Preface

The term “Black” is linked essentially and primarily with a vision of a Black World which exists both in Africa and in the diaspora. “Blackness” is a color-coded politically based term of marking when question which only has meaning when questions of racial difference and in particular White supremacy are deployed. In South Africa and the United States, the ideology of White supremacy reached the dangerous levels of racial segregation while Black dispersed from homelands with a feeling of hollowness they heard their psyche disrupted.

The Africans began to emigrate to Europe and the Americas in increasing numbers, constituting new African Diaspora communities directly or indirectly connected with slave trade.

Displacement from the original homeland and relocation in the new society formed a saga of pain and withdrawal. Thus the nostalgia of homeland and people and memories of old times transforms into the sense of belongingness. The displacement out of the homeland and relocation in the new society either frightens or fascinates. The immigrant or the diasporic person should reaffirm their sense of rootedness. All the diasporic writers thus deal with features like alienation, marginalization, readjustment, rootlessness, traumatic conditions of the immigrant. The Blacks in White America were the victim of racial discrimination, particularly Black Women were sexually harass and by both Black Male and White. They were kept silent and relegated to the zone of ontological malady.

The study of the Black feminist literature actually revealed the physically and psychologically mutilated condition of the Black Woman. Paule Marshall is the first black woman writer who dramatized through her work Black Women’s journey from “unwisdom” to “wisdom”. She is a vanguardal writer as she provides centrality to all the protagonists in her novels.
The present study aimed to understand the psyche of Black diasporic female who were jeopardized multiple times. This thesis is a regards to all the Black female who underwent the trauma of racial discrimination under colonialism.
This thesis *exploring the fractured female psyche in black diaspora:*

*An assessment through Paule Marshall’s Novels* has the following chapterisation:

1. **Chapter – I.**

   **To explore Paule Marshall a vanguardal voice**

   This chapter deals with Paule Marshall historical background.

   Marshall is called a vanguardal voice as she made Black women a radiant hero who would cast off from her imprisoned psyche, the Thanatotic and self loathing condition.

2. **Chapter – II.-**

   **Schizophrenia of diaporically displaced community**

   This chapter deals problems of displaced community in the novels of Marshall. The migrated blacks were more prone such mental imbalance, schizophrenia owing to their bipolar behavior.

3. **Chapter – III.**

   **Nostalgia of homeland**

   The Black women was representative of cultural heritage. This chapter deals that how Marshall dramatizes in her work the nostalgia of homeland that the Blacks experienced.

4. **Chapter – IV.**

   **Fractured Black Female Psyche**

   In this chapter the study informs that the Black woman was the victim of not only White Supremacy but also male dominance. The female characters in the novel developed fractured psyche as they were double jeopardized. But at the end all the character emerged triumphantly.
5. Chapter – V.

**An estimate of Paule Marshall as reconstructionist of Fractured psyche**

This chapter deals with Marshall as a reconstructionist. Marshall has taught all her protagonists to speak. She provides centrality to female celebrates black culture and community. The identity lost is achieved at the end.

6. Chapter – VI.

**Conclusion**

Thus the journey of the Black women which starts from innocence to experience is completed. At the end the Black women emerged successful with gained knowledge like Mother Eve who made exit from the Garden of Eden to gain knowledge. Each of the protagonists get the awareness of self only when they experience pain.

In this concluding chapter is summarization of the research work has been done elaborating the finding of my thesis. For my research work I have take the works of Paule Marshall

*Brown Girl, Brownstones.*

*The Chosen Place, The Timeless People.*

*Praisesong for the Widow.*

*Reena and Other Stories.*

*Daughters.*

The MLA Handbook for Writer of Research Paper (Seventh Edition) has been referred for documentation, formatting and reference.
Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction of Paule Marshall</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>To Explore Paule Marshall “A Vanguardal Voice.”</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Marshall’s Biographical ketch</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>As a Vanguardal</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Literary Journey and contributions</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>The Schizophrenia of a Displaced Community</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Victimization of Black Women</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Displaced Community in the novel of Paule Marshall</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Nostalgia of Homeland</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>The Concept of Home</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Displacement of the Bajans (Barbadians)</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>‘Home’ for the Diasporic People</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Fractured Black Female Psyche</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 The fractured psyche in the protagonists 78

4.3 Conclusion 98

V An Estimate of Marshall as a Reconstructionist of Fractured Female 104

5.1 Introduction 104

5.2 The Reconstructionist 105

5.3 Restructuring the image of the Black woman 108

5.4 Theme and Techniques 111

5.5 Connecting with the Roots: Restructuring the Black Psyche 118

5.6 Conclusion 120

VI Conclusion 124

Bibliography
Introduction

The most enduring consequences of the migration for the migrants themselves and for the receiving communities were the development of racism and the corresponding emergence and sustenance of an African-American community, with particular cultural manifestations, attitudes, and expressions. The legacy is reflected in music and art, with a significant influence on religion, cuisine, and language. The cultural and religious impact of this African immigration shows that migrations involve more than people; they also involve the culture of those people. “American” culture is not “European” or “African” but its own form, created in a political and economic context of inequality and oppression in which diverse ethnic and cultural influences both European and African (and in some contexts, Native American) can be discerned.

Undoubtedly, the transatlantic slave trade was the defining migration that shaped the African Diaspora. It did so through the people it forced to migrate, and especially the women who were to give birth to the children who formed the new African-American population. These women included many who can be identified as Igbo or Ibibio but almost none who were Yoruba, Fon, or Hausa. “Bantu” women, from matrilineal societies, also constituted a considerable portion of the African immigrants, and it appears that females from Sierra Leone and other parts of the Upper Guinea Coasts were also well represented. These were the women who gave birth to African-American culture and society.

African Diaspora refers to the communities throughout the world that are descended from the historic movement of peoples from Africa – predominantly to the Americas, Europe and the Middle, among other areas around the globe. The term has been historically applied in particular to the descendants of the West and Central Africans who were enslaved and
shipped to the Americas by way of the Atlantic slave trade, with the largest population in the US.

With regard to all historic migrations (forced and voluntary), the African Union defined the African Diaspora as “[consisting] of people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationally and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union.” Its constitutive act declares that it shall “invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union.”

Much of the African Diaspora was dispersed throughout Asia, Europe, and the America during and the Atlantic Slave Trades. Beginning in the 9th century, Arabs took African slaves from the central and eastern portions of the continent (where they were known as the Zani) and sold them into markets in the Middle East and eastern. Beginning in the 15th century, Europeans captured or bought African slaves from West African and brought them to Europe and later to the Americas. Both the Arab and Atlantic slave trades ended in the 19th century. The dispersal through slave trading represents the largest forced migrations in human history. The economic effect on the African continent was devastating. Some communities created by descendants of African slaves in Europe and Asia have survived to the modern day, but in other cases, blacks intermarried with non-blacks, and their descendants blended into the local population.

In the Americas, the confluence of multiple ethnic groups from around the world created multi-ethnic societies. In Central and South America, most people are descended from European, American Indian, and African ancestry. In Brazil, where in 1888 nearly half the population was descended from African slaves, the variation of physical characteristics extends across a broad range. In the United States, there was historically a greater European
colonial population in relation to African slaves, especially in the Northern Tier. Racist Jim Crow and anti-miscegenation laws passed after the Reconstruction era in the South in the late nineteenth century, plus waves of vastly increased immigration from Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, maintained some distinction between racial groups. In the early 20th century, to institutionalize racial segregation, most southern states adopted the “one drop rule”, which defined anyone with any discernible African ancestry as African.
**Introduction of Paule Marshall**

Paule Marshall stands as a pioneer of the Black women’s Renaissance. Breaking the snare of silence, she gave Black woman an identity that ensured her existence. Until her arrival in the literary scene, most of the writers wrote about the history colonialism and slavery. Marshall is the first Black woman writer who explored these ideas from the female perspective.

Paule Marshall is a writer who unraveled the black un-wisdoms to wisdom. She was of the opinion that Black people especially Black woman should try to reconstitute their inner self with a positive insight.

She believes that the survival of Black woman and community is possible, not by relinquishing cultural traits, but by valorizing the cultural past, people and value system. They should awaken themselves from a ‘cultural limbo’ condition. Paule Marshall stands out as an ‘Avant Garde’ Black woman novelist who redesigned the new shapes of female character.

Paule Marshall’s kunstlerroman is in all of her novels. Her literary odyssey is akin to Holy Grail’s quest. She is an eminent writer who deals with most complex ideas about women as self and part of community. These ideas started resolating not only in United States but over the entire Black Diaspora. She is contemporaneous with African-American writers James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Gwendolyn Brooks. At the same time her work is distinctly Caribbean in many ways. Marshall writing focuses on the culture language of Barbadian heritage. Barbara Christian considers Marshall as contemporary Black woman writer like Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Gloria Naylor.
**Works & Themes**

Brown Girl, Brownstones, Marshall’s first novel tells the story of the coming of age of Selina Boyce, a girl growing up in a small black immigrant community. Selina is caught between her mother, who wants to conform to the ideals of her new home and make the American dream come true, and her father, who longs to go back to their homeland, Barbados. The issues dominant in the novel – travel, migration, psychic fracture and striving for wholeness – will be important structuring elements in her later works as well.

Soul, Clap, Hands and Sing, whose title is taken from Yeats “Sailing to Byzantium,” is comprised of four novellas, each taking place in different locations but depicting an ageing man of African descent. Hardened by their compliance to the Western ideal to accumulate wealth, when these men finally feel the need to develop meaningful human relationships, they reach out to young women. Still caught up in their selfish motives, these men have to face their individual failures in having waited too long as well as the tragedy of loneliness. While, as Joyce Pettis points out, “women’s capacity for renewal is not elaborately articulated in this early work, the recognition is crucial, for it foreshadows their potential for exhaustive developments in later texts,” (Pettis, 15) such as The Chosen Place, the Timeless People, and Daughters. In these works, childbearing will stand for the hope to heal the West Indian psyche of the fractures it has suffered from the traumatic experience of the colonial past and white supremacy. Conversely, the inability to conceive and the unwillingness to bear children will be a symbol of the inability to remedy those fractures.

In The Chosen Place, the Timeless People these issues are brought in the character of Merle Kimbona, daughter of one of the last sugarcane plantation owners and a servant. As an educated woman, who had lived in England but returned to her homeland, the fictitious island of Bourne located in the West Indies, Merle stands as a symbol for the troubled
consciousness of the West-Indian psyche. Having been seduced and abused by the perverted ideals of the British white supremacy epitomized in the character of an upper class English lady, which ultimately lead to the end of her marriage with her African husband, Merle was left alone with her shame and conviction that she had lost her quest for her true identity. Thus it is a bitter and cynical Merle who meets the novel’s other main character, Jewish American anthropologist Saul Amron, coming to Bournehills to conduct a preliminary survey that aims to better the life of the inhabitants in a way that takes their culture into account. The subdued romantic affair between Merle and Saul results in the cancellation of Saul’s project, the suicide of his wife, and Merle’s decision to move to Africa and find her husband and daughter. Simple oppositions, deployed in an ideologically burdened manner (e.g., the one between a problematic America and an unproblematic Africa or the one between “perverted,” futile female homosexuality and Merle’s ability to conceive a child with her African husband) point to a problematic idealism in the novel’s message. Nevertheless, Marshall’s extraordinary talent in depicting complex, intriguing characters undermines this idealism and creates a brilliant epic of the West Indian condition.

Reena and Other Stories is a collection of Marshall’s mostly early fiction but it also contains the important essay, “The Making of a Writer: From the Poets in the Kitchen.” In this piece, Marshall expresses her gratitude to her mother and other Barbadian women for having taught her the power of the word as an instrument of communication as well as survival.

Praisesong for the Widow is in many ways the closing point of Marshall’s explorations concerning the fractured West Indian psyche. The main characters, Avatara and Jerome Johnson evoke the Silla and Deighton Boyce, the parents of Selina in Brown Girl, Brownstones. Similarly to the couple in the earlier novel, Avatara and Jerome are caught up
in pursuing capitalist comforts. As Deigthon, Jerome dies without ever realizing that there may be a different way of survival. Unlike Silla, Avatara discovers a possibility to reconnect with the heritage of the cultures of African descent when traveling to a Caribbean island. Here, the remains of African cultures are preserved in legends, dances, myths and rituals. The novel suggests that, in Pettis’ words, “the divisiveness of Eurocentric cosmology can be countered through sensitivity to and acceptance of one’s cultural origins. The result is a self that is whole and moored.” (Pettis, 16-17.)

In Daughters, Marshall is no longer invested in depicting such cultural and psyche reintegration although the familiar motives of travel and the symbolic significance of childbearing reappear. The heroine, Ursa McKenzie, daughter of an African-American woman and a native politician of a fictitious Caribbean island, Triunion, lives in Brooklyn. The conflicts in her life are structured by the social implications of racism and gendered relations. The idealism of the earlier novels only appear in Ursa’s long planned thesis topic: the demonstration of egalitarian gender roles people of African descent under slavery. The Triunion legend of slave freedom fighters and lovers Congo Jane and Will Codjoe portray an equal relationship unmatched by any of the couples in the novel. While Ursa chooses not to bear children and her friend Viney is willing to be a mother only through artificial insemination and chooses to stay celibate, these motives no longer suggest the denial to discover and accept one’s cultural heritage. Ursa is quite capable of leading a productive, if not utterly satisfactory, life in New York, the source of her main conflict is her relationship with her father, the politician who has lost his initial zeal to help his people and has become a puppet in the hands of imperialist businessmen.

The recurring themes of travel, psyche reintegration, and gender relations in a patriarchal, postcolonial, capitalist, and white supremacist world render Marshall’s oeuvre a
consistent body of writings exploring the possibilities and stakes of claiming a culture of African origins. As Dorothy L. Denniston concludes in A to Z of American Women Writers, “Marshall offers no easy solutions in her fiction, but she does suggest models for change and possibility. Because she develops those possibilities through the characterization of Black women, she celebrates female agency and empowerment. Indeed, Black women become representative of the larger black struggle for individual autonomy and communal wholeness.” (88) This research work does not include Marshall’s novel Fisher King. (2001)