

## V. CONCLUSION

The fight for claiming racial identity must be started from each individual's self who belongs to the particular race. She or he has to be able to claim her or his own individual identity before asserting it significantly into the whole of the associated society. The elaboration of each member's consciousness (basically of her or his identity) will establish the so-called collective consciousness or, referring to Goldman's term, the *world view* of the associated society.

This kind of fight is very well represented by Hurston throughout the struggle of Janie in finding a voice of her own. During the passage of her life she learns to adapt with the other people's voices; her grandma, her first two husbands and the society as well. Yet her adaptability has its own limit. She herself possesses a voice of her own, which needs to be claimed and asserted. She has gone through the process of finding this voice of her own with her extra ordinary silent protest. Silent here does not signify total acceptance, nor does it stand for weakness. During the silencing directed by the determining socializing agents (grandma, and the first two husbands supported by the patriarch society) and the silence, which she closed herself, Janie learns to use her voice when it is seen necessary.

The word voice may represent anything as long as it is associated to one's consciousness. Yet, as frequently appeared in this novel it is mostly

linked to a dream or vision. Generally, Janie has undergone four processes of associating herself with the so-called voice. The first stage stands for the time when she came to her sexual awareness and thus holds her own vision of love and marriage. The second stage refers to Janie's attempt of putting aside her own vision and taking over the task of fulfilling other's voice (Vision), which in this case was grandma's. She learns to assert her voice externally during the third process. Furthermore she is capable of compromising her own vision with the demand of the other's (her husband, Starks and the society). She knows well when to assert her voice and adapt herself to make another room in her consciousness for the other's. The last process suggests her total possession of the voice. She no longer sees the society demand and the persistent voice of others as boundaries, which force her to forget her own vision. She has been to the 'horizon' by experiencing her own ideal relationship between man and woman. She is a woman of her own whose voice belongs to no one but herself.

These rites to consciousness are elaborated to suggest the black people that the racial ideology, which performs as the old mentality no longer fits the reality. Thus it is challenged by this new mentality, which will assert itself as the counter mentality towards the old one. The voice must not be used overtly as the means of competing for superiority, nor it should be manifested in extreme wordy protest to put the blame on others for what we have been suffering. We should use the voice in a manner which enables us

to claim our authentic existence, which is not measured in materialistic standpoints.

This new perspective of one's authentic existence can be seen from two different yet interrelated angles. The first one is one's existence as social being. This kind of existence can only be achieved if the person realizes her or his origin and continues to preserve and thus to be proud of her or his cultural heritage. Only in this sense that she or he will not feel alienated from her or his associated group. The last yet the most authentic existence of man is his capacity as God's individual creation. Man can not exist authentically had she or he not realized that she or he must be inescapably related to God, the Supreme Being. And as suggested by Hurston throughout Janie's spiritual experience and closeness to God, this relationship between man and God is entirely personal. Thus, there is no objective knowledge able to discover such relationship. Every single person will have different spiritual experience in her or his relationship with God. As free individual being man can determine her or his own life, but only to some extent, under which she or he will have to surrender her or his plans to the highest Creator. The great thing is, this idea somehow corresponds with the title of the novel itself; *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

## Synopsis of Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Janie, the central character of this novel was a black American woman. She was not entirely black for her father was a white teacher who got her mother pregnant. People said her father ran away and left her mother. She never knew him, nor her mother for she left her soon after her birth and delegated the task of taking care Janie to Nanny.

Nanny then had become the most determining and influential person in Janie's childhood and adolescence life. She also made her to marry a rich old man she did not love, Logan Killicks. The marriage was soon over when Janie met this ambitious, full of chances and changes-man, Jody Starks. She ran off and got married with him. What happened next was Janie only became a domesticated wife. She was treated as an accessory to her husband supremacy as the mayor of the town. Yet she learned to use her voice when it was necessary. When she did not use it externally, she always busied herself by talking to her mind.

When Starks died, she met this much younger and attractive man, Tea Cake. He treated her differently compared to all the men she had been associated with before. He treated her equally. When she decided to marry him, the town showed harsh disapproval. And yet she carried on her living with Tea Cake and moved to Everglades. They lived happily in the muck and Janie was also allowed to work with the rest of the people. She could do anything she wanted and express her thought whenever she

liked. They loved and respected each other very much. This was really Janie's 'horizon'; the dream of what the relation between man and woman should be.

The happiness was threatened after Tea Cake was bitten by a mad dog. He was trying to save Janie from the bite during the hard storm and terrible flood, but he had to risk his own self. Tea Cake was getting worse and the doctor said there was no medicine could cure him. One day he got really mad and the damage in his brain urged him to kill. There was no other living things around so Janie became the only object. It was really a hard choice but she had to think and move real quick.

Janie's rifle and Tea Cake's pistol exploded almost at the same second. Tea Cake died and Janie was put into trial. During the trial her fellow blacks turned their backs against her. The only supportive friends at the time was the white women who came to the trial. Tea Cake's death was finally decided as an accidental happening and thus Janie was released from the trial prison.

She grieved so much for Tea Cake and yet she wanted to continue her life for good and pursued her other dreams, in which Tea Cake's were part of them too. People talked and mumbled about her messy life but she did not care. Instead she even shared her valuable passage of her 'horizon' to her woman friend, Pheoby. The tale was meant to be widespreaded to all the women who concerned about their inner personal growth the way she did.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY