To be crowned with the Noble Prize is a life changing honour. The award brings with it the worldwide recognition that highlights one’s works and provides the funds to continue the mission. For institutions and academics a Noble Prize is used to attract the best and the brightest heads and hearts. The two most celebrated Noble Laureates, Toni Morrison and Elfriede Jelinek are the best minds and real masters of their fields. They dared to cross the conventional boundaries of thoughts. The themes of these writers prove them thorough feminists who try to project the silence and physical muteness of their characters and reflect the power structure of the society through gender discourse. Their works concentrate on gender relations, women’s lives, motherhood, the community and the sexual politics. Their works explore gendered relationships of individuals and communities, men and women together, and the damage that people do to each other. They look at subjects, which construct and some times constrict people and make a call to the potential for change. The gender norms that Morrison and Jelinek discuss in detail in each of their novels are forced submission and subjugation of female gender, male control over power, domestic and physical violence against women, sexually abused language, marital rape, daughter rape, mothering and sexual slavery.
In exploring issues of gender, Morrison does not only reverses or criticizes stereotypes, but also recognizes and portrays new insights into the lives and strengths of black women and black men. Similarly Jelinek's women avoid being typed, claiming their own position as individuals beyond the limitations of stereotyping. This also relates to the stabilization of an individual's importance and the subject's importance. It also revitalizes the existence of those who have been silenced, absent and denied an individual voice. She portrays her woman not only as a prey but also as a woman whose sexuality is considered dangerous, outrageous and a version of identity and self worth. Their alternative values directly contravene patriarchal and paternalistic control of men, who ignore, restrain and forbid their women to practice any kind of control over their own bodies. Jelinek's exploration of women's sexuality reveals an area related to creative energies, the claiming of identity and the recognition of self-worth. The fight and the struggle of Jelinek and Morrison remind me two most important feminists of their age who resemble very close to Jelinek and Morrison in the treatment of their subject. One of them is Marry Wollstonecraft, often characterized as the first feminist philosopher. *A Vindication of the rights of women* (1972) is one of the first works that can be called feminist. Wollstonecraft argued that women's education and upbringing is responsible for their limited expression and expectation. She advocated the need for women to speak out and tell
their stories. And other name is Simone de Beauvoir who fiercely opposed to the image of women in home and in relation to men. She provided a new dimension to the feminism with the publication of *Le deuxieme sexe* (The Second Sex) in 1949. By raising the question over the defined inferior position of women, she asserted that woman is defined and differentiated with reference to man but man is never known in reference to her. Indian writer R.N. Tagore acknowledges that this civilization of power is "exclusively masculine, one in which woman has been thrust aside into the shade, and therefore it has lost its balance."¹ Analogous question is raised by Morrison and Jelinek by describing the sufferings and humiliations of women in most touching manner but at the same platform they have given the gateways to their barriers and problems.

The damaging globalization of negative representation of beauty and femininity are Jelinek's and Morrison's two major focus in their writings. Through gender norms for her female characters Jelinek presented the brutal truth of distinct ways in which one can dehumanize a woman to such extremes that her entire subsistence, including her feminism is all razed. And these ways are superseded by pornography and marital rape. However, there does exist a subtle distinction between the two; whereas pornography is more centered on the grounds of financial and/or sexual securities, marital rape sabotages the entire being of a woman for merely ego-satisfaction of a
sadist. Such a sadist is under a two-way reprimand from the Almighty—
for the culprit is not only inflicting pain on someone's physical
domains, but also he is viciously piercing her tender spirits. Jelinek
advocates the doctrine of free love and total emancipation of female
bodies from such nasty bondages and patriarchal forces.

