innocent woman who has been looking for love and admiration, and so he gave her all the love he had. Tea Cake brought Janie 20 years

back and opened her eyes more to see herself in the eyes of those who care for her, hence she grew up more confident and more self-loving. At this final stage Janie had money, liberty and most importantly love, unhappily their contentment lasts only 18 months before a hurricane victimized Tea Cake and he started to hallucinate. These hallucinations drove him to think that she was cheating on him, so he threatened her with a pistol, but Janie was vigilant enough and pulled the trigger to kill him to rescue her life.

Some critics see that Tea Cake is not so much different from the other husbands because he beat her once, and her silent reactions towards that put the novel in contradictions, for that they consider this kind of reactions as not convenient to the powerful characteristics of feministic characters. For instance, Jennifer Jordan claims in her article "Feminist Fantasies: Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*" that Janie "demonstrated no ability to survive alone" (113). In other words, Jordan hereby wants to emphasize Janie's incapability to function independently without a man in her life, by considering her several marriages in spite of facing the same endings. But the fact is that Janie's love for Tea Cake rationalizes his bad temper given that his love was evident in his eyes unlike the others, she told her friend Pheoby that "Teacake ain't wasted no money of mine, and he ain't left me for no young gal, neither. He give me every consolation in the world" (8). Tea Cake inevitably filled her with all the emotions she needs and that is exactly what she wanted in the first place; Janie had a certain image about marriage and she was insisting on finding it through marrying several times, so according to this intention, her several marriages stem from her longing for containment, a sense that would make her feel her femininity in the fullest sense of the word through a man who would not dominate her. Thus her need for a man was not for surviving but for fulfilling a certain feeling that would empower her more than she already was. And by evidence, Hurston could end the novel by Tea Cake and Janie living happily ever after, but purposefully she intended to kill the character of Tea Cake in an attempt to shift the attention

to Janie's capability to live on her own after fulfilling her inner desires of respect, sexuality, containment and love. In her last words to her friend Pheoby she told her "It's uh known fact Pheoby, you got tuh go there tuh know there. Yo' papa and yo' mama and nobody else can't tell yuh and show yuh. Two things everybody's got tuh do fuh theyselves. They got tuh go tuh God, and they got tuh find out about livin' fuh theyselves." (226). She advised her friend to go and take risks to build a life of her own without the need to be directed by anyone, since having the freedom to act on her own terms is one of the first steps towards self-empowerment.

Another most important feminist feature in the novel is that the story is told "retrospectively" (Miles 67). Janie returned to Eatonville and recounted her story to her friend Pheoby, on one hand, this aspect is one of the characteristics of an emergent and powerful woman that sees herself as a model to the other by having a voice recounting her experiences with proud, on the other hand, Hurston tries to emphasize the oral tradition of telling stories that is known for the African heritage in the sense that no one would carry the legacy of the possible power blacks can have except blacks themselves; stressing on the importance of sharing experiences to others to spread the benefit to each and everyone, Janie in this respect told Pheoby "You can tell 'em what Ah say if you wants to. Dat's just de same as me 'cause mah tongue is in mah friend's mouf" (7).

III. Janie Crawford as a Feminist Character

It is not only about being exceptional that one's life becomes different; it is about feeling it at the outset. As a matter of fact, Janie Crawford's belief in her capabilities led her to change her life radically, but these capabilities only seem to be stemming from a determined personality that holds some special characteristics. Janie Crawford through the novel was subject to racism, sexism, failed marriages, and violence but these did not prevent her from emerging even stronger. Hurston showed the readers how Janie

responded to different situations, how she talked with people, how she treated her husbands, in order to portray Janie in different situations so that they can trace the amount of difference in her way of talking, her tone, her mature voice full of anger, sarcasm, and wisdom. At first, Janie seemed to be a meek character that submitted to the patriarchal social pressures, and Hurston intended to show her that way in order to make readers feel the amount of power she carried within herself and her capability of assuming her life goals by the end of the story. In the beginning Janie was surrounded by whites with whom she felt a little different from, the thing that raised a lot of questions about herself and her identity, who was she and where she belongs to? until a certain point when she saw a picture of herself she realized her blackness and that she holds an African American blood (Hurston, *Their Eyes* 11). This incident proved that she was smart enough to recognize her identity by just looking at a picture of her surrounded by white kids, and since then she became aware of her core value and the importance of resisting all constraints that prevent her from continuing her journey of self discovery. Furthermore, although she was raised by her traditional grandmother and in spite of the pressure that her nanny was casting on her, Janie could not conform to the traditional teachings of her grandmother, and even when she was told what to do she always had questions in her head that needed answers. She was also open to nature and she believed from the beginning that she had a special connection with the natural world as she sat under the Pear tree enjoying the bees and the blossoming flowers; she knew inside that God is great to create harmony in the world and that she is not born to live as a mule, in the scene where she first made a connection between love and marriage and sexuality Hurston says:

She was stretched on her back beneath the pear tree soaking in the alto chant of the visiting bees, the gold of the sun and the panting breath of the breeze when the inaudible voice of it all came to her. She saw a dust-bearing bee sink into the

sanctum of a bloom; the thousand sister-calyxes arch to meet the love embrace and the ecstatic shiver of the tree from root to tiniest branch creaming in every blossom and frothing with delight. So this was a marriage! (13)

Hurston's way of describing Janie Crawford went beyond the mainstream woman of the twentieth century, because as Washington claims "the society in that period had a tendency towards 'silenc[ing] women' and, moreover, to make them conspirators in that silence" (qtd. in Qashgari 36). She stated in her autobiography *Dust Trucks on a Road* that in most of her works she liked to inspect "what makes a man or a woman do such-and-so, regardless of his color" (151). So that's why Hurston focused on depicting the main character as a Female rather than solely a black woman. In an attempt to send a message that it is not necessary to be black or white or yellow woman to have a specific way of reclaiming the voice, since patriarchy and sexism can be subject to any other woman in the world. For this reason, Janie Crawford the open spirited black girl with her openness to the world and her tendency to seek an understanding of all what surrounds her amazed the audience because she was narrowly seen only as a black woman that is expected to be little weaker than the ordinary. Although Hurston's claiming in one of her letters in Karla Kaplan's collection *Zora Neal Hurston: a life in letters* (2003) that "I belong to no race nor time. I am the eternal feminine with its strings of beads" (qtd. in Zamani 241). Here Hurston wanted to make out of Janie a multi-racial character, as she did not only represent black females but also females in general. And probably this is why she made Janie as a hybrid character, from a black mother and white father, this situation serves her objective of making Janie a universal character that represents both blacks and whites. So that's why she looks and acts differently from the other black females in the same novel.

Additionally, Hurston managed to reveal some personal traits of the protagonist through portraying her physical appearance since body language can sometimes tell more than

words can do; right from the first pages, readers encountered Janie Crawford coming back to her town Eatonville devoid from everything but her overalls which captured the attention of men because her body was bursting of youth in “The men noticed her firm buttocks like she had grape fruits in her hip pockets; the great rope of black hair swinging to her waist and unraveling in the wind like a plume; then her pugnacious breasts trying to bore holes in her shirt.” (Hurston, *Their Eyes* 2-3). Hurston’s way of describing the body of Janie symbolizes the power and beauty that can emerge out of decay and how they are combined together to help the protagonist in challenging the judgmental community she lives in. Tom McGlamery (2004) asserts that Janie’s organs are seen as “markers of an essentially undiminished ‘strength’ that both sets in motion the anarchy at the heart of Eatonville and protects her from its effects” (qtd. in Zamani 241). So Hurston’s use of Janie’s body refers to the power that lies in the body of women, and how Janie comes back having only her body at the outer self and her fearless spirit at the inner self to protect her from the patriarchal society.

Janie Crawford was a curious character that always questions the world; a girl who takes inspiration from nature to make such conclusion about love and marriage must be a very sensitive and vigilant girl that have an unlimited vision of the world and knowledge about the real purpose of life, her uniqueness lies in the way the other blacks see things; while their eyes were watching her, her eyes were watching god holding aspirations that never seemed to fade.

IV. Freud’s Theory of Personality: Janie Crawford between the Id, Ego, and Super Ego

In the field of psychoanalysis, there are many psychological theories dedicated to understand the human psyche, the composition of the personality and the identity that differentiate each one from the other. Freud’s Theory of Personality is a theory that is subcategorized into three abstract branches of the human psyche; these branches help individuals in balancing their interaction within society and maintaining their psychological stability, and are called: the Id, Ego and the Super Ego. Therefore, Janie Crawford the

protagonist of the novel is to be analyzed according to this theory in order to understand psychologically what was behind her decisions, how the community restrained her, and also how her personality helped her in growing up a strong black woman that confronts the social ideals and norms, and to divert towards her own freedom and self-determination.

The Id is the first element within the theory and “it comprises both the pleasure-seeking urges with which we are born, and the wishes, obsessions, and other affects derived from or associated with them” (De Berg 50). In other words, the Id is implicated within the unconscious and it includes all the irrational and abstract desires, wishes and thoughts that humans need to fulfill. Regardless of the social, ethical norms and restrictions and devoid from idealism and values, they occur unconsciously and are driven by the absolute need to satiate and pleasure the biological nature such as sex since the Id according to Freud is originally “the sexual part of our personality” (qtd. in De Berg 50). Accordingly, Janie Crawford’s Id was functioning actively since the beginning of her teenage period and it can be seen clearly in the scene when she was sitting under a blossoming pear tree and enjoying the view, the sound, and the smell of the blossoming flowers:

This singing she heard that had nothing to do with her ears. The rose of the world was breathing out smell. It followed her through all her waking moments and caressed her in her sleep. It connected itself with other vaguely felt matters that had struck her outside observation and buried themselves in her flesh. (13)

Here, we notice that Janie was using her senses in order to construct an image inside of her that would touch her spirit and leads her to pleasure. This incident awakened her Id and showed her the way towards satisfying her desires; it demonstrates also that Janie was rational and sensitive to her body and her femininity and knew how to extract an image from nature and link it to herself to form a sexual desire. Hence Janie was actually living an unconscious state of mind where she believed that love should lead to marriage and it requires a harmony

between man and woman like the “dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom“(13).

Also, that marriage is connected to love and sexuality. Then as far as she knew her desires she felt that she was ready to get out of the unconscious world to seek answers and feel consciously what seemed to her as a love.

The superego, however, is all what is related to the conscious, particularly the social context including the social norms and values that individuals must respect and act accordingly. It is implicated through parents or teachers who act as the curser that directs and controls the behavior of the individuals whenever they start to interact with people surrounding them. Hence, the superego is the set of customs, laws or authority that prevent the unusual feelings of the Id from coming out to the real world because “These unconscious injunctions may well be in conflict with our current ethics but on an unconscious level it continue to influence us all the time” (De Berg 50). In the case of Janie, her Nanny acted as the Superego because she tried to repress her desires and prevent them from coming out as soon as Janie discovered her sexuality and got kissed by a boy. So, her Nanny insisted on marrying her so that she would neither fall in sins nor divert from the regular social values; another manifestation of the Superego lies in Janie’s first marriage to Logan Killicks when she found out that their relationship is in lack of love, so in her first chance of thinking of leaving him she could not do it because the teachings of her Nanny stabilized in her unconscious; This incident shows that Janie’s conscious was thinking about what was right and what the other consider as wrong.

Because Janie had the tendency to do things even though she has been aware that they challenge the traditional standards, she run away with another man called Joe Starks who was not much different from the first husband in terms of their vision to women. Joe was also a manifestation of the Superego as he pushed Janie towards perfectness, he wanted her to act and look like gentlewomen repressing by this her spontaneous personality and her vivid spirit.

Originally, Joe himself was greatly influenced by the social mannerism, so this is the reason why he imposed his behaviors on Janie as far as he considered her as his property. What is more, is that the black community itself serves as the dominant Superego for all the characters not only Janie Crawford. The morals were adopted by everyone and thus females were the ones who suffered the most from oppression and repression of their desires and wishes since they were classified at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In particular, the community where Janie lived caused a serious pressure on her, but her mind was not limited to the traditional society that shaped her way of living, rather she was longing for further answers to her wondering to find a balance between her desires and the social norms. From this point, the Ego joins the equation from the moment it breaks out from the unconscious and stands as the balance between the social norms and the unlimited thoughts of the Id, De Berg claims that “the ego tries to find a healthy *balance* between our own wishes and those of others” (50). In this respect, the Ego is manifested in the scene when Janie was obliged to accept to marry with Logan Killicks, on one hand, she was having thoughts and wonders whether he will love her the way she has been always dreaming and whether marriage will make them love each other, and on the other hand, she was remembering her grandmother’s arguments about the advantages of marrying him. As a result, she had but to satisfy both sides; her Id and the Superego, in other words, her inner thoughts and Nanny’s wishes so “finally out of Nanny’s talk and her own conjectures she made a sort of comfort for herself. Yes, she would love Logan after they were married. She could see no way for it to come about, but Nanny and the old folks had said it, so it must be so” (Hurst 25).

Another demonstration of the Ego when Janie was married to Joe Starks, the beautiful beginning to their relationship did not predict any sign of problem that would encounter them. However, Joe Starks was much off a materialist man that run only after his profits and making out of his wife a furniture to dispose or a working woman. In one of the

scenes, Joe asked Janie to bring him a pair of shoes, Janie responded to his order without saying any word although she hide a maelstrom of anger in her chest, she chosen to keep calm because she had no effort to indulge in another dispute with him and push the relation to a worst situation “a little war of defense for helpless things was going on inside her ...she wanted to fight about it. But ah hates disagreements and confusion, so ah better not talk. It makes it hard to get along” (67). This scene represents also how Janie learned through years of oppression with Joe how to manage her decisions, as she learned when to speak and when to keep silent. At this point Janie knew how to balance her own life on her own terms, since her unconscious thoughts were growing stronger in the shadow of the social constraints and patriarchy “no matter what Jody did, she said nothing. She had learned how to talk some and leave some” (90). In fact she was fooling the people around her with submission by making people see what they want to see in order to have a time for her to rise up more powerful.

Another moment when Janie proved to know how to measure her decisions through the Ego is when she encountered Tea Cake; this man completely changed her life. In one hand he was nearly twenty five years old while she was twenty years older than him, on the other hand she felt that he might be different from the other men because he showed a remarkable interest in her but she was ashamed of thinking of it. Here we can trace the confusion between her Id which calls for a possibility of having a successful relationship with Tea Cake and the Superego which prevents her from constructing a relationship with a man who is half her age, but then she succeeded in making a balance between the two and “decided to treat him so cold” (119). To stay away and watch what would come from him.

The scenes mentioned above display Janie’s ability to swing between the Id, Ego and Superego to make important decisions; sometimes one of the branches take over the other ones, while in other occasions Janie (signifying the Ego) is able to adjust her divergent thoughts (that signify the Id) with the norms of the society (that signify the Superego) to come

out with a compromised result for both of them to create a sense of emotional stability. This means that Janie was having a feeling of belonging to her community because she was naturally outspoken person and always wanting to get involved in it, but when she started to realize that her commitment to her community would erase her personality and minimize her role as a woman, she broke out from it and embraced individualism seeking only her own goals and living with her own standards. Exactly as Freud states in this respect that “the ego becomes differentiated from the id when infants learn to distinguish themselves from the outer world. While the id remains unchanged, the ego continues to develop strategies for handling the id’s unrealistic and unrelenting demands for pleasure” (qtd. in Feist 35). Accordingly, we notice that in most of the times and especially in Janie’s quadragenarian⁷ period the Id seems to be the most dominant one, because she resorted to use one of the Defense Mechanisms⁸ as a strategy to fulfill her demands for pleasure that she is deprived from when she was younger, which it is known by Regression; it is a behavior of reversion by which the individual revert to a previous phase of his life to practice the same behavior he used to do, because it was pleasuring for him at that age as it satisfies his desires. Hence in this case, Janie’s feelings towards Tea Cake drove her to run away with him throwing aside all the social standards, to seek a fulfillment of her desires of love, protection and sexuality that she have felt when she was sixteen under the Pear tree, feelings which she did not have the chance to live them in their right time.

Apparently, Janie sometimes was going through conflicting situations, as the Id and Superego were in antagonism, which one is the most dominant. However, she was able at the end to manage her decisions in a way that serves only her own desires.

V. The Role of the Patriarchal Community in Restraining Janie

Zora Neale Hurston was persistent in describing the social context that enclosed the course of events throughout the novel; The black community played an important role in

intensifying the meaning and giving a clear image about the real circumstances behind the struggle of the protagonist under study. Therefore, the context in which the protagonist lived and grew up was the major framework for the difficulties and the struggles that she was obliged to go through as any other black woman. Hence in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* Janie Crawford was born in a traditional black society but was surrounded by white kids who used to taunt her because she lived in the backyard of the whites, and call her Alphabet because each time she has been called differently “Dey all useter call me Alphabet ‘cause so many people had done named me different names” (11). So Janie was defined since her childhood and she did not have a single name because everyone was calling her the way they wanted and according to their vision. Thus the community where she grew up did not identify her by who she really was, rather they gave her a false image about her until she realized that by her own when she saw a picture of herself, where she realized that she is black and different and that she should act accordingly, as a result, Janie learned to look over her own identity and do whatever she thought it suited her.

The patriarchal and oppressive community she lived in was indirectly the main reason behind her early marriage to Logan Killicks; Nanny obliged her to get married right away out of fear from sexual exploitation that is recurrent in their society, by virtue of her long experience as a former slave she said to her:

Honey, de white man is the ruler of everything as fur as ah been able tuh find out. Maybe it’s some place way off in de ocean where de black man is in power, but we don’t know nothin’ but what we see ... De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see. Ah been prayin’ fuh it tuh be different wid you. (17)

So Nanny was thinking that by marrying her at a younger age she would protect her from the whites and the blacks because she knew that the community was not fair when it comes to women. Also, they would cast their power on her at every chance they get, but she did not

know that she was tossing her granddaughter at oppression itself to a traditional old man that exercised the same social oppression and carried the same vision about women as mules who live on serving their husbands. In this regard, Davie justified the recurrent symbol of the mule as “for white Americans, blacks seemed to slide into the category of animal—a convenient justification for owning them’ and African American men see their wives and female mates in the same way so as to justify controlling them” (qtd. in Qashgari 36).

The community with whom she lives proved to be a real patriarchal and materialistic one when Janie became a widow of Joe Starks with all the money and the labor. So people from everywhere started to propose their services to her not for help but because they believed that a woman without a man cannot live properly and that she needs always man’s assistance since “Uh woman by herself in uh pitiful thing” (107). And that “god never meant ‘em tuh try tuh stand by theirselves” (108). However, with all what she has been through Janie learned to differentiate between the look of love and the look of profit, and that all these supposedly helping men were longing for power through a woman whom they impose their manhood on. At this stage, Janie had a large knowledge about her community and the way men and women were thinking, she paid the price of half of her life to reach such level of awakening so that she would never be fooled again; this was clear enough when she was talking to her friend Pheoby about enjoying freedom after Joe’s death, Pheoby says ”Sh-sh-sh! Don’t let nobody hear you say dat, Janie. Folks will say you ain’t sorry he’s gone” but then Janie replied carelessly “Let’em say whut dey wants tuh, Pheoby. To my thinkin’ mourning oughtn’t tuh last no longer’n grief” (111).

Another figuration about the community is when Janie started to hang out with Tea Cake after the death of Joe Starks; people of Eatonville were having their minds blown seeing them together having picnics, hunting and fishing, they ashamed Janie for wearing pink and blue dresses only after nine months since the death of her husband. Mary Washington justified

Janie's excitement with her relationship with Tea Cake in that "the sense of risk and helplessness and the secrecy of their relationship in its early stages are the reasons why Janie finds her affair with Tea Cake as an irresistible adventure" (qtd. in Qashgari). In that period they had nothing to talk about except the story of Janie and Tea Cake who seemed to be enjoying their partnership "Day after day and weak after weak" (130). Regardless to anyone, in the same manner, when Janie came back to Eatonville after she run away with tea cake, she was forty years old and dressed in overalls while people were sitting on the porches watching and throwing their judgments and comments on her, these people were envious, greedy, astonished and curious about what happened to her with a twelve years younger boy and all the money she had. Hurston in describing them she said "They made burning statements with questions, and killing tools out of laughs. It was mass cruelty. A mood come alive. Words walking without masters" (2). This description shows that the people who were judging were not responsible for their judgments; instead of investigating the exact truth, they sat there sarcastically making false judgments about her. However, these judgments were like masks that hide their fear of her strength that was apparent in the way she looks and walks with pride, Dian Matza in this respect claims that "clearly jealous of Janie's good looks, pride and defiance the towns people hide their feelings behind their criticism of her manners, for they don't hesitate to note that she fails to converse when she passes them" (48). In this scene Janie crossed them ignoring their judgments because she felt that she became mature and wise enough not to respond to their gossip, especially when she knew that is was the only thing they were good at and they will talk about her anyway, it shows also that Janie found the ability to blind an eye about all what is said about her, and embrace individuality.

Chapter Three: Janie under the Feminist and Psychoanalytic lens

The third chapter is dedicated to analyze the protagonist's process of growing up, not only in terms of aging, but also in terms of her transformation from a submissive girl to a strong independent woman. Typically, the novel is regarded as a quest narrative that depicts a woman's process of seeking liberty and self-actualization as she grows up. Hence by means of the psychoanalytic literary theory and the feminist theory, this chapter will study the three stages of Janie Crawford's growing up in order to investigate the feminist and psychoanalytic, as well as the internal and external factors that shaped her journey. Therefore, the first stage includes two sections, the first section analyzes Janie's submission to her Nanny from a feminist perspective, and the second section deals with Janie's identity confusion from a psychoanalytic perspective in terms of Eric Erikson's Psychosocial Stages. The second stage subsequently, includes also two sections, the first one depends on Karen Horney's psychoanalytic theory of Basic Anxiety; to analyze the mechanisms that Janie uses to fulfill her psychological and emotional needs, while the second section deals with Janie's first signs of rebellion against the oppressive circumstances. Finally, the third stage includes two sections either, the first one deals with how Janie constructs a sense of intimacy according to Eric Erikson's Psychosocial Stages, while the second section depicts Janie's love experience and emerging as a powerful woman.

I. Stages of Janie's Metamorphosis

I.1. First Stage: Indecisiveness, Submission to the Traditional Social Standards and Identity Misrecognition

I.1.1. Janie under the Influence of Nanny

According to the feminist movement, Identity recognition is one of the most important aspects as it symbolizes strength and capability. Particularly, the African American tradition stresses more on the vitality of knowing and maintaining one's identity, especially

when it comes to Afro-American women who suffered mainly from patriarchy and oppression and “have been made aware that those who name also control, and those who are named are subjugated” (King 683). Therefore, identity recognition is a tool for resistance and empowerment to defeat the social stereotypes that are imposed on them. However, like any other black girl in a black community surrounded by circumstances of racism and oppression, Janie was raised by a former slave mother. The latter represents the typical submissive black woman that bows to men’s power and control. Also who accepts the fact of being the least appreciated member in the community as far as she is a woman and also black.

The woman whom the readers do not know much about her since she died in the beginning of the novel, her effect was so evident through the course of events in relation to the protagonist. Given that she used to recount her experiences to make herself an example to be followed, and marked through this the cruel beginning of Janie’s life. Nanny “ was born back due to slavery so it wasn’t for [her] to fulfill [her] dreams of what a woman oughta be and to do” (19). So because of this limited vision of life she was always dependent on men and didn’t know anything else except obeying them even at the expense of her life. Consequently, she was subject to sexual exploitation by her white master whom she used to work with, resulted in a white girl named her Leafy; which later going to be Janie’s mother. So as soon as the master’s wife knew that, she assaulted her physically while asking her why her girl looked white, and out of Nanny’s internalization of her role as a slave she told her “ Ah don’t know nothing’ but what ah’m told tuh do, ‘cause Ah ain’t nothing but uh nigger and uh slave” (21). Nanny then as soon as she got the chance fled away until the announcement of abolition of slavery; afterwards, she lived on taking care of her daughter Leafy to provide her with better life as a free girl. On the contrary, Leafy’s life was not much better than her mother’s since she was raped by her school teacher when she was seventeen, and got pregnant of Janie, and then fled away to another place where no one knows. Nanny determined to raise

Janie and protect her from the cruelty of the world by recounting her experiences in order to convince Janie that women are “de mule uh de world” (17). And that they wouldn’t find any other peaceful place except being under the wing of a man. But in the same time, she implicitly taught her how to deny her identity as a woman in favor of men “ You know, honey, us colored folks is branches without roots and that makes things come round in queer ways” (19). According to this understanding, Nanny represents the submissive and meek women who incorporate all the stereotypical images of women and live by them. And because marriage seemed to her the only solution to women’s problems and a materialistic matter, she constructed a special definition of a wife based on her own circumstances and tried to embalm it on Janie. So the coincidence of Janie’s sexual awakening with Nanny’s old age, pushed Nanny to marry her forcibly to the first man that asked her hand; ignoring by that all Janie’s requirements and with no consideration to her young age. Hence this decision for Nanny was on one hand, to have a sense of relief towards Janie’s future, and on the other hand, to guarantee the protection, financial support, and the social status that neither Nanny nor her daughter Leafy had the chance to get. As a result of this decision, Nanny did not only prevent Janie from living her young spirit freely, but also confused her thoughts about love by making her believe that sexuality and love are sins, and that marriage can stand up even without love.

In support for this idea, Fulton in her Essay “ The Legacy of Slavery” explained why Nanny’s advices are much more materialistic rather than intangible, she states that “ Nanny’s lessons are born of pragmatism based on lived experience circumscribed by the institution of slavery that does not include a mutually satisfying heterosexual relationship” (83). Meaning that Nanny’s relationship with men was nothing more than a relationship between a master and a slave, characterized by rigidity and firmness where love ceased to exist. What is more is that she even stagnated her thoughts and imposed them on Janie because she was thinking that she was the only wise person around her by considering her long experiences. She also made

Janie believe that she didn't know what things that suit her, as she said "Dat's what makes me skeered. You don't mean no harm. You don't even know where harm is at. Ah'm ole now. Ah can't be always guidin' yo' feet from harm and danger. Ah wants to see you married right away" (16). As if Nanny was half-scared and half-sure that if Janie recognizes herself and tastes freedom she would definitely rebel against her and the regular norms of the society.

When one stops and thinks profoundly about the way Nanny's way of thinking, he would probably sympathize with her because she is a victim of her age and her surroundings. She grew up as a slave so that's what she became. Therefore, though she repressed Janie, her fear for her was just a kind of overprotection, and to open her mind so that she would not fall in the same mistakes.

I.1.2. Janie's Self-Identity Confusion

I.1.2.1. Identity vs. Role Confusion

The fifth stage of Erikson's Psychosocial Development would fit the case of Janie Crawford, the previous stages were not part of the analysis because major events of Janie's life started by the period of her adolescence. Therefore, Identity vs. Role Confusion is concerned with the most important period in the individual's life, which is adolescence; the period that lies between Infancy and Adulthood. During this period, adolescents start to question the truth of their identity, try to find out what makes them unique to others, and to construct a special definition to their own self to see how they can cope with their society. For Erikson "The adolescent mind is essentially a mind or moratorium, a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, and between the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult" (qtd. in McLeod). Accordingly, at the age of sixteen Janie Crawford started to search for new social positions and partnership from which she could know herself better, she also wanted to understand her role in the society she lived in to

see which position she was occupying. Driven by these urges, she tended to sit under a big pear tree to ponder its blooming flowers and how they were pollinated by the bees “it had called her to come and gaze on a mystery. From barren brown stems to glistening leaf-buds; from leaf-buds to snowy virginity of bloom. It stirred her tremendously. How? Why?” (13). She kept looking at the virginity of nature and projected it to herself, she questioned why and how come everything runs in harmony with each other. For Janie, the pear tree seemed like a female giving love and waiting to be loved back “She saw a dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom; the thousand sister-calyxes arch to meet the love embrace and the ecstatic shiver of the tree from root to tiniest branch” (13). As a result, her passionate emotions were provoked and drove her to the realistic world to search for a partner that would make her practice her feelings of sexuality “she was sixteen. She had glossy leaves and bursting buds and she wanted to struggle with life but it seemed to elude her. Where were the singing bees for her?” (14). Well the answer was in Johnny Taylor, a boy whom she used to see him as “shiftless”, but after she was mesmerized with the pollinated air, the shiftless boy seemed so attractive to her and at the first chance she let him kiss her. At this point the psychological crisis happens, as her Nanny sees her kissing the boy and decides to marry her right away. So the moment of her sexual awakening was interrupted and turned from a joyful experience to a traumatic experience.

According to Erikson’s theory, this incident changed not only Janie’s adolescence period but also her whole life in the opposite direction, because she didn’t enjoy the moment of her sexual awakening to the fullest. As consequence, this incident led to a role confusion, she was confused on one hand about either to follow her desires or Nanny’s standards of living, and on the other hand about her existence within her society, as she became confused about what was exactly her role as a woman if she could not feel her sexuality in normal way! . In a regular and healthy condition, the adolescent by the end of this stage reaches an

understanding of his psyche in accordance to his society and try to live in harmony with them. According to Bee, what should happen at the end of this stage is “a reintegrated sense of self, of what one wants to do or be, and of one’s appropriate sex role” (qtd. in McLeod). However, Janie did not reach such integrated self, rather she came up with a shattered identity since she was deprived from living her stage as it should be, and was unwillingly moved to the stage of Adulthood in the wrong timing. Also, she did not get what she wanted and did not do what she wanted to do in terms of practicing her sexual identity. Therefore, this identity confusion led to an unhealthy personality characterized by traumas, regressions, and emotional deprivation.

It is worth mentioning that the psychological crisis is crucial in each stage. It serves as a pulse that pushes the individual to find a solution to that crisis according to his way of thinking, and this helps a great deal in the identity formation. In other words, indulging in the social circumstances and fighting for one’s desires is what really strengthen the relationship between the individual and his own self. This relationship in turn, leads to a feeling of self-esteem that enables Individuals to go through any difficulty they may encounter. On the contrary, after Janie was deprived from her right to explore more about her identity, she did not rebel against the imposed social standards in favor of her desires; rather she accepted them by conforming to her Nanny’s order to marry her. But the fact is that Janie actually repressed those feelings of sexuality, and this regression caused her serious problems eventually since she kept always longing to set those feelings free at the very first chance she get. In this respect, Feis states:

Although identity confusion is a necessary part of our search for identity, too much confusion can lead to pathological adjustment in the form of regression to earlier stages of development. We may postpone the responsibilities of adulthood and drift aimlessly

from one job to another, from one sex partner to another, or from one ideology to another. (258)

II.2. Second Stage: Stirring up in Search for Love, Voice, and Appreciation

This stage uses Karen Horney's theory of Basic Anxiety, which represent the period of Janie's transition from the first stage to the third stage. In this stage, Janie adopts two neurotic trends as a tool to overcome her problems and to fulfill her needs.

II.2.1. Janie Crawford Moving Towards People

Through this trend, Janie attempts to get attached to certain people in her life, in search for the one who would fulfill her need to be accepted and belonged.

II.2.1.a. The Need for Affection and Approval

After Janie was forced to get married to Logan Killicks, the owner of the often mentioned sixty acres of land, she finally accepted the marriage hoping that it would bring her love and respect by making herself believe the advices of her Nanny. So she started her journey in search for the love she has been always dreaming of under the pear tree, and to let her sexuality burst freely. However, she found the opposite.

By considering her old childhood experiences which were not so much pleasant, Janie's childhood period was not a healthy one starting by the absence of her parents at a very young age. Although her grandmother raised her at early age, she could not replace the crucial relationship between Janie and her parents. So, she grew up totally in lack of feelings of maternity and paternity the thing that provoked anxiety and lack of warmth that drove her eventually to search for them by any means. Additionally, being a black girl that lives in "de white folks' back-yard" (11). Along with a direct contact with the white kids, made Janie confused about her identity and whether she was blessed to live in a better conditions with the whites, or damned because she looked somewhat different from the black fellows with whom she used to study, since "Mis' Washburn useter dress [her] up in all de clothes her

gran'children didn't need no mo' which still wuz better'n whut de rest uh de colored chillum had" (11-2). As a consequence, Janie was subject to racial harassment from children of her same race and color, the thing that she eventually understood when she grew up; that blacks were as much racist and oppressive as the whites or even worse. The black children were offending her because of the sad memory of what her father did to her mother "They'd push [her] 'way from de ring plays and make out they couldn't play wid nobody da lived on premises. Den they'd tell [her] not to be takin' on over [her] looks 'cause they mama told 'em 'bout de hound dawgd huntin' [her] papa all night long (12). After all, the circumstances that characterizes Janie's childhood conforms the definition of Horney to basic hostility in her book *The Neurotic Personality Of Our Time* (1937) as "a feeling of being small, insignificant, helpless, deserted, endangered, in a world that is out to abuse, cheat, attack, humiliate, betray, envy" (92). Accordingly, Janie developed a basic hostility towards her environment due to feeling of isolation, loneliness and alienation in a time where she needed to be loved and involved. As a result, her need for love and affection was intensified and drove her to search for it as a tool of empowerment and to feel safe in the hostile society she lived in.

Furthermore, the incident when her grandmother repressed her feeling of sexuality by virtue of overprotection from social and sexual exploitation, Nanny unconsciously caused a psychological problem to her granddaughter, which drove her to search for her needs of love somewhere else. Horney claims in this respect that "Parents, with the best of intentions, may exert so much pressure on the child that his initiative becomes paralyzed" (self-analysis 43). Meaning that out of parental pressure the individual fails to develop self-respect and self-sufficiency, he also becomes inevitably dependent on someone in order to feel loved. For that reason, Janie's acceptance to get married to the old Logan Killicks was backed up by her urge to feel loved, though she doubted it in the beginning, she compulsory made herself believe that this marriage would be the only way to feel love, affection and approval only because she

had been told so, this urge made her place herself in a second position where she doubts her inner desires and believe others'. Hurston described "it was just so. Janie felt glad of the thought, for then it wouldn't seem so destructive and mouldy. She wouldn't be lonely anymore" (25). However, after a short period of her marriage Janie recognized that life was not always as she expected, Logan was nothing but a loving man, and she could not love him either for that he "don't even never mention nothing pretty" (28). Obviously, Logan was far from being the idealized man that Janie dreamed of because "[she] wants things sweet wid [her] marriage lak when you sit under a pear tree and think. Ah..." (29). Here Janie wanted the same image and the same feeling she felt when she was under the big pear tree, and this proves that she repressed those feelings and waited for the moment when she would feel it again. This proves also that Janie was still driven by her childhood desires. Furthermore, Logan was expecting her to do the chopping the woods, cut potatoes and watch the mules, and by the last one she started to become a real mule. Janie recognized at the end that "marriage did not make love" (30). So her need to be loved and to be accepted as a real woman was not fulfilled. As a consequence, her basic hostility was worsened and she had to unconsciously adopt another neurotic trend in search for a better partner that would compensate her disappointment.

II.2.1.b. The Need for a Powerful Partner

Joe Starks was the following destination towards searching for another tool of empowerment, and he seemed the perfect partner with whom Janie thought she could overcome feelings of helplessness and isolation. Basically, individuals driven by the need for a powerful partner look for a person who protects them from dangers and satisfies their life expectations and goals. According to Horney, individuals following this trend are characterized by an "Overvaluation of "love" because "love" is supposed to solve all problems" (Self-analysis 55). As a matter of fact, as soon as Janie met Joe Starks whose looks

foretold his strong and determined personality, she decided to leave her first husband Logan Killicks to start a whole new different life with new aspirations. What really thrust her to do so was the way she saw herself in the eyes of Starks who demonstrated in the very first meeting a feeling of appreciation towards her, a feeling that she has never felt before. In the scene where he found her the first time doing farming stuff he told her:

You behind a plow! You ain't got no mo' business wid uh plow than uh hog is got wid uh holiday! You ain't got no business cuttin' up no seed p'taters neither. A pretty doll-baby lak you is made to sit on de front porch and rock and fan yo'self and eat p'taters dat other folks plant just special for you. (34)

A talk like this had made Janie recover her self-confidence that she couldn't find with Logan. Starks talked a lot about goals and life ambitions; he described himself as "uh man wid principles" (35). Janie as a neurotic character saw in him the model of a powerful partner, and this was the right chance for her to attach herself to someone who would satisfy her needs to be appreciated and to avoid isolation. As consequence, she shared his ambitions with him, developed their own business and helped him until he became a mayor. However, the partner that she counted for in satisfying her needs became powerful only for himself, dealing with his business and neglecting all Janie's needs. Hence all what she came up with from marrying Joe was the title of Mrs. Mayor's Starks. In one of the scenes where Starks was celebrating setting up of lights in the town, people asked Janie to say something in the honor of the occasion, he spoke on behalf of her and underestimated her in front of all the citizens of the town "ah never married her for nothin' lak dat. She's uh woman and her place is de home" (51). By this words Starks broke Janie's dreams of having a strong partner that would protect her from isolation and inferiority, since he did not only prevent her from making her voice heard, but also isolated her from him, from the society and from herself. What is more is that he even prevented her from indulging in conversations with regular citizens of the town.

Under the pretext of being a middle class woman who should not get involved with the lower class people “ You’s Mrs. Mayor Starks, Janie. I god, Ah can’t see what uh woman uh yo’ stability would want tuh be treasurin’ all dat gum-grease from folks dat don’t even own de house dey sleep in” (63).

One cannot deny that by marrying Joe, Janie had the chance to indulge in the world of business and acquire new experiences with all the money and the properties that she shared with him. This by any means created a sort of power within herself, but what she was really looking for was not yet accomplished. It was not the position, the money or the property that she hunted for, it was rather an absurd feeling from her husband that would make her feel safe with his presence. It is worth noticing that what is really distressful about being neurotic is the compulsory need to be attached to someone in order to feel safety, after all what she has seen from her husband she continued to live with him twenty years under the same conditions, after being done beaten, humiliated and oppressed. Horney states in this case:

A woman hanging on to a man to whom she relegates all responsibility for her life may be utterly oblivious to such questions as whether that particular man is an entirely appropriate person to hang on to, whether she is actually happy with him whether she likes and respects him. If a person must be independent and self-sufficient he will refuse to tie himself to anyone or anything, no matter how much he spoils his life thereby; he must not ask or accept help, no matter how much he needs it. (Self-analysis 41-42)

II.2.2. Janie Crawford Moving Away from People

Hurston states in her novel that “Times and scenes like that put Janie to thinking about the inside state of her marriage” (84). After Janie had assumed inside of her that the good image of Joe Starks was not persistent anymore, she came to the realization that Starks

actually was feeding his power from her silence. She realized also that as a powerful partner he wanted her submission, which was something she had been already suffering from, and she was not ready to live that sensation again. As a result, Janie started to change, she started to indulge herself in conversation, defend on herself, speak of what hurts her, and “was giving away what she didn’t value” (90). After Joe was dead, Janie driven by the need of self-affirmation, privacy and self-efficiency grew even stronger, with all the money and wealth she inherited she got the respect of all who surrounded her, and “found out very soon that her widowhood and property was a great challenge in South Florida” (107). Meaning that becoming a widow with a lot of money was the only solution for women to be respected in her society. As a result, men of the town were offering her their services, but she insisted on taking them for granted since “These men didn’t represent a thing she wanted to know about. She had already experienced them through Logan and Joe” (108). So out of her pain she learned how to idealize herself, by unconsciously adopting a whole new neurotic trend that would allow her to step away from people who would restrain her freedom. Feis in this respect claims that neurotic characters “frequently build a world of their own and refuse to allow anyone to get close to them. They value freedom and self-sufficiency and often appear to be aloof and unapproachable” (173). In the same way, Janie was keen not to allow anyone to indulge in her own world, although she remained little in touch with people of the town she didn’t allow them to exceed the limits “Janie talked and laughed in the store at times, but never seemed to want to go further” (109). According to what Horney’s theory entails, Janie under this trend she felt a sense of self-sufficiency which made her in no need for the help from anyone. At this point she started to bent towards freedom as “she liked being lonesome for a change. This freedom feeling was fine” (108).

It is important to mention that Horney finds no problem in jumping from one trend to another. A normal person can flexibly integrate the three trends together in his life, as he

can use a particular trend once and resort to the other direction in other circumstances. Like the case of Janie, she did not fulfill her needs when she moved towards people, so she resorted to another trend by moving away from people as another option for resolving her conflicts adequately. This fact proves that Janie was not having an extreme psychological problem in spite of all the hard circumstances she went through; she was flexible in opting for different trends in her life to combat the underlying concern that can be the basis for deeper conflicts. If not so, as a disordered character she would face all situations in one single manner by the same trend and at this point the conflict becomes more severe, and she would never develop and go further in her life.

II.2.3. First Signs of Revelation: Fighting Forms of Oppression

Because “There are years that ask questions and years that answer” (25). The negative attitude that Janie took towards her grandmother came after she became mature, and after she witnessed all forms of oppression over and over again. Janie came to the realization that Nanny deprived her from living the most important period in her life by marrying her at a younger age and deceived her by giving her false hopes about love and marriage. Nanny therefore made Janie live according to her vision of life, and see things only from her perspective making Janie pay the price of the traumatic past that she and her daughter had.

She hated her grandmother and had hidden it from herself all these years under a cloak of pity. She had been getting ready for her great journey to the horizons in search of people; it was important to all the world that she should find them and they find her. But she had been whipped like a cur dog, and run off down a back road after things ... She hated the old woman who had twisted her so in the name of love. (106-107)

Starting with Logan, the ideal husband in the eyes of Nanny was anything but ideal to Janie, for that Logan did not match the image that Janie constructed under the pear tree, in the

same way, Todd McGowan in his essay “Liberation and Domination” states “Logan shatters Janie’s imaginary identification: he desecrates the pear tree, Janie’s ideal of love and marriage” (52). In the early days of their marriage, Janie could not feel chemistry in their relationship since she was longing for someone who would thrust her to love him through his actions, but he was not one of that kind, given that he had neither the look nor the actions of a loving man. She complained to her Nanny about that saying “Cause you told me ah mus gointer love him, and, and Ah don’t” (27). But Nanny indeed tried to convince her that love was not an important thing, and that protection and wealth were all what matter. As a matter of fact, Logan represents patriarchy that seems to exclude any form of femininity for two things: first as he obliged Janie to conform to the traditional gender roles that require a dominating man and submissive woman, and second as he could not appreciate or even notice the young and the beautiful looking of Janie, Instead he treated her as a “mule” that must obey and do only what she was asked for. What is more is that he decided to buy her a new mule for her take care of, by this decision Logan was telling Janie indirectly that she was going to help him in his job whether she liked it or not, by saying “... and dis man Ah’m talki’ ‘bout is got uh mule all gentled up so even uh woman kin handle ‘im” (32). And also trying to ameliorate his work at the expense of her, which was so apparent in his reaction while they were discussing the subject “he studied Janie’s face and waited for her to say something” (32). For that he was sure that his decision would provoke her to refuse it, but Janie did not complain, and she remained silent because it was the only option she had during her whole marriage until Joe Starks showed up in her life as a spark of hope that would change her life for the best. Attracted by his striking tone, Janie was encouraged to leave Logan after she was convinced that her romantic imagination of marriage and love was not by any means becoming real “She knew now that marriage did not make love. Janie’s first dream was dead, so she became a woman.” (30). At this stage Janie broke up from what was left of her

childhood memories, the pain and the suffering had done already knocked her down and made her become realistic about life. At this point, Janie Crawford became a grown up woman, not in aging but in experience. Hurston was persistent in portraying Janie's way of seeing life after she chose not to live as oppressed woman, she states "The morning road air was like a new dress that made her feels the apron tied around her waist. She untied it and flung it on a low bush beside the road and walked on, picking flowers and making bouquet" (39). Here the significance of the word "road" symbolizes the new life and new experiences that Janie was longing for.

Janie's courage to run away with Joe Starks was not backed up only by her urge to live freely, but also by the death of Nanny; at that point she broke the link that bonded her to the authority of her grandmother and became free to live by her own new standards and follow her own heart. This incident marked the very first sign of Janie's emergence as a woman with free will. The first years she lived them with Joe Starks, Janie was proud to be with such an ambitious man, she aspired to live in the horizon which she has been always seeking. However, as soon as he accomplished his dreams and became a mayor, he seemed to be just a different face of oppression as he started to give her less importance, much neglecting and often humiliation. But Janie was not yet coming out of her silence, she just sat there watching him oppressing and controlling her, and all she could do was talking to her heart but no voice was to come out of her throat to complain; she had two options either to obey or remain silent. Obviously, Starks was refilling his power from Janie's silent attitudes and he seemed to be enjoying that, exactly as Racine stated "There seems to be a connection between a lack of voice and a need to control, for both men and women" (287). In simpler words, silence of Janie was the thing that escalated Stark's domination, additionally, McGowan states in this regard "Joe's authority, his power over the town and over Janie, does not exist in itself, it exists only insofar as they invest him with this authority, insofar as they recognize his

authority” (55). Furthermore, Starks wanted Janie to be disguised as a rich middle class woman and act and dress accordingly, the thing that symbolizes the amount of pressure of the cultural protocols combined with oppression on women, and how they are expected to act according to other people’s requirements. In sum, this type of control was just an extension to the general concept of oppression. Through her relationship with Starks, Janie was not allowed to make speeches because her place was in the home, her hair was not allowed to be showed up while she was working in the store, was beaten whenever the dish was not cooked enough, her beauty was underestimated in many occasions, and was not allowed to indulge in conversations with people of the town. Above all, Janie was oppressed in the fullest sense of the world by a man whose perception about women was restricted to obedience combined with his powerful position in his community, which in turn intensified his oppression. In this respect McGowan states that “predominant aspect of Joe’s character is evident not only in his dealings with Janie but in every dimension of his behavior in Eatonville” (54).

Even though Janie condones to Starks’ forms of oppression, she managed to rebel within herself as soon as she recognized that Joe was restricting her within his borders. Well, for a dreaming character like Janie who used to look for the horizon, watches God, and inspire by nature, one could assume that she cannot remain silent any longer. Hence, she learned a new strategy, she decided when to speak and what to speak in the appropriate time, for that she knew that Joe “didn’t represent sun-up and pollen and blooming trees” and that she was living another failed marriage. So, she knew that she has nothing to be afraid of losing anymore. As a result, she started to react verbally whenever she felt underestimated, so in one of the incidents when Starks undervalued her youth and her womanhood, she said in front of everyone:

Stop mixin' up mah doings wid mah looks, Jody. . . . Yeah, Ah'm nearly forty and you'se already fifty. . . Naw, Ah ain't no young gal no mo' but den Ah ain't no old

woman neither. Ah reckon Ah looks mah age too. But Ah'm uh woman every inch of me, and ah know it. Dat's uh whole lot more'n *you* kin say. You big-bellies round here and put out a lot of brag, but tain't nothin' to it but yo' big voice. (94)

This incident represents the climax of their relationship and marks the emergence of the powerful woman within Janie and distorted the powerful image of Starks in front of his fellows. In this regard Diane Sadoff argues that “Janie liberates herself by engaging in a verbal battle with Jody” (qtd. in Jordan 109). Subsequently, their relationship strained even worse and Joe became a sick person; while he was in his death bed Janie confronted him about all what he done to her “Naw, you gointuh listen tuh me one time befo' you die” (102). And indeed she made her voice heard, and the end of Joe Starks literally marked the beginning of her life, given that the first thing she did when he died, was flipping her hair out “The weight, the length, the glory was there” (104). Janie at this stage moved way further towards reclaiming her independence as a female character, as she enjoyed freedom, wealth, people's respect, however she was still searching for love.

III. Third Stage: Finding the Voice and Asserting the Feminine Power

III.1. The Appeal for Love

What characterizes this period is Janie's experience with finding true love, and how it changes her life. At this stage Janie emerges as a strong woman that fights for the love of her life and confronts anything and anyone tries to hold her back. Love under this stage is by excellence Janie's tool for empowerment.

III.1.1. Intimacy vs. Isolation

The fifth stage in Erikson's psychosocial stages is experienced in the period of young adulthood. This period is based fundamentally on the virtue of love shaped by romantic relationships, which in turn are backed up by *Genitality*. The term was defined by Erikson as

“the capacity for heterosexual mutually orgasmic sexual relations” (qtd. in Stewart and Lykes 146). This means that relationships in this stage are characterized by sexual desires which enforce the relation between the couple and help in maintaining their intimacy. In this period, the individual who already recognized his identity becomes ready to blend it with someone else whom he feels comfortable with. By sharing with him intimately all what concerns him. Feis states “mature intimacy means an ability and willingness to share a mutual trust. It involves sacrifice, compromise, and commitment within a relationship of two equals. It should be a requirement for marriage” (259). Hence being able to establish a successful relationship at this stage leads to mutual commitment, security, and the ability to face life difficulties. Which are all under the term *Intimacy*. Whereas the inability to establish an intimate relationship out of fear of commitment or due to already failed experience leads to *Isolation*, which is defined by Erikson as “the incapacity to take chances with one’s identity by sharing true intimacy” (qtd. in Feis 259).

What is more important is that the virtue of love under this stage according to Erikson cannot be seen only through the sexual relationships with other partner, but it can also be seen through one’s own discovery of his own sexuality and its value which is so important in regaining the feeling of the true identity (Stewart and Lykes 147). Therefore, Janie after a devastating experience of failed marriages with Logan Killicks and Joe Starks, she went through a period of isolation from people, if not saying men precisely. It was not because she lost faith in life or she gave up her goal in finding love, but it was more or less a period in which she tried to reestablish her stability away from people who would deter her road towards emerging. In the same way, Feis states “some degree of isolation is essential before one can acquire mature love” (259). However, the third man Janie established a relationship with was a boy named Tea Cake, whose real name was Vergible woods, Gates explained the symbolism of his name by claiming that “It symbolizes Janie’s tree; he is the woods

themselves". It is derived from 'veritable woods', which signifies purity and genuine love" (qtd. in Qashgari 38). This means that Tea Cake's real name refers to the pear tree that Janie used to sit under in her adolescence dreaming of love, so this love finally appeared in this boy who was a glimmer of hope in Janie's life after a period of isolation; in the beginning she was afraid to engage in a relationship with another man especially when he was twelve years younger than her, something that neither the society nor the recurrent traditions accept this, but after she knew him closely she was convinced that he was the one whom she would share her intimacy with since she felt as Hurston describes "as if she had known him all her life" (118).

Love was apparent in the way Tea Cake and Janie were living their life and their deep relationship with each other from the beginning. Besides feeling him familiar from the first sight, Janie could make him enter her house after a period of isolation when men did not dare to stand beyond the porch of her house "Tea Cake fell in beside her and mounted the porch this time. So she offered him a seat and they made a lot of laughter out of nothing" (121). This action is an indication that Janie trusted Tea Cake which is something essential in establishing intimacy with a loving partner. Over time their relationship developed to become more passionate, as Tea Cake started to revive her teenage spirit, as if he knew that part of her adolescence was stolen from her and he was insisting on making her live with it. They started to fish, play, go on picnics together "Tea Cake and Janie playing checkers; playing coon-can; playing Florida flip on the store porch all afternoon as if nobody was there. Day after day and week after week" (130). But what really intensified their relationship was that Tea Cake unlike Janie was not worried about the difference of age between them, and whenever he felt that she might have a little doubt about his loyalty to her, he persisted to make her feel that "age got nuthin' tuh do wid love" (125).

After they sacrificed anything to be together, they left their home town Eatonville and settled their relationship with marriage in Jacksonville. Then they traveled to Everglades where they lived in a boardinghouse. As any other relation they both faced ups and downs and their marital life was threatened many times, but their passion to each other surpassed all the problems; this fact proves how deep their love was and how their intimacy with each other was based on mutual respect, trust and passion. S. Jay Walker considers their relationship as a “blurring of sex-role stereotypes within an intensely sexual relationship” (qtd. in Bloom 187). He wanted to say, their sexual relationship helped them in blinding their eyes on the recurrent stereotypes that entailed a dominant man and a meek woman. They both lived on their own terms driven solely by their emotions. What is more important is that Janie with marrying Tea Cake her sexuality drives and fertility were intensified as he used to value every feminine aspect in her, from her to hair to her body and even her spirit. One would think that Janie knew her sexuality with Logan Killicks, recognized its importance with Joe Starks, and felt it with Tea Cake. Therefore, Tea Cake was the dream reality that Janie had when she was under the pear tree, “He looked like the love thoughts of women. He could be a bee to a blossom a pear tree blossom in the spring. He seemed to be crushing scent out of the world with his footsteps” (126).

One cannot be sure about how this relationship worked so well, it may be because Tea Cake was the right person in the right timing or because he really appreciated Janie as a real woman! .By taking into consideration Feis statement “many marriages lack intimacy because some young people marry as part of their search for the identity that they failed to establish during adolescence” (259). We could assume that Janie’s failure with the previous husbands in the period of adolescence was not only because those two men were sexists or female oppressors, but also because Janie was going through the process of discovering her identity. In that period she was thinking that marriage would make her know herself more and

see herself through the eyes of her husband who is supposed to cherish her identity. But it turned out to be the opposite as they were trying to disfigure her identity, and which was by no means going to lead to intimacy. However, when she encountered Tea Cake she was aged forty, and she had already established a certain image about her identity. She knew then what really mattered, what really worthed sacrificing for, and with whom she would fulfill what was left of her quest. After all, regardless to the different reasons, the consequence is one and that is her relationship with Tea Cake in comparison to the previous ones, was thriving. For this reason, Alice Walker reviewed the novel by claiming that it constitutes “one of the sexiest, most ‘healthily’ rendered heterosexual love stories in our literature” (qtd. in Bloom 76)

III.2. Janie’s Special Relationship with Tea Cake

Janie’s dream of liberty was misplaced with Logan, shattered by Starks, and revived with Tea Cake who paved her road to live in the horizon. The death of Joe Starks for Janie was the end of domination and control. At the first moment he left the world she set free all what was inhibited by the controlling system of her husband, and was ready to enjoy the feeling of liberation and freedom to the fullest; without the shackles of neither the traditional gender roles nor the male domination “Before she slept that night she burnt up every one of her head rags and went about the house next morning with her hair in one thick braid swinging well below her waist. That was the only change people saw in her” (106). People could see that she looked glowing on the outside, but they didn’t know that it was the effect of freeing her spirit on the inside that made her look that way; they did not know that her indomitable spirit was not touched by patriarchy, and it was the secret of her resistance.

Coincident with the first sprouts of her emergent personality, Tea Cake appeared in the life of Janie as “a glance from God” (126). In spite of the evident harmony between them in the very first conversation they had, Janie on the virtue of the disappointing experiences

she lived with the previous marriages was hesitant to think that he might be interested in her. She feared that he might steal her money and then take her for granted, however, she couldn't hold herself from thinking about him because of a simple gesture that had a deep effect on her; Tea Cake taught her how to play without considering her age or her gender, since this game was reserved to men only "He set it up and began to show her and she found herself glowing inside. Somebody wanted her to play. Somebody thought it natural for her to play. That was even nice" (114). For the first time since her childhood Janie enjoyed her young spirit without anyone criticizing her, she was sick of her Nanny's rules, Logan's rigidity and Starks' domination, it was the first time she enjoyed her freedom without limits and with no consideration to what might obstruct their moment. And that was the charm of their relationship because Janie felt "like a child breaking rules" (121). What is more than that is that he appreciated her as a real woman as he took care of her hair and her needs. He made her learn how to see herself from a different sight, and wanted her to recognize her importance as a woman that worth respect and appreciation. In one of the scenes he invited her to buy groceries for her although she had them in her store he tells her "You sells groceries for ordinary people. We'se gointuh buy for *you*" (129). Tea Cake unconsciously or probably consciously was raising her self-esteem as a woman, which was a feeling she did not used to with the previous husbands; it is worth to note that self-esteem is an important aspect in recognizing one's identity. This aspect represents one of the core values of the feminist movement as indispensable tool for regaining the female identity. Because generally male oppression focuses on diminishing the value of the female identity in order to erase the pedestal of empowerment. As Boisnier claims in this respect "higher stages of feminist identity development should be associated with higher self-esteem" (213). Consequently, Janie started to glow from inside out as she dressed in colors, bursting out in her beauty without a tiny regard to what might the town's people say. She was done living their life

according to their standards, with Tea Cake she developed the courage, the strength and the voice to say no to whatever and whoever restrain her, at that point she decided “tuh utilize [her]self all over” (133). And compensate all what she have missed in silence and submission. Subsequently, she decided to go off the town with Tea Cake to Jacksonville and get married, in spite of the advices of her friend Pheoby to make up her mind about this decision, she insisted on following her heart and her dream after she became certain that Tea Cake was never the same as Joe Starks, she told her “Dis is uh love game. Ah done lived Grandma’s way, now Ah means tuh live mine” (134). Indeed, they got married and settled there enjoying the first days of a loving marriage, they worked together, danced, enjoyed their time as never before and Tea Cake declared his love for her by saying “From now on you’s mah wife and mah woman and everything else in de world Ah needs” (147). Tea Cake was persistent in his idea of love and respect, whenever he did something that might create an uncomfortable feeling inside her, he reminded her how much she was important to him as he gave her the chance to express her feelings and thoughts, he was a good listener to her thoughts and that’s exactly what helped her in making her voice more powerful enough to be taken into consideration. In similar idea, Qashgari claims that:

Janie’s search is not for a voice, in fact she “had one all along”. Kaplan suggests that Janie is indeed searching for a good listener. Nanny refuses to listen to her when she reveals to her that she wants to find true love instead of marrying Logan. Jody and Logan also choose to ignore her and her need for expressing herself by silencing her.

Tea Cake is the first one to allow her to speak for herself and actually listens to her. (39)

It was evident in their relationship that they established a good habit of communication as they talk too much and express everyday their feelings and emotions, on the same token Nellie McKay claims “Tea Cake shows her a non-materialistic, day-to-day existence of love and respect between people who are not in constant state of competition and control” (qtd. in

Racin 288). Meaning that unlike previous marriages, Tea Cake and Janie's relationship was not a matter of competition between gender roles as no one was longing to be superior to the other. In fact it was their love that made them both and together superior to the obstructive mainstream thoughts of everyone. Later on, Tea Cake on behalf of his decision to not depend on her money on living but on his salary, decide to travel to Everglades where they both worked together to live concurrently on supporting their little family, their life there revolved around "Dancing, fighting, singing, crying, laughing, winning and losing love every hour. Work all day for money, fight all night for love" (155). In this new town on the muck, Janie had a sort of throwback to her past in Eatonville and made a comparison between them, in terms of clothing, the way of seeing things, their intention and everyday life it was like another world for her. And she even felt pity for the people back there because they were missing so much liberty and life in Everglades. This idea brings about the effect of the social context on shaping one's life and identity, for that in Eatonville people were gossiping about everyone, they had certain useless morals that everyone was obliged to follow. But in Everglades people were living and making others live for themselves not for somebody else, given that Janie the girl who used to be afraid of expressing her thoughts is now telling stories to everyone and making her voice echoing in the town "Only here, she could listen and laugh and even talk some herself if she wanted to. She got so she could tell big stories herself from listening to the rest. Because she loved to hear it" (158). What is more is that she started to wear overalls and heavy shoes for work exactly as men; it was at that point when Janie had the chance to live in egalitarianism with men, something that would strengthen her identity even more. Therefore, Tea Cake did not only gave her love, but also the chance to have life experiences from another social context away from the traditional gender roles, as Jay Walker claims "it is the blurring of "places" essentially blurring of the sex roles stereotypes within an

intensely sexual relationship, that constitutes the liberation and happiness of Janie Killicks Starks Wood” (525).

Once jealousy knocks the door, troubles come with it; as Tea Cake caught Mrs. Turner introducing her brother to Janie in an attempt to make her leave Tea Cake for him. Mrs. Turner thought that Janie did not deserve such a black man like him, as a reaction Tea Cake slaps Janie out of jealousy. But for some reason Hurston did not mention the reaction of Janie towards Tea Cake beating her, but readers know only through the witnesses that she did not respond at all; this incident put the novel in doubts, as critics questioned Janie’s emergence as a strong woman in such a sensitive period of her metamorphosis, thinking also that Tea Cake was not much different from the rest of the husbands although Hurston clarified the incident by saying “No brutal beating at all. He just slapped her around a bit to show he was boss” (172).

In fact what justifies Tea Cake’s beating Janie is not jealousy, but his fear of losing her, just the same way when Janie felt jealous and tried to beat him because she saw him talking with another girl. Janie was familiar with the sensation and although it was the first time she felt jealousy, she knew that it was different and it was awful enough to drive people to madness. In addition, the beating action was not for having a sense of possession of Janie like a mule for Logan, nor like an object to Starks, but as a wife. Seemingly, Tea Cake needed to show that he was the boss, not over Janie but over Mrs. Turner and her brother so that they would not mess with them again “Ah didn’t whup Janie ’cause she done nothin’. Ah beat her tuh show dem Turners who is boss” (173). It is important to mention that the arguments here are not for justifying Tea Cake’s beating as much as it is for justifying Janie’s. The arguments highlight the background of the incident and the driving forces that made that happen, because when one stops and compare the incident with Joe Starks who beaten Janie just because the dish was not cooked enough, one can sense the difference between the two husbands, and

understand that Janie's reaction stems from her feeling that she was not being controlled, humiliated nor obliged to be silent. Rather, she chose to remain silent because she knew that he wouldn't hurt her feelings. In this regard Racine claims that "The slap also represents the inability to articulate or a lack of voice. Tea Cake beats Janie because he does not know how to verbalize his fear of losing her to someone else-someone who is a lighter skinned African American like Janie, someone of innately greater value in white society"(289-90).

Eventually, with their ability to fight all what might separate them, Janie and Tea Cake fought the superpower of nature, as a hurricane hit Everglades and nearly drowned everything. In his effort to save Janie from drowning, Tea Cake was bitten by a dog and consequently he got rabies, so he fell sick but Janie was always there to feel his pain "You got tuh tell me so Ah kin feel widja. Lemme bear de pain 'long widja, baby. Where hurt yuh, sugar?" (204). Janie at this point started to assume the responsibility for the whole situation, something that indicates how far she had grown up, and how much love gave her the strength to handle all what might be overweighting for other woman in her situation. However, as symptom for the rabies Tea Cake started to hallucinate, and thinking that Janie was cheating on him with the brother of Mrs. Turner and that she did not love him anymore. At that point "Tea Cake was gone. Something else was looking out of his face" so Janie "was beginning to feel fear of this strange thing in Tea Cake's body" (213). For that reason, Tea Cake became extremely violent and emotionally aggressive to the point that he attempted to kill Janie, so as a reaction to save her own life, she shot him dead. This incident is considered as the climax of Janie's life as it represents how she gained a sense of self-control. One would say that killing Tea Cake was the price for asserting her freedom, self-actualization and growing up a tough woman that sacrifices her love in favor of her life, in the same idea, Diana Miles in her essay "Identity and Rebirth" she claims that "The self-articulated claim to her own voice is prefigured by her ability to kill off a violent and rabid love affair" (72). So far in the novel

Janie's decisions prove that she went way too far in fighting for asserting her existence in this world. By having the courage to kill Joe Starks verbally and Tea Cake physically, she lost with them social position and love but she won her life and her dream. Nellie McKay claims that "the relationship with Tea Cake help[s] to shape Janie's] self-knowledge, but in his death she is free to discover security in herself, and the courage to speak in her own black woman's voice, no longer dependent on men" (qtd. in Racine 290). Which means that Janie after the devastating death of Tea Cake, she was ready to face her future with open arms because she was backed up by experiences that gave her lessons about how to deal with her life eventually.

Janie was set on trial for the case of Tea Cake, but she was set free because of the circumstances that preceded the killing. The scene of the trial was more than just a depiction of Janie's case, but also it carried a deep representation of racism and sexism, and how they both function under the shadow of classism, Hurston intended to use racism images in order to serve the subject of sexism, as Du Plessis describes the scene as "the main place in which race and gender, as well as class and sexuality, show intense cross-purposes and mutual conflicts" (qtd. in Qashgari 36). Because in this scene Janie was surrounded by white jury including white women and also blacks, but only the white women who sympathized with her, and this proves Hurston intention in delivering a message that women do find each other regardless of race or color, as far as they share the same gender; which is sexism. Afterwards, she buried him in Palm Beach and went back to her town Eatonville devoid from anything, no more blue satin dresses, no high heels and no car; rather she came back wearing overalls which symbolizes competition with the male power and seeking equality with them. Janie carried within her a strength that was visible in the looks of her eyes, the men who were once envious of her or of Tea Cake for having her "chewed up the back parts of their minds and swallowed with relish. They made burning statements with questions, and killing tools out of

laughs. It was mass cruelty. A mood come alive. Words walking without masters” (2).

According to their shared social standards, Janie’s returning home that way was considered as shameful or dishonorable for a woman in her age, but they refused to admit deep inside that she represented the symbol of self-independence that they lost while they confined other people with their narrow vision of life. However, in spite of their judgments and comments, for Janie it was no more than bluster. So she chose to remain silent but this time it was different, because she carried inside the loudest voice. Her friend Pheoby described her “Ah see you is. Gal, you sho looks good. You looks like youse yo’ own daughter” They both laughed “Even wid dem overhalls on, you shows yo’ womanhood” (5). Indeed, after Janie came back from burying Tea Cake she looked bursting in life, something that indicates a feeling of self-revelation that makes anyone appreciate himself. Although Pheoby described her as “yo’ own daughter” on the outside, Janie was her own Nanny on the inside, for that she carried painful experiences. For that reason, she told her story to her best friend so that she would see the world from a different dimension, she saw herself as a leader of the feminine power and she was persistent in making the rest of women like her; free from the shackles of patriarchy and male oppression. She appoints Pheoby to deliver her story to everyone on behalf of her, indeed her effect was taking place at the moment because after she told the story, her friend seemed overwhelmed and excited about the idea of living freely as she told Janie “Ah done growed ten feet higher from jus’ listenin’ tuh you, Janie. Ah ain’t satisfied wid mahself no mo’” (226).

Hurston claims “Real gods require blood” (Danticat 18). And she means by this that the position that Janie reached was not an easy task. As she was oppressed, humiliated, beaten, she had to kill, she faced hurricane but at the end she emerged as a goddess in her imaginary life, she came back from the journey of her life carrying glory and eternal youth sprouting out from her vivid spirit that was fed by love. She told her friend “So Ah’m back

home agin and Ah'm satisfied tuh be heah. Ah done been tuh de horizon and back and now Ah kin set heah in mah house and live by comparisons" (225). At that point in her life Janie was satisfied psychologically, emotionally and physically, living with a free spirit and a free state of mind that cannot be constrained neither anymore to a certain place nor to another man. Therefore, Janie went through a long journey to transform from a mule to muliebrity⁹ that represents the power of the black female that can burst out of decay.

Conclusion

Growing up an Afro-American woman in the twentieth century has been a real challenge for most of black females. Being a member in a community where patriarchy and sexism seem to be a lifestyle, is like being stuck between a rock and a hard place. Women who lived during this period suffered a great deal to proclaim their rights and liberties. Indeed, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a cultural and historical manifestation of this period. Through the character of Janie Crawford, Hurston shows to the readers the amount of pressure the society is casting on women in addition to the psychological uncertainties that they grow up with because of such harsh circumstances. However, according to the way the story ends, Hurston demonstrates in the name of all black females that women can in one way or another break the back of the beast and emerge stronger to fight for their dreams.

This study aims at investigating the issue of sexism from different dimensions by using the psychoanalytic literary theory, and the feminist theory. These two theories are used to examine the personality of the Protagonist, and how it enabled her to resist patriarchy, the traditional gender roles, and oppression that were recurrent in the black community. It analyzes also stages of Janie's transformation from a naïve girl to a strong independent one in light of circumstances of sexism and patriarchy. The novel proves that Black females can be as independent as any other women in the world as far as they have both the power and the will to be so. Since Hurston wrote the novel to change the world's perception about the Black woman, the study serves as a support to this claim by providing an objective analysis about Janie Crawford's mechanisms of resistance.

This first analytical chapter is concerned by the psychoanalytic and the feminist features that characterize the novel, so it tries to highlight the aspects that make the novel

conformant to both of the theories. Therefore, the chapter sheds light on the relationship between Zora Neale Hurston and her novel. This shows on one hand how passionate Hurston is as a feminist figure who took her own personal experiences as a testimony to exemplify the power of the Black woman, and on the other hand, it shows how Hurston projects her pain in the story as a tool for healing it from all kinds of psychological and social pressures that she has been put through during her life. As a result, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* does not only mirror the historical dimension of the twentieth century black community and the struggle of women at that period of time, but also the personal dimension of Hurston's life, which in turn provides an authentic depiction to the sufferance of Black women. Moreover, the analysis of Janie's personality according to Freud's theory of personality shows that Janie as she grows up, she develops the ability to balance her decisions through the Id, Ego and Superego. According to the analysis, it is noticed that Janie in her adolescence had the tendency to submit to the norms of her society, however, in her quadragenarian period she was driven by her Id that represents her own desires, which in turn means that she reached a level of self-sufficiency that drove her to follow her desires regardless to the traditional gender roles. Additionally, according to the feminist theory, and through the analysis, the novel proved to include certain feminist features starting from the nature of the story, as the protagonist is in quest for her voice and liberty within a patriarchal society. Also, it depicts how the protagonist challenges the regular social norms, by indulging in a relationship with twelve years younger boy, and establishes her life with him. In sum, the ending of the novel proves that Janie is brave enough to challenge, divert, and prove her existence as a free woman within a patriarchal community.

The second analytic chapter analyzes the protagonist's stages of growing up by means of both the psychoanalytic literary theory and the feminist one. Genuinely, Hurston shaped the personality of Janie Crawford in a way that was not similar to the traditional representation of

black women, who were considered submissive and weak creatures that should conform to men's dominance. Conversely, Janie Crawford represents the ambitious and the dream-seeker side of the Black woman with a personality strong enough to fight in the sake of destroying the stereotypical images of her fellow women. Accordingly, the analysis of Janie's first stages by means of Eric Erickson's psycho-social development concludes that in this period Janie did not explore her sexual identity to the fullest. This incident that led her to jump to the second stage with a psychological crisis that drove her to look for her identity in the wrong place. It is important to mention that this crisis have been repressed within her until the third stage, which makes it the first reason why she challenged anything to fulfill her repressed sexual desires.

The second stage, subsequently, by means of Karen Horney's theory of Basic Anxiety represents the period of transition from adolescence to young adulthood, and the results show that Janie first opted for integration with her first two husbands whom she thought they would endow her with feelings of admiration, but when they did not, she opted for isolation from people as a mechanism of defense from feelings of helplessness. Hence despite the difficulty of this period, Janie confirms that she was flexible in opting for different solutions for her problems. However, the third stage by means of Eric Erickson's psycho-social development shows that the virtue of love was Janie's power to resist her community and to fulfill her sexual desires .After all, the result of her stages of growing up can be seen through two perspectives; as a woman, and according the psychoanalytic literary theory, Janie Crawford proved her capability to bear the pain of the social pressures and the effect of hasted marriages to build a life basing on her own standards. The analysis also demonstrates how Janie was able to take serious decisions about her life basing on her own wishes. The latter confirms that Janie knew what she needed, and what she deserved a sense self-appreciation. Nevertheless, as a Black woman and according to the feminist theory, Janie Crawford proved

to be the typical Black woman who was powerful enough to resist forms of oppression, male dominance and subordination in her community. Despite the harsh circumstances she grew up in, she managed to bite the bullet and fight for her dreams and continue her life with a deep feeling of self-sufficiency and self-liberation.

The study place itself as an opposition to recurrent criticisms about the novel, since some critics claim that it does not conform to the principles of feminism because the protagonist showed dependency on men, and that the novel is a quest for a man rather than a voice, or liberty. Well the results of the analysis suggest that Janie indeed she was looking for a man, but the fact is that she did not a want a man as a “body”, but rather as feeling; in other words, Janie was looking for the feeling of love within the framework of marriage. So how come this was regarded as problematic while it is many girls’ wish by her age! Moreover, the way the story ends foretells Hurston’s objective behind the novel, which was that women continue their path towards freedom with or without a man in their life, and that what exactly happened with Janie as she killed her husband to rescue her life, and continue her journey towards independence.

Notes

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1. The mule is an animal of mixed parentage (donkey and horse), usually the offspring of a jackass and a mare. Mules are frequently sterile and are employed as beasts of burden to labor for their masters. However, mules are stereotypically portrayed not as docile but rather as stubborn and unpredictable animal. (Haurykiewicz 46). And it is used frequently in Hurston's novel to portray how women were perceived in the eyes of the other.

 2. Sojourner Truth was a famous African-American abolitionist and a civil rights activist whose name has been linked to defending women's rights and liberties. Although she was born a slave, she carried a sense of liberty that urged her to escape slavery in search for freedom. She was famous by her outrageous speech "Ain't I a Woman" in Ohio 1851 against gender inequality at Women's Rights Convention.

 3. Capitalism in the United States was a socio-economic system in which resources of production were privatized. Owners of these resources regulate and control the markets in a way that guarantees profits. For further reading about the impact of this system on working class blacks, see Marable 121-26

 4. Blaxploitation is a term appeared in the early 1970s to refer to the cinematic genre of films dedicated to the blacks. "Blaxploitation movies is shown as underdogs fighting their way, often in a violent manner, up the social structure. Gangsters and shady entrepreneurs, pimps, drug dealers and pettycriminals are populating the screen" For indepth reading about this idea, see Drozdowicz 7-9

 5. There is no exact definition to the term Womanism, but it has been associated with black feminism. King Kimberly defines it as "integration of ethnic and feminist consciousness among women of color" (Enns and nutt 94).

 6. Psychological reader-response is a type within the theory of the Reader-Response Criticism. "It is the theory looks at the motives and what interpretation reveals about the readers themselves. Our responses to characters are based on our interpretations, which are products of our personal fears, defenses, needs, and desires we project onto the text" (Timoteo)

 7. A person whose age falls between 40 and 50

 8. Defence Mechanisms are used unconsciously by humans as a protection from certain feelings like helplessness, anxiety, or fear. "With the ego, our unconscious will use one or more to protect us when we come up against a stressful situation in life. Ego-defense mechanisms are natural and normal. When they get out of proportion, neuroses develop, such as anxiety states, phobias, obsessions, or hysteria." (McLeod)

⁹. The term muliebrity is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “the stage or condition of being a woman. Or possessing full womanly powers” It is used to describe Janie's transformation from a submissive character to a female with strong identity and capability to challenge anyone.

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