

DIALECTICS OF DESIRE: A MARXIST READING OF SERIAL MONOGAMY IN HURSTON'S "*THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD*"

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Abstract

Marxism, serial monogamy and patriarchy intersect as systems of power, where patriarchal web enforce gender roles through monogamous relationships, limiting women's individuality. In Marxist terms, these relationships mirror capitalist exploitation, with men having authority over both economical resources and social powers, treating women as property or labor to maintain dominance. The present study, titled "Dialectics of Desire: A Marxist Reading of Serial Monogamy in Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God", explores the odyssey of Janie Crawford against the complex backdrop of the early 20th-century African American experience. This article scrutinizes the complexities of serial monogamy within the narrative through a Marxist lens, exploring how Janie's three marriages reflect the dialectical tensions between personal desire and social and economic intricacies. Eventually, this study contributes to a subtle understanding of how Hurston's narrative subverts established presumptions of marriage and financial quest. It also offers critical insights into class struggle and the impact of capitalism on personal relationships during a transformative era.

Keywords: African-American Literature, Patriarchy, Radical Feminism, Race, Marxism, Serial Monogamy, Women Empowerment, Gender Roles.

Introduction

This research investigates how a patriarchal society, intertwined with a capitalist class system, exploits and suppresses women, as depicted in Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). Similar to how capitalism thrives on labor exploitation, patriarchal serial monogamy reinforces class-like hierarchies within personal relationships, often granting men dominance across successive partnerships. The study highlights the struggles and hardships faced by women from marginalized Black communities in the Afro-American tradition. The novel's protagonist, Janie Crawford, exemplifies the victimization of desires molded by societal norms within the frameworks of Marxism and serial monogamy. From a young age, she internalizes societal expectations that prioritize economic stability over personal fulfillment, as emphasized by her grandmother Nanny's insistence on marrying for security. Janie's three marriages represent the tensions between personal desires and socio-economic realities, illustrating how monogamy functions as a tool of control in a patriarchal society, reducing her identity to that of a laborer and a trophy wife. While she yearns for love and self-expression, her desires are shaped and distorted by societal conditioning, complicating her pursuit of authentic aspirations. Ultimately, Janie's journey reflects both the fight for liberation and the enduring impact of systemic oppression, positioning her as a powerful symbol of resilience within African-American life. This analysis offers a critical perspective on how Hurston's narrative challenges traditional notions of marriage and financial ambition while addressing the intersecting oppressions of race, gender, and class.

The Role of Marxism in African-American Literature

Marxism is a socio-political and economic theory developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels that critiques capitalism by emphasizing the conflict between the bourgeoisie (capitalist ruling class) and the proletariat (working class). It advocates for a classless society with communal ownership of the means of production, asserting that class struggle drives historical progress and that capitalism exploits labor for profit. In African American literature, Marxism provides a framework to analyze the intersections of race, class, and economic exploitation, uncovering how capitalism intensifies racial oppression. Authors like Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, and Toni Morrison explore the systemic challenges faced by Black individuals, illustrating how radicalized capitalism restricts opportunities and perpetuates inequality. For instance, novels such as *Native Son* (1940) and *Invisible Man* (1952) examine the economic and social barriers confronting Black protagonists, while Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959) highlights aspirations for upward mobility within a capitalist framework. Similarly, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) can be analyzed through a Marxist lens to explore Janie's pursuit of self-fulfillment amidst racial and gender constraints. The novel underscores the intersection of economic power, patriarchy, and personal agency in the lives of Black women. Through such narratives, African American literature frequently engages with Marxist critiques to expose how racial and class-based exploitation intertwine, revealing the systemic barriers that shape individual and collective experiences.

Monogamy and its Role in African-American Literature

Monogamy, the act of having a solitary accomplice in a heartfelt or conjugal relationship, assumes a huge role in African American writing as an impression of cultural standards, individual desires, and the intricacies of affection, constancy, and power dynamics. In works by authors like Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, and Zora Neale Hurston, monogamous connections are in many cases investigated with regard to race, orientation, and class, uncovering both the imperatives and freedoms that accompany responsibility. For instance, in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), Hurston looks at Janie's excursion through three relationships, each offering an alternate point of view on adoration, power, and independence, while addressing conventional thoughts of monogamy. Through such accounts, African American writing utilizes monogamy to investigate further subjects of character, individual freedom, and the convergence of cultural assumptions with individual longing.

Background of the Study

The convergence of serial monogamy and Marxism in mid-20th - century African American writing uncovers a significant investigation of identity, love, and economical independence. Following the Civil War and Reconstruction, African-Americans confronted foundational bigotry and financial minimization, especially under Jim Crow regulations that implemented isolation and restricted opportunities. The Incomparable Relocation saw many moves from the rustic South to metropolitan focuses, presenting new friendly elements and financial difficulties that impacted individual connections. This period likewise stamped changing gender roles, as African American women stated their freedom and look for profound satisfaction from traditional men and women roles, provoking a reexamination of monogamous connections. The Harlem Renaissance further pushed these topics into the spotlight, observing Black identity and imagination while investigating cultural standards. Through a communist focal point, many creators inspected how material circumstances shape connections, underlining the effect of financial conditions on identity and marriage. Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* delineates this dynamic through

Janie Crawford's three relationships, mirroring her journey of empowerment. The quest for love and need for money arises as a type of opposition against cultural mistreatment, as characters take part in sequential monogamy to recover their personalities and declare their desires.