Morrison's writing in common with several other black women
writers like Alice Walker, celebrates the erotic and the sexual
'funkiness' or liberated energies of women. Sethe recuperates the
version of her own sexual self at the end of Beloved, and Sula, the
protagonist of Sula looses her sexual energies on all around her, to
mixed results. Jelinek's Erika in The Piano Teacher keeps dark sexual
urges and in an especially grimy scene she goes to a Turkish beneath
a bridge in a sleazy part of Vienna to watch live sex shows where she
is the only non-performing woman around. Morrison and Jelinek aim to
put people in touch with myths, which enable them to imagine their
lives and act out their potentials. Silence and breaking silence appear
as the central issues in their writings. Paul. D is silenced in Beloved.
His heart holds its secret tight like a tobacco tin. There is a debate
through the novel about hiding or articulating the unmentionable
histories of slavery and the community plays a role in this. Erika is
silenced in The Piano Teacher like a mute object, many a times a
mere piece of flesh ready to be pierced at any moment through her
mother. Ultimately she emanates her dark frustration by spoiling
herself. Gerti, the prey is silenced in *Lust* to get molested brutally by her husband and goes on with the legal prostitution in the form of her marriage. The silence is broken as a new downfall with a fresh extra marital affair. These two great Nobel Laureates have scrutinized male-female relations, their deceits, and their lasting pleasures. Joe, bored and complacent with his marital life leaves Violet for Dorcas. Their love is bolstered by a three-some relationship. Paula confused and troubled by her marriage ultimately feels composed after establishing her own identity as a prostitute. *Jazz* promises new freedoms, sensuality and romantic love without ties and without real loss of sufferings while *Lust* gives us a voice, expression, and a form to the searching, pains and the celebratory patterns of a specific moment.

Jelinek's fine blend of the musical spiritual with the imaginative, metaphorical and realistic has given raise to those voices who would seek to limit women's writings to testimony and record alone. Jelinek communicates the pain of the hidden by challenging traditional boundaries of thought patterns and putting forth the abilities of downtrodden fair sex. One such challenge is to oppose the norm of mothering defined for female gender. She raises the question that why mothering and delivering a baby is considered as one and the same? She says that mothering is actually the nurturing of one's off springs, then why all the responsibility goes only to women? Why men in any culture do not participate in mothering their off springs? This imposed
liability is actually the form of oppressive patriarchal force against female sex. Moreover through her writings she also raises the question about the importance of the name of a father behind a child? Why a child without a mother's name behind him/her is considered as orphan but is debased as a bastard without a father's name? Through Paula in *Women as Lovers* she has projected this pain and gender norm very artistically that many males and females save the name of their marriage for the sake of father's name behind their off springs. Neither love remains in genitals nor in relations, still is a woman is forced to continue with her sufferings under same roof for a good for nothing cause- a man behind family. Why a woman is forced to confine herself in her inner space? Indian writer Partha Chatterjee points out this pain in his work *The Nation and its Fragments*:

> The world is [...] the domain of the male. The home in its essence must remain unaffected by the profane activities of the material world—and woman is its representation.\(^2\)

Morrison's and jelinek's work focus not just on negative stereotypes and waste but on the aspirations of the young women such as Sula, Sethe and Erika. Who refuse the social constraints, overrule the filth of the male dominance and their self-assertion is nurturing and more positive. As a Black woman writer, Toni Morrison provides a particular focus on women's role and the 'triple burden' of
African-American women, offering opportunities for women to develop self-identity and women-oriented relationships with family and friends and the community. Her works suggest opportunities to re-value women's traditional skills. In the similar fashion, Jelinek criticizes cosmeticised and racist image of beauty, the destructive stereotypes which construct women in roles such as whore, prostitute and so on. She offers alternatives, offers friendships, and relationships such as that of a mother and daughter, and sexual relationships where women make their own choices.

Morrison like Alice Walker, Maya Angelou and Gayle Jones, develops new approaches to social, sexual and psychological reality. Alice Walker a widely read and taught southern novelist, like Toni Morrison, works to recuperate history and to give a voice to black women whose lives have been hidden, unheard, through the establishment of sisterhood and the writings which she terms as 'Womanist' prose. Her novel The Color Purple is a powerful, lively imaginative depiction of the abused life of a young black woman, Celie, who writes to god, explaining her confused sense of guilt, shame and innocence. In the similar to the fate of Pecola of The Bluest Eye, she is sexually abused by the man she believes to be her father. Later on she establishes a relationship with Shug Avery, a fast bisexual fascinating night-club singer, and finds her own identity.
Toni Morrison while portraying her characters regularly projects the defined identity of black woman as poor and helpless and white woman as rich as powerful. Her writing is not an encounter between two people but between the two images that lie in the history of hundreds of years of race relations. The woman of Morrison breaks the definition of stereotypes and resists the direct encounter with this living, complex humanity and points to the possibility of an authentic subjectivity.

Toni Morrison’s winning of Nobel Prize is a significant event on many counts. The fact that an African-American woman should get a prestigious international award is the culmination of what started in the eighteenth century with the writings of Black literary foremothers like Lucy Tery and Phyllis Wheately. More recently it is befitting endorsement and justifiable triumph of the struggle of the 1960s that we are familiar with as the Civil Rights, Black Power and Women’s Liberation Movements. These gave rise to what we could broadly term as new Black Renaissance of which the chief protagonists were Maya Anglou, Terry McMillan, Alice Walker, Sonia Sanchez and Gloria Naylor.

A Professor at the Princeton University since 1989, with a ground ship in European Literature from the great French and Russian Classics to Jane Austen, Toni Morrison is deeply rooted in her own
Shu 190

culture. And it is this rooted ness that imparts a special quality to her works. She captures the inherent powers of woman and crafts dialogues in such a manner that they appear deliciously poetic. Let us feel the magic of the image evoked by 'Nuns go by as quiet as lust'; 'Fog came to that place in wisps some times, like the hair of the maiden aunts'. Unlike any African writer, Toni Morrison in *Sula* particularly, has tried to explore "the image of the individual freely imagined feminine selfhood." Morrison has presented Sula and Nel as two parts of self and equated marriage with the death of female self. It is Nel, who comes to a realization of what selfhood holds.

I'm me," she whispered. "Me". Nel didn't know quite what she meant, but on the other hand she knew exactly what she meant. "I'm me. I'm not their daughter. I'm not Nel. I'm me. Me." Each time she said the word, there was a gathering in her like power, like joy, like fear, "Me" she deeply murmured. And then, sinking deeper into the quilts, "I want... I want to be... wonderful. Oh Jesus, make me wonderful."

Elfriede Jelinek portrays similar image of selfhood in *The Piano Teacher*. Erika wants the total freedom to live gratifying and observing her sensual impulses. Jelinek says that Erika is experimental and perfectly willing to think the unthinkable things. She lives at her own
fantasies, creates her own realities and sets her own personal objectives. She is a finite being but highly unfortunate is the fact that, she wants to attain the infinite; a self-defeating goal. Consequently, she suffers from a sense of frustration, loneliness, anguish and estrangement. Unable to maintain the balance of her inner and outer selves, she withdraws from the external world and plunges herself into the disasters. "Her eyes alight on nothing, and, with no burst of rage, fury, or passion, Erika Kohut stabs a place on her shoulder, which instantly shoots out blood."^{5}

Jelinek's ability to write across formal constraints- writing with accuracy both politically and historically as well as writing philosophically and passionately challenges the big assumptions that weaker sex can not take a part in literary texts. Jelinek interweaves the tones, textures, and versions of sexual relations. She portrays her characters and balances them like a musician in her magnum opus Women as Lovers. She has artistically depicted the tranquil tornadoes that rest inside the very perturbed-self of Brigitte and Paula. Barring all the elements of proficiency that are so evident in her novels, there is yet a non-failing rudiment of the truest possible portrayal of ugliness that enshrouds the state of most of the contemporary women, chiefly of those who dwell in the murkier dimensions of the society; regardless of their nationality. Her acrid courtesies towards the predominant sex depict her as a cynic and misanthropist; however
that's just a trifle of a response- for there's never enough stock of gunpowder in the arsenals of even her staunchest critics. She is just exquisitely celestial when her genius is concerned. And being an esteemed Nobel Laureate itself says it all.

Claiming one's identity or writing about the self in order to establish a sense of self worth are crucial elements in the works of Toni Morrison and Elfriede Jelinek. Much of Morrison's work guarantees a sense of authenticity. These forms, springing directly from the slave narratives of history, challenge postmodernist critical beliefs and practices. Many feminist critics have written about the work of Toni Morrison that she concentrates her focus on black women's lives and rescue them from silence and absence in history. Morrison exposes the sufferings undergone by women and celebrates strong women in an equal measure.

