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A Post-Colonial Study of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) and Mary Henderson Eastman's *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin* (1852)

By Dr. Najlaa Hosny Ameen Mohammed
Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia

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APOSTCOLONIALSTUDYOFHARRIETBEECHERSTOWESUNCLETOMSCABIN1852ANDMARYHENDERSONEASTMANSAUNTPHYLLISSCABIN1852

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In summary, the study explains that language and literature combine to construct the post-colonial binary of an American self and a non-American Other, underlining colonial authority. Moreover, both writers interpolate their colonial subjects by incorporating them into a system of representation. Whether the American novelist favors or opposes slavery, the study of colonial discourse leads us to a fuller understanding of colonial institutions.

A Comparative Study

Literature offers a space in which inner and outer worlds can be portrayed from diverse standpoints, and where inner and outer experiences of these different worlds can be exquisitely articulated in narratives that give voice to subjective or collective truths. Imagination and innovation are central concepts informing those nineteenth-century narratives that mapped the collapse of grand enlightenment narratives. This period witnessed a significant change in analytical discourse, laying emphasis on the social and the historical conditions that paved the way for specific forms of representation. As a genre, post-colonial fiction detected and deconstructed the binary opposites inherent in power relations, e.g. other-self, margin-center, and colonizer-colonized. Several scholars, including Ania Loomba, G. C. Spivak, John Thieme, Martin Gray, and Patricia Waugh, have illustrated how postcolonial criticism and discourse sought to emphasize the impact of European cultures on the former colonies. This paper interrogates the positions of two post-colonial American novels written in the nineteenth-century: *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Life among the Lowly* (1852) by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811- 1896) and *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin* (1852) by Mary Henderson Eastman (1818- 1887). Both texts examine the institution of slavery from an entirely different perspective. By examining two critical nineteenth-century narratives, the aim here is to understand nineteenth century writers' perspectives on slavery. The research objective is to scrutinize, highlight and discuss literary post-colonial techniques utilized by the two writers to enhance their views on servitude. The current research intends to test the hypothesis that these two opposing works of post-colonial fiction draw on different literary techniques and methods to convey their specific religious, social and cultural standpoints regarding the institution of slavery, Africa, and the non-European Other.

I.

This research is presented in three sections: the first introduces the theoretical framework by reviewing literature touching on the institution of slavery in Africa, and offering a prefatory note on reviews detailing different post-colonial narratives and perspectives. The second provides an analysis and presentation of the results attained when examining the two texts through the lens of post-colonialism. This approach involves a critical examination of the novelists' literary and aesthetic styles, alongside American representations of the colonized people and their culture. The third section presents a discussion of post-colonial interpretations resulting from scrutinizing the two texts.

Many American post-colonial narratives focused on the institution of slavery during the nineteenth-century, either drawing on a pro-slavery or anti-slavery

Author: Assistant Professor of English Literature, English Department, Huraymilaa College of Science and Humanities, Shaqra University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. e-mail: nhsayn@su.edu.sa

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narrative. Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* exemplifies cogent post-colonial literary attacks on slavery. The novel was praised by Abraham Lincoln, who said, when he met Stowe: "So you're the little lady who wrote the book that started this Great War" ("Harriet", 2012). By this 'Great War', Lincoln is referring to the American Civil War (1861-65). In contrast with this important anti-slavery text, many post-colonial literary works of fiction emerged in the 19th century justifying and defending slavery. For instance, the Southern author Mary H. Eastman's *Aunt Phyllis' Cabin*. Both novels were massively popular, and both were written in 1852 by female authors who achieved remarkable success.

In the nineteenth century, post-colonialism influenced the literary style of those writers who chose to write about the institution of slavery. This post-colonial literary style marked the "collapse of the grand narratives of history, justice, equality, founded on the concept of universal reason, by developing context-specific strategies" (Waugh, 1992: 3). The post-colonial style introduced the aesthetic practices of postmodernism, involving playful irony, parody, intertextuality, allusion, breaking the fourth wall, and juxtaposition, among others (Waugh, 1992: 2). Nineteenth-century post-colonial discourse describes "any kind of resistance particularly against class, race, and gender oppressions" (Thieme, 2003: IXX). *Uncle Tom's Cabin* revolves around the societal effects of the evils brought by slavery, both in general and as it affects slaves themselves specific. The protagonist, Uncle Tom, is portrayed as an angelic character who is loyal to his masters, despite having borne severe physical and emotional torture during his life. His wife, Aunt Chloe plays an active role striving to emancipate her husband when he is sold to a new coarse master. Due to fear of her son becoming a slave, Eliza runs away with him to the north, encountering death more than once, but ultimately surviving to be reunited with her husband George at the end of the novel. Thus, the idealized characters in the novel are drawn to attract the sympathies of the white reader.

Conversely, Mary Henderson Eastman's *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin* artfully defends slavery, portraying slaves living in the South as possessed of an essential happiness in contrast with the suffering of free blacks and the working classes in the North. Through typecasting, Eastman performs what Ania Loomba describes as: "the gathering of 'information' about non-European lands and peoples and 'classifying' them in various ways determined strategies for their control, e.g. the different stereotypes were generated through particular colonial policies" (97: 1998). Using her characters to convey her anti-Tom concepts and racial stereotypes, she introduces the 50-year-old Aunt Phyllis who is proud to be a slave and enjoys the rapport with her paternalistic master. She works on a plantation and cherishes her family, which consists of three children and her husband, Uncle Bacchus. Her master is widower Mr. Weston, who lives with his daughter-in-law Anna Weston and his niece Alice, who is engaged to Mr. Weston's son, Arthur. Arthur cites the failures of free society, emphasizing the supposed benefits of slavery. The only dissenting character in the novel is Aunt Peggy, who is portrayed as senile; she eventually dies after lifetime spent working in the plantation.

This paper will explain how both Stowe and Eastman thoroughly employ numerous literary post-modern techniques in their texts to convince readers of their viewpoints. Discourses of religion, racism and feminism are introduced at various points throughout the two novels in light of the post-colonial approach. In addition, the researcher examines how the two post-colonial novelists are able to successfully utilize numerous post-modern techniques, which include intertextuality, biblical allusion, satire, juxtaposition and breaking the fourth wall, to convey post-colonial opinions on slavery.

II.

a) Religion

Both writers depict the institution of slavery from totally different viewpoints, and introduce additional discourses to support their stances. Religion is one such discourse, since it had come to be a conspicuous informant of thought during the post-colonial era. John Thieme submits that many nineteenth-century post-colonial discourses espoused the aim of civilization, often employing religious motives (2003:54). Shands (2008) propounds that the interaction between colonialism and religion can be used as an effective method by Christians to conduct so-called civilizing missions. In *Postcolonialism, Feminism, and Religious Discourse*, it is written that "the very terms 'religion' and 'sacred' are problematically imbued with western presuppositions" (2002: 1). Eastman uses an exquisitely religious tone to exhort slaveholders to treat their slaves mercifully and to provide them with food, clothing and shelter, so as to be rewarded by Christ Jesus. Throughout the novel, Eastman conveys her viewpoint regarding the required role of the master towards slaves; claiming masters' behavior and attitudes towards slaves should be as "heavenly masters" (Eastman, 1852: 70). Thus, the slaveholders should teach slaves the doctrines of Christianity in order to lead them to be more useful and better servants. Eastman cites religious terminology to convey her pro-slavery standpoint.

Eastman highlights several spiritual Christian rules as essential to uphold as part of the institution of slavery. The master, Eastman says, must treat his slaves in accordance with the Bible and the merciful spirit of the Christ. For example, Arthur, who is considered the Author Surrogate, expounds considerably on the role of

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the master in liberating slaves, by allowing them to become educated, religious and civilized "slaves". Moreover, Eastman provides an example of the ideal master and slave relationship, as Arthur, a noble master, calls his servant "my friend". Moreover, as well as being a slave, Phyllis is glorified for being a "Saint" and a "noble Christian women" (Eastman, 1852:62). Religion thus plays a prominent role in the post-colonial agenda.

By contrast, Stowe presents several alternative religious propositions in her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Stowe deliberately channels a religious tone and presents imagery throughout the novel to deliver diverse and indispensable messages to her readers. The slaves in her novel find religion to be their only refuge as it heals the wounds of servitude and humiliation. For instance, the religious ceremonies held by the slaves in Uncle Tom's cabin are full of "merriment", "beautiful readers", "exhortations" and "prayers" (Stowe, 1852: 18). Such "gatherings" strengthen the slave's autonomy and solidarity (Stowe, 1852: 50). Frequently, Tom quotes the Bible, radiating inner tranquility and relief, stating: "I'm in the Lord's hands" (Stowe, 1852:64). Huggan (2001) observes, "postcolonial studies, it could be argued, has capitalized on its perceived marginality while helping turn marginality itself into a valuable intellectual commodity" (VIII). Elsewhere, anti-slavery critics Ward, Thomas and Co (1841) vehemently condemn the extreme brutality and diabolical dehumanization of Slavery in their famous text, *Slavery and the Internal Slave Trade in the United States of North America*. Under the pretext that slavery is blessed by "Divine providence", the slave traders accrued huge wealth that served as a strong incentive to defend the slave trade. This trade resulted in an "unmitigated appalling amount of human misery" (Ward and Co, 1841: 3). Thus, the analysis of colonial discourse leads us toward a better understanding of colonial institutions and specific ways of representing social ideologies and cultural manifestations.

Discussing the use of the discourse of religion to support or counter slavery, Goulet (2007) explains that many postcolonial writers identify and correlatean interplay between race, class and gender with religion in general, questioning colonial rule in light of "the religious" and "the fearful" to observe how the inferior classes were affected by the colonizers. Certainly, Stowe cites religion to substantiate the fact that the violent institution of slavery is against the will of God, and uses the religious nature of those in servitude to prompt her readers to imaginatively empathize with them. This is illustrated in her harsh criticism of family separation, whether as a consequence of trading in slaves, death, or fleeing out of dear. To exemplify, Stowe unequivocally intends to shocks the reader with the painful death of slave Pure's baby when her owners refused to give her money to buy milk for the little infant. Afterwards, Pure "cried, and cried, and cried, day and night" (Stowe, 1852: 149) until she willingly met her death, which was a hundred times more merciful than continuing to live her onerous life within the abominable institution of slavery. Of course, God never approves such trauma to his creatures. Stowe thereby defends her antislavery standpoint, and encourages her readers to take active action against slavery, by highlighting the deficiencies of the institution of slavery under God's law.

b) Racism

Eastman and Stowe differ in their view point of the master-slave relation in the context of Africa. Each writer defends her own stance by using diverse post-colonial narratives to imply a rapport between American masters and African slaves during the nineteenth century in Africa. Throughout *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe intertwines postcolonial criticism with the detection and deconstruction of binary opposites that are inherent in power relations, such as other-self, margin-center, and colonizer-colonized. Her novel provides what Andre Brink, one of the most prolific writers in South Africa, has called a 'reinvention', 're-visiting', or 're-imagining' of history in its representation of post-apartheid South Africa (Shands, 2008: 18). In contrast, Eastman adopts a racist approach in *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin*. She claims that the institution of slavery offers slaves tranquility and a decent life, in contrast with that led by those who choose to run away to escape their so-called inevitable destiny.

Stowe scathingly attacks racism in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In *Confluences: Postcolonialism, African American Literary Studies, and the Black Atlantic*, John Cullen Gruesser argues, "South Africa has suffered from a double colonialism, one external, stemming from colonial conquest in the nineteenth century and the other internal and related to apartheid" (cited in Shands, 2008: 19). Stowe exquisitely portrays this racial discrimination as rooted in the distinction between master and the slave throughout Uncle Tom's Cabin. For example, Haley refers to Eliza, Tom, and Harry as "articles" and "unfeeling animals", haughtily saying "these critters an't like white folks" (Stowe, 1852:2). By terming slaves 'critters 'Haley forcefully detaches them from humanity.

Certainly, interrogating slavery from a post-colonial perspective "can be useful since for the contemporary American context it makes more sense to relocate and rename the center of power so as to speak about internal colonialism and Euramerican dominance" (Hestetun, 2001 cited in Shands, 2008: 9). Stowe's anti-slavery stance exemplifies such renaming, and thus her work belongs to the trope of "writing back" (a the term first used by Salman Rushdie in a Times newspaper article, "The Empire Writes Back with Vengeance") since she criticizes the American racial and political agenda in Africa (Thieme, 2003: 83). Stowe uses her considerable literary skills for "dramatizing a number of situations,

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some inspiring and sympathetic" to convey the American view about African slaves and lead the readers towards "a better understanding of the principles on which the United States was founded" (Newborn, 2011).

The anti-slavery Stowe criticizes the fact that the American master views the slave as a truly genealogical isolate and as such socially desperate. This resonates with Orlando Patterson's viewpoint, famously expressed in *Slavery and Social Death*; that slaves are "[f]ormally isolated in their social relations with those who lived, the slaves also are seen as culturally isolated from the social heritage of his ancestors" (1982: 5). To apply this to the novel, Mrs. Shelby describes slaves as "poor, simple, dependent creatures" (Stowe, 1852: 23). Miss Jane also looks upon them as if they are "low creatures" (Stowe, 1852: 147), and Miss Ophelia scorns them, regarding them as: "low-minded, brutal people" and "inferiors" (Stowe, 1852:153).

According to Buruma and Margalit (2004), America failed to find a moral way to achieve economic growth in Africa (cited in Shands, 2008, 11). Stowe attacks racial ideological thoughts through the character of Miss Ophelia, and her racially discriminatory and imperialist attitude; she says slaves are "debased, uneducated, indolent, provoking … people who have neither consideration nor self-control, who haven't even an enlightened regard to their own interest" (Stowe, 1852:151). Stowe attacks the American corrupting influence that undermines the spiritual characteristics, mental abilities and cultural worth of the Africans.

By contrast, Eastman's novel claims that slaves lead a decent and luxurious life under the institution of slavery; she highlights the benefits and blessings they gain from the institution. She justifies her proslavery viewpoint by claiming that without their American slave owners they would be unable to support their own lives and satisfy their needs. As Wisker (2007) discusses, American writers also enabled the reader, through typically imperial writing and colonial strategies to "re-read history and cultural expression through the lens of the marginalized, disempowered, maddened and silenced Other" (160-161), to pave the way fora racial agenda and political expansionism in Africa. Eastman looks to assist those slaves who fail to manage a decent life under the institution of serfdom as directed by white people.

For example, Eastman draws the readers' attention throughout the novel to the fact that slaves enjoy their lives within the institution of slavery. She claims that Southern slaves are much better off as slaves than they would be as free men. Once they finish their daily chores, slaves can enjoy their evening pleasantly. In Eastman's words, they are "all at ease, and without care" (Eastman, 1852: 30).Their cabins are neat and clean, and they can relax in a scene of genuine enjoyment. When they are freed, slaves are never as happy or comfortable as they were when under a master. Susan provides an example of a runaway who fails. "Poor Susan!" Eastman laments. She has absolutely no means, no money. Her guilt for leaving her mistress piles up, and her feelings are constantly agitated. According to Eastman, Susan feels she has gone "out of the frying pan and into the fire" (Eastman, 1852: 58-61).At least with her mistress, Susan was well provided for and at peace. Thus, Eastman claims that the institution of slavery protected poor slaves from facing an uneasy destiny, illustrating that those slaves who escaped from their masters encountered multiple challenges as they unfortunately failed to adapt.

Furthermore, Eastman contends that the slaves were mentally incapable of managing their own lives. This resonates with the view presented by pro-slavery sociologist Arthur De Gobineau in his book *The Inequality of Human Races*, published in 1915toelucidate the intellectual superiority of the white races, in contrast to the black ones. He explains that the so-called black "savages" are biologically incapable of managing their own lives, and thus they ought to be enthusiastic about being enslaved to the white nations who have the potentiality to offer them "civilization" and "progress" (Gobineau, 1915: 4). He never considers this alleged interpretation as degrading (Gobineau, 1915: chapter XIII). Similarly, Eastman introduces a character to portray this viewpoint; Aunt Phyllis, who represents acquiescence to servitude, prefers to keep her young children "with the white people that they might acquire good manners" (Eastman, 1852: 46).

Under the pretext of taking responsibility for civilizing the black countries, Eastman defends the institution of slavery. In 2003, John Thieme writes:

> In the nineteenth century, Colonialism is practiced in most eras of human history. During this period Europe characteristically represented it as a 'civilizing' project that would bring enlightenment to less developed parts of the world and their supposedly 'backward' peoples. Such a discourse is based on racist assumptions of European 'superiority' and frequently masked economic opportunism. Most of its manifestations have entailed economic exploitation … (2003: 54)

Articulation of imperial ideologies is an important post-colonial strategy in the pursuit of colonial, economic and political ends.

Eastman purports out that the black countries were subjugated and colonized by the white because they are inferior, asserting an overtly racist viewpoint thus: "The emancipation of her slaves will never be accomplished by interference or force. Good men assist in colonizing them, and the Creator may thus intend to Christianize benighted Africa" (Eastman, 1852: 20). Being an incompetent and low-minded creature, Susan hands 10 dollars to her new mistress Mrs. Moore for she

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is not rational enough to manage her own life and finances. The proslavery writer adopts George Fitzhugh (1854) sociological perspective claiming that it is essential that slaves "were deprived of the protection and security of slavery …. Their miserable condition was proof of the curse that freedom would prove to their race" (cited in Trimarchi, 1854: 8).

In the two post-colonial novels, each writer portrays the conditions experienced by slaves, alongside the master-slave relationship. However, despite their differing perspectives, the two writers do appear to call for a better lifestyle, and more appropriate and more humane conditions. Ato Quayson notes that post-colonialism can then "be seen as a project to correct imbalances in the world" (Shands, 2000: 9). John Thieme also observes that "cultural practices have both a historical and discursive relationship to Western imperialism, whether each phenomenon is treated critically, ambivalently or collusively" (2003: IXX). Therefore, either from a pro-slavery or an anti-slavery standpoint, both writers look forward to attaining a rapport between the white slave and the black master, aside from the direct and indirect goals of each writer's work.

Critics of post-colonial literature have observed that it functions as "an anti-colonial intellectualism that reads and valorizes the signs of social struggle in the fault lines of literary and cultural texts" (Huggan, 2001: 6). In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe deliberately reflects the slaves constant exposure to internal panic triggered by their masters. For instance, young master Henrique is a cruel "despot" who has inherited immoral flaws that lead him to beat his servant severely when his horse is dusty (Stowe, 1852: 183). This is compounded by the incessant sense of fear and horror that haunts runaway Eliza as she "in despair, throw herself into the river" and her fear made her "flesh and nerves impregnable" (Stowe, 1852: 34). In addition is the slave Prue, who longs for death in order to escape the merciless stab of slavery. In addition, Miss Ophelia threatens the little child Topsy saying: "I'll whip you" if [Topsy] does not bring [Miss Ophelia] some roses (Stowe, 1852: 166). In an attempt to criticize the inhumane treatment of the slaves in Africa by their white masters, Stowe draws readers' attention toward the humiliating scenes that afflict their lives.

Huggan also argues that post-colonial literature, it "could be argued, has capitalized on its perceived marginality while helping turn marginality itself into a valuable intellectual commodity" (2001: 11). This explains why Stowe underscores how the inhumane master-slave relationship deprives slaves of their self-esteem and self-respect. She seeks to change the status-quo in Africa out of concern for black slaves. A sense of patriarchal degradation overwhelms Tom when the young George teaches him writing and reading. Moreover, the runaway George blames God and society because he has lived life as a humiliated slave with no self-worth. His utmost dream is "to act worthy of a free man" (Stowe, 1852: 127). Such issues have been discussed by sociologists such as Orlando Patterson, who stated that the master-slave relationship is based on "the strong sense of honor the experience of mastership generated, and conversely, the dishonoring of the slave condition" (1982: 11). This sense contributes to the spiritual and social death of slaves. Never does the slave dream of the freedom of the body, instead he seeks rebirth in a just society. From a post-colonial perspective, Stowe illustrates the deep sense of humiliation undergone by African slaves because of their white masters.

For her part, as explained above, Eastman agrees with the arguments pro-slavery Fitzhugh's statement that: "Slavery protects the infants, the aged and the sick. … They are part of the family, and the self-interest and domestic affection combine to shelter, shield and foster them" (qtd. In Trimarchi, 1854: 16). Thus, the happiness of the slaves and the hospitality of their masters in the South are conspicuous in Eastman's text. Mrs. Moore, for instance, embraces the confused runaway Susan, bringing her into her house, and teaching her Christian instruction. Although her new mistress attempts to Susan's wounds that resulted from slavery, she believes that Susan deserves suffering "for her ingratitude" to her old master (Eastman, 1852: 27). Here the author calls on the necessity of an intimate master-slave bonding based on co-existence, reciprocity and affection, as she attempts to convince her readers that slavery is more beneficial to slaves than their freedom as this institution satisfies their needs and secures their futures.

John Thieme expands on this type of Colonial discourse. In light of his standpoint, Eastman presents "a uniform phenomenon", which is regarded as an "expression within the colonizing nation [that] often worked towards producing a homogenizing narrative of Empire, in which Western culture was bringing enlightenment to the supposedly benighted regions of the world" (2005: 54). In this sense, Eastman elaborates on the advantages and rectitude of slavery in the South. For instance, she depicts the ties between the slave and master through the relationship between the merciful and kind Miss Ellen and her darling slave, Lucy. When Miss Ellen encounters death, Lucy is devastated as "her eyes heavy weeping, and her frame feeble from long fasting, and indulgence of bitter, hopeless grief" (Eastman, 1852: 15). Thus, Eastman highlights the emotional and positive rapport between the virtuous kindhearted master and the faithful obedient slave.

c) Feminism

In "Under Western Eyes", Chandra Mohanty's propounds that numerous post-colonial feminists unpicked the consciousness of the colonized nations,

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citing the Eurocentric perspective that privileges Western notions of liberation and progress, describing Third-World women as victims of poverty, ignorance and restrictive notions of culture and religion (1991). Considering the role of feminism in post-colonial literature is important when discussing these two novels. Chris Weedon in "Key Issues in Post-colonial Feminism: A Western Perspective" writes:

> Aboriginal people's struggle for recognition of their history since white settlement forms an integral part of the broader fight for human rights and equality and Aboriginal women are active in this fight, while at the same time urging white feminists to take these issues seriously. In Europe and North America, the economic and political legacies of colonialism have radically changed the 'racial' and ethnic makeup of societies, bringing with them problems of white ethnocentrism, ethnic conflict and racism that feminists must address. (2002: para. 2)

That is to say, the trans-Atlantic slave-trade is a topic that provoked urgent discussion among white female writers like Stowe and Eastman. Not only do the two writers portray features of the colonized countries and the Other, but they also discuss the concepts of non-white and non-western from differing points of view.

As a discussion of the slave trade by a female writer, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is embellished with feminist techniques intended to deliberately introduce several female characters to convey certain messages in respect of slavery. For example, the Mrs. Shelby and Aunt Chloe is epitomized by Mrs. Shelby's active attitudes. Mrs. Shelby prevents her husband from falling in bankruptcy, and the active Aunt Chloe succeeds in liberating her husband through the food store she sat up to raise enough money for his sake. Thus, Stowe encourages her readers to liberate themselves from the chains and the shackles of societal stereotypes, in an attempt to bring about liberation and independence.

For instance, Eliza is portrayed as a docile obedient slave who willingly living in bondage to her merciful Christian masters. Yet, when her master was about to separate her from her child, she embraces her maternal role, stating: “but your mother will save you yet” and becoming a defiant and courageous female who succeeded in protecting her child from his black destiny of enslavement (Stowe, 1852: 24). Underlying Stowe perspective, David Richardson explains in his book, *Abolition and its Aftermath* that women had to oppose the wide-ranging stereotypes of passive and ineffective creatures. Simply put, women constituted the “backbone” of the institution of slavery, thus, their resistance paved the way to emancipation and freedom (1985: 27).

Cherri Moraga (1981) illustrates in her book entitled *This Bridge Called My Back. Writings by Radical Women of Color* different processes for acknowledging and acting upon differences that are hierarchically structured through radicalized power relations. For instance, Moraga calls for overcoming the non-conscious forms of the institutionalized injustice within the masculine society at that time (1981: 30). Therefore, it is understood that Eastman seeks women’s liberation from male-dominated society and the submissive stereotypical roles in which they are unwillingly entangled. Judging on masculinity and strength, men mistakenly thought of women as inferior creatures. Exquisitely she likens the wives to slaves urging both to fulfill “mental and bodily emancipation” (Eastman, 1852: 50). In an attempt to defeat both social enslavement and female subjectivity, Eastman induces “wives to be obedient to their own husbands” and “servants to be obedient to their own masters” (Eastman, 1852 50).She succinctly delivers an effective solution to helpless women: “Religion seems to be a necessary qualification of the female mind” (Eastman, 1852: 62).

By choosing a female protagonist Eastman conveys a clear message to readers, for example she mentions in her novel: “strong-minded female steps forth from the degraded ranks, and asserts her positions” (Eastman, 1852: 50). If Aunt Phyllis is understood to represent miserable and powerless women in Eastman's society, her religious personality also allows her to overcome all life’s troubles. The strong slave Phyllis speaks the words of Jacob: “Surely God is here” (Eastman, 1852: 68). Similarly, women “would have been truly happy to have obtained her own freedom, and that of her husband and children” (Eastman, 1852: 46). Eastman’s helpless woman, Aunt Phyllis, gains power through her spiritual bond with God. Interestingly, in reviewing post-colonial ideologies, Shands mentions that while the minds of the West are capable of great economic successes, and of developing and promoting advanced technology, they cannot grasp the higher things in life, for they lack the spirituality that proceeds from understanding human suffering (2008: 12). The Dalai Lama also stated in an interview in 2006, “people in the West “have become too self-absorbed. The West is now quite weak, it can’t cope with adversity and has little compassion for others”.

d) Techniques

The two novels, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin*, were written in the nineteenth century when discourse was characterized by resisting “the fragmentation of the modern by reformulating the narratives of the past within the historically constituted practices and traditions which we inherit as a part of cultural community” (Waugh, 1992: 3). It is form of post-colonialism in which literary works were marked with “the increased visibility of academic intellectuals of Third World origins as pacesetters in cultural criticism”; Arif Dirlik calls 'post-colonialism' a child of postmodernism (Loomba, 1998:247). That is to say, a new sort of

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nineteenth-century post-colonial novels emerged, marked by the collapse of the grand narratives paving the way to the prioritization of aesthetic and the functional strategies. Language and Literature played a cooperative role, together establishing a bond between the European self and the non-European self. Edward Said, the Palestinian-American critic, added that such linkage "is a part of the creation of colonial authority" (cited in Loomba, 1998: 95).

Loomba expounds the view that post-colonial writers tend to record a discourse where 'truth-effects' produce the same effects as actual events; this was laid down by Foucault who explains that such effects express the material effects of ideology with conflating the two (95: 1998). Both writers made good use of language, literature, culture and philosophical ideas for subversive purposes. Many writers confirm that post-colonial culture relies upon discourse as Tiffin and Lawson illustrate; "Colonialism (like its counterpart racism), is a formation of discourse, and as an operation of discourse it interpellates colonial subjects by incorporating them in a system of representation" (Loomba, 1998: 95). To elaborate, Stowe and Eastman utilize several post-modern techniques, such as intertextuality, juxtaposition, and satire, among others, to represent and persuade the reader of their post-colonial ideologies, which concern the institution of serfdom.

i. *Intertextuality*

Stowe's anti-slavery text *Uncle Tom's Cabin* intertextualizes biblical allusions and religious vocabulary, intentionally employing both to influence and encourage readers to take action against slavery. For instance, Eliza uttered "Lord, help! Lord, save me" and "We must have faith" (Stowe, 1852:34), when she courted death by casting away caution to jump over the ice mountain escaping from the grip of the slave-catchers. Here, as Aunt Chloe said: "The good Lord have pity on us!" (Stowe, 1852:26). It is apparent that a strong bond with God relieves the anxiety and despair felt by the miserable slaves. Stowe used religious terminology in her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to sympathetically influence readers to take action against the institution of slavery.

Eastman's novel, *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin* achieves what Julia Kristeva describes as intertextuality. *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines intertextuality as "the manner in which texts of all sorts (oral, visual, literary, virtual) contain references to other texts that have, in some way, contributed to their production and signification" (Childs and Fowler, 2006: 121). It is obvious that both novelists employ intertextuality in their texts in order to build a "pattern of interconnected fields within which its meaning is transmitted to the reader through already-known vocabularies of generic and discursive formation" (Childs and Fowler, 2006: 121). This post-modern form of intertextuality is embedded by Eastman and Stowe in the post-colonial texts *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Eastman supports her pro-slavery argument by offering an alternative interpretation of the Bible. Her text mentions in the preface that Ham, the son of Noah, brought the wrath of God upon himself, and that because of his sin God cursed Ham and his descendants to forever be a race subservient to God's chosen people (Eastman, 1852: 13-15).According to Eastman's interpretation, slavery is "a curse on Ham and Canaan and their prosperity", and this curse has existed since then. Accordingly, the Southerners enslave Africans, the direct descendants of Ham. In addition, Eastman says there is no reference in the Bible condemning those who enslave "heathens" (Eastman, 1852:15-16), and God's Prophets including Abraham, Isaac and Jacob held slaves. When Jesus Christ, the Son of God came he did not free the slaves, though he encountered many, nor did his Apostles after he died (Eastman, 1852: 18-20). Eastman confirms the fact that Christ "was all powerful to accomplish the Divine intent"; thereby establishing God's will for "a world sunk in the lowest depth of iniquity" (Eastman, 1852: 18-23). In her post-colonial novel Eastman introduces different religious reasons to justify, defend and authorize the institution of slavery.

Moreover, Eastman frequently uses biblical allusion to convince Christian readers of the validity and divine approval for slavery. Cuddon defines allusions as:

> Usually an implicit reference, perhaps to another work of literature or art, to a person or an event. It is often a kind of appeal to a reader to share some experience with the writer Often using allusions a writer tends to assume an established literary tradition, a body of common knowledge with an audience sharing that tradition and an ability on the part of the audience to 'pick up' the reference. (1991: 47)

Eastman uses allusion to enrich her work and give it more depth and significance. Biblical allusions are intentionally employed to remind the readers of the judgment on Ham and Canaan, so readers understand that slavery was divinely sanctioned. For example, Arthur reflects the writer's ideology in Chapter VI: "I see rules to regulate the conduct of the master and slave in Scripture, but I see no where the injunction to release them; nor do I find laid down the sin of holding them" (Eastman, 1852:33). Spirituality thereby becomes a central feature in post-colonial studies.

ii. *Juxtaposition*

Patricia Waugh propounds that in post-colonial discourse, knowledge is no longer critical, but functional; it depends mainly on the "structure of feelings as it foregrounds aesthetic implications and concerns in the sense that the concept of universal

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reason develop context-specific strategies or local interventions which draw on the concept of language" (1992: 3). Among the aesthetic practices used by the two novelists are the tools of comparison and contrast, although they are employed in the texts for entirely different ends. Comparing and contrasting different characteristics, events or goals serves a more functional purpose, aside from the aesthetic one.

From the anti-slavery perspective, Stowe uses comparison and contrast to draw the reader's attention to the distinction between slavery and freedom. Stowe contrasts between Miss Ophelia the hypocritical southern lady, who treats slaves as poor inferior creatures and her later depiction of a true Christian female who decries the evil system of enslavement. Comparison is also made between the angelic "high-bred" child Eva, born "of ages of cultivation, command, and education, physical and moral eminence", and the heathen slave Topsy, whose personality is stained by ages of "oppression, submission, ignorance, toil, and vice" (Stowe, 1852: 168). Such a technique provokes readers to criticize themselves for allowing an unjust system and discrimination to prevail in society. Stowe's use of this technique supports and strengthens her post-colonial stance concerning servitude.

Eastman also utilizes comparison and contrast to intensify her pro-slavery post-colonial stance. For instance, she starkly contrasts between the destiny of Susan under the enslavement of her mistress, on the one hand, and that of the abolitionist, on the other. Susan enjoys a comfortable and well-paid life with her former mistress, plus "she had never been put to hard work" (Eastman, 1852: 24). When sheltered by the abolitionists, Susan is overloaded, low-paid and "felt very much as if it was out of the frying pan into the fire" (Eastman, 1852: 25). Eastman contrasts her slave characters - Suzan and Phyllis -with the characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*- Tom, for instance - in order to emphasis the benefits and the merits of slavery in Africa.

Eastman, offers a shining example of the noble slave, a deacon who was "uneasy" to accept five cents more than his regular wage as "he was afraid he was imposing on" his master (Eastman 34). Another instance of the noble traits of the slave comes through the character of Aunt Phyllis; she weeps to her merciful master Mr. Weston, after secretly hiding the runaway Jim in her room without permission. On the other side, Susan serves to embody the ungrateful slave, leaving her kind mistress and her sick baby who immediately meet sits death after her departure. Eastman contrasts the different characters, to highlight the fact that the slaves' lives under slavery are much better than they would be were they free. This technique is more functional than aesthetic; focusing on ideological thoughts and post-colonial messages.

iii. *Satire*

By citing Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Eastman satirically contrasts the discrepancies between the conditions of the slaves in the North and the South. Eastman uses satire to refute the former anti-slavery novel and make her case to readers. Satire is defined in *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms* as a literary genre in which "the author attacks some object, using as his means wit or humour that is either fantastic or absurd" (Childs & Fowler,2006: 211).She deplores and satirizes Stowe's description of the slaves' cabins in her novel: "They were rude shells, destitute of any pieces of furniture, except a heap of straw, foul with dirt, spread confusedly over the floor" (Stowe, 1852: 53). If the North is rife with poverty, suffering and squalor, Eastman confirms, by contrast, that the South contains "healthy and airy" cabins which secure "the comfort and the happiness of the slave" (Eastman, 1852: 52). She delineates the south as "a land of pure delight" (Eastman, 1852: 55). Unlike the Northern slaves, the slaves in the south do not need to "strive after wealth, yet he is always provided with comfort" (Eastman, 1852: 55). Eventually, Eastman advises the Northern Christians to avoid supporting emancipation, as it only that deprives slaves of an ecstatic and comfortable life. Satire is a post-modern technique used by Eastman to exaggerate her post-colonial viewpoint regarding slavery.

Another technique used by postmodern novelists, especially in the nineteenth-century, involved inserting the author into the text. This is a meta-fiction technique also known as 'breaking the fourth wall' (Phillips, 2015). Magher also notes that "postmodernism is more playful and self-reflective. Many works of postmodernism are mimetic, meaning that they call attention to the fact that they are works of fiction. They may break the "fourth wall" by addressing the reader directly or by talking about the process of writing fiction" (2015).As well as drawing attention to their own presence throughout the novels the two writers mainly use this technique to explicate their post-colonial thoughts and critical ideologies, and to encourage the reader to engage with the events and the characters. John Thieme comments that "post-colonial commentary that homogenizes colonial discourse runs the risk of being viewed as a practice suited to fulfilling the needs of the Western academy" (2003: 54). In this sense, Eastman employs the technique to convince readers of the utility and benefits of slavery in Africa.

Eastman satirizes Stowe *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by breaking down metaphorical walls with the readers. She attempts to convince readers that slaves are happy in the south, to refute the abolitionist movement. She also directly addresses readers, interacting with them as if they are real characters in a play, for example:

> My readers must go with me to a military station at the North, and date back two years from the time of

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> my story. The reason must change, and instead of summer sunsets and roses, we will bring before them three feet of snow, and winter's bleakest winds. (Eastman, 1852: 20)

By breaking the fourth wall, she draws their attention in an ironical and direct way to the false promises of the abolitionists who seduce slaves, telling them to runaway and leave their masters. Eastman gets close to her readers and addresses them in a straightforward way to persuade them of her pro-slavery manifesto.

Another instance of Eastman's playful language game and self-reflective technique is reader involvement. This technique essentially interrelates with the creation of meaning. As Cuddon explains, "a text may have totally different meanings for different readers at different times. Thus, what readers bring to a text (knowledge, assumptions, cultural background, experience, insight, etc.) affects their interpretations. A reader is in a position to create the meaning of a text" (1991: 397). This technique is employed when Eastman, as author within the text requests reader involvement in posing questions to abolitionists:

> But, what will the Abolitionist say to this scene? Where were the Whip and the Cord, and other instruments of torture? Such consideration, he contends, was never shown I the southern country (Eastman, 1852: 20).

Eastman indicates a discrepancy between slavery in the South and the North. Emphasizing the joy of the Southern slaves, Eastman satirizes the fake attitudes of the Northern abolitionists and refutes their role in the American society as reformers calling for a different type of democracy. She encourages readers to stand for slavery as a promising outcome in the South. Different post-colonial messages are also referenced, to be conveyed to the readers by Eastman, with the aim of highlighting the importance of the institution of slavery and attacking any attempts to eradicate it. Both Stowe and Eastman draw on multiple post-modern techniques to strengthen their post-colonial claims about slavery, and to encourage their readers to take effective action.

III.

Postcolonial criticism brings about useful and significant findings. It enables us to listen to and participate in cross-cultural and multi-voiced dialogue. It also challenges the preconceptions of the reader about slavery, and the American ideologies of Africa in the nineteenth century. The American writers Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mary Henderson Eastman successfully introduce their readers to history, reality and culture from totally opposing perspectives. From a post-colonial perspective, it is understood that each novelist tends not only to share differing opinions about the institution of slavery in nineteenth century in Africa, but also reconfigures cultural forms and ways of life in Africa on the periphery. Colonial discourse is seen to bring minority practices and the ethnic diversities to the fore in both texts, although each takes a different standpoint. Throughout this analysis, and the two depictions of the roles of the colonizer and the colonized, the principles on which the contemporary world is based emerged.

In this context, we should understand that post-colonial criticism as a project is intended correct the imbalances of the world. To exemplify, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has proved to be a pivotal post-colonial work of fiction attacking the violation and mistreatment of black African slaves by white masters. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is an example of a writing-back-to-the-empire-narrative, giving voice to the colonized Other, who is characterized by silence, weakness and backwardness. On the other hand, Mary Henderson Eastman's *Aunt Phyllis's Cabin* is a pro-slavery post-colonial novel that not only justifies slavery, but also calls to inhibit attempts by the abolitionists or the slaves themselves to give African slaves their freedom.

This research also highlighted the different religious narratives and cultural methods employed by the two novelists to convey their viewpoints to their readers. Post-colonial critics explain that religion was considered an effective tool by nineteenth-century novelists, and this is apparent in both texts. Both, in an attempt to move nineteenth-century readers who were characterized by their religious beliefs and spiritual motifs, use religious tone, biblical allusion, sacred justification, and divine terminology.

Racism is also viewed differently by the two novelists. Stowe attacks the racial assumptions underlying authority of white American masters over black African slaves. She offers numerous examples and depicts many scenes of severe torture, intense suffering and indecent humiliation. Eastman, by contrast presents a discourse in which Western superiority and power, on the one hand, and African inferiority and backwardness on the other, are indisputable.

Furthermore, both Stowe and Eastman use the female character as a powerful tool to portray the need for equality, an end to discrimination and a need for balance in nineteenth century patriarchal society. Despite discrepancies in their treatments of the topic of slavery, both writers strengthen the structure of resistance against slavery and pave the way to freedom, by introducing key female characters in post-colonial texts. By offering different examples of helpless and strong women, the position of the woman is presented as a symbol of social enslavement and female subjectivity.

The many literary techniques used by the two novelists to render their post-colonial texts more effective in bringing about real change in respect of the institution of slavery, offer a wealth of aesthetic

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understanding, including, intertextuality, biblical allusion, juxtaposition, satire, breaking the fourth wall, meta-fiction, and reader involvement Language occupies a subversive role in the canon of post-colonial literature, supporting revolutionary narratives in all tenors.

Receiving success and attention from many politicians, thinkers, theologians and critics, the two novels succeeded in challenging the social convictions that were entrenched in the American society of their day. Sellman (1993; 1999) comments on the forthright attitude of Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, stating: "the novel's characters were, to a considerable extent, unflattering stereotypes that relied upon demeaning racial caricatures of the 19th century minstrelsy. It played a crucial part in turning Northerners against slavery and against the south" (1993; 1999: 5). On the other hand, Meir (2010), propounded Eastman's narrative in her "dazzling novel" *Aunt's Phyllis Cabin*, stating, "she sees the Sioux as human beings, both in their strengths and in their weaknesses, and she recognizes the value of their history, legends, and religious beliefs" (2010: para. 2).

Thus, the post-colonial approach succeeds in bringing forward new findings in terms of two nineteenth-century novels. Not only does Stowe and Eastman's literary style prove to be quite distinctive, its ideological presuppositions and the religious, social, and cultural references within it are noteworthy in terms of enhancing the post-colonial standpoint of the novelists.

The conclusion reveals that language and literature are both implicated in the construction of the binary of the American self and the non-American Other, which comprise the creation of the colonial authority. Both writers interpellate colonial subjects by incorporating them in a system of representation. Whether the American novelist takes a stance for or against slavery, the study of colonial discourse leads us to a fuller understanding of colonial institutions and American ideology. Further research is recommended employing a post-colonial approach in order to deliver different findings and interpretations of writers' perspectives on slavery in the nineteenth century.

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