Literature Review

The major point of view of this study is to investigate the oppression and dehumanization of women in a male-overwhelmed society as portrayed in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* through a Marxist lens, with specific thoughtfulness regarding how monetary shakiness and monogamy exasperate their mistreatment. To accomplish this, the literature review is divided into two sections. The initial segment analyzes past studies on Marxist understandings of various African-American books, focusing on how financial and social designs shape women's encounters of minimization. The subsequent part surveys basic investigations of Hurston's novel according to different points of view, including feminist, postcolonial, and psychoanalytic methodologies, to offer an exhaustive comprehension of the various aspects through which the original has been broke down. Together, these segments give an establishment to a Marxist study of the novel, contextualizing it within broader interpretations of class, orientation, and financial determinism in writing.

The principal Marxist study by Battestin, M. C. (1999). in “*The Economic and the Aesthetic: Dickens's Hard Times and the Limits of the Marxist Critique*”, dissects Dickens' evaluate of modern free enterprise, while examining and discussing the critique of industrial capitalism and the novel's aesthetic complexities.

Then, M. P. (2005) in “*The Politics of Class and Power in Jack London's The Iron Heel*”, investigates London's scrutinize of entrepreneur power structures, stressing the significance of obstruction against oppressive frameworks.

Another article by McGowan, M. J. (2010). named “*Totalitarianism and the Politics of Marxist Ideology in Orwell's 1984*”, offers a Marxist examination of Orwell's tragic novel, talking about the connection among tyranny and class persecution. McGowan contends that 1984 fills in as a wakeup call about the risks of unrestrained power and the control of truth, at last featuring the significance of mindfulness and obstruction notwithstanding harsh frameworks.

One more study by Schmid, D. W. (2015). set forward an article “*Class Struggle in The Great Gatsby*”, looks at how Fitzgerald scrutinizes class differences, showing how the quest for abundance prompts moral and social rot. The article dissects the characters' connections and inspirations, featuring how their longings for abundance and status are interlaced with the more extensive financial scene. Around the same time, (2015) by Chappell, M. W. “*John Steinbeck and the American Narrative: A Marxist Perspective*”, investigates Steinbeck's evaluate of social disparities and his promotion for common fortitude through his books. The proposal breaks down different works by Steinbeck, including *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Of Mice and Men*, featuring how his accounts mirror the financial difficulties of his time and promoter for the freedoms of the working people.

Another article in a similar setting by Harris, S. A. (2016) “*The Influence of Marxist Theory on Toni Morrison's Beloved*” evaluates the financial designs that support racial mistreatment, examining Morrison's characters through a communist system. The work adds to a more profound comprehension of how writing can draw in with complex social issues.

In “*Marxism and the African American Experience in Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man*”, E. P. (2017). talks about the convergence of race and class in Ellison's novel, studying both prejudice and free

enterprise. The article breaks down how the hero's mission for character is molded by the financial states of African Americans, underlining the effect of fundamental mistreatment.

Likewise, Hargreaves, R. C. (2019) in "*Class Conflict in John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men: A Marxist Reading*", R. C. Hargreaves breaks down Steinbeck's portrayal of common battles during the Economic crisis of the early 20s, introducing his novel as an investigate of entrepreneur mistreatment. The article investigates the connections between characters as an impression of the more extensive financial setting of the Economic crisis of the early 20s, featuring the effect of free enterprise on the existences of underestimated people.

Additionally, Stroud, J. A. (2020). in his article "*Class Consciousness in the Southern Gothic: A Marxist Reading of William Faulkner's Works*", dives into Faulkner's depiction of class battles and social shamefulness in the Southern Gothic kind, reflecting profound class cognizance. It advances the comprehension of Faulkner's commitments to American writing, revealing insight into the getting through tradition of class differences in the South. In another article "*Working-Class Voices in American Literature: A Marxist Perspective*", by Tompkins, J. A. (2020) looks at the portrayal of average people in American writing. The article examines how writing reflects monetary disparities and evaluates industrialist philosophies, underlining the depiction of work battles.

Likewise, an article by Haller, S. L. (2021) named "*Revolutionary Roots: Marxism and the American Novel*", investigates how American creators coordinate communist hypothesis into their attempts to scrutinize financial and social designs. It features how subjects, for example, class battle, free enterprise, and estrangement shape accounts, utilizing key American books to outline these thoughts. In article "*Marxist Critique of Capitalism in Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man*", Nguyen, M. B. (2021) investigates how Ellison studies entrepreneur structures through the intersection of race and class, focusing on the dehumanizing impacts of free enterprise. Through a detailed examination of key scenes and characters, the article shows how Ellison's clever uncovered the convergence of race and class battles, making a critical commitment to the comprehension of American writing and its socio-political setting.

One more concentrate by Williams, T. K. (2022) named "*Gender, Race, and Class in Toni Morrison's Beloved: A Marxist Approach*", he looks at the crossing point of gender roles, race, and class in Morrison's novel, contending that it scrutinizes foundational mistreatment and depicts the versatility of African American women in the midst of financial difficulties in a post-bondage setting. Around the same time, one significant article by Fenn, E. R. (2022), "*The Role of Class in F. Scott Fitzgerald's Tender Is the Night*", looks at how class elements shape the characters' lives, introducing the novel as a scrutinize of social separation during the Jazz Age. This communist point of view improves the comprehension of *Delicate Is the Night* as an evaluate of social disparity in American culture.

In 2023, connected with communism two center examinations were distributed, initial one by Weiss, A. C. (2023) "*Capitalism and Alienation in the Works of Philip K. Dick*", that investigates how Dick's sci-fi scrutinizes industrialist social orders, zeroing in on subjects of monetary abuse and individual estrangement. Furthermore, another by Harrison, L. F. (2023) named titled "*The Great Gatsby and the Illusion of the American Dream: A Marxist Critique*", looks at how Fitzgerald studies the Pursuit of happiness, depicting it as a bogus ideal set up by free enterprise, prompting moral rot. The article contends that the characters' quest for riches and status eventually prompts frustration, uncovering the disparities and moral rot intrinsic in an entrepreneur society.

While, Chen, D. L. (2024). in his article “*Marxism and the Contemporary American Novel: Analyzing Colson Whitehead's The Underground Railroad*”, utilizes a communist structure to investigate how Whitehead studies fundamental disparity, especially corresponding to the financial effects of bondage. By breaking down the characters’ endeavors to get away and the monetary elements of subjugation inside American culture, underscoring how these powers shape the existences of the oppressed and their quest for opportunity.

There are various past studies on *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. In this viewpoint, an article by Ben Hmeida (2015), named *The Quest for Feminine Identity in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God: A Feminist Perspective*”, gives an itemized women's activist examination of Janie Crawford's quest for independence and self-definition inside a man centric culture. The study centers around how Janie's connections — especially her relationships — go about as locales of battle between customary orientation jobs and her character development.

Osman, A. (2020) additionally discusses women strengthening in *The Interplay of Gaze and Voice in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*”. He talks about Janie's battle for self-strengthening, delineating the original's investigation of orientation and power. The "look" addresses how Janie is seen and frequently typified by others especially men while the "voice" represents her ability to verbalize her considerations, wants, and character. From this perspective, storytelling and dialogue highlights the Janie's development. Whereas Khan, M. (2020) in “*Exploring the Role of Community in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*”, investigates the significance of community and its impact on Janie's self-awareness. He contends that while Janie's process is profoundly individual, her improvement is altogether affected by the mutual assumptions, tattle, and backing she experiences. Khan features how the local area's aggregate perspectives frequently oblige Janie, yet they likewise give open doors to reflection and self-strengthening.

Brown, L. (2021) in “*Resilience and Identity in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*”, investigates how Janie's flexibility shapes her personality, focusing on her quest for individual flexibility. Brown additionally investigates how Janie's association with nature, especially through the repetitive symbolism of the pear tree, represents her internal strength and getting through craving for opportunity and satisfaction.

Johnson, T. (2022). in “*The Intersectionality of Gender and Race in Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*”, Johnson looks at the interconnection of gender roles and race in molding Janie's excursion. The article further underscores how Hurston's utilization of vernacular discourse and rich social imagery mirrors the lived real factors of Dark people.

Smith, R. (2023) examines in “*Symbolism and Empowerment in Their Eyes Were Watching God*”, about emblematic components that add to Janie's endeavors in manly dark world. Smith features the pear tree, which represents Janie's romanticized vision of self-acknowledgment, and Janie's hair, which turns into an image of independence and opposition against man centric control. In “*Gender Inequality and Identity in Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*”, Al Saadi, H. (2023) looks at how Hurston scrutinizes man centric designs through Janie's connections, featuring subjects of orientation disparity. Moreover, the article highlights Hurston's accentuation on Janie's advancing character and opposition.

Morrison, J. (2024) in “*Feminism in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*”, breaks down the women' activist components, emphasis on how Hurston's narrative style addresses Dark people voices and encounters. Morrison contends that the novel is a spearheading

work of Dark woman's rights, offering a scholarly space where the complicated personalities and their inner battles are focused.

To sum up, while various researches have investigated *Their Eyes Were Watching God* from feminist, postcolonial, and psychoanalytic points of view, and a few works have applied Marxist theory to other African American books, no study till to date has explicitly analyzed the novel through Marxist lens focused on serial monogamy. This absence highlights a prominent gap in the present study, as the complex interplay between monogamy, inner desires, financial instability, and women oppression remains under-explored within this framework. It is this gap that the current article expects to address, offering a new perspective on the financial and social powers deeply shaping the existence of women in Hurston's novel.

Research Methodology

The researchers' qualitative textual analysis is grounded in the perspectives of Marxist feminist theories, drawing on Karl Marx's theory of Marxism (1848) and Frederick Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), alongside the works of Liza Macdonald (1997) and Heidi Hartmann (1976 and 1979). The study embraces an engaging methodology, descriptive in nature focusing on the textual analysis of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to reveal how economic and social factors add to the oppression of women inside the system of serial monogamy in a male dominated society.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (1884) – *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*

Marx and Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) offers a basic verifiable materialist examination of the family structure, featuring the interaction between the rise of private property and the suppression of women. As per Engels, the monogamous family emerged close by the advancement of private property, intended to guarantee patrilineal legacy and the transmission of wealth. For Marx and Engels, this change denoted the family as a vital organization in the maintenance of class disparity. The financial capability of the family was directly attached to the combination of wealth and class influence, with women filling in as vehicles for creating beneficiaries and keeping up with the social generation of the workforce. Marriage, in this unique circumstance, isn't just a profound or social plan yet additionally a site of financial trade where women's bodies and work become commodified to help men and the propagation of capitalist property relations. Similarly the monogamous family structure standardizes gender imbalance and the alienation of women. Women's status inside this construction is one of double subjection: they are taken advantage of for their reproductive work in the family and frequently for their useful work in the more extensive economy, making the family a basic site of both capitalist exploitation and gender suppression.

Liza Macdonald (1997) – *Intersectionality and Marxism*

Liza Macdonald's (1997) contribution to Marxist feminist theory extends the comprehension of the intersection between race, gender, and social class. He evaluates traditional Marxist analysis for its restricted emphasis on class, especially Black women, within capitalist frameworks. She coordinates the idea of intersectionality into Marxist theory, accentuating those frameworks of mistreatment like bigotry, sexism, and classism at the same time and cannot be perceived in isolation from each other. By integrating intersectionality into Marxist analysis, Macdonald gives a structure to grasp how free capitalism's gendered and racialized work divisions make remarkable types of oppression. This approach lines up with the more extensive Marxist feminist venture of

revealing how industrialist abuse is supported through the persecution of women, especially those minimized by the two genders and race.

Heidi Hartmann (1976 & 1979) – *Dual Systems Theory*

Heidi Hartmann's work, especially in her expositions from 1976 and 1979, gives a critical feminist expansion of Marxist theory by presenting the idea of “*Dual Systems Theory*”, which sets that man centric society and capitalism are two interrelated frameworks of oppression. In her 1979 exposition “*The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*”, Hartmann studies the propensity inside Marxist theory to subsume gender under class, contending that male controlled society works as an autonomous framework. For Hartmann, patriarchy is a social framework that awards men command over women’ work, bodies, and sexuality, and this framework is built up by capitalist structures that advantage from the unpaid or underpaid labor of women, especially within the four walls of home.

Marx and Engels' foundational work features the financial elements of the family inside capitalist social system, while Macdonald and Hartmann give basic critical feminist extensions that integrate race and gender into the examination. By perceiving that patriarchy and capitalist society are commonly supporting frameworks, these speculations offer an exhaustive way to deal with understanding the complicated ways by which women’ labor and monogamy are commodified and controlled under capitalist and patriarchal designs.

Analysis and Discussion

The novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) opens with Janie's return to Eatonville, setting up a reflective narrative where she recounts her past, including her forced marriage to Logan Killicks. The story is narrated through the point of view of her grandma, Nanny, whose encounters are significantly formed by the traditions of subjugation and monetary difficulty. Nanny, naturally introduced to subjection, exemplifies an age of Black people who were overwhelmed by endurance under both servitude and the financial imperatives of a post-slavery South. Nanny’s insistence on Janie to marry Logan is deeply knotted to the themes of financial security, desire and marriage. As Nanny explains,

“*Ah been prayin’ fuh it tuh be different wid you. Lawd, Lawd, Lawd!*” (Hurston, 1937, p. 14), her perspective is shaped by a feeling of dread toward weakness and destitution, convincing her to focus on Janie’s financial security as opposed to permitting her to seek after love or inner desires. Nanny's assurance to wed Janie off to Logan Killicks, a more seasoned, monetarily stable rancher, mirrors her conviction that financial security is the only gateway for Janie to acquire economical stability and wellbeing:

[Nanny:] “*Tain’t Logan Killicks Ah wants you to have, baby, it’s protection. Ah ain’t gittin’ ole honey. Ah’m done ole. One mornin’ soon, now, de angel wid de sword is gointuh stop by here. De day and de hour is hid from me, but it won’t be long. Ah ast de Lawd when you was uh infant in mah arms to let me stay here till you got grown. He done spared me to see de day. Mah daily prayer now is tuh let dese golden moments roll on a few days longer till Ah see you safe in life.*” (Hurston, 1937, p. 14).

For Nanny, Logan addresses a way out for protecting Janie from the complexities of life as a Black woman in the South:

“*De Lawd will provide. He know Ah done bore de burden in the heat uh de day. Somebody done speak to me ‘bout you long time ago. Ah aint said nothin’ ‘cause dat wasn’t de way Ah placed you.*”

Ah wanted yuh to school out and pick from a higher bush and a sweeter berry. But dat ain't yo' ideah, Ah see." (Hurstons, 1937, p. 15),

Nanny's choice to focus on Janie's financial stability lines up with Friedrich Engels' (1884) contention in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, which guarantees that marriage in capitalist society frequently works as a device for controlling women and guaranteeing financial security. Nanny, in orchestrating Janie's union with Logan, epitomizes this perspective on marriage as a survival kit. She tells Janie,

"So de white man throw down de load and tell de nigger man tuh pick it up. He pick it up because he have to, but he don't tote it. He hand it to his womenfolks. De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see." (Hurstons, 1937, p. 36),

reflecting her perception that, in a society molded by both man and capitalism, Black woman endurance frequently depends on their reliance on individuals for security and economic needs. By driving Janie into a cold marriage for the sake of money, Nanny inadvertently builds up the Marxist system that Engels investigates — where women are treated as products and their jobs are restricted to keeping up with monetary designs through marriage. Notwithstanding, Janie's disappointment in her union with Logan Killicks features her dismissal of this value-based perspective on marriage, as she wants close to emotional satisfaction and independence as opposed to material security. Her resistance from Logan's requests for actual work on his farm;

"Some folks never was meant to be loved and he's one of 'em'. Ah wants things sweet wid mah marriage like when you sit under a pear tree and think. Ah. . . I want a bloom time, and a green time and an orange time." (Hurstons, 1937, p.56)

Delineates her craving to escape the financial and gendered constraints that Nanny and Logan implemented upon her. Marx's (1848) proclamation that *"the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles"* is obvious in Nanny's life, as her encounters as a previous slave formed how she might interpret endurance inside a framework that offered little independence to Black Women.

Logan sees Janie's commitments as vital for his agricultural achievement, commenting,

"You done been spoilt rotten, ah'm too honest and hard-workin' for anybody in yo' family. Dat's de reason you don't want me. You need to get down off'n yo' high hoss and let me see what you can do" (Hurstons, 1937, p. 29).

This viewpoint lessens Janie to a simple monetary resource instead of perceiving her mankind. Janie communicates her disappointment when she thinks,

"Sometimes Ah'm uh little piece of a woman every now and then, but mostly Ah'm a man's mule and uh woman's need." (Hurstons, 1937, p. 28),

Moreover, on another instance she said ,

"Ah done been married to one man, and he didn't show me nothing but how to work. You work me all day and don't think about what I need. But I ain't that kind of woman no more.." (Hurstons, 1937, p. 35),

She further reflects her growing desire for autonomy, freedom, and emotional fulfillment, which stands in stark contrast to the capitalist values of work, production, and economic exchange. In any case, Janie's struggle arises when she understands that this sort of marriage offers no close to emotional association:

"Ah wants things sweet wid mah marriage lak when you sit under a pear tree and think. Ah..." (Hurstons, 1937, p.25).

Janie's experience is symbolic of the inconsistencies women face under free enterprise as Janie discovers that the financial steadiness Logan offers comes at the expense of her emotional closeness and individual satisfaction:

"She knew now that marriage did not make love. Janie's first dream was dead, so she became a woman" (Hurston, 1937, p.43).

This builds up Marx and Engels' contention that marriage under capitalism decreases women to workers whose work effectively supports the nuclear family, as opposed to permitting them to seek after their own longings. Janie, in any case, won't acknowledge this job, declaring her freedom when she tells Logan she is leaving:

"Ah'm just uh cracked plate." (Hurston, 1937, p.192)

This is Janie's approach to dismissing the enslavement and monetary bondage that Logan — and, likewise, Nanny — anticipates that she should acknowledge. As Marx and that's what Engels' said that *"The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the dominant material force of society is at the same time its dominant intellectual force."*

The, Janie's second marriage to Joe Starks "Jody" as a result of her disillusionment with Logan Killicks who represents stability but not true love that she expected. When Jody arrives in her life, he offers Janie an escape from this cage with lots of golden promises of a grand life. Jody is the mayor of Eatonville, a combination of wealth and ambition that she always desire of. His wealth and power give him a high social status, which he uses to exert control over Janie. At the same time, Jody wants her to be submissive wife. Give her services in a store for earning and keeping her respectable public image. She is again limited to a role where she is ornamental rather than an equal partner.

"Ah want things sweet widout dogwood flowers and asphodel. Ah want to be a woman and have her own mind, have her own power, make her own way in life." (Hurston, 1937, p. 89)

These lines highlighting her desire for recognition beyond mere labor. Joe's dominance over Janie, both socially and economically, reflects Engels' critique of marriage as a system of property relations, where women are treated as commodities. Joe's command over Janie's appearance and discourse, is symbolic of the manners by which patriarchal capitalism suppresses women's voices and personalities, lessening them to instruments of male power and social capital.

"Mah wife don't know nothin' 'bout no speech-makin'. Ah never married her for nothin' lak dat" (Hurston, 1937, p.42)

Heidi Hartmann's (1976, 1979) theory of Capitalism and Patriarchy's intersection further enlightens Janie's battle. Hartmann contends that male dominated society and capitalism support each other by binding women to reliant, subservient roles, which is clear in Joe's treatment of Janie. She is supposed to proceed as an image of his prosperity while being denied office or support in public life. However, Janie's developing familiarity with her abuse drives her to challenge Joe's power:

"Ah ain't got but uh minute to stay here with yuh. You ain't de Jody ah run off down de road wid. You's uh ole man" (Hurston, 1937, p. 56)

In Janie's second union with Joe Starks, monogamy turns into a method for projecting societal position and power. Joe's ascent in Eatonville positions him as an entrepreneur figure who utilizes his union with Janie to state predominance, regarding her as an expansion of his social standing as opposed to as a person with her own voice.

“She must look on herself as the bell-cow, the other women were the gang. So she put on one of her bought dresses and went up the new-cut road all dressed in wine-colored red.” (Hurston, 1937, p. 71)

Their monogamous marriage mirrors the industrialist utilization of union to support abundance and power. Joe detached her from the community and denies her a voice, exerting control over her through his riches and position.

“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.” (Hurston, 1937, p. 82)

Joe fabricates a store and turns into a conspicuous figure in Eatonville, situating Janie as the vendor, a job she hates however is compelled to perform. Janie's work in the store,

“She hated the store like poison, but she kept silent.....” (Hurston, 1937, p. 99)

is one more type of constrained monetary support. Her work serves Joe's desires, not her own, lining up with Macdonald's investigation of how industrialist structures make women's work imperceptible and subordinate to men. Her quiet suffering mirrors Hartmann's (1979) examination of how patriarchal capitalism minimizes women by disconnecting them inside the home or binding them to jobs that serve men's financial power. Indeed, even her union with Joe Starks, at first promising as a means of escape, rapidly transforms into one more type of monetary control. Joe's desire to high social status is reflected by in a way he regards Janie as an augmentation of his property. His comment,

“Mah wife should look lak a mayor's wife, but she doesn't. Ah'm de mayor of de town, and I ain't got no wife dat looks lak no mayor's wife.” (Hurston, 1937, p. 71)

At the point when Joe kicks the bucket and Janie removes the head cloth he constrained her to wear,

“She tore off the kerchief from her head and let down her plentiful hair. The black woman took the ribbon from her hair and let it fall to her waist. Her hair was long and thick, and it swung down like a wave.” (Hurston, 1937, p. 114)

it represents her rejection of the monetary and social requirements that Joe — and, likewise, Nanny— forced on her. In this monogamous marriage, Janie's capability is to keep up with the family and improve Joe's status, not to participate in the open arena or express independence. From a communist view, Janie's work is controlled and limited to serve Joe's financial and social objectives, reflecting how marriage can be a severe foundation under free enterprise.

After Joe's death, Janie starts to declare her autonomy, representing her dismissal of the financial and social abuse she saw in her marriage. This second marriage mirrors Janie's developing familiarity with how marriage can work as an instrument of control and double-dealing.

“She sent her face to Joe's funeral, and herself went rollicking with the springtime across the world. She saw the horizon over the tree tops and the earth and the sky and the seas. She saw the length of her life for the first time and she understood that it was hers to make or mar. She stretched and reached her arms toward the sky as if to embrace it.” (Hurston, 1937, chapter 9)

Janie's physical presence at Joe's funeral, while sending her face, implies that she is participating in the funeral in a way that society expects her to (as a widow), but emotionally, she is detached. She has already emotionally “moved on” from the constraints of her marriage and is no longer bound by Joe's authority or by the expectations society placed on her as his wife. Janie's ultimate

rebellion to Joe's control is a crucial turn in the story. At the point when she stands up to him on his deathbed, saying,

"Ah been a wife a long time, and it's been a good while since I been one. But dat's over. Ah been one long time, but de time is come now. Mah own mind had tuh be squeezed and crowded out tuh make room for yours in me. Ah ain't never been nothin' but a cow to be milked an' a slave in de field. Ain't no call for you tuh beat me, Jody. Ah been hurt too long to be hurt no mo." (Hurston, 1937, chapter 9)

When Joe dies, Janie's act of tearing off her head rag, symbolizes her rejection of the economic and social constraints that Joe imposed on her, including the gendered labor she was forced to perform:

"She took the vase of flowers and set it on the table. She laid her hand on the cloth of the counter and looked at it for a long time. Then she stepped back and looked at him and said: 'You done it, Joe. You done it. She tore off the kerchief from her head and let down her plentiful hair. The long black tresses rippled and shook like a hurricane wind, and she stood there until something fell off the shelf behind her.'" (Hurston, 1937, chapter 9)

Symbolically, her hairs refers to her self-independence and women empowerment and by realizing it, she is signaling that she no more needs to be confined by the financial values and worldly support that her marriage comprised of. Ultimately, Janie's couple with Joe Starks, which at first encouraging freedom, again turns into one more type of financial and social control.

Then, Janie's third marriage with Tea Cake is based on love, companionship and emotional satisfaction. It offers a more evenhanded organization, denoting a shift towards freedom, as portrayed by Marx and actually progressive potential for Engels. It marks a stark contrast from her previous relationships. This time, Janie also financially strong due to inheritance from Joe. So this factor produced power balance in their union. Tea Cake approaches Janie with deference and urges her to participate in practices she was recently denied, mirroring Engels' contention that the freedom of women requires their full reconciliation into the work cycle. He energetically welcomes her to play checkers, expressing,

"It was the time to hear the laughter of people you love and who love you. So she laughed and laughed, so glad to be there in the garden, in the same yard with the man who loved her." (Hurston, 1937, p. 138)

which represents a shift from predominance to shared happiness and friendship. This mirrors Engels' statement that the freedom of women requires their full cooperation in both social and work circles. Janie's intense gesture of longing for Tea Cake because he does not try to take her control through any lust of property or materialistic pursuits as Logan and Joe did.

"He could be a bee to a blossom—a pear tree blossom in the spring. The bloom was gone. The tree was gone. She was only left with the memories of what had been. But the bee continued, and the petals fell. And they did not look like what she had dreamed. She wanted to turn the wheel back to what had been. She longed for the peace and serenity that her father and her mother had found in the world, but that was lost." (Hurston, 1937, chapter 10)

However, even in this apparently heavenly marriage, financial and property issues appeared re-emerge. Tea Cake's command over Janie's funds turns into a disputed matter when he takes her cash and bets it away. Despite the fact that Tea Cake later wins back the cash, his underlying command over Janie's funds,

“Tea Cake ain’t draggin’ off no poor empty-handed woman behind him. Ah seen you take up wid plenty men before now, Janie, but dat’s a different sort of man. He don’t want you to be no help to him.” (Hurston, 1937, chapter 10)

In spite of the fact that Janie partakes in her experience with Tea Cake, her work in the fields like her past work in Logan's fields and Joe's store effectively supports the family. The subject of monogamy is likewise muddled in Janie's relationship with Tea Cake. While their marriage depends on shared warmth, Tea Cake's desire and possessiveness particularly when he beats Janie to attest his strength mirrors the industriousness of male centric control inside the establishment of marriage. Engels contends that monogamy effectively builds up men's command over women's bodies and conceptive work, and Tea Cake's activities exhibit that even seeing someone in affection, traditional elements of power remain. Their relationship addresses a shift from the capitalist model of marriage to a more egalitarian partnership.

“He drifted off into sleep and Janie looked down on him and felt a self-crushing love. So her soul crawled out from its hiding place.” (Hurston, 1937, p. 128)

Janie's personal satisfaction in her relationship with Tea Cake is portrayed as a takeoff from the materialistic and status-driven nature of her past relationships. According to a capitalist point of view, this marriage is less about monetary control and more about sharing close to companionship, mirroring a push toward a more mutual and equivalent organization. In any case, even in this more freed marriage, power elements persevere. Tea Cake's envy drives him to affirm command over Janie, mirroring the waiting impact of man centric and industrialist structures.

“Before the week was over he had whipped Janie. Not because her behavior justified his jealousy, but it relieved that awful fear inside him.” (Hurston, 1937, p. 147)

This moment complicates Janie and Tea Cake's egalitarian relationship, uncovering how even in a marriage in light of affection, the motivation to control and overwhelm can arise. Tea Cake's activities reverberate the entrepreneur's need for strength and control, showing that Janie's journey for genuine opportunity in marriage is as yet obliged by cultural standards.

“Here was peace. She pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder. So much of life in its meshes! She called in her soul to come and see.” (Hurston, 1937, p.193)

According to a Marxist viewpoint, Janie's last reflection represents her break from the capitalist structures that have administered her previous connections. She no longer characterizes herself from the perspective of marriage or monetary need, yet through her own inward feeling of harmony and satisfaction. Hartmann contends that Marxist frameworks depend on male centric control to take advantage of women's work, both inside the home and in the society, and Janie's experience outlines how her work whether on Logan's farm, in Joe's store, or in the Everglades with Tea Cake, is taken advantage by the men in her day to day existence.

Engels contends that monogamy in capitalist societies serves effectively safeguards male property freedoms and guarantee inheritance of wealth through legitimate heirs. Nanny, however determined by adoration and insurance for Janie, eventually underwrites this framework by driving her into monogamous relationships for economic survival. Janie's relationships, especially her initial one with Logan, mirror Engels' evaluate of monogamy as a foundation that guarantees male strength over women. Conversely, Janie's craving for affection, particularly in her relationship with Tea Cake, addresses a test to the customary monogamous marriage that Nanny imagines for her. This mirrors Hartmann's contention that even in connections based on affection, patriarchal

structures and capitalist exploitation actually shapes the dynamics of force and work. Nanny sees marriage as the main way for Janie to safe her future, saying,

"Ah can't die easy thinkin' maybe de menfolks white or black is makin' a spit cup outa you. Ah ain't never been afraid of de white man, but Ah'm skeered uh de menfolks in de town." (Hurston, 1937, p. 72)

In the current novel under study, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, the development of family structures i.e. from the Consanguine family to the Punaluan family lastly to the Pairing family mirrors the movement through different social stages, which can be lined up with the ideas of Marxism, brutality, viciousness, and civilization. Every family type mirrors the intricacies of human connections and cultural standards at various places ever, representing how these elements impact individual characters and their marriages, especially in Janie Crawford's excursion toward self-revelation and financial reliance.