Jelinek's treatment of women and of gendered relations, identity and femininity involves us in thinking about wrong, right, evil, good, male and female. Her denial of stereotypical version of fragile woman is emphasized in accounts of sexuality, breakdowns and challenges to self-esteem posed by negative versions of women's beauty. We can view the author's skill as a triangle, the surface of which is covered by offensive language and corner points approach three directions: towards a feminist perspective, a Nazi past and the contemporary
poetical arena. And every angle of the triangle rebels and roars up with more controversial attitude. The thematic and linguistic multiplicity of her novels continues in her plays too. She does not see the war from the view points of victims: she observes the observers, comments on the commentators and in this way makes her own ironic comments on the current political developments.

The important task is the construction of an authentic subjectivity. It is in this very context that man is always considered as a significant text. Subjectivity itself is a highly problematic concept in all forms of contemporary critical discourses, and it is important to put it in correct perspective. Jelinek as a feminist opposes the patriarchal notion of a unilateral self, and attempts to forge a unified, coherent and gender defined identity for women. As a matter of fact, women writers have not yet experienced that subjectivity which will give them a sense of personal autonomy, continuous identity and an agency in the world. In fact, yet so far feminists have got the success only to deconstruct the myth of as the absolute other and expose it as a position within a patriarchal discourse. Moreover, the need to challenge gender stereotypes has led scores of women writers and feminists to examine identity in relational terms, rather than as a unitary, self-directing and isolated ego.
They comment on mothering and motherhood, such as Sethe's protection of her children as a fierce, loving mother who results in her attempts to kill them rather than letting them to be taken back to slavery. With a firm feminist approach Morrison holds the viewpoint that gender is as important critical issue as race and class. She approves the claims of the lesbian relationships of females and demands for their recognition in the texts. Morrison's argument about self-worth, black and white, discovering roots, questioning polarized values are real tough issues to deal with.

In Jelinek's writings, one can easily see the complex operations of the possibility and denial of self in terms that are essentially rational. The gradual discovery of Paula's permeability is linked with the narrator's sense of identity. The invisibility is exactly not the biochemical accident to her epidermis; it is because of a peculiar disposition of the eyes of those for whom a female is not a matter of identity. She pines throughout the span of the novel to give voice to her subsistence, as being invisible itself implies being formless. Jelinek has unearthed the division of society along the lines of race and gender. The author, in her agonized recitation of the sorry expeditions of the protagonists, has discovered the possibility of authentic identity of women and projects the women characters through a balanced perception. Through her writings in the most oppressive moods, the esteemed instigator has stated that according
to the philosophy of patriarchal powers, a woman is merely an object of cosmopolitan ridicule and her entire existence is confined to provide sexual gratification only. Thus the belief that "a woman's claim to the rights of creation means first to create self."\(^6\) itself lays emphasis on finding a separate entity in which a woman has to build herself up psychologically. The question of self is more of a matter of understanding than fulfillment. Jelinek's portrayal of women is an antagonizing set of the social as well as political values. She has attained popularity not only for writing literature with female protagonists but also for projecting the true woman who, de facto, remains in the background. This implies that an ideal woman is not the woman whom she has described, but the woman as it is, and ought to be. The serious issue is that in the projection of mind, soul or the physical entity of a 'being', the inner self is never represented. The reality claims that a human being is divided into so many sleeves among which it becomes troublesome to say as to which self must be the real one.

With Jelinek, it is difficult to say which 'self' of hers must constitute the real woman. The history itself bears witness that the social dimensions in which the woman has been used as a thing, to be used and thrown into the gutter, to be exploited both sexually and socially, accepts woman as a wretched creature. The woman is unfortunately a prey to sexual gimmicks and all time supervisor to the
family and the society. Elfriede Jelinek, through comparisons shows that woman in her divided-self forgets as to how things are to be managed, that her identity is not entirely mislaid besides being divided into responsibilities of varying degrees of humiliation. This is really the irony of the destiny of a woman whose identity is lost in the welter of her roles, which she plays everyday.

The problem highlighted by Elfriede Jelinek in *The Piano Teacher* and by Toni Morrison in *Sula* in projecting the characters is absolutely the thought of the feminists. The fact is that the land of Austria and Africa is obsessed with the female complex and there is no Wollstonecraft or Simone de Beauvoir to awake the feminine consciousness, who made it clear that women's sole purpose to cultivate the non-rational, sensuous side of life in order to please men lacks dignity. Although Jelinek and Morrison have made their best attempts to fight for the female cause yet a revolution for the liberation of female sex from these imposed gender norms is still few steps away. Toni Morrison's cosmos condemns the patriarchal powers and asserts with D. Martin- "Marriage is the mechanism by which the patriarchy is maintained." Whether it is the constraint of the social set up, or, the heresy of the political faith and behaviors, a group like Paula and Brigitte, Nel and Sula need Psychological equality. The reality is that their pursuit is lost into confusion and indirection due to oppressive cultural norms and repressive social constructs. It can be
held that the philosophy of change of Sula is a substitute, an approach for maintaining self hood, some thing like the feminist group in the modern world.

Both Nobel Laureates highlight very strongly in their writings that psychological equality is an individualistic problem, which the male chauvinistic society would not grant to women, and she herself would not be able to grab it without making a serious fight. The bitter result since the ages is that she is being punished physically and psychologically and the extent of this barbarism could be the death itself. Sula is a similar case of death and humiliation for not being recognized for the psychological liberty. Brigitte is similar fate of punishing herself to prostitution. The quest of an identity remains incomplete as the self and its identification remains unwarranted. What Jelinek wants to pose like many other feminists is that the end of one’s life is not the end of one’s identity. A woman has to account for her own individualistic strength if she has to replace her humiliation by self-respect. The society is hostile to her because her powers are a threat to it.

Morrison, as a writer provides a vision to hope and an end to destruction through love. She gives a scope to black men’s quest for freedom and justice and black women’s quest for love and identity. Morrison knows that neither can succeed without the other. She writes
that there is a difference between the treatments. The way to wholeness and integrity for the individual lies not through a defiant assertion to selfhood by rejection of society but through the working together of self and community, even if the community itself does not at first appear to nurture individual selfhood for it’s women.

While dealing with the sexist issues, Morrison looks at the concept of women bonding as a means of coming to an understanding of the self in Jazz more than any of her earlier works. Violet finds herself through her relationship with Dorcas, Alice Manfred and Felice. Similarly Jelinek’s Erika is an unimaginable figure without mother. Nel and Sula find each other complementary. Violet’s identification of self with the Black women like Dorcas gradually leads her to discover the real “me”. Alice is the person with whom Violet can sit with. Through the bright prospects of women binding, Morrison discards the compulsion of a male dominated society’s expectations of the woman to make her play roles as mother, wife and housewife; and thus leave her creative energy or the exploration of individual psychology.

Morrison succeeds brilliantly through her writings, in arriving at the solution of gender solidarity. Jelinek and Morrison both project the sexual and feminine problems of their characters. At the same moment they go much deeper into the very roots of racism and sexism. In a subtle way, they reveal the ideological basis of these
pernicious social evils. They have proclaimed themselves to be pure feminists as writers like Gloria Naylor, Alice Walker, and Gayle Jones.

Toni Morrison and Elfriede Jelinek contribute to our understanding of the importance of perception. It is not only the degree of the depth of their thoughts that distinguishes their fiction of the highest ethical kind but the depth of the empathy they yield in dealing with the untouched issues. Supporting and practicing Simone's theory, Morrison, through her writings clarifies that due to the external repressive forces and internal oppressions, a female child is conditioned to accept her passivity and dependence over male world. These forces deprive a female of her subjectivity and convert her into an object. She also reflects the trauma of those women who after their menopause are considered as identity less due to the loss of their reproductive powers. Morrison and Jelinek condemn these forces and illicit practices in vital. Through their characters both the novelists have epitomized the realities of feminine world and have registered a vociferous protest against the debilitating sexism of patriarchal society.
Works Cited

1. Das, Kumar Sisir (ed.). 

2. Chatterjee, Partha. 
   Nations and its fragments: Colonial and Post Colonial Histories, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994, p.120.


5. Jelinek, