

History of Slave Narratives Revisited for Redemption and Recognition as Individuals in Human Society in the Novels of Lawrence Hill

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Abstract

This article conducts a critical study of history, Slavery and slave narrative through journeys made by colonized and their life sagas. The stories told and some untold, few revisited ones by times and people in different places at different intervals actually creates a platform for historicising mythology and folktales. In the process of this slave narrative many lives are formed and destroyed. The fight for one's own identity and freedom has brought in life transformation and a big game Changer for many. While were many narratives and slaves continue to undergo violence and atrocities and on other hand slave narratives have also revealed and talked about achievements made by slaves and their transition sought from unknown to discover the known in creating an identity for oneself and others by being self-reliant and determined towards just not their goals but for them to be identified as human beings in their treatment as equals on grounds of discrimination for life time freedom and respect.

This work concentrates on pinnacle of those slaves and slave narratives which has gone to the depths of making historicism and the revisiting interesting opening doorway for new boundaries to explore and contemplate.

Keywords: Slave narratives, historicism, mythology, folklore, identity, self-reliant.

Introduction

Lawrence Hill is the author of ten books of fiction and non-fiction. In 2005, he has won several literary honours, such as: a National Magazine Award for the article “Is Africa’s Pain Black America’s Burden?” published in *The Walrus*. His first two novels were *Some Great Thing* and *Any Known Blood*, and his first non-fiction work to attract national attention was the memoir *Black Berry, Sweet Juice: On Being Black and White in Canada*. But it was his third novel, *The Book of Negroes* (HarperCollins Canada, 2007) published in some countries as *Someone Knows My Name* and in French as *Aminata* — that attracted widespread attention in Canada and other countries.

Lawrence Hill’s non-fiction books, *The Illegal* and *Someone Knows My Name* are the ones which enable the readers and researchers to revisit past and discover new stories and discover the in-depth stories of Unknown ones on alien lands (immigrants) through slave trades. This work enables to shed light on those awaiting ones to see the day light and their narratives of perseverant struggles and their meticulous thriving for liberation and transition found and united by abolitionists just like that in the one

of Hill's, 'Someone Knows My Name' and the political manifestation in 'The Illegal' for a bigger and new economical, political and social change for the immigrants (illegal) in Freedom State.

Abolitionists and slavery to life

"Someone Knows My Name" the story focuses on Aminata Diallo, who was born in West Africa in 1745. In 1802, Aminata goes to London to help the cause of the British abolitionists. Abducted from Africa as a child and enslaved in South Carolina, Aminata Diallo thinks only of freedom and of the knowledge, she needs to get home. Sold to an indigo trader who recognizes her intelligence, Aminata is torn from her husband and child and thrown into the chaos of the Revolutionary War. In Manhattan, Aminata helps pen the Book of Negroes, a list of blacks rewarded for service to the king with safe passage to Nova Scotia. There Aminata finds a life of hardship and stinging prejudice. When the British abolitionists come looking for "adventurers" to create a new colony in Sierra Leone, Aminata assists in moving 1,200 Nova Scotians to Africa and aiding the abolitionist cause by revealing the realities of slavery to the British public. This captivating story of one woman's remarkable experience spans six decades and three continents and brings to life a crucial chapter in world history

Aminata is taught to read and write, and she keeps these skills a secret for fear she will be beaten or worse. Aminata later becomes pregnant, and her child is sold into slavery. Aminata goes to New York with her new master, Solomon Lindo, a Jewish duty inspector. While in New York, Aminata uses her reading and writing skills to try to gain freedom. She dreams of returning to her village in Africa. Over the years, Aminata reunites with her husband and has another child who is also sold into slavery.

In the second half of the novel, readers learn about Aminata's life after slavery. Aminata works for the British as a scribe recording the names of African Americans emigrating to Canada in the "Book of Negroes" (which is a historical document). In this role, Aminata learns the stories of how different black people sought and gained their freedom.

Aminata's courage and self-reliant efforts put in time again though torn apart in her relationship, places and cultural differences but her perseverance sought despite of all daunting odds brings the horrifying history of slavery to life. Her identity sought through the knowledge gained from reading and writing gained at Indigo Farm. The knowledge transition which helps are get liberation from the clutches of slavery into a new land and later her evolution as a scribe to British paves her way and hope to return to Africa to reunite with her known ones. The human spirit that stays alive though crushed by atrocities at times and people forms the labyrinth for a freedom and gain of identity. This dynamics through narrative of Aminata is well portrayed providing scope for new readings and revisiting into history of slavery to a new begging of life.

Redemption and Recognition

The Illegal by Lawrence Hill is a political thriller exploring themes of immigration, nationality, and racial identity. Set in the year 2018 in two fictional countries, the story follows Keita Ali, a marathon runner from the economically depressed Zantoroland, who seeks asylum in the wealthy Freedom State. Reflecting the challenges of dealing with undocumented immigrants faced by Western societies, Hill's narrative explores the concept of belonging and examines how systemic structures impact individuals based on legal status and race.

Set in the near future, *The Illegal* centers on the interconnected destinies of the fictional nations Zantoroland and Freedom State. The story follows Keita Ali, a marathon runner from Zantoroland, whose life takes a dramatic turn when he becomes a refugee in Freedom State. Political turmoil plagues Zantoroland, and after the regime murders his father, Keita flees and becomes an undocumented immigrant in a hostile new land.

In Freedom State, Keita faces both systemic and personal challenges. Anti-immigrant policies push him to society's margins, and he finds refuge in the hidden enclave of AfricTown. There, he uses his running skills in races to raise money for the release of his kidnapped sister, Charity. Living under the alias "Roger Bannister," Keita distances himself from a dishonest sports agent and eludes persistent immigration authorities.

His journey is supported by a diverse group, including Ivernia Beech, an elderly ally, and journalist Viola Hill. They form a covert support network. Viola uncovers corruption between the governments of Freedom State and Zantoroland, complicating Keita's situation. Finally, the government conspiracies exposed provides Keita a pursuit of justice turning a battle for legal recognition and redemption in the face of significant obstacles.

This journey of the character Keita by Hill enables the readers for more such findings of interesting slave narrative and their emergence from dark to light as refugees in immigrant land to emerge as individuals in run of life race. Thus, the narrative helps defy the socio-political realities of Zantoroland and Freedom State. The new emergence of individuals through human spirit over adversities giving hope to many still fighting for freedom helps find a new dimension towards living.

Conclusion

"*The Illegal*" and "*Someone Knows My Name*" stands as a testament to Laurence Hill's narrative mastery, seamlessly blending past history, she narratives and their struggles embedded in human emotions. Its depth lies not only in the intricate portrayal of their diasporic living but also their sagas ability to resonate with readers across cultures and generations when revisited. The novel's impact transcends its historical setting, inviting introspection on themes of empowerment, identity, love, duty, and the intricatedynamics of power politics by abolitionists.As readers immerse themselves in this literary tapestry, they are not just witnesseto a historical saga but voyagers through the labyrinth of human experiences, enriched by the symbolism of historical myths and diasporic immigrant writings

This paper signifiys those meticulous and self-reliant efforts for liberation and transition to set new boundaries threaded through narratives of Keita Ali(runner) in "*The I'lllegal*" and that of Aminata Diallo(immigrants) in "*Someone Knows My Name*". These works of Hill's stands as a testament to the power of narratives, bridging the chasmbetween past and present, culture and individuality, and history and emotion. Hill's utilizationof symbolism and cultural representation crafts a narrative that lingers in the mind, leaving an indelible mark that transcends the boundaries of time and history.

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