In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), Frederick Engels portrays the consanguine family as an early social design where financial need and familial obligation direct connections, frequently to the detriment of individual longings. Engels attests, *"The first condition for the liberation of the female sex is to bring the whole female sex into the public industry"* (Engels, 1884). Hartmann declares, *"Women's subordination is a product of both capitalism and patriarchy"*. Engels also contends, the family *"perpetuates the enslavement of women"* (Engels, 1884), and Janie's battle to declare her own desires inside this structure mirrors her endeavor to liberated from the historical examples of enslavement that Nanny and Logan address.

Whereas, the Punaluan family structure, addresses a shift during the Age of Savagery toward additional mutual connections, Engels proposes that in this stage, *"The family had already developed its forms, but now, as savagery advanced toward barbarism, it was undergoing important modifications"* (Engels, 1884) showing a more solid comprehension of human securities where organizations are not generally exclusively founded on financial or hierarchical control. Janie's relationship with Tea Cake in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* epitomizes this advancing dynamic, accentuates emotional closeness, and shared friendship. This relationship addresses a shift from unbending, patriarchal designs to a more libertarian type of organization, where Janie tracks down bliss in mutual activities and profound satisfaction. Tea Cake's assertion,

"You got de keys to de kingdom" (Hurston, 1937, p.109)

represents the correspondence and opportunity Janie encounters in this relationship, which distinctly differentiates the mistreatment and control she saw in her past relationships. The development in Janie's connections additionally lines up with Heidi Hartmann's (1979) contends *"patriarchy and capitalism reinforce each other, confining women to dependent and subservient roles."* Interestingly, her relationship with Tea Cake addresses a break from these severe designs, permitting her to investigate an organization in light of profound correspondence as opposed to financial need. This repeats Engels' attestation that the Punaluan family structure mirrors a beginning phase in which familial relations were not characterized by proprietorship and control however by shared care and backing.

The Pairing family, as depicted by Frederick Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), addresses a more advanced and mature phase of familial improvement described by a serious relationship between a man and a woman. Engels notes, *"Monogamy was the first form of the family to be based... on the supremacy of the man... but it is the form in which*

woman achieves the greatest personal freedom" (Engels, 1884). Janie's union with Tea Cake in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* embodies the Pairing family structure, denoting an extreme takeoff from her past relationships, she encounters a relationship established in adoration, friendship, and shared regard. Tea Cake urges Janie to embrace her distinction, expressing,

"Ah needs two things dis world got, and dat's you and de horizon" (Hurston, 1937, p. 142).

Moreover, Liza Macdonald (1997) investigates how women' character in both economical and domestic frameworks can be basically dissected through a feminist Marxist lens. She declares that marriage, customarily outlined as a site of affection and organization, frequently serves entrepreneur interests by building up orientation jobs. In any case, Janie's organization with Tea Cake undermines this story, as their affection is based on correspondence and shared encounters as opposed to financial need or man centric control.

So the development from the Consanguine to the Punaluan lastly to the Pairing family represents a movement through the times of boorishness, hostility, and human progress in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. This movement features the continuous discussion of cultural assumptions and individual desires chasing certifiable association and profound wealth.

Janie ends up in typical gender role. Nonetheless, after Joe's demise, she acquires the store, representing her initial move toward empowerment and self-acknowledgment:

"She was stretched on her back beneath the pear tree, and the blue sky was a great, blue, endless sea." (Hurston, 1937, p. 44)

This newfound liberty permits her to embrace her personality completely, who urges her to communicate her thoughts: "He wanted to make her feel like a woman". Janie starts to recover her voice and state her goals, mirroring the more extensive subject of women' strengthening notwithstanding foundational persecution. Toward the end of the novel, Janie's development typifies strength and self-realization, showing that genuine empowerment comes from both financial freedom and the capacity to characterize one's personality outside cultural limitations. Engels' hypothesis expresses that the emotional connection among a married couple can be accomplish when woman begin procuring outside the home and men simultaneously begin focusing on family tasks, which they conventionally don't think about worth doing. This hypothesis is strikingly outlined in Janie's advancing relationship with Tea Cake, which represents the potential for uniformity and profundity when the two accomplices share liabilities and backing each other's yearnings.

Conclusion

To conclude, in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, Marxism and Serial Monogamy intersect in African-American literature through the exploration of power dynamics, economic dependency, and personal liberty within relationships. It also portrays how capitalist structures shape intimate lives. Marxist analysis reveals how Janie's husbands embody the capitalist bourgeoisie, where personal relationships are transactional and women' identities are defined by their economic stability. By examining her marriages to Logan Killicks, Joe Starks, and Tea Cake, we can understand how monogamous unions serve as both economic and emotional transactions that reflect the broader power dynamics of capitalist society. Marxist theory, also provides insight into how Janie's journey through monogamous relationships is shaped by her evolving class consciousness and her struggle for empowerment.

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