



Woolf and Morrison: A Comparative Study

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
the degree of M.A. in English.**

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Preface

I have prepared this dissertation in partial requirements for the degree of M.A. in English. I decided to work on this topic because an investigation about Woolf and Morrison: A comparative Study seemed fascinating to me. The idea actually crossed my mind when I talked to my sir Mr. Asit Roy Choudhury about my dissertation.

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1. Introduction

Virginia Woolf is a prominent and powerful feminist writer of the 19th & 20th century .She is also a highly influential journalist and critic .She is a forerunner of women' liberty. She served numerous feminist criticisms during her lifetime. The suppressed and oppressed women had been struggling for two centuries for the recognition of their cultural roles and political rights. Then some writers came forward to inspire or encourage these women through their writings .Among them, Virginia was an important precursor .Her contribution to English literature, especially to fictional world is much more remarkable than that of other feminist writers. In A Room Of One's Own, she gives a unique account of why a woman must have money and a room of her own in order to write fiction .It has become a classic statement of feminism.

Woolf has been appreciated as a high skilled writer of various aspects of literature .She was, probably , very much interested in writing fictional pieces such as novels ,short stories etc. She felt she had a great obligation to raise the abandoned women .So to fulfill her aim, Woolf continued writing. pacing in different branches of literature, especially in fictional literature .In addition to ,providing various persuasive elements she was able to construct some high-grade novels, in which her main strategy is to indicate the miserable lifestyle of women .As the writer says- "The history of England is the history of male line, not of the female". That is while men were sailors or soldiers, women were either beautiful or red-haired or a Queen kissed one, as if it were a great glorification for the women of that time.

Woolf has taught us to see the obstacles and to see that chief among them is internalization of the deadly images of women created in art .Any writer's desire to come into language is a burden. The female writer has language limitation boundary

where expression fails. One of the practical reasons of women's silence in writing field was-nobody prompted them to write anything ,rather they were totally deprived of getting the scope of education and of sufficient time to think of something for writing .Here we should keep in mind that art and literature are the two branches of high-leveled perception of knowledge .So it deserves a great enthusiastic attention from any writer who wants to create an effective and productive literary piece .But the women of that era were discouraged and deceived by the whole social condition created ,according to the writer ,by the male masters. Woolf discusses when the feminist writer started to write novels and faced many difficulties .To compose a high-leveled novel, one has to attain certain qualities. But the women writers could not easily live with a long, Significant and implicative sentence.

When women were mostly conscious of their own right and recognition, the seed of feminism firmly grew in their hearts. And the novels written by them became full of pleading of their own problems and sufferings. But it is not a satisfactory feature of any well-constructed novel. Woolf recommends women to overcome their personal emotions and passions. They have to have the sharp eyes to see the outer world where the mystery of life is hidden. It is very much courageous and sincere that nowadays the novels written by women are full of various subject matters. Their creative faculty is developing gradually. They are dealing with various thoughtful subjects in their novels. In the modern time, many women having a great deal of individual talent appeared as writers and they are also able to compose such writings that are almost equal to the writings of the male writers.

Woolf's perspective in A Room of One's Own is that every woman needs a room herself where she can find something for her own where they will be busy thinking about herself keeping everything beside. In society women are very busy doing many things.

they do not have time to take care of themselves. In patriarchal society, we always take care of others, so it is impossible to manage sometime for own selves. In A Room of One's Own Virginia Woolf describes the novel as leaving a shape on the mind's eyes. Woolf prophesies that 'Women in time to come will write fewer novels but better novels and not novels only but poetry and criticism and history'. The writer here also mentions that women must have leisure, money and room to themselves in order to write poetry and other literary pieces.

Toni Morrison was born Chloe Anthony Wofford in the northern Ohio city of Lorain, the second four children of George and Ramah Willis Wofford. Among the legacies from her family that influenced Morrison's life and writing are a strong black self-image .Her father imparted to his daughter a strong sense of black identity. Morrison's observations about the erasure of the past and the need to reclaim it signal a concern with history in all her work –essays, novels, interviews. Her novels take that task of recovery seriously, involving a reconstruction, revisioning and revisiting of the past. Morrison's expressed desire to represent the 'presence and heartbeat of the black people', her writing is very attentive to historical specificity, which resists any monolithic categorization of black identity. Toni Morrison's prominent novels are *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *The Black Book*, *Song of Solomon*, *Tar Baby*, *Beloved*, *Jazz*.

Toni Morrison holds an unusual position within the ranks of black female writers. Her work is clearly linked to her race, identity, gender and feminist concerns. Morrison strongly insists that her literary context is essentially African American and Beloved describes slave narratives as its precursors. Beloved is a very first novel by Morrison to

take on the subject of slavery and identity crisis. Morrison's Beloved it does not talk only about a woman, but also about a poor Niger woman.

In Beloved, it is the intent of Morrison's art to show off its own ability and power. She works in her own way. Beloved combines the personal quest theme with the collective memory of racial brutality. This book is elegiac, pastoral, sad, sweet and mysterious. This novel is the incarnation of Sethe's baby girl and of her most painful memory –the murder of her daughter to protect her children from slavery.

Linda Krumholz says, “ In her last moments ,Beloved stands as a contradictory image ,both as the African ancestor ,the beautiful African Mother, connecting the mothers and daughters of African descent to their pre-slavery heritage and power , and as the all-consuming devil child .Morrison resurrects the devil-child, then spiteful, beautiful , painful past ,so that Beloved –and the novel – will live on to haunt us”.

