

## **The American Adam: A Comparative Study.**

**Marie Samir Wahba**

### **Abstract**

This research examines the American Adam, the pioneer, as a remarkable image that incorporates the Anglo American tradition. It is a comparative reading of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952) and Maxine Hong Kingston's *Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book* (1989). The American Adam is an icon of innocence, perseverance and great expectations. He also signifies individualism. The American Adam endeavours to fulfill the American Dream of abundance and great achievements. This article traces the "polyphonic" dialogues of three American "unmerged" voices with respect to the individualism of the American Adam and his great expectations. Twain acknowledges Huck Finn the American Adam. Huck Finn's innocence condemns the corrupt hypocrite society which renders him lonely. Such "lonesome" feeling, however, motivates Huck Finn to be a self reliant individual who enjoys the fulfillment of the American Dream.

Ellison, on the other hand, represents a different image of the American Adam. The innocence of Ellison's Adam is regarded as a "flaw" that consigns him to a life of illusions. It is a mark of his "Cyclopean" blindness. The illusions of Ellison's black Adam are represented by misconstruing the assumptions of the dominant culture. He is deceived by the mirage of equality and the American Dream. The naivete' of black Adam renders him a submissive creature who is dominated by others. The black Adam, however, undergoes a painful process of disillusion. It is an illuminating journey toward gradual insight, independence and self reliance. Such journey is a starting point that leads to collective consciousness which has suffered from a long history of "invisibility" and marginalization. As such, individualism is a means, not an aim.

Likewise, Kingston represents Wittman Ah Sing as a Chinese American Adam who reflects the countercultures of the Sixties. He is named after Walt Whitman, who is the father of the American personality. The fatherhood of the Chinese American Adam, however, is different. He highlights the inclusive and dynamic nature of the American personality. Thus, Wittman Ah Sing is not the echo or the shadow of the Anglo American Whitman. The American Eden of Wittman Ah Sing is the “carnivalization” of all Americans. It is an inclusive and “dialogic” vision which is not attained in America. The American inclusive identity acknowledges the individuality of all Americans. Successful individuals interact to form a multicultural community that rejects segregation and marginalization. Such multicultural community is represented by Wittman Ah Sing’s inclusive theatre. Huck Finn, the nameless protagonist and Wittman Ah Sing, therefore, represent three versions of American Adam who lead physical and metaphorical journeys in America. The three journeys are incorporated within an endless “polyphonic” orchestration which interacts “dialogically” with the Anglo American journey motif. The three American picaresque journeys highlight the American society and the pervasive mainstream values. They also foreground the “polyphonic” perceptions with respect to the dominant traditions such as the idea of heroism and white supremacy. Unlike Twain’s presentation that celebrates canonical heroism and white supremacy, Ellison and Kingston deconstruct racial hierarchy and represent a counter image of heroism. Accordingly, this article traces the “polyphonic” dialogues about the American Adam.

## "إعادة كتابة التاريخ في بعض روايات امي تان"

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### ملخص

يتناول هذا البحث كناية آدم الأمريكي الذي يعتبر رمز من الرموز الانجلو أمريكية و مظهر من مظاهر هذه الثقافة. يدرس هذا البحث هذه الكناية في دراسة مقارنه لثلاث روايات أمريكية هي "مغامرات هاكلبيرى فن" (1884) للكاتب الانجلو أمريكي مارك توين (1835-1910)، و"الرجل الخفي" (1952) لـرالف إليسون الإفريقي الأمريكي (1914-1994)، أما الروايه الثالثه فهي "القرود تريبيماستر" (1989) للكاتبه الأمريكية ماكسين هونج كينجستون الأسبويه الأمريكية (1940-). تتمثل هذه الكنايه في صورة المغامر الذي يسعى لتحقيق ذاته. تتناول الروايات موضوع البحث هذه الكنايه بصور مختلفه ومتنوعه. هناك ثلاث شباب أمريكيين يجولوا بالمدن الأمريكية. من ثم تقدم الروايات نماذج لثلاث رجال أمريكيين. تعكس هذه الصور المختلفه لكنايه آدم الأمريكي القيم السائده بالمجتمع الأمريكي حسب رؤيه كل كاتب. تتفاعل هذه الصور في إطار حوارى بين النصوص.

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,  
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,  
I will make divine magnetic lands,  
With the love of comrades,  
With the life-long love of comrades.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of  
America,  
And along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies,  
I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's  
necks,  
By the love of comrades,  
By the manly love of comrades.

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme!  
For you, for you I am trilling these songs.

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1860).

The Anglo American experience is the core of the American cultural scene as the dominant culture. It is the experience of the British American who views himself as the American "Adam". The American "Adam" deserts the corrupt Old World in order to reconstruct an "ideal" civilization in the virgin New World or the Eden of "American Dream". Such experience revolves around a self confident individual whose pilgrimage recreates the world. It is a story of a pioneer whose supremacy and superiority postulate his "humane" vocation to save the "other". This is the "White Man's Burden" of Anglo Americans to cultivate the world and to be the tutor of elevated values and sublimity. As such, the Anglo American holds the power of freedom and enlightenment. This great mission is represented by the "Statue of Liberty". Brett Hansen grants the Statue of Liberty as a "grand structure" (34). He endorses such structure as the epitome of "hope", "Freedom", "Democracy" and "Independence". It is "Liberty Enlightening the World" (Hansen34). Accordingly, The Statue of Liberty reflects the great Anglo American contributions as the route of Liberty.

The statue of "Libertas" (Wikipedia online) represents the crowned Roman Goddess of Freedom who holds "[tabula ansata](#)" (Wikipedia online) that incorporates the date of American Independence. Her crown is also significant. Joseph Parisi remarks that the "seven spikes in the crown [represent] the seven seas and seven continents" (34) as her mission is "universal".

She holds a torch that illuminates the world and that guides those who need enlightenment and she also stands on broken chains that represent dependence and slavery (Wikipedia online). Hence, the American enlightenment is the sole route toward "liberty" and "equality". In "the New Colossus" (1901) — the poem inscribed on the pedestal of the statue — Emma Lazarus records the "universal" message of the Statue of Liberty as follows:

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breath free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send those, the homeless, tempest—tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" (35)

The Anglo American experience is a glorification of the American "Adam" or the pioneer and the savior whose footprints and fingerprints reconstruct the world on the account of his power.

The object of this research is to explore the Anglo American tradition in three American texts from three different traditions and perspectives. It is a study that underscores the "dialogic interaction" of the three texts in a "polyphonic" process. Accordingly, this study foregrounds three journeys of three American "Adams" who shed light on the dominant culture that represents the anchor of the American society.

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America has been perceived as the icon of Eden and the home of "Adam". The metaphor of the American "Adam" is a significant image that shapes the portrayal of Americans (Kathryn Hume). R. W. B. Lewis observes that the American "Adam" is the hero of the New Eden who enjoys another beginning and a new starting point. The American "Adam", Lewis remarks, is an innocent and perfect challenger that makes amends of the corrupt Old World. Lewis delineates the profile of the American "Adam":

[Adam is] an individual emancipated from history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritance of family and race; an individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling, ready to confront whatever awaited him with the aid of his own unique and inherent resources. (5)

This Anglo American metaphor reflects the great expectations of the American individual or the idealistic adventurer who is responsible for the recreation of a better world. Such a dream is known as the "American Dream".

James Truslow Adams regards the New Eden as a site of fulfillment, promotion and "equal" opportunity for the American Adam who escapes the corrupt Old World. For Adam, the New Eden is home of the "American Dream". He argues:

[The] *American Dream* [is] that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement...a dream of being able to grow to fullest development...unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders. (404-5)

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) is an outstanding paradigm of the American Adam. As an adventurer and an explorer, he navigates toward the mysterious world. He can also promote success there. Thus, his power and self-confidence pave the way to the virgin "Eden", a promised land of prosperity where he achieves the

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"American Dream". Moreover, Columbus' footprints have reconstructed the world map. Thus, he is considered a significant representation of the American "Adam" who celebrates the beauty of "Eden" or the home of the "American Dream".

Many writers have glorified the American "Adam" who is reborn to fulfill a great "American Dream". Walt Whitman, for instance, conceives of himself as "chanter of Adamic songs" (102). He celebrates the American experience and the American Adam:

As Adam early in the morning,  
Walking forth from the bower refresh'd with sleep,  
Behold me where I pass, hear my voice, approach,  
Touch me, touch the palm of your hand to my body as I pass,  
Be not afraid of my body.

(105)

Whitman, the "chanter" of the American Adam, portrays the ideal representation of man who enjoys the youth of American civilization. He is mesmerized by the footprints of the American "Adam" which mark the American "Eden". It is the idiosyncratic seal of "Adam" which reflects his powerful abilities and his great contributions.

The idiosyncrasy of the American "Adam" brings forth the importance of individualism as an elevated value that is incorporated in the Anglo American tradition. Individualism underscores the interaction of the individual and his/her society; "the individual becomes integral in his separateness to the extent that he is absorbed into indissoluble union of all men" (Richard Chase 8). Such a relationship foregrounds the ambivalent nature of individualism. Chase and Irene Travis Thomson regard individualism as paradoxical. Thomson remarks that individualism varies from isolation to community, which reflects the mutability of the American society. This leads to another function of individualism. It is a means that underscores the importance of man. Elizabeth C. Hirschman argues that individualism is a route of "self sufficiency" and "self

glorification" (10). In "Self-Reliance", Ralph Waldo Emerson endorses individualism as a means which brings into focus the elevated status of man. Emerson advocates self confidence; he believes that man's personal perception is the source of positive values. Thus, an individual "is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition" (Emerson 179). Moreover, Emerson honours the individual who succeeds to live independently despite of his position within a big society. Such an independence postulates self trust, Emerson elaborates, which is not hindered by threats of inconsistency or misunderstanding. He brings the individual into focus as the core of society, not institutions or sacred consistent values. He underscores self confidence as the route of individualism and the creation of a "unique" personality. It is an attempt to be "yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation" (Emerson 199). The values of Independence and self confidence represent the core of "democracy". The independent and self reliant personality is brought into focus as an effective contributor. Ellison argues that democracy is "a collectivity of *individuals*" (*Shadow and Act* 28). "Every" American has the power to shape and reshape America with no threat of exclusion. Accordingly, individualism is a primary feature of the American "Adam".

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), *Invisible Man* (1952) and *Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book* (1989) explore the dominant icon of the American "Adam". The three American voices are engaged in an "unfinished" "polyphonic" conversation with respect to "Adam's" individualism and his achievements. First, there is *Huckleberry Finn* which is considered a canonical text. T.S. Eliot and Andrew Lang consider it a masterpiece. Toni Morrison regards *Huckleberry Finn* "classic literature" (392). John C. Gerber examines the position of *Huckleberry Finn* as a text that attracts scholars as well as young readers, Eric Solomon describes it as the American "vital critical center" (246). It is a key text that paves way to the study of American fiction. *Huckleberry Finn* is the narrative of Huck Finn. Stanley Brodwin and Harold Bush note that Huck Finn is an "Adamic"

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image. Moreover, Hume points out that Twain has portrayed Huck Finn as an epitome of innocence which is the primary feature of the American "Adam". Huck Finn is a child — symbol of innocence — who endeavours to enjoy freedom. Thus, he escapes the corrupt society. The escape is symbolical of the historical escape from Europe to the New World and the pursuit of a new beginning in order to restore one's innocence and serenity. He deserts the narrow minded Miss Watson and Widow Douglass. He also escapes Pap Finn who "was just all mud" (39). Pap Finn resembles humanity which is corrupted in the Old World. Huck Finn, however, takes off his apparel — symbol of "civilization" — which "got to be all rug and dirt" (37) and he moves "naked, day and night" (136) as a new born baby or a new born Adam. Accordingly, Huck Finn's image is an elaboration of Whitman's portrayal of the pure and innocent naked body of Adam.

Huck Finn's innocence is further reflected with respect to his childish observations. The corrupt society is the object of his significant remarks that underscore the chasm between his innocence and society. Huck, for instance, exposes Widow Douglass' double standard attitude. Despite her secret smoking, which she finds "all right" (15), Widow Douglass forbids Huck Finn to smoke as she instructs him that smoking is "a mean practice" (15). Moreover, Huck Finn questions the lasting mutual hostility between the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons. He tries to discover "what was the trouble" about (128) but he receives no answer. Huck underscores the discrepancy that characterizes the behaviour of the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons with respect to religious beliefs which do not match with hatred. They "took their guns along...and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall" while listening to a sermon "all about brotherly love" (129). Huck Finn remarks that hypocrisy forces them to appear pious. He notices that "most folks don't go to church only when they've got to; but a hog is different" (130). Thus, Huck Finn exposes the hypocrisy of those who occupy an elevated position in society. It is a perception of an innocent outsider that foregrounds the peculiarity of the corrupt attitude. Accordingly, Huck Finn suffers from a deep sense of alienation.

"Lonesome" is a key term in *Huckleberry Finn*. It is Huck Finn's refrain which he frequently repeats throughout his narrative. Hamlin Hill points out that Huck does not find a home at the Widow's house, Pap Finn's cabin and Grangerford's residence. He does not regard Pap Finn with filial emotions but as a stranger or an enemy. Hill describes the "Oedipus" patricide image of Huck Finn's symbolic murder with special reference to the fake stories of his deceased father. Such a symbolic murder underscores Huck's sense of alienation. Huck Finn is always haunted by the idea of death on the account of his deep sense of misery at Widow Douglass' house; "I felt so lonesome I most wished I was dead" (*Huckleberry Finn* 16). Such "lonesome" feeling is the result of a gap that separates the innocent Huck Finn from the corrupt society. That sense of alienation, however, motivates Huck Finn to grow as independent and a paradigm of Emerson's "self reliant" individual. He is a self reliant individual who plots his own fake murder in order to devise an escape. He also attempts to avoid the pursuit of Pap Finn and Widow Douglass. He also manages to survive on the account of his own competence and capacity to live on a raft and in Jackson Island. Moreover, his manual skill and his geographical knowledge of his environment make out of Huck Finn a "Robinson Crusoe" who provides himself with sustenance and who survives harshness of nature on his own. As such, the "self reliant" Huck Finn is a significant image of the American "Adam" who enjoys the "better and richer and fuller" of the "American Dream" (Adams 404).

Huck Finn's self reliance can be further investigated with respect to the form of the novel. *Huckleberry Finn* can be read as a "metafiction". In *Self-Conscious*, Patricia Waugh's definition revolves around the process of fiction writing; it "self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact" (2). Not only does Huck Finn represent a "self reliant" individual with respect to daily provision, but also with respect to his role as a narrator. First, Huck Finn introduces himself as a fictive character portrayed by Twain and that his narrative complements *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876). Huck Finn proposes the postulations of reading his

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story: "You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer', but that ain't no matter" (13). Moreover, Huck Finn mentions the characters that play part in his narrative and he also displays the outline of his narrative: "Now the way that the book winds up, is this" (13). In the end, Huck Finn evaluates his writing journey as a self-reliant author. He argues that writing is a difficult task. Finally, He mentions that "there ain't nothing more to write about and I am rotten glad of it, because if I'd a knowed what a trouble it was to make a book I wouldn't a tackled it and ain't going to no more" (295-6). So, as a "self-reliant" individual, Huck Finn is conscious of the act of writing. Consequently, *Huckleberry Finn* is an outstanding text which represents the metaphor of the innocent American "Adam" who celebrates his "self-reliant" individualism.

The Anglo American icon of innocent Adam is the subject of "polyphonic" dialogues among other traditions in America. *Invisible Man*, for example, revolves around a nameless protagonist who is another version of the American Adam. Such version converses with Twain's Adam with special reference to that Anglo American metaphor. In *Shadow and Act*, Ellison observes his natural filiations—as an American author—with Huck Finn, not Jim who is of the same race (58). Ellison represents his own metaphor of the American Adam that interacts with Twain's Huck Finn. Unlike Huck Finn's meritorious "innocence" which disapproves of corruption, Ellison represents the innocence of his nameless protagonist as a "flaw". It is a "flaw" that consigns the nameless protagonist to a life of illusions. Patrice D. Rakine compares the failure of the nameless protagonist to Cyclops' downfall on the account of Ulysses' conspiracy. Such deceit renders the dehumanized and brutalized "other" totally blind. Both Cyclops and the nameless protagonist represent the "brute" "other" who loses perception on the account of illusions and deceit or "innocence". Hume describes such a state of "false innocence" (69) as a "burden"(70). It is a state of illusion which underscores his naiveté and lack of experience.

The nameless protagonist misconstrues the illusions of the so called social equality in America and the American Eden as the home of the American Dream that provides equal opportunities to all Americans regardless of their race. For instance, the nameless protagonist unconsciously equates "social responsibility" with "social equality" in his speech that follows the Battle Royal (30). His illusion is reflected by his dream to be brought into focus as an African American leader or a praiseworthy figure that is championed by Americans. Moreover, his naiveté is underscored by the ambiguous riddle of his grandfather's death bed advice which he cannot decipher (17). The grandfather compares the African American strive after their rights to the struggle against a lion (17). That is, the American Dream is a mirage according to the African American experience. In *Shadow and Act*, Ellison argues that lack of equality renders the American Dream impossible (36). Thus, the misconstruction of the nameless protagonist is a mark of his naiveté.

The naiveté of the nameless protagonist is also represented by his submissive and acquiescent attitude. He acts according to the directions of others. He is portrayed as a subjugated and dependent person. He blurs the racial boundaries according to Mr. Norton's order. Moreover, he submits to Dr. Bledsoe's conspiracy on the account of the recommendation letters. He also follows the advice of Junior Emerson with respect to his work at the Liberty Paints. Furthermore, he becomes the subject of the Brotherhood's subjugation. They impose a new name and identity on him, dictate to him what to say and govern his perceptions. Such dependent attitude and lack of self reliance represent innocence as the tragic flaw of Ellison's African American Adam.

The nameless protagonist, on the other hand, undergoes a painful process of maturity. Unlike Huck Finn who remains immature till the end, Hume remarks that the protagonist of Ellison's *Invisible Man* will "suffer while learning the difference between real life and moral ideals" (69). The nameless protagonist describes disillusion as "painful" (459). Leon Forrest examines the progress of the nameless protagonist. He describes it as "a metamorphosis", a "rebirth" and

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"stages of his processing into life" (308). As such, disillusion lies in the gradual insight of the nameless protagonist. This is the first feature of his maturity. Robert Butler explores such a state as a process of "independence, and self awareness" (126). The nameless protagonist realizes that America is by no means an ideal Eden that provides equal opportunities to all Americans. It is the Eden of power holders, a private Jim Crow Eden for the whites only to achieve the American Dream. As such, Maxine Lavon Montgomery highlights Ellison's doubt of a raceless and classless American Eden. The progress and painful disillusion of the nameless protagonist can be deciphered with respect to the form of *Invisible Man*, which could be read as a Bildungsroman (Stewart Rodnan1970; Kennett Burke1987; Rakine2006). Susanna Howe defines Bildungsroman as "the novel of all-rounding development or self culture" (6). Metamorphism is the core of *Invisible Man*. *Invisible Man* revolves around the maturity of an African American Adam who undergoes a long process of "self culture" (Howe), a process that foregrounds the indispensability of "self reliance".

Another feature of the nameless protagonist's maturity is the ability to develop a self reliant personality. Kun Jong Lee explores Emerson's "self reliance" in relation to racism. Kun Jong Lee argues that Emerson rejects subjection and weakness which are the features of the slave. As such, blackness equates lack of self reliance according to Kun Jong Lee's study of Emerson's self reliance. Ellison's nameless protagonist, however, eliminates Emerson's racial distinction with respect to self reliance. As an African American Adam, he learns to be self reliant. His self reliance is represented by burning all the documents that impose an identity on him as a dependent submissive person. Ellin Horowitz remarks that the nameless protagonist illuminates his independent route by burning those documents. It is a means which underscores his idiosyncrasy and individuality. Likewise, his self reliance is reflected by revisiting and evaluating his past experience. Such reconstruction brings into call Penelope's determined act of weaving and reweaving in order to direct her own life according to her free will. Accordingly, it is a process that foregrounds individualism as a means toward racial consciousness.

*Invisible Man* is the story of an African American Adam who strives to acquire a space of his own as an individual and as part of a collective consciousness. Such a quest is reflected in Ellison's dialogue with *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Horowitz remarks the interaction of those two texts with respect to the creation of an individual artist as an initial step toward collective consciousness. The nameless protagonist deciphers his case with respect to "Stephen's problem" as follows:

Stephen's problem, like ours, was not actually one of creating the uncreated conscience of his race, but of creating the *uncreated features of his face*. Our task is that of making ourselves individuals. The conscience of a race is the gift of its individuals who see, evaluate, record... We create the race by creating ourselves and then to our great astonishment we will have created something far more important: We will have created a culture. (286)

The quest for the self is his method; it is not an egoistic end, it is a self construction as an individual who contributes to the collective identity. In other words, it is an attempt "to become one, yet many" (465). The nameless protagonist, on the other hand, argues against individualism as an aim. Columbus is a significant paradigm of an adventurer who endorses individualism as an aim. The nameless protagonist "laughed at Columbus. What an India he'd found" (402). The quest for the self as an aim is illusive according to Ellison's protagonist. Consequently, the nameless protagonist's attempt to create "*the uncreated features of his face*" is his means to achieve "the uncreated conscience of the race".

The attempts of the nameless protagonist, however, are obstructed by his "invisibility". Rakine points out to the historical dimension of the white failure to observe the individuality of "other" Americans. Such a failure is represented by slavery and the marginalized and segregated position of the African Americans. Gates and Ellison observe the impact of marginalization and segregation on the African American individual and how individualism constitutes a burden in the context of inequity. In *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Man*, Gates argues that racial segregation deprives African

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Americans of individualism since every black person represents his/her race. Gates describes it as "the 'burden of representation'" (xvii). Ellison also argues against the "pre-individualistic black community" (*Shadow and Act* 90) which is considered the African American reaction to what Gates calls "burden of representation". Ellison remarks that the African American community disapproves of individualism which might lead to drastic consequences since a whole African American community might be responsible for the crime of an African American individual. Besides, Rakine draws a parallel of the Anglo American failure to interact with African Americans as individuals with "Cyclopean" blindness. Accordingly, the failure of the mainstream perception to observe black individualism renders African Americans "invisible".

*Invisible Man* revolves around the "invisibility" of the African American individual. The "invisibility" of the protagonist, for example, lies in the fact that he is nameless. M. L. Raina argues that the protagonist's "invisibility" lies in the fact that the whites refuse to see him as an American individual. In the epilogue, the nameless protagonist mentions the cause of his invisibility: "I am invisible...simply because people refuse to see me" (17). The nameless protagonist also encapsulates his "invisible" state with respect to the accident detailed in the prologue. The nameless protagonist attacks the white pedestrian because he fails to see him and to apologize to him. The white man is an image of Euripides' Pentheus who cannot perceive his cousin Dionysus — the nameless protagonist — as a god (*Bacchae* 405 BC). Moreover, the nameless protagonist cannot be perceived by the discourse of power. The *Daily News* makes a victim out of the white criminal. Accordingly, the "invisibility" of the nameless protagonist can be regarded as his "burden of representation".

The nameless protagonist's "invisibility", therefore, lies in the fact that he is observed as an emblem of a racial stereotype, not an individual. Rakine compares the Battle Royal to Ulysses' encounter with the drunken Cyclops. Like the one eyed monster, the drunken Southern white exploiters cannot see the African American as an

American individual. Moreover, Junior Emerson views him as Jim, Twain's slave. Adding to this, Rakine compares the hospital "bright third eye" doctor (188) to Cyclops. Like the monster, the doctor observes the nameless protagonist as a case to experiments. Furthermore, the Brotherhood regards him as a spokesman with no personal point of view or free will. Robert A. Lee points out that Brother Jack fails to perceive the nameless protagonist as an African American individual. Likewise, Kimberly Lamm argues that the Brotherhood overlooks individuality. The Brotherhood believes that "individuals...don't count" (236) but "it's what the group wants, what the group does" (320). Horowitz notes that the crime of the nameless protagonist according to the Brotherhood is his quest for individuality. They accuse him of being an "opportunist" (324) and a "dictator" (324). The Brotherhood's failure to acknowledge the individuality of the nameless protagonist is physically embodied by the "Cyclopean" (281) portrayal of Brother Jack. Suddenly, the nameless protagonist is confronted by a "glass eye....staring fixed at" him (381) and Brother Jack's "left eye had collapsed" (381). The nameless protagonist discovers that "he doesn't see me. He doesn't even see me" (382).

The nameless protagonist, however, resists such an "invisibility" through his writing experience and his attempts to portray his own image. Lawrence P. Jackson and Russell W. Nash point out that Ellison employs Twain's first person narrator which is represented by Huck Finn's voice. One can easily relate the individuality of Ellison's narrator to the Anglo American tradition of the individual narrative voice. Adam Z. Newton highlights the dialogic interaction of the Anglo American texts with special reference to the introductory sentence that reflects individualism (32). "I am an invisible man" (*Invisible Man* 7) interacts with the introductory sentence of *Notes from the Underground* (1864): "I am a sick man. I am a spiteful man. I am an unattractive man" (Foeder Dostoevsky online). It also interacts with the introductory sentence of *Moby Dick; or The White Whale* (1851): "Call me Ishmael" (Herman Melville online). It is an "interaction" with a long tradition that celebrates the first person narrative voice.

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*Tripmaster Monkey* revolves around a third American Adam. Wittman Ah Sing is a "[fifth]-generation native Californian" (41) who experiences the countercultures of the 1960s. Wittman Ah Sing is an American product, not an alien or a foreigner. He, therefore, distances himself from the FOB with respect to his racial remarks (5). He introduces himself as an "anti war" (47) and a "hip" (49) that endeavours to be "[an] American who doesn't kill" (235). W. J. Rorabough explores the "hippies". They represent a subversive counterculture of the 1960s that rejects the mainstream culture and war. It also violates codes of society. He also points out their free consumption of drugs and their free attitude toward sex. Rorabough notes that hippies "wanted to decentralize authority, to embrace nature rather than conquer it, to feel rather than reason, to play rather than work, to share rather than compete, and to 'make love not war'"(284). Wittman Ah Sing is a significant hip who "[hates] merchandizing" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 237) and who frequents drug parties. Moreover, Wittman Ah Sing recites Jack Kerouac's poem about American people. Kerouac is a significant pioneer of the Beats. The Beat generation of the 1960s embraces a subversive countercultural approach. Allan Johnston points out that the Beats consider themselves a reaction to the corrupt society that is preoccupied with materialism, war and destruction. The Beats, Johnston notes, resist such brutality with respect to their free life style. Thus, Wittman Ah Sing reflects the subversive American "Adam" of the 1960s.

Wittman Ah Sing's American citizenship is further represented by his natural filiations with the Anglo American tradition. As English major, he studies the books of American pioneers and Anglo American canonical texts. Likewise, Wittman Ah Sing is interested in the American cinema. He, for instance, affiliates with Charlie Chaplin, the protagonist of *The Gold Rush* (1925) when he visits the restaurant which has received the crew of the film. Moreover, he chooses to watch the *West Side Story* (1961) which is considered one of the most significant American musical films that has won several awards. Wittman Ah Sing is an American Adam who is another "chanter of Adamic songs". Wittman Ah Sing's

experience is his attempts "to take the hyphen out—'Chinese American'. 'American', the noun, and 'Chinese', the adjective" (327). Accordingly, the Anglo American tradition is incorporated in Wittman Ah Sing's personality as an American Adam.

Wittman Ah Sing's portrayal as an American Adam is further displayed by his name. Wittman Ah Sing's father "tried to name him after" Walt Whitman (161). The choice of Whitman is significant. Jennie Wang states that Whitman is the father of the national personality in his poems. Moreover, Chase endorses Whitman as a "representative" who "spoke with the very voice of his native land" (45). Thus, Whitman can be regarded as an American Adam. Jennie Wang describes him as "a maker of American identity" (102) and "creator of his race, his people, his community" (113). Like the Anglo American Adam, Wittman Ah Sing is a father of America's inclusive national personality. Hence, Jennie Wang remarks that the American idea is no more limited to Uncle Sam and Huck Finn but it also includes Kingston's "American Monkey" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 340). A Chinese American Adam who interacts with Whitman, the Anglo American Adam, produces his own "song of Myself" (Jeanne Wang 102).

The dissonance that underscores Whitman's and Wittman Ah Sing's songs is represented by the misspelling of Whitman's name which can be deciphered with respect to the Chinese American contribution to the dominant culture. Debra Shostak argues that Wittman Ah Sing "stands for the transformation of American culture in contact with Chinese American culture" (248). Thus, Wittman Ah Sing's image of the American Adam is represented by his fatherhood. Wittman Ah Sing is a father of an inclusive interactive American identity which blurs all boundaries of segregation and challenges any monolithic identity. He is a new American Adam who celebrates his difference. He is not the shadow or the echo of Whitman, nor is he "Wit Man" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 179), the "China Man" who is clustered with the Chinese people or FOBs on account of their common physiological traits argues Jeanne

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Wang; she conceives of Wittman as an American father of inclusion and interaction that celebrate the plurality of America and deconstruct a monolithic and stagnant American identity. Accordingly, it is a new identity that "represents all of the people who have made the United States their home" (E.D. Huntley 163). The American Eden, therefore, stands for equality, freedom and democracy that Wittman Ah Sing dreams of and endeavours to achieve. As such, equality, freedom and democracy are American principles which have to be applied in America. The American Eden as a home of the American Dream is still a theoretical vision which has by no means been attained in America.

The inclusive manifold identity of America brings into focus the individuality of every American especially the marginalized "other". It is a process that enables the marginalized and silenced "other" to employ the first person pronoun. Wittman Ah Sing's family name is significant; it is "Ah Sing" which reminds readers of the first verse in *Leaves of Grass*. Wittman Ah Sing declares "One's-self I sing, a simple separate person, /Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse" (3). The route to democracy is a route of individuals who succeed to sing the self, and successful individuals create an inclusive community which celebrates pluralism according to A. Noelle Williams. Wittman Ah Sing, James T.F. Tanner argues, yearns for individuality as well as community which are considered "the requirement in a democratic society that the individual has proper scope for development and the community have means for furthering social goals" (64). In "One Man Show", Wittman Ah Sing insists on the regaining his individual self as a means that subverts marginalization. Wittman Ah Sing rejects the inability to say "I" (318). The Chinese American Adam encourages Chinese Americans to restore their individuality; "[we] used to have a mighty 'I', but we lost it...I.I.I.I.I.I.I.I-warrior" (319). It is a war against segregation and marginalization. Unlike the violent communities of gangs in *West Side Story* (A. Noelle Williams 96), the "[alienated], tribeless" individualism (*Tripmaster Monkey* 246) and the egoistic dimensions of individualism that casts old Popo outside her community because

she is "self-reliant. And she has advantages—water-proof matches, fat wood kindling, Army surplus" (202-3), it is a war to create "a loving community" (331) that yearns for peace. It creates a choir that is able to sing together "not only in solo" (John Lowe 122). Such a collective orchestration is the interaction of individual voices which are not dissolved or silenced according to Lara Narcisi.

Unlike Hamlet's irresolution and procrastination which he experiences in chapter one due to his contemplative monologue of suicide, Wittman Ah Sing succeeds to pave routes of interaction among individual voices in America with respect to his task as an American playwright. Wittman Ah Sing's motto is as follows: "[we] make theater we make community" (261). Irma Maini argues that Wittman Ah Sing's community is represented by his theatrical efforts to write a play that includes all ethnic groups in America. It is a site of multiculturalism and dialogic interaction. As such, *Tripmaster Monkey* is a text which revolves around the construction of a literary work of art as a process of achieving a communal project. In chapter one, for example, the narrator displays the process of writing the play as a communal project. Jeanne Wang notes that Wittman Ah Sing — the playwright — warns the audience of segregation and exclusion. He warns of a forgranted passive reception that depends upon stagnant stereotypes. Wittman Ah Sing's "Ishmael", therefore, is not necessarily white (34). Wittman Ah Sing proposes his rules of writing; "[from] now on, whenever you read about people with no surnames, color them with black skin or yellow skin" (34). Wittman Ah Sing also rejects stage directions which impose racial description. His actors "will walk on stage and their look will be self evident" (34). In the end, Wittman Ah Sing succeeds in his communal project. Unlike the loneliness and alienation of "Ishmael" who survives as an orphan that is "[buoyed] up by that coffin, for almost one whole day and night" (*Moby Dick* online), "Wittman's community was blessing him" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 340) in the end. Derek Parker Royal remarks that such relation highlights Wittman Ah Sing's "hopes to redefine literature in a more communal way" (150). Like Penelope who aims at " working on her great web all day

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long, but at night she would unpick the stitches again by torchlight " (*The Odyssey* online) in order to deceive the suitors and determine her family and community, Wittman Ah Sing constructs his community with respect to his theatrical project. Consequently, *Tripmaster Monkey* is a novel which revolves around a "Penelopean" process of weaving and reweaving a metamorphic, inclusive and interactive American community with respect to the journey of creating an inclusive theatre. Wittman Ah Sing's "[community] is not built once-and-for-all; people have to imagine, practice, and re-create it" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 306). Thus, it is a theatrical community in the process of creation and recreation with no final word.

Huck Finn, Ellison's nameless protagonist and Wittman Ah Sing are three versions of the American Adam that experience their individualism in the American space. It is a physical as well as a metaphorical journey in America. Janice P. Stout notes that the journey motif is a significant feature of Anglo American literature since the American history begins with a journey toward the New World. Stout remarks that motivation, direction of journey and the historical dimension are the main features of the journey narrative (x). Stout adds that Anglo American tradition incorporates significant journeys such as Homer's *Odyssey* (eighth century BC), Dante's *Inferno* (1555) and Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). Thus, the journeys of Huck Finn, the nameless protagonist and Wittman Ah Sing interact within a remarkable Anglo American journey motif. Accordingly, reading *Huckleberry Finn*, *Invisible Man* and *Tripmaster Monkey* in the context of the Anglo American journey motif is indispensable as it brings into focus a chorus that reflects harmony as well as dissonance.

Huck Finn's journey is a quest for freedom and his "Celestial City". It is the pleasure to "[lay] down in the bottom of the canoe and let her float...[having] a good rest and a smoke out of [his] pipe, looking away into the sky, not a cloud in it" (47). As such, Huck Finn cannot appreciate the journey motivation of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. To him, Bunyan's protagonist is "a man that left his family it didn't say why" (121). Huck Finn's journey, on the other hand, is fleeing

from a corrupt society. Stout notes that escape is an implicit judgment. Huck Finn, Stout adds, "'lit out' from a repressive and devious society" (33). As such, it is Huck Finn's attempt to "fix up some way to keep Pap and the widow from trying to follow" him (*Huckleberry Finn* 44). The corrupt society of the South is the American "Inferno" which is represented by Pap Finn, the criminals of the shipwreck, the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons, the Duke and the Dauphin's crimes and Sherburn and the murder of the drunken Boggs. Thus, echoing Dante, Huck Finn descends the Mississippi river. He also witnesses the atrocities of the corrupt Southern society and contacts the corrupt residents of the American "Inferno" who are responsible for their crimes.

Huck Finn's adventure further echoes *The Odyssey*. The corrupt society resembles the antagonism that encounters Ulysses who is captured by Calypso, the nymph. Ulysses also faces the hostility of Poseidon, the god of the sea. Moreover, he is imprisoned by Polyphemus the Cyclops. Ulysses faces the destructive tempest, the temptation of Siren and Scylla the sea monster. Ulysses, however, succeeds to escape all his enemies due to the protection of Minerva the Roman goddess who pleads to Zeus on behalf of Ulysses. Like Ulysses, Huck Finn is protected by the power of a natural god. It is the Mississippi river that offers him refuge and protection against the hostility of the corrupt society. Eliot observes the power of the river. It is a "natural force that can wholly determine the course of human peregrination" (351). Not only does the river protect Huck Finn, but it also, as Brodwin argues, supplies him with provisions for the journey and with free gifts: "cord-wood floating down, and pieces of log rafts — ... a dozen logs together.... a canoe; just a beauty...about thirteen or fourteen foot long, riding high like a duck" (*Huckleberry Finn* 43). Finally, like Ulysses the adventurer who restores his wife, property and treasure, Huck Finn regains his fortune in the end. Tom tells him that "'it's all there, yet—six thousand dollars and more...'" (295). Accordingly, Huck Finn is the blessed adventurer who leads an "Odyssean" triumphant journey that overcomes the corrupt residents of the Southern "Inferno".

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As for the journey of the nameless protagonist, it is a mental and a symbolic journey (Edward M. Griffin1969; Rodnan1970; Burke1987; Butler1995). Likewise, J. Lee Greene reads the historical dimension of that journey in light of the Black journey to the North. As such, it is a quest journey. Stout defines the quest as a "spiritual" (16) and "mental" (90) effort to gain "self knowledge" (16). The nameless protagonist's journey is a process of self discovery. Likewise, Forrest traces the structural dimension of the narrative in process. It is a formula of *purpose, passion and perception*" (Forrest 308). The passion of the nameless protagonist is an "Odyssean" peril. Rakine points out the affinities of Ulysses' journey with that of the nameless protagonist. Both of them encounter antagonists when they are on their way homeward. Moreover, like Ulysses, the nameless protagonist commits mistakes. Rakine, however, argues that the nameless protagonist is deprived of Ulysses' chance to make amends due to his peripheral position in the American society. The nameless protagonist is also deprived of the "Odyssean" supernatural protection and free gifts. He, for instance, provides himself with electric light through theft. The nameless protagonist describes his "fight with Manipulated Light & Power...[He uses] their service and pay them nothing at all" (*Invisible Man* 8-9). The nameless protagonist's "Progress" brings into focus his burdens and frustrations. Like John Bunyan's Christian who carries "a great burden upon his back" (Bunyan online), the nameless protagonist suffers from a heavy burden "as though [he] carried a heavy stone, the weight of a mountain on [his] shoulders" (*Invisible Man* 357). Unlike Christian's "progress" that enables him to get rid of his burden, Ellison's protagonist cannot easily set himself free. Accordingly, it is not Twain's "Kingdom-Come" (*Huckleberry Finn* 77) or Bunyan's "Celestial City" which occupies the core of *Invisible Man*, it is the American racial "City of Destruction" or the Racial "Inferno" instead.

The nameless protagonist, therefore, has "descended, like Dante, into the depths" (11) and encountered the inhabitants of the American racial "Inferno". Unlike the inhabitants of Dante's "Inferno", the dwellers of the American racial "Inferno" are not responsible for their degraded position since "[responsibility] rests upon recognition" (16).

The nameless protagonist meets some of those invisible and unrecognized residents. On the first level of Ellison's "Inferno", the nameless protagonist meets a senior African American woman singing the spirituals. Then he descends farther where he meets a black girl whose naked body is the object of scrutiny as a human cargo. On another lower level, the nameless protagonist meets a slave mother who has killed her master and her children's father because of her frustrated dream of freedom. Likewise, Brother Tod Clifton is a significant "Inferno" resident according to the Brotherhood. In Canto xxxiv, Dante exposes the dwellers of the deepest level of his "Inferno". They are the most famous traitors in history. He meets Lucifer, Judas Iscariot, Brutus and Cassius there. Tod's individualism is a "High Treason" that renders him an American "Brutus" according to the Brotherhood. The nameless protagonist is accused by the Brotherhood of organizing a funeral for Tod whose quest for individualism is considered a serious treason (374). So, the American racial "Inferno" is the segregated residence of African Americans. Consequently, the nameless protagonist leads a mental and spiritual quest which can be observed as the thorny journey of the marginalized "other" in America.

*Tripmaster Monkey* represents another quest journey in America. It is the quest for a multicultural American community that resists the exclusivity of segregation. Like the "Odyssean" dream of home and family, Wittman Ah Sing dreams of a tribe which is represented by his theatrical journey. Such a journey, however, is difficult as Wittman Ah Sing, like Ulysses, is hindered by an American Cyclops. In Wittman Ah Sing's case, the American Cyclops is the "Unemployment Office" which cannot appreciate the talents of Wittman Ah Sing the playwright, nor can it pave routes of theatrical interaction among American individuals. Wittman Ah Sing, for instance, realizes that he is "invisible" to the clerk. He meets the same clerk "but she did not recognize him. She asked him the same questions" (227). Wittman Ah Sing's talents, as an artist and a playwright, are "invisible" to the "Cyclopean" office of Unemployment. Wittman Ah Sing tells the counselor that he seeks

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to work as a playwright. The counselor's answer reflects such failure to see. "So you write down that you are seeking a retail job" is the counselor's advice (TMHFB238). Accordingly, Wittman Ah Sing's career as a playwright is his "Celestial City" which he cannot reach.

Wittman Ah Sing's pilgrimage foregrounds hardships that face the pilgrim solely. Like Bunyan's pilgrim, Kingston's pilgrim faces an American "wicket-gate" and "narrow way" (*The Pilgrim's Progress* online). Such hardships are represented by the exams that Kingston's pilgrim faces on his pilgrimage at the "Unemployment Office". For example, Kingston's "pilgrim passed the test of waiting" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 226). Passing such test, however, does not lead to the "Celestial City" of employment. Unlike Bunyan's pilgrimage, Kingston's "Celestial City" is not the prize of the steadfast pilgrim who perseveres in his pursuit of the "Celestial City". It is not a route of constant persistence to reach the state of joy and grace. On the contrary, "Capitalism" offers the rich the gracious and joyous "Celestial City", whereas the "invisible" "other" is provided with the hardship and tests of the pilgrimage and is deprived of its paradise. Thus, "Capitalism" is another American "Cyclopean" image. Like Ulysses, however, Wittman Ah Sing learns to outsmart the "Cyclopean" "Capitalism". He decides to work six months only and to establish his theatre during the other six months on account of "the dole" (272). He attempts to fake his U.I.D. claim cards every fortnight. Wittman Ah Sing has "enough names and addresses for years of Unemployment" (249), his journey brings into focus the economic exploitation of the "Cyclopean" "Capitalist" regime.

Economic exploitation and marginalization represent two "monologic" forms that render life an "Infernal" route. Wittman Ah Sing witnesses the American "Inferno" which is the outcome of "monologism". Such "Inferno" is twofold. First, war is the political consequence of economic exploitation. Wittman Ah Sing, the pacifist, cannot tolerate war. He argues against toy weapons that teach children how to enjoy war. He also escapes "draft" as he is under a vow of peace. Thus, he "will not go to Viet Nam or to any war" (340). Likewise, Wittman Ah Sing witnesses another "infernal" route in

America. It is the peripheral position of the marginalized "other" who is deprived of the American Dream. Such segregation is represented by the ghettos as the "Inferno" of "monologism". In his play, Wittman Ah Sing integrates a scene that represents Chinatown as an "Inferno". The tourists descend the "Circle of Evil" (299). Wittman Ah Sing portrays those circles as he imagines that "[the] First Circle is the shops and restaurants; the Second circle is the home life...Three levels down...a poker club had assembled and was in full swing..." (299). Accordingly, unlike Dante's "Inferno", Kingston's "Inferno" is the responsibility of economic exploitation and segregation, not the responsibility of the victims or residents of the "Inferno". In general, Huck Finn, the nameless protagonist and Wittman Ah Sing lead three different "Odyssean" journeys that display different perceptions of the American "Celestial City" as well as the American "Inferno".

*Huckleberry Finn*, *Invisible Man* and *Tripmaster Monkey*, therefore, can be read as three American picaresque novels which display the values of the dominant culture as well as the subversive voices of marginalized groups. Richard Bjornson states that the picaresque journey provides a panoramic view of society as a background which is imbued with values and traditions. In other words, "[because] picaresque heroes wander from place to place and traverse various social milieux, they encounter many different people, and by momentarily focusing upon these secondary characters, the author can depict a cross section of contemporary manners, morals, and idiosyncrasies" (Bjornson 9). The picaresque journey foregrounds the American society as a site of interactive traditions that act and react in a "polyphonic" process. Accordingly, the cultural back ground of the three picaresque novels displays the significance of the dominant tradition and the "contrapuntal" reading of the dominant tradition.

Heroism is a significant factor in any national tradition since the heroic qualities bring into focus the elevated values of the community. Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, for instance, displays the heroic sublimity of the Anglo American canonical figures. They are the Shakespearean tragic heroes who occupy the top of the social hierarchy or the "Chain

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of Beings". On Huck Finn's raft, for instance, Huck Finn watches the rehearsal of the Dauphin and the Duke. They rehearse the roles of Romeo, Juliet, Macbeth and Hamlet's soliloquy. Huck Finn endorses such a performance. He declares that "it's sublime; sublime....It was beautiful to see him" (152). Shakespeare's sublimity renders a villain, the Duke, a character of "a most noble attitude" (152). Moreover, the Shakespearean rehearsal elevates the raft society according to Huck Finn. As such, "the raft was a most uncommon lively place" (153). The "Arkansaw" audience, however, cannot appreciate the Shakespearean sublimity due to their degraded mentality (165). Accordingly, Twain's image of heroism represents the Anglo American canonical tradition of heroism and sublimity which is based upon hierarchical structures.

*Invisible Man*, however, represents a "contrapuntal" image of heroism. It is the image of the fool, not the tragic hero. Ellison's representation of heroism subverts the hierarchically structured image of the American society. Unlike Twain's stage, Ellison gives the fool a microphone and enables him to hold the stage. It is a process that introduces a different perspective of sublimity. The Vet is Ellison's fool. He is an insightful physician who meets Mr. Norton and the nameless protagonist at the Golden Day. Ellison's disillusioned fool is an African American intellectual who "[speaks] the truth to power" (Said *Representations of the Intellectual* 97). He discovers that his professional expertise is by no means his source of dignity. He highlights the "invisibility" and the naiveté of the nameless protagonist. The Vet describes the nameless protagonist as an "invisible" person, "a walking personification of the Negative" who "fails to understand the simple facts of life" (*Invisible Man* 81). Moreover, as the black intellectual, the wise fool highlights the reason that motivates Mr. Norton to be the patron of a Southern Black College. They are egoistic motives. The Vet, therefore, encapsulates the Norton nameless protagonist relationship as follows:

Poor Stumblers, neither of you can see the other. To you he is a mark on the score-card of your achievement, a thing and not a man; a child, or even less — a black amorphous thing. And you, for all your

power, are not a man to him, but a God, a force....He believes in you....in the great false wisdom taught slaves...that white is right. (81-82)

The Vet's counter discourse confronts and repudiates white homogeneity. He also exposes its dominant power.

Moreover, the Vet's vision can be compared to Cassandra's tragic prophesy which no one believes. On his way to New York, the nameless protagonist meets the Vet once more. The Vet warns him not to be deceived by the North as a home of Black freedom. He also advises him to be himself: "Be your own father....leave the Mr. Nortons alone"(130). In other word, the Vet motivates him to lead the painful route of disillusion. Unfortunately, the nameless protagonist ignores that advice. The Vet's prophesy, however, is considered a form of resistance that disturbs homogeneity. As such, he is banished as an "insane" person (82) who "should be under lock and key" (117). The Vet is sent to a mad house in Washington D.C. The Vet is considered mad due to his transgression of the dominant order which is maintained on account of "Reason". In *Madness and Civilization*, Michel Foucault points out that a subversive act is viewed as "non-reason" (ix). This distinction is a strategy that represses and confines resistance. The Vet, therefore, has to be repressed and confined in a mad house because he challenges the dominant "Reason". Accordingly, Ellison's heroism is not drawn on the sublimity of a "tragic hero" but on the subversive discourse of a fool who violates the codes of "Reason" and whose prophesy is never perceived.

Kingston represents another subversive image of heroism. It is Caliban the son of Sycorax, not Shakespeare's Prospero. Caliban is Kingston's hero who is invited to play a role in Wittman Ah Sing's inclusive theatre. Unlike Shakespeare's Caliban who cannot claim his island and who is enslaved by Prospero, Kingston's Caliban occupied the centre stage and is not silenced or brutalized by any "footlights". On stage, "Caliban is raging at not seeing his face in the mirror" (290). Wittman Ah Sing's theatre, therefore, enables Caliban to protest

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misrepresentation as well as elimination. Caliban has the right to perceive of himself and to portray his own face as a human being, not a beast. Kingston's Caliban overcomes repression and emerges as a sublime hero, not a "cannibal" that occupies a peripheral position on Shakespeare's stage. In general, heroism in *Huckleberry Finn*, *Invisible Man* and *Tripmaster Monkey* is a significant value that displays the elevated as well as the degraded. It is also a remarkable site of "contrapuntal" interaction that exposes white supremacy as another cultural value that is incorporated in the American dominant culture.

White supremacy is a significant Anglo American value. It is based upon a hierarchical structure of human races whereby the WASP occupies the top of the hierarchy. Critics highlight the development of white supremacy. Ania Loomba notes that white supremacy is the result of racial contact. In other words, "the centrality of whiteness....was the actual contact with black people, based on conquest and exploitation" (71). Hence, it is the result of the encounter of whites with "other" dark races. John Ruskin, for instance, glorifies such a supremacy; "[we] are still undegenerate in race, a race mingled of the best northern blood...we are rich in an inheritance of honor" (277). Likewise, Thomas Jefferson honours the white colour as a mark of "superior beauty" (182). The Caucasian Complexion, Jefferson claims, is "preferable to the eternal monotony, which reigns in the countenances, that immoveable veil of black which covers all emotions of the other race" (182). John Bird points out the positive associations for whiteness which oppose the negative associations for blackness. Moreover, James Leonard remarks that white superiority imposes inferiority on "other" races in America. Leonard, for example, observes that "white magic" stands for "the power of logical forms" (148). Frantz Fanon notes that whiteness "stands for the bright look of innocence, the white dove of peace, magical heavenly light" (189). Accordingly, white supremacy consolidates Euro-centrism and Western self definition.

Critics remark the racial significance of white supremacy. Said remarks that "being a White Man....[is] a self confirming business"

(*Orientalism* 227), and he also believes that it demands elevated conduct. As such, it is a strife to preserve white purity with respect to the binary opposition of the superior WASP and the "other" inferior races in America. White purity imposes racial segregation. Rakine remarks the "dividing line" that separates races (160). Jim Crow boundaries hinder each race to discover the humanity of the "other". Fanon remarks that the "white man is sealed in his whiteness. The black man is sealed in his blackness" (9). As such, it is segregation that advocates "monologism". The "other" races, therefore, suffer from imposed negativity which is "a denial of Negro humanity" (*Shadow and Act* 301) and the "associations of blackness with filth and dirt" (Loomba 71). Moreover, Fanon observes the negative connotations of blackness. Black man stands for "immorality", "ugliness" (192), "Evil", "Satan", "physical dirtiness or...moral dirtiness", "sin" and "the bad side of the character" (189). Thus, the positive negative binary opposition reinforces white supremacy and paves the way for racial exploitation.

White supremacy is further expressed in the Occidental Oriental binary opposition. Said elucidates the European conception of the Orient. He remarks that the Orient is the "deepest and most recurring [image] of the Other" (*Orientalism* 1). In other words, in the process of self definition, the Oriental image represents a "foil character" that underscores the juxtaposition between Orient and Occident. It is a distinction that frames the Occident as the emblem of civilization and highlights Western superiority which justifies Western homogeneity. As such, the Orientalist discourse is a European product with respect to the constitution of the Occidental image; "the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West" (*Orientalism* 5). Moreover, Said displays the methodology of reading the Orientalist discourse as a discourse, which reinforces white supremacy and justifies white homogeneity. First, Said explores the cultural position of the author. Said calls such device "strategic location" (*Orientalism* 20). Second, Said exhibits the cultural filiations of the text. This is Said's "strategic formation" (*Orientalism* 20). Thus, Said

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advocates a contextual reading of the Orientalist discourse that reveals more about the Occident than the Orient.

Racism offers the humanity of the "other" as a sacrifice to white supremacy. This human sacrifice, which goes back to the slave trade and the middle passage, continues through lynching as the most severe form of exploitation and discrimination. Rakine, for instance, notes that violating racial taboos in the South leads to black lynching as a human sacrifice. Rakine remarks that crossing racial boundaries of segregation that threatens racial purity renders the African American a black human sacrifice. Mutilation is also another human sacrifice. It is the "ritual dismemberment" (Rakine153). Such a sacrifice is the punishment of resistance or any form of mutiny that challenges white dominance.

The journey of Huck Finn, the nameless protagonist and Wittman Ah Sing display white supremacy that is the predominant value in the American society. The three journeys represent a "contrapuntal" perception of such a cultural phenomenon. Twain's portrayal of white supremacy is rooted in Southern racism. *Huckleberry Finn* displays the symbolic connotations of whiteness versus blackness. Such binary opposition is reflected by the "white" and "black" angels; "[de] white one gits [Pap Finn] to go right, a little while, den de black one sail in en bust it all up" (30). It is also represented by comparing night darkness to "sin" (60) and comparing the filthy streets of Arkansaw to "black...tar" (156). Jim's "free will" to offer himself as a self sacrifice, on the other hand, renders him "white inside" (279). Hence, Jim's "whiteness" is the result of his sacrificial self in order to rescue Tom, the white god. Such "free willed" sacrifice, which is by no means imposed by the white dominance, promotes Jim to the rank of the blessed white saints. Accordingly, Twain's image creates a racist binary opposition of positive whiteness and negative blackness.

Racial connotations, therefore, justify the degraded position of the African American who is dehumanized. Southerners, for example, believe that "sneaks and cowards [are not] fit to eat with a dog or drink with a nigger"(101). The African Americans are rendered brute

since "a nigger" and "a dog" occupy the same level. Such a position is represented by the parallelism between African Americans and animals which have to be governed and tamed. Moreover, the black slave is deprived of his human rights. He is deprived of freedom, equality and citizenship. Huck Finn, for example, is astounded by Jim's future plans. Jim's enthusiasm reminds Huck Finn of "the old saying, 'give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell'" (110). The African American is also expected to act as a sub human or a beast, which explains why Huck Finn finds Jim's familial affection "abnormal". Jim "cared just as much for his people as white folks do for theirs. It don't seem natural" (170).

Southern racism can be further traced in the missing details or the blind spots of Twain's mirror, to use Pierre Macherey's metaphor of the mirror. The artist's mirror is by nature selective due to his/her ideological position. The mirror, argues Macherey, has "many facets" (124) that reflect inconsistency and contradictions, it "seizes, inflates, and tears [the] world. In the mirror, the object is both completed and broken.... The images emerge from [the] laceration. Elucidated by these images, the world and its powers appear and disappear" (Macherey 134-5). Accordingly, Twain's "completed" reflection of the American society lies in its fragmented nature which is determined by Twain's racial background. Twain's reflection of slavery eliminates atrocities, "human sacrifice" and "dismemberment". It also foregrounds the stereotype of the slave.

Twain's "Cyclopean" reflection eliminates the atrocities of slavery which is represented by torture, whip lashing, mutilation and lynching. Twain's image, however, reflects the "humane" treatment solely. For example, Joanna Wilks explains how slaves are provided with all their "human rights". She also asks Huck Finn whether British people "give [servants] holidays, the way we do, Christmas, and New Year's week, and Fourth of July?" (186). The slaves' celebration of the Fourth of July is ironic as it is the celebration of freedom and independence. Frederick Douglass satirizes such a contradiction. He asserts that the "white" Fourth of July is the day that exposes injustice and cruelty. Douglass argues that "[this] Fourth of July is *yours*, not

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*mine*. You may rejoice, I must mourn" ("What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" 431). Moreover, Twain eliminates lynching and mutilation—"the ritual dismemberment" of African Americans, the American "human sacrifice" (Rakine153). David E. Sloane remarks that Twain "avoided depicting the lynching of a Negro" (115). Thus, Twain's "Cyclopean" image eliminates Southern lynching as a "brutal ritual" (Rakine126) which reinforces white supremacy. Such elimination consolidates the pro slavery discourse which advocates slavery as a "normal" system.

Twain's image of society, therefore, rejects abolitionism as an obscene approach, it defames and degrades abolitionists and condemns the runaway slave. The runaway slave is "an ungrateful nigger...[who would] feel ornery and disgraced" (221). Huck Finn judges his abolitionist attitude on the account of his ostracized position as a pariah who will "go to hell" (223). Huck Finn's eternal damnation displays the Southern view of the abolitionist as a person who "goes to everlasting fire" (222). Moreover, Huck Finn despises Tom's attempts to set Jim free as an act of "stealing" (223) other people's property. Huck Finn expresses his censure: "I'm bound to say Tom Sawyer fell, considerable, in my estimation...[he] is a *nigger stealer*" (235). Thus, Huck Finn does not set Jim free due to "humanitarian" reason or to his "conscientious" conduct. It is due to his affection for Jim the slave: "[what] I want is my nigger" (254). As such, there is by no means inconsistency with respect to the evasion episode. Huck Finn tries to steal his nigger without annoying Tom's quest for pleasure and adventure. Huck Finn's submission to Tom's plan reflects his life motto; "I learnt that the best way to get along with...people is to let them have their own way" (142). Huck Finn is a practical person who strives for his "best way". It is an egoistic journey that yearns for self interest and that avoids trouble, not a "humanitarian" quest for "equality". Thus, *Huckleberry Finn* can be read with special reference to the Orientalist discourse that foregrounds the European self as juxtaposed to the peripheral "other" represented by the African American who is observed as an African "other", not an American counterpart.

*Huckleberry Finn* is a remarkable text that reflects Twain's "strategic location" as a Euro-centric Anglo American writer. Twain's portrayal of the Anglo American self is juxtaposed to the "Orientalist" "other". *Huckleberry Finn* can be read in relation to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) as a journey that juxtaposes the British Robinson Crusoe to the "uncivilized" Friday. Such "strategic formation" unravels the Anglo American dominant culture. Like Robinson Crusoe, Huck Finn governs an island. Huck Finn "was boss of it; it all belonged to [him], so it say, and [he] wanted to know all about it" (51). Moreover, Huck Finn succeeds to discover the riches of the island. He discovers many kinds of vegetables and fruit (51). Huck Finn also finds Jim in a miserable state. He suffers from fear and hunger. Thus, Jim is like the "noble savage" that needs to be saved by Huck Finn.

Michel de Montaigne defines the "noble savage" as the symbol of human immaturity. The "noble savage" represents "a nation...in which there is no kind of commerce, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers....[They are] 'men fresh from the hands of the gods'" (Montaigne 110). Like Robinson Crusoe, Huck Finn offers Jim – the American "Friday" or "noble savage"—"meal and bacon and coffee, and coffee-pot and frying pan, and sugar and tin cups....a good big cat-fish" (54). Like Friday, Jim is mesmerized by Huck Finn's "witchcraft" (54). Although Huck Finn and Jim are in the same island, Huck Finn is able to sustain himself whereas Jim – the adult — "was most about starved" (54). Twain's discourse underscores Huck Finn's power as a white saviour whose "burden" is to elevate the "African" "noble savage". Accordingly, the antithesis between Huck Finn and Jim foregrounds the white supremacy and racist attitude which is predominant in the South.

Ellison's *Invisible Man* interrogates Twain's "Cyclopean" reflection of white supremacy. Underground, the nameless protagonist listens to Louis Armstrong's "'What Did I Do to be so Black and Blue?'" This song revolves around an African American woman who is deserted by her lover on the account of her black complexion. Unlike Jim's interior whiteness that saves him from severe

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punishment, the black beloved finds that being white inside does not elevate her position due to her black complexion; "I'm white inside/It don't help my case/ 'Cause I can't hide what is on my face" (Thomas 'Fate' Waller67). To Ellison, black submission is a failure. White supremacy is analysed by the Vet as a domineering force which cannot be appeased. The Vet describes "the white folks" as "authority, the gods, fate, circumstances — the force that pulls your strings until you refuse to be pulled any more. The big man who's never there" (*Invisible Man* 128). The absent "big man" refers to the "monologic" whiteness that yearns for purity. The nameless protagonist, for instance, cannot contact Senior Emerson since "[no] one speaks to him. He does the speaking" (153). The white force is a "monologic" force that cannot be the saviour of the African American people. The African American Ahab pursuit's of the white force or the white Northern trustees, as saviours, is both illusory and destructive.

Ellison also regards the "purity" of white supremacy as a form of blindness. It is the failure to acknowledge the African American contributions. The nameless protagonist remarks the message of the Liberty Paints. It is to "KEEP AMERICA PURE" (160). Moreover, he finds out that its "monologic" slogan is "'If It's Optic White. It's the Right'" (177). At the Paint, the nameless protagonist, however, becomes aware of the illusory claims of white purity argues Robert A. Lee. First, he discovers that pure white incorporates "black drops" (163). The black drops create "the purest white" (164). The nameless protagonist, however, satirizes the white blindness of the integrated black by adding "*concentrated* remover" instead (166). Thus, there is no American whiteness without the incorporation of American blackness. The black challenge to white purity is reflected by the primary role of black Lucius Brockway in the manufacture of white paint; "*we are the machines inside the machine*" says Brockway (177). Accordingly, the apparent purity of whiteness is an illusion that underscores and exposes the white "Cyclopean" failure to discover the black component of the American society.

Segregation is a "monologic" motive that determines purity. Kun Jong Lee argues that the quest for racial segregation in Ellison's

novel is "incestuous". Ellison portrays Mr. Norton's adoration of his deceased daughter, who stands for white purity, as a lusty incestuous drive. Mr. Norton's daughter is the emblem of white purity that leads to segregation and which eventually leads to her collapse and death. Moreover, Mr. Norton encourages black segregation — the black incest — that preserves white purity. After disclosing his incest, Trueblood receives a hundred dollar bill from Mr. Norton. It is the reward for retaining and supporting barriers of segregation, argues Kun Jong Lee. Violating such barriers, however, is destructive. The nameless protagonist, says Rakine, is punished because he blurs the segregation boundaries and drives Mr. Norton to the black slum. So, unlike Huck Finn's "burden" to save Jim, Mr. Norton proves to be the nameless protagonist's burden, not his saviour. Accordingly, white supremacy which is preserved by segregation is the primary cause of the black ordeal.

Unlike Twain's mirror, Ellison's mirror brings the black ordeal into the centre of the American scene. Such ordeal is of a twofold representation in *Invisible Man*. First, there is "displacement" or the black alienation. White supremacy renders the African American an alien who suffers from the sense of exile at home. The nameless protagonist's sense of exile at home can be elucidated with respect to the affinities between *Invisible Man* and Euripides' *Bacchae* (405BC). Rakine underscores such affinities. Similar to the American protagonist of African ancestry, Dionysus is of dual origin. As such, he is rejected by his maternal family the same way the African American is degraded on the account of his African ancestry. Rakine points out that both the nameless protagonist and Dionysus represent the American and Greek "other" respectively (161). It is marginalization that imposes the state of being alien on the "other" at home. Thus, like Pentheus who fails to perceive Dionysus as the son of Zeus and Semele who owns limitless power, the dominant culture fails to perceive the nameless protagonist as an American individual. Dionysus accuses Pentheus of "Blindness of heart, and ...blaspheming god" (Scene II online). In the end, Dionysus avenges himself. As for the nameless protagonist, he demands apology and recognition.

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Moreover, Ellison brings forth another African American ordeal; human sacrifice. The nameless protagonist realizes the significance of the place where the Brotherhood meets. It is the "Chthonian" (243). The Chthonian gods, Scott Scullion argues, are deceased heroes and underground gods. Those gods receive Black victims as a sacrifice. That sacrifice is offered at night whereby the sacrificial blood is poured into a hole and the sacrificial flesh and bones are consumed by fire. The nameless protagonist excavates the American Chthonian that stands for white supremacy. Such white heroism receives the African American victim as a sacrifice. The Brotherhood sacrifices the black Harlem for the sake of "the larger plan" (403). That plan is a political alliance with other political parties. Unlike Jim's "free will" to sacrifice himself, the nameless protagonist highlights the forced sacrifice of the African Americans. It is the duty of the black to sacrifice for the welfare of the white. "... [The] weak must sacrifice for the strong?..." That is the sacrifice (404). It is a process of "dismembering" the American body by tearing off the African American organ. Such "ritual dismemberment" is represented by Tod Clifton's murder and the nameless protagonist's vision of castration which can be read as a "ritual dismemberment". Consequently, the journey of the nameless protagonist is a "contrapuntal" reading of Twain's discourse of white supremacy. In Ellison's novel, white purity is an illusion and the mark of blindness. It is also an exercise of power that imposes racial segregation that alienates African Americans and turns them into American human sacrifice.

Wittman Ah Sing's journey also represents another "contrapuntal reading" of white supremacy. Unlike in Twain's novel where whiteness stands for everything positive and blackness stands for the opposite, Kingston "deconstructs" that "reductiveness" (John J. Deeney33). There is "brown", "black" and "chestnut" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 60). In a drug trip, Lance's guests experience the "snow show" by watching a blank television screen. It is an imaginative game of pulling white and black dots into imaginative figures. Although it is a black and white television set, Wittman Ah Sing manages to figure a plurality of colours. He perceives "confetti

jumping and dancing to music. Snow is not white" (94). As such, it is the celebration of pluralism by spreading pieces of colourful paper. So, Wittman Ah Sing's trip in the American landscape foregrounds the plurality of colours and cultures and challenges the American racial hierarchy.

Wittman Ah Sing is proud of his yellow complexion. He insists on wearing a green shirt which makes him look yellow. Green "had to do with racial skin...of course...[ Wittman Ah Sing] knew what color he had to wear—green, his color to wear to war" (44). Thus, Wittman Ah Sing wages war on racism with respect to colour. He rejects the "American' interchangeability with 'white'" (329). Instead of wearing "white masks", Wittman Ah Sing learns from the African American experience; how African Americans are proud of their blackness. Wittman Ah Sing argues that "Blacks beautifully [define] themselves. 'Black' is perfect" (326). As such, he endorses his yellow complexion in a way that deconstructs white superiority. Thus, racial hierarchy is crowned by yellow as the great American colour; "... I'm Yellow? 'I'm a Gold. We're Golds'" (326). Likewise, Wittman Ah Sing challenges another dimension of racial stagnancy. It is the American white and black binary opposition which makes out of the American society a chess board of a white black conflict that eliminates diversity of colours. He argues against the assumption that "Americans are either white or black...someday Blacks and whites will shake hands over my head. I'm a little yellow man beneath the bridge of their hands and overlooked" (307-8). Wittman Ah Sing rejects any binary opposition that excludes and segregates Chinese Americans as aliens and foreigners.

In his attempts to redefine America, Takaki argues against considering Asian Americans foreigners or "strangers". Moreover, Lisa Lowe remarks that Asian Americans are the perpetual aliens or the symbol of racial exclusivity that banishes "other" Americans (6). Although he is an ABC, Wittman Ah Sing suffers from "displacement". Wittman Ah Sing is frustrated by treating him as a tourist or a foreigner. He condemns any admiration of his "good"

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command of English language, any question concerning his opinion about "their" country"(*Tripmaster Monkey* 317), their demand of his passport or green card, not his American Identity Card. Wittman Ah Sing declares: "...[We are] Native Sons and Daughters of ...the Golden West...We're all of us Americans here. Why Single out the white guy?..."(327). Kingston remarks another form of "displacement": It is the white image of the Chinese American as an emblem of the Orient. This image is a strategy of segregation that marginalizes the "other" and renders the Chinese Americans as intruders. Wittman Ah Sing exposes the racial attempts to "watch [Chinese Americans] turn strange and foreign" (318). Such intrusion juxtaposes Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901). Kipling represents a colonial portrayal of Kimball O'Hara and the Indians; how the colonized observes Kim the imperialist intruder — an exploiter from another race and another culture — as the welcomed friend. Kipling, Said argues, portrays the so called harmonious relation between the Oriental colonized and the Western colonizer (*Culture and Imperialism*146). As such, any resistance is considered "madness" and "evil" (*Culture and Imperialism*147). That lack of conflict is reflected in Kim's title as "Little Friend of all the World" (*Kim* online). Such title equates colonialism to friendship and harmony. Kingston's Wittman Ah Sing, however, is regarded as the uninvited Kim albeit his American identity. Accordingly, Wittman Ah Sing's "displacement" opposes Kim's "universal" friendship.

Wittman Ah Sing resists the portrayal of the Chinese American as an "alien". He admires his Caucasian wife because she does not regard him as an Oriental mystery. Wittman Ah Sing asserts that "[she's] not getting any mysterious East from" him (*Tripmaster Monkey* 155). Jeanne R. Smith remarks that Oriental mystery is a racial strategy which denies other Americans the "common humanness" (77). Wittman Ah Sing does not represent Twain's racial representation of a blue painted "Arab" who reflects disease, madness and death (*Huckleberry Finn* 171), nor does he accept to be Twain's "Camelopard" (*Huckleberry Finn* 165). The "Camelopard" is a hybrid fictive animal believed to be an Oriental

creature (*Unknown explorers* online). As such, Wittman Ah Sing is by no means the racist Occidental image of an exotic Oriental creature that represents fossils of pre maturity, nor is he an "Oriental" image "in and for" the mainstream perception. Wittman Ah Sing's subversive motto is: "I'm not an oriental antipode" (*Tripmaster Monkey* 327). In other words, Wittman Ah Sing rejects the exilic Orient Occident juxtaposition.

Wittman Ah Sing is a significant representation of the American Dionysus. He takes revenge for psychological segregation and "displacement. He also takes revenge for the physical segregation which is represented by the Angel Island detention and by Chinese American human sacrifice that is embodied by Chinese American fatal despair in Angel Island (234) and Chinese American lynching (298). Wittman Ah Sing's revenge is a "Dionysian" one. Like Euripides' Dionysus — the god of theatre and wine — who enchants Greek women to perform hysterical celebrations, Wittman Ah Sing takes his revenge on white supremacy, which advocates "monologism", through celebration and theatre. Thus, Wittman Ah Sing is "profoundly Dionysian and has standards" (129). He is the American "Tripmaster" who "walks other through their trips, enriching their hallucination and keeping them from harm" (Shostak 248). Wittman Ah Sing is also the American god of theatre, celebrations and madness who creates a theatrical community that advocates interaction. *Tripmaster Monkey* is a "contrapuntal" reading of white supremacy which advocates segregation.

In conclusion, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Invisible Man* and *Tripmaster Monkey* represent three different, even contending, images of the American Adam who wanders throughout the American space and whose journey sheds light on the social background that is imbued with dominant values such as heroism and white supremacy. The three representations shed light on Anglo American homogeneity and resistance. They display interactive discourses that subvert any "monologic" reading of the Anglo American tradition. There is a twofold significance of that "interaction". First, the Anglo American

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tradition is incorporated within the African American and Chinese American experiences; hence they are not "foreign" or "alien" experiences. . Thus, the "other" American experiences integrate the dominant culture in a remarkable incorporative process that refutes all forms of segregation. Such incorporation is by no means an act of affiliation or an act of containment, rather it is a dialogic process that rejects any monolithic perception of the American identity. Second, an interactive reading of all American experiences illuminates the process of interpretation. The "polyphonic" comparative study of the Anglo American tradition avoids stagnant interpretations. It is a means that transgresses any monolithic reading of classic masterpieces which consolidates binary opposition and the hierarchal structure of society. A different reading of the canonical texts sheds light on the plurality of interpretations. Accordingly, dialogic interaction is a "democratic" postulation of liberty and equality which are the axes of the Anglo American tradition.

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