In her novel Beloved Morrison examines the Question of Identity. She explores how the text itself expresses issues of identity .Her explorations of the theme of identity calls upon the treatment of self – image particularly in the context of slavery. Black women's particularity is transparent because of racism any failure of white women to recognize their own particularity continues that racism. Toni's work has provided a new voice for African Americans and has focused clearly on the 'double burden' of black women who struggle against racial prejudice and a male-centred society.

Toni Morrison says,” This has got to be the least read of all the books I'd written because it is about something that the characters don't want to remember, I don't want

to remember ,black people don't want to remember ,white people don't want to remember .I mean , it's national amnesia”.

Safia Mirza says, “Black women bring to feminism lived realities of a racism that has marginalized and victimized them in the wider world”.

This novel Beloved examines the dehumanizing impact of slavery, one might expect that the white man, the monstrous enforcer of slavery's brutality, would haunt the black community .The haunting occurs, however,within a social structure relatively insulated from the white community and in its most intense form, springs from the “rememory “ of an ex-slave in the form of one victimized by slavery.

Susan Bowers says,” What Beloved suggests is that tomorrow is made possible by the knowledge of yesterday, a knowledge that for contemporary African – Americans can be gained from imagining what it was like to walk in the flesh of their slave ancestors”.

In these two novels, the two writers describe the true condition the women in the society. Woolf describes the condition of whole female folk, but Morrison describes specifically the condition of black female folk. The writers show the humiliating condition of the helpless women of different ages. Both hope that in future talented women will come forward to write many persuasive and subtle literary pieces which will express their individual identity.



2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design:

I analyzed the two novels Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own and Toni Morrison's Beloved by using Feminism, Black feminism and Gynocriticism theory.

I collected my materials sources from books, journals, articles and internet. When I selected my materials I carefully examined whether Feminism (Identity Crisis) occurred in these sources.

2.2. Theoretical Framework:

Primary Sources: Books, Articles, Journals and Internet.

Secondary Sources: Discussion with some scholars.

As it is an academic research and the researcher could not buy costly books for this research because of the limitation of her budget, she could not find any sources from where she could determine a theoretical framework . Since the subject of this study is relatively a new one and many thesis have not been found on this, the researcher could not collect any more information .I went to different libraries, browsed, internet to get suitable sources for my research. I discussed difficult terms with some scholars like Asit sir and Jaharat Ara mam.

2.3. Describing the process:

I found some theories like Feminism, Black feminism and Gynocriticism. I found them in several books, internet. I studied these two books A Room of One's Own and Beloved.

Then I found how the theories are relevant to the novels.

My finding is as follows:

These two female writers talk about female related problem which is crisis-Identity crisis. Women folk never come out from this problem if they won't. These two writers discuss women folk's obstacles. Society women are very busy doing many things. They do not have to take care of themselves. In patriarchal society, we always take care of others, so it is impossible to manage some time for own selves.

In these two novels, the two writers describe the true condition the women in the society. Woolf describes the condition of whole female folk but Morrison describes specially the condition of black female folk. The writers show the humiliating condition of the helpless women of the different ages. Both hope that in future talented women will come forward to write many persuasive and subtle literary pieces which will express their individuals identity.

The women were mostly conscious of their own right and recognition, the seed of feminism firmly grew in their hearts. They recommend the women to overcome their personal emotions and passions. They have to have the sharp eyes to outer world where the mystery of life is hidden.

2.4. Obstacles Encountered:

I faced problems in collecting literature reviews for my thesis. Since very few works have been done on this topic, I tried my best to collect articles, journals or any book written on this topic.

Some times I could not find the name of writer of review when I collected literature review from internet. Besides there are very few articles in the internet on this topic. I also faced difficulties to enter British Council Library. However, I tried to make the best use of all the materials I could lay hands on and planned the scheme of my research work.

3. Defining Theories



3.1 Feminism

The most important and most historical awareness was created during 1960-1970 for the Feminist literary criticism. The 'Women's where the significance of the images of women promulgated by literature. At first we shall see how the literature of women would be different and special. We need to reconstruct and revive, those women novelists, poets and dramatists, which have been forgotten from decade to decade. Canonicity is the development of male writing and women's writings were neglected. Some women wanted development of the female writing .As earlier writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf had recognized ,many of the political discourses which developed such concepts claimed to be universal but actually excluded women from full citizenship and sovereignty. Feminism has been one of the most powerful movements in thought to expose some of the contradictions and inadequacies of this political legacy.

In the book, A Vindication of the Rights of Women, Wollstonecraft set out the fundamental feminist demand that women be recognized as sharing with men the capacity and the right to be regarded as autonomous beings , entitled to recognition as citizens in the civic sphere. While demanding rights for women , Wollstonecraft made no attempt to deny sexual difference. On the contrary, she saw women as having quite specific social and familial duties. Women always want their dignity as citizens. There was a lack for dignity and rights. Women were the subject of men

but not citizens. Woman is property of men. The society does not give any position of women, she is like slave. The matter of women's rights stands very insecurely on the border between legitimacy and illegitimacy, depending on which we are talking about women's rights. The plight of women folk in the society is very miserable. Some laws should be made or saving the women folk from their problems and suffering now. The laws should be made for improving the present lots of the women. For years, women are deprived. Women want dignity, pride, that movement about rights of equality. It seems that women folk are progressing in the present circumstances but in reality it is near about zero. The notion of equality is based on cultural equalities and political. Laws should be reformed. The main notion of women rights generally. The political debates about rights and citizenship during the revolution brought immediately to the question of women's rights. The academic world was itself an arena of struggle for feminists. Women were still tiny minority of those with secure academic posts and feminists were a marginal.

Wollstonecraft argued, women needed, 'a civil existence in the state' whether they were married or single both as a means of improving their private circumstances as a means of contributing to the common good. While her sense of the importance of women's social and civic contribution is a crucial aspect of Wollstonecraft's feminism, an equally important one is her explosive anger over the treatment of women in her day. In this universe, they have not own shelter. In Victorian period, the women deny the rights of vote . Women were not given any citizenship. They could not own property. The society did not treat like citizens. The preoccupation of political economy with the accumulation of wealth and with production, distribution and exchange went along with an emphasis on industry and on manufactures: on

factories and workshops, which were predominantly male places of work, rather than on the continuation of domestic and small-scale production in which women were engaged. As a result, political economy had almost nothing to say about women's paid work and about their role in providing the capital, the techniques, and the sources of labor. The problems of women are in the house and outside. They are always prey to raping and other sexual harassment in the society. The movements of women rights are necessary nationally and internationally. The women rights are human rights. These should be improved locally and globally. The women folk should be treated so that they should be given equality with male, both in the house and outside.

The women folk face obstacles in every sphere. Male have friends, women have relatives and slaves have masters. In their family life, they enjoy no freedom and personal space. They do not enjoy any educational right. Their life is only to serve others. Women have no freedom to love, to desire and to do other mental things. Women dream of their own world. Many educated women are equal to male folk in everything. But, in spite of so much fitness, they are led to understand that they are mere women. Their deplorable condition is found in the writing of many novelists. Literature teaches us to be conscious. Though literature, women rights becomes improved. This gives courage to women to get of the strong holds of the tradition ideas and orthodoxy.

“Feminism is to analyze the conditions which shows women's life and to explore cultural understandings of what it means to be a woman” said Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones.

Julia Rivkin said, "Feminism is an analysis of gender that "ignores" race, class, nationality and sexuality is one that assumes a white, middle-class , heterosexual woman inclined toward motherhood as the subject of feminism.

Hornby (2003:489) Said, "Feminism is the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men in other words it is the struggle to achieve this aim."

Mary Wollstonecraft says, "It is justice not charity that is wanting in the world".(Azim&Zaman,1994:15)

This statement is appropriate for the society .In the world; there is no justice in the affairs of female folk. In case of rights and privileges, question of justice comes in .Women folk have no right to speak freely, to do anything freely,even to think freely. Women always want their dignity as citizens. There was lack of dignity and rights. Women were the subject of men but not citizens. Women are properties of men. The society does not give any position. She is like a slave. In the Vindication, Wollstonecraft set out the fundamental feminist demand that women must be recognized as sharing with men the capacity and the right to be regarded as autonomous beings, entitled to recognition as citizens in the civic sphere. While demanding rights for women, Wollstonecraft made no attempt to deny sexual difference. Women should be conscious about their rights of equality. They will have to create a strong hold for own rights of equality.

Woman had been struggling for two centuries for the recognition of their cultural roles and achievements, and for women social and political rights. Feminist writings

first started when Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of Right of Women in 1792, Stuart Mill's The Subjection of Women and the American Margaret Fuller's Woman in The 19th century. Feminist movement got a new turn when in 1920 in U.S.A. Women got the right to vote after a long struggle. As a distinctive and concerted approach to literature, feminist criticism was not inaugurated until late in the 1960s.

Feminist criticism is moral because it is one of the central problems of Literature is that in much of it women are not human beings, seats of consciousness. Feminism has become more entrenched in the academy. Women's Liberation Movement became increasingly difficult to contain differences among women within a single movement and the idea of a universal sisterhood. The differences around issues of sexuality and 'race'. Women have continued to be active to the present day in single issue campaigns around for example, reproductive rights, violence against women, women's legal rights, the peace movement. Feminist ideas have also had some influence within mainstream politics and wider public debates. Academic feminism has been influenced by these changes in feminism politics, with feminists theory itself becoming more particular. The recognition of difference among women has become a central theoretical issue in its own right. Feminists have become aware of the sources of pleasure in women's lives as well as the sources of pain and deprivation; The meaning and discourse is not limited to explorations of pleasure, play and leisure. Feminist analyses of the development of discourse have addressed such issues as the legal regulation of women's lives and the maintenance of heterosexual hegemony.

Early Feminist criticism drew extensively on *Simone de Beauvoir's* The Second Sex a work which had initiated the process of analyzing the social construction of gender and of distinguishing between sex and gender ;and on Kate Millett's Sexual Politics which analyzed the system of sex-role stereotyping and the oppression of women under patriarchal social organization.

Elaine Showalter claims that "If one can see A Room of One's Own as a document in the literary history of female aestheticism and remain detached from its narrative strategies, the concepts of androgyny and the private room are neither as liberating nor as obvious as they first appear. They have a darker side that is the sphere of the exile and the eunuch".

A Room of One's Own is considered the first major work in feminist criticism. Woolf deploys a number of methodology –historical and sociological analysis, fictional hypothesis, to answer her initial question of why there have been so few female writers. Her position is that a woman must have 500 pounds a year and a room of her own if she is to write creatively. A Room of One's Own is a forcefully argued and thoroughly documented Polemic, against male privilege, male prejudice, male vanity and the state to which male domination has brought the world. Woolf suggests that the “true” nature of women will only be approached in fiction. When women are sufficiently independent not only in a financial sense, but in the sense of being freed from social and cultural restraints to explore the quotidian, the everyday lives of people in the world. She wanted, women folk make a room of their own with bravery. Virginia Woolf writes of many intelligent guidelines for any writer in this book. She offers a suggestion that one should write with an androgynous mind allowing both the softness of the feminine and

the power of the masculine to come forth in words. A writer must not fear another's opinion but instead believe so forcefully in one's words that criticism cannot cause dishonesty of talent. And of course she is resolute in the fact that a writer needs a room of one's own to come to his or her center and in order to bring forth greatness without prejudice.

Authors write about the African-American experience to psychological and social effects of Slavery. African-American novelist Toni espouses a political ethical perspective that integrates past memories of an historical struggle among communities. Beloved is a very well written book about a black woman. Sethe, her child Denver and the hardships that they overcome. Toni's fiction provides an exploration of the effects of dominant American Cultural values, otherwise known as "apple pie" ideology on the African-American community. Morrison's most technically sophisticated work to date using flash backs fragmented narration and shifting viewpoints .She explored the story of the events that have led to the protagonist Seth's crime.

In our observation, we find different feminists true condition of female folk. They are always suppressed by patriarch society. The condition of female is the same. They have no dignity in the society .In our research we find Woolf's A Room of one's own , they have no strong position of female folk in the society and also Morrison's Beloved the black female slave who is suppressed in her life. Sethe is protagonist and suppressed character. In Beloved we find the black female suppressed about her class, color, racial condition.



3.2 Gynocriticism

The feminist practice or women's liberation, feminist literary criticism is a modern criticism approach that just started in 20th century. The chief pioneers of this approach are English writer Virginia Woolf and French writer Simone de Beauvoir. They firstly had an insight into the twist of the female image and sexism in the male writers' works. Since 1960s, Kate Millet with her Sexual Politics made the feminist literary criticism become a theoretical branch. American poet and writer Adrienne Rich, Mary Ellmann, Professors Sandra Gilbert, Susan Gubar and Elaine Showalter, French writer Helene Cixous also contributed a lot. In this period, feminist criticism transformed from the "Female Aesthetic" to "Gynocritics". The Anglo-American feminism, which divided into three phases: criticism of the women writers in history or spade works for "Gynotexts" and feminist discourse for female identity. The first phase is concerned with women as reader-with women as the consumer of male-produced literature and with the way in which the hypothesis of a female reader changes our apprehension of a given text, awakening us to the significance of its sexual codes. A representative critic in this phase is Kate Millet with her Sexual Politics. To the second phase, Elaine Showalter helped to wage a more regular warfare. She proposed a set of strategies and principles, which contribute to the formation of the identity of an American feminist theory. The most important concept of "Gynocriticism" in this phase is to study women's writing in relation to female experience and develop out of it a theory appropriate to women. Till the last phase, the Anglo-American feminist criticism approach and the French approach began to merge in some aspects. Showalter called gynocritics the "Second phase" of feminist criticism, because it succeeded and built upon an earlier phase of "feminist critique", which had focused on women as the writers of male texts.

Gynocriticism is a criticism which concerns itself with developing a specifically female framework for dealing with works written by women, in all aspects of their production, motivation, analysis and in all literary forms. Showalter's says "Outlines a literary history of women writers; produces a history, which shows the configuration of their material, psychological and ideological determinant, and promotes both a feminist critique (Concerned with women readers) and a " gynocritics" (Concerned with women writers).

There are three main concerns of gynocriticism. One concern is to identify what are taken to be the distinctively feminine subject matters in literature written by women- The world of domesticity.

Another concern is to uncover in literary history a female tradition incorporated in sub-communities of women writers, who were aware of, emulated and found support in earlier women writers who in turn provide models and emotional support to their own readers and successors. A third undertaking is to show that there is a distinctive feminine mode of experience, or subjectivity.

Showalter said "Gynocritics is related to feminist research in history, anthropology, psychology and sociology. All of which have developed hypothesis of a female subculture including not only the ascribed status and the internalized constructs of femininity but also the occupations, interactions, and consciousness of women".

In gynocriticism, feminist studies have served to raise the status of many female authors who are more or less scanted by scholars and critics and bring into purview. Other authors who have been largely overlooked as subjects for serious consideration. Showalter finds the phallic prejudice. the female writers are easily to be submerged in the river of literary history. Then she raised the assumption of "female sub-culture" which has its own subjects and images. Gynocritics is related to feminist research in

history, anthropology and sociology, all of which have developed hypothesis of a female subculture including not only the described status and internalized consciousness of women (Showalter, 1979). Gynocriticism is the traditional period of feminist criticism.

In literature of their own, Showalter divides the tradition of women's writing from 1840 to the present into three phases which she calls feminine, Feminist and female. In the Feminist phase, from about 1880 to 1920, women reject the accommodating postures of femininity and use literature to dramatize the ordeals of wronged womenhood.

Gynocriticism concentrates not on women as readers, but on women as producers of texts on history, themes, structures and genres of literature by women. Gynocriticism is turning to the authority of women's writing in order to learn what women really feel and experience.

Showalter says, gynocriticism begins at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary history, stop trying to fit women between the lines of male tradition and focus instead on the nearly visible world of female culture. Kristeva claims as the ultimate purpose of feminist criticism a decentred vision—one that goes beyond difference and beyond gender.

Showalter identified three historical phases of women's literary development: The "feminine" phase, which women writers imitated the dominant tradition; the "feminist" phase, which women advocated minority rights and protested and the "female" phase, which dependency on opposition—on uncovering misogyny in male texts — is being replaced by a rediscovery of women's texts and women (Guerin, 2004, P-198)

In the first phase, female writers imitated the traditional mode of mainstream culture, in the second phase, female writers began to oppose these traditional value rules, the third phase is the self-discovering period, female writers began to search their own identity without relying on the opposition with male.

In The Madwoman in the Attic, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar rebuilt the visage of female nature or the femininity, which is constructed by the social culture.

Gynocriticism is the transitional period of feminist criticism, especially the Anglo-American feminist. Gynocriticism is complex study method, object and quality, also leads abundant theoretical achievement.

Gynocriticism is related to feminist research in history, psychology and sociology, all of which have developed hypotheses of a female subculture. Elaine Showalter calls Gynocriticism which concerns itself with developing a specifically female framework for dealing with works written by women. In her 'gynocriticism' which the concerns of the woman as writer are central.

Gynocritics start at the point when we free ourselves from male literary history, stop trying to fit female between the lines of the male tradition and focus on the newly visible world of female culture. It must also take into account the different velocities and curves of political, social and personal histories in determining women's literary choices and careers.

In A Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf argued that economic independence was the essential precondition of an autonomous woman's art. Woolf believed that women's literature held the promise of a 'precious specialty' a distinctly female vision. Representatives of the formal Female Aesthetic, such as Virginia Woolf begin to think in terms of male and female sentences and divide her work into 'masculine' 'journalism' and 'feminine' 'fictions redefining and sexualizing external and internal experience.

3.3 Black Feminism

Black feminist organizing emerged as a direct result of the Civil Rights and black liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Black women experienced racism in the women's movement but they did not merely cede the movement to the interests of white feminists. Black feminist theory explores the issue of how race, class and gender are related to produce an integrated analysis of power and oppression. Black feminism is the complexity and heterogeneity of Black Women's experiences, in sharp contrast to the radical erasure of difference that is inherent in the objectification of African-American women as the "Other". Black women whose activism in the civil rights and Black Power movements had centered on the issue of racial injustice began to discuss the situation as women. A possible narrative thread between and through these histories of identity and debate, examining the meanings and difficulties of Black feminisms and their relationship to cultural and national identities.

From the Mid-1980s racial difference became a key focus for feminist criticism as white feminists at last addressed the absences in their own processes of critical selection and commentary. Barbara Christian complained Black women are tired of being asked to produce a Black feminist literary theory as if I were a mechanical man.

Black feminist criticism shares some of the problems faced by lesbian feminist criticism. As Susan Willis argues in her critical perspective on Black women's writing "Black women's writing is not a mere collection of motifs and strategies but a mode of discourse which enables a critical perspective upon the past, the present and sometimes into an emerging future"(Greene and Kahn Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism, 1985, P-220). In other words, Black criticism was not simply a self naming

distinctive or essentially 'other' school or method alongside white criticism, but was influencing the whole agenda of feminist criticism.

The term 'Black' is radically unstable and related to political positions. An attempt to trace the meanings that surround and inform this term involves an engagement with its geographical, cultural and political indeterminacies, with its reliance on context and time. Black feminist politics include a keen sensitivity to the marked inscriptions of difference and specificity. Black feminism distinguishes itself from White feminisms. The meaning of 'Black' as a racial, cultural, national or political term has implications for the development and meanings of Black feminisms. The relationship between the terms 'Black' and 'Feminism', both of the feminist movement and identities. Racism ensures that black women do not have the relations to patriarchal as white women. White feminist theory and practice have to recognize that white women stand in a power relation as oppressors of black women. Ideologies of black female sexuality do not stem primarily from the black family. The way the gender of black women is constructed differs from constructions of white femininity because it is also subject to racism. Black women are constantly challenging these ideologies in their day to day struggles. The white family structure and related ideologies of 'romantic love' formed under capitalism, are seen as more 'progressive' than black family structures.

The confusion of racial identity with class identity which are revealed as indicative of each other. Feminist identification becomes a matter of uneasy alliances, of negotiating difference, of interpreting the meaning and validity of sexuality, class, heritage, culture and even race. One important struggle, rooted in these different ideological mechanisms, which determine racially differentiated representations of gender, has

been the black woman's battle to gain control over her own sexuality in the face of racist experimentation. It is not just our her story before we came to Britain that has been ignored by white feminists, our experiences and struggles here have also been ignored. These struggles and experiences, because they have been structured by racism, have been different to those of white women. Black feminists decry the non-recognition of the specificities of black women's sexuality and femininity, both in the ways these are constructed and also as they are addressed through practices which oppress black women in a gender-specific but none the less racist way. Feminist theory in Britain is almost wholly Euro centric and, when it is not ignoring the experience of black women 'at home', it is trundling 'Third World women' onto the stage only to perform as victims of 'barbarous', 'primitive' practice in 'barbarous', 'primitive' societies. Black feminism is both a re-evaluation of African femininity in respect of African communities and men and a re-examination of racial and cultural differences between women. The 'authenticity' of origins of cultural identity of race prevail as issues within the politics of Black feminism. Identity politics and debates over 'mixed race' identity, forms of racism and class complicate the broad terrain of 'racial difference' on which 'Blackness' is identified. It is here that the impact of postmodernism on Black feminisms has been, in some ways, enabling. Its corrective against identity politics, against the 'authenticity' of Blackness, allows for multiple Black female identities to be expressed, recognized and valorized.

Mirza(1997) said "A postmodern black feminist identity is not just based on racism and oppression but on recognizing the fluidity and fragmented nature of radicalized and gendered identities. In this sense we can reclaim subjectivity from the cul de sac of

identity politics and reinstate it in terms of a powerful, conscious form of political agency.”

Stevi Jackson says, “Black feminism distinguishes from ‘first world’ feminism and involved in cultural and national ideologies .In order to locate and identify black feminism,the context of academic convention ,cultural domination and cultural currency become determinate factors” .

Pratibha Parmar (1997:67) said,

To assert an individual and collective identity as a black women has been necessary historical process ,both empowering and strengthening .To organize self consciously as black women was and continues to be important that form of organization is not arbitrary, but is based on a political analysis of our common economic and cultural oppression.

Safia Mirza (1997:70) said, “Black women bring to feminism livid realities of a racism that has marginalized and victimized them in the wider world.”

Black women’s particularity is transparent because of racism, any failure of white women to recognize their own particularity continues that racism. This masks the fact that white-ness is every bit as implicated as black-ness in the workings of racism.

Carby (1997:213) said, “Black women are subjected to the simultaneous oppression of patriarchy, class and race”.

Black identity is invisible identity. Feminism identification becomes a matter of uneasy alliances, of interpreting the meaning and validity of sexuality, class, culture and race.

Many black struggles survive with dignity in the face of violence, poverty and humiliation but black identity is identity not built on that alone. The novel Beloved presents the reader with insights into the suffering of black women. In Beloved it is an attempt to free African-Americans from guilt and past suffering. Beloved is a ghost story that frames embedded narratives of the impact of slavery, racism, and sexism of the capacity for love, faith and community of black families, especially of black women during the reconstruction period. In Beloved it is an attempt to free African-American from guilt and past suffering. Beloved suggests that the suffering of the “black and angry dead” is the inescapable psychological legacy of all African-Americans. Beloved is a ghost story that frames embedded narratives of the impact of slavery, racism and sexism of the capacity for love, faith and community of black families, especially of black women during the Reconstruction period.



4. Critical Analysis

The past and present day –to day experience inspired me to learn about feminism because, in this 21st century still enormous discrimination between male and female writer is evident. In this respect I go through various feminism based novels. Among these novels A Room of One's Own and Beloved touch me more than anything else. For this reason I selected this topic for my dissertation.

Feminist criticism's self transformation over the past several decades as it engages with both critiques from within and encounters with psychoanalysis, Marxism, post colonial theory and lesbian and gay studies-have produced a complex proliferation of work not easily subsumed to a description.

Feminism is the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. In other words it is the struggle to achieve this aim. One of the reasons white women have such difficulty reading Black women's work is because of their reluctance to see Black women as women and different from themselves. In a patriarchal power system where white skin privilege is a major prop, the entrapments used to naturalize Black women and white women are not the same .

Virginia Woolf's statement in Three Guineas that "as a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world".

Identity Crisis is actually a vacuum feeling. Identify crisis is a psychosocial state or condition of disorientation and role confusion, as a result of conflicting internal and external experiences, pressures and expectations and often producing acute anxiety. It is distress and disorientation resulting from conflicting pressures and uncertainty about one's self and one's role in society.

I think future researchers and women who are victim in male dominated society will be benefited. This paper may be used as future reference. Therefore, I chose two books of two different writers of the same century as they have talked about the same thing-“Identity Crisis of women” and express, it from two different perspectives.

The famous Delphic shrine to the god Apollo admonished the visitor, “Know Thyself”. This is particularly true and gives complex and changing ideas about what constitutes “the self” and what “knowledge”.

The power of racism to divide black people from one another’s, the argument chosen to emphasize black/white difference will tend to deny the complexity of both black and white experience. Black children learn more positive gender models from their own social networks. It is important to recognize that individuals can simultaneously accept dominant gender stereotypes

basis on which black people and white people come to occupy different societal positions. It is because black women and white occupy different structural positions that many young black women actively resist the gender stereotypes that are constructed as “normal” femininity. Racism does not only differentiate between women and white women, it also differentiates the working class in such a way that in a public context white working class women are advantaged over black working class women and over black working class men.

Black female regroovers are interacting with a group whom by virtue of their race and class position are already in possession of racial, educational and economic capital, which is necessary to participate in the social field. Social distinctions such as gender, race and ethnicity are open to microscopic scouting for their validity as referential categories in contemporary positioning and identity.

Black women talk about their identities are highly gendered. Black feminist thought has the potential to theorize and develop an understanding of how black women come to construct definitions of themselves which are clearly situated in the way they experience their social positions and hence their racial identities.

Black identity is monolithic and essentialist term. Black women's identity can often be measured in relations to be physical! signifies of hair and skin.

Black womanhood illustrates the tension between essentialist and anti-essentialist ideas in the construction of racial identity.

“As subjects people have the right to define their own reality, establish their own identities, name their history as objects, one's reality is defined by others, one's history named only is ways that define one's relationship to those who are subject. (Hook,1989: 42). Women are deprived of equal rights in every sphere of life. They cannot enjoy the same freedom as men enjoy. Since, they are not given equal rights even in literary field, their intellectual world remains crippled. So, no good writings of women come into light. Women always suffer from a crisis-Identify Crises. As everywhere they are either interrupted or discouraged.

Virginia Woolf A Room of one's own talks about the privacy, solitude and silence of home needed for a woman to be a writer. Woolf in the famous novel A Room of one's own elaborates this identical problem faced by women through out centuries.

Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own is a landmark of 20th century feminist thought. Women are historically, have been uniformly deprived of these basic prerequisites. These conditions – leisure time, privacy and financial independence. She writes a history of a woman's thinking about the history of thinking women: her essay is a reconstruction and a reenactment as well as an argument.

As we see Mary Beton, the narrator is stopped at each station and reminded that women are not allowed to do such things without accompanying men while she is crossing a lawn at fictional Oxbridge university and trying to enter the library. As she is a woman, she is given very poor dinner at the women's college. So a thought comes in her mind that her identity is of significance for this unequal treatment because she is a woman, inferior to man. She is a victim of some man made conventions of particular society. Woolf finds same discrimination in the intellectual field where especially men identify women. As women have no identity of their own, no room to sit and write, some thing creative, as they always depend on men's help and favor, they suffer from a life long crisis which is their identity crisis.

A Room Of One's Own is considered the first major work in feminist criticism. Woolf deploys a number of methodologies historical and sociological analysis, fictional hypothesis, philosophy, notably to answer her initial question of who there have been so few female writers. She ties their minority status largely to socioeconomic factors, specifically their poverty and lack of privacy. A woman must have 500 pounds a year and a room of her own if she is to write creatively.

A Room of One's Own Woolf describes money is the primary element that prevents women from having a room of their own and having money is of the almost importance. Because women do not have power, their creativity has been systematically stifled throughout the ages. Women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time. Poetry depends upon intellectual freedom. She believes that the writing of novels lends it self more easily to frequent starts and stops, So women are more likely to write novels than poetry. The financial discrepancy between men and women at the time of Woolf's writing perpetuated the myth the women were less successful writers. women are treated unequally in her society and that this is why have

produced less impressive works of writing than men Woolf describes the central point of a room of ones own is that every women needs a room of her own something men are able to enjoy without question .A Room of Her Own would provide a woman with the time and the space to engage in uninterrupted writing time. During Woolfs time women rarely enjoyed these luxuries Woolf uses the room as a symbol for many larger issues such as privacy leisure time and financial independence.

Through out the literary history most of the writings have been written about women by men. They always remain silent. They do not get any chance to write about themselves, to express their latent thoughts and feelings.

A girl can not find her own room in her father's house. After her marriage she can not use the little property from her father's house for herself. that also is given to her husband. Without thinking for her own she has to do it. If this opportunity was given to her then this lady would prove herself, every inferiority would flee. If a lady has her own money then she would spend it according to her desire. The women society will have to improve gradually. High posts are generally occupied by the men folk only. They consider them self-worthier than female people. In the offices especially the officers of newspaper are controlled by male people.

A Room of Ones own is exposition of the mistreatment and oppression of women as well as an argument .The basis of the argument is that in order for women to be equal citizens, they must be equally funded. They need money to properly think, love and sleep ,as well as live. They need not be burdened with child rearing or house keeping or other traditional female roles. The purpose of this story is to show how women need to maintain leisure time, money and a room of her own so that she can become a writer.

Quentin Bell (1972:43) says, In A Room of ones own one hears Virginia speaking .In her novels she is thinking .In her critical works one can sometimes hear her voice ,but it is always a little editorial .In A Room of ones own she gets very close to her conversational style the conversational voice is there .(Quentin Bell, Virginia Woolf A Biography)

A Room of ones Own is a very open text .It is crammed full with ideas of she uses imagery, voice and story gives the text its lightness.

John Lehman (1972:19) says," It is feminist Propaganda, yet it resembles an almond tree in blossom".

This book is an uncompromising piece of feminist propaganda. She had therefore much to lose and nothing to gain by offending their prejudices. Her honesty is thus shown as remarkable as her sensibility.

A Room of One's Own is an extremely impersonal and defensive book .The entire book teasing sly, elusive in this way, Woolf plays with her audience, refusing to be entirely serious ,denying any earnest or subversive intention. (Elaine Showalter, A literature of Their Own from Charlotte Bronte to Doris Lessing ,1993)

Virginia Woolf's book A Room of One's Own, she wrote, " The backwardness and weakness of women as a group are the result of their social and economic handicaps. If a woman writer seeks recognition as a writer, she certainly has to overcome the barriers of powerful male-dominated society, male exploitation, orthodoxy and economic selfishness. Only a room, a room of her very own can free a woman from this situation. Because, she could hold the keys of the room in her hand and feel the sense of freedom within the four walls of her room. And that freedom would be the same sort of freedom her brother's experience sitting in their own rooms".

In Beloved Toni Morrison has open the maternal narrative in feminist fiction. Women may be treated as slaves, but that does not mean that they are slaves. The novel imagines the impact of slavery on a group of black people. This is a ghost story, a love story, a political novel. This is a period in American history, the year of the civil war of slavery. And black slaves have no own home, no power no own identity. In this story, it is clearly seen that, how a black, woman slave is treated. Here we see, because of lack of confidence and own identity. Toni's novel reflect her desire to draw on the people, places, language values, cultural traditions and racial decide.

Toni Morrison is careful not to make all the whites awful and all the blacks wonderful. We experience American slavery as it was lived by those who were its objects of exchange, both at its best – which wasn't very good –and at its worst which was as bad as can be imagined. It is Toni Morrison's ambition to create a from and a story telling that keeps alive the struggle to remember, the need to forgot and the inability to forget. Something terrible happened and keeps happening and it is not entirely clear what or even when. Though the events of Beloved could be arranged to make a drama, though there is a grand climatic scene, the book is elegy, pastoral, sad, sweet and mysterious. The novel there are similar passages that signal the narrative tension between remembering and forgetting. Sethe worked hard to remember as close to nothing as was safe. Black slaves have no own home, no power, no own identity. Morrison's purpose is not to convince white readers of the slave's humanity, but to address black readers by inviting us to return to the very part of our past that many have repressed, forgotten or ignored.



5. Final Review

I studied Virginia Woolf's A Room of Ones Own and Toni Morrison's Beloved and found different views about identity crisis.

Virginia Woolf's essay A Room of One's Own is a land mark of 20th century feminists thought. She writes a history of a women's thinking about the history of thinking women: her essay is a reconstruction and a reenactment as well as an argument.

Woolf's book A Room of One's Own she wrote, "The backwardness and weakness of women as a group are the result of their social and economic handicaps. If a woman writer seeks recognition as a writer, she certainly has to overcome the barriers of powerful male dominated society, male exploitation, orthodoxy and economic selfishness. Only a room, a room of her very own can free a woman from this situation. Because, she could hold the keys of the room in her hand and feel the sense of freedom within the four walls of her room. And that freedom would be the same sort of freedom her brother's experience sitting in their own room."(Smith.J.1998)

I found the basis of the argument is that in order for women to be equal citizens, they must be equally funded. They need money to properly think, love and sleep, as well as live. The purpose of this story is to show how women need to maintain leisure time, money and a room of her own so that she can become a writer. This book is an uncompromising piece of feminist propaganda. She had therefore much to lose and nothing to gain by offering their prejudices. Woolf's honesty is thus shown as remarkable as her sensibility.

I found many intelligent guidelines from A Room of One's Own. A writer must not fear another's opinion but instead believe so forcefully in one's words that criticism cannot

cause dishonesty of talent. A writer needs a room of one's own to come to his or her center and in order to bring forth greatness without prejudice. Woolf suggest that the "true "nature of women will only be approached in fiction. Women are sufficiently dependent in not only in a financial sense, but in the sense of being freed from racial and quotidian, the every day lives of people in the world. Women make a room of their own with bravery.

This book A Room of One's Own is a very open text. It is crammed full with idea. Money is the primary element that prevents women from having a room of their own and

having money is of the utmost importance. Women do not have power, their creativity has been systematically stifled throughout the ages. Women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time .I found here the room as a symbol for many larger issues, such as privacy, leisure time and financial independence.

My another work about Toni Morrison's Beloved. Black community always humiliated in this world, especially black female. I found here the story telling that keeps alive the struggle to remember. It is elegy, sad, mysterious, grand climatic scene. American slavery as it was lived by those who were its objects of exchange, both at its best which wasn't very good and at its worst which was as bad as can be imagined .Black slaves have no own home ,no power ,no own identity. Sethe wants to save her child beloved from brutal slavery. Morrison's purpose is not to convince white readers of the slavers humanity, but to address black readers by inviting us to return to the very part of our post that many have repressed, forgotten or ignored. It is national amnesia; nobody wants to remember their brutal, painful past.

This book represents a successful working through of American's racial traumas. The trama of Sethe, a mother who could not suffer her children to be taken back into slavery, is not represented through her inability to remember the past; indeed, Sethe appears to suffer from insatiable memory. This story is between life and after life, living and dead, oral and written, self and other.

Almost all system in the world are patriarchal and women all over the world suffer oppression in their daily lives because of their fact. The roles that have been given to women, those of mothers and wives, have also served as an excuse for the suppression of their own desires and voices . Women are still subjected to deprivation and discrimination in the society.

If we look at history, we see that how women were deprived or how women were tortured both physically and mentally. Now a days almost any women can have a career if she applies herself. Women can choose whether or not marry. But women of mid 19th century had no such choices. They lived in a state little better than slavery. During the early to mid 19th century the social order was being challenged and a new philosophy was emerging, imbued with the ideals of liberty,

These two female writers talk about female real problem which is crisis –Identity crisis. Women folk never come out from this problem if they won't. These two writers discuss about women folk's obstacles. Society women are very busy doing many things, they do not have to take care of themselves. In patriarchal society, we always take care of others, so it is impossible to manage some time for own selves.

In these two novels, the two writers describe the true condition the women in the society. Woolf describes the condition of whole female folk but Morrison describes specially the condition of black female folk. The writers show the humiliating condition of the helpless women of the different ages. Both hope that in future talented women

will come forward to write many persuasive and subtle literary pieces which will express their individual identity.

The women were mostly conscious of their own right and recognition, the seed of feminism firmly grew in their hearts. They recommend the women to overcome their personal emotions and passions. They have to have the sharp eyes to see the outer world where the mystery of life is hidden.

6. Conclusion

As one critic observes that under the gender revolution of 1970's women writing about women stress a strong element of protest like their western counterparts. The women of the 90's are a mother, a wife, and a daughter struggling to keep her own identity. Her circumstances and her aspiration make for very difficult choices, family or finance, dream or dependence, career or cooking. It is not only the women's life that receives the exclusive attention but by focusing her experiences women writers explores the social and familiar constructs. Women have been learning to know and discover themselves fighting in a world of rapid, radical challenges in all spheres-political, economical and domestic. Women writing are not necessarily feministic. She has freedom of her writing. Women can write about women's life as well as they can also share the problems of society which she can reflect in her writings. Many women writers have discovered or uncovered new facts as well as come up with new stories. Another short coming of women writers is that some of them follow men tradition way of writing. Women have always preferred men's writing whereas they should have their own identity in their writing. Women should have their power in writing in proper time.

I have identified and investigated identity crisis in these two women.

In Virginia Woolf's book A Room of One's Own, she wrote," The backwardness and weakness of women as a group are the result of their social and economic handicaps. If a woman writer seeks recognition as a writer, she certainly has to overcome the barriers of powerful male-dominated society, male exploitation, orthodoxy and economic selfishness. Only a room, a room of her very own can free a woman from this situation.

Because, she could hold the keys of the room in her hand and feel the sense of freedom within the

four walls of her room. And that freedom would be the same sort of freedom her brother's experience sitting in their own rooms".

Virginia Woolf's statement in Three Guineas that "as a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world".

Toni Morrison says," This has got to be the least read of all the books I'd written because it is about something that the characters don't want to remember, I don't want to remember ,black people don't want to remember ,white people don't want to remember .I mean , it's national amnesia".

To conclude, there has actually been little real improvement on the status or position of women during the last two centuries .Their job opportunities have widened, equal rights in educational institutions have been assured and a semblance of equality to women has been granted in many other areas. But women continue to remain victim of veiled inequality, gross in justice and double standard. The work of the two writers under our investigation clearly portray this continuing discrimination.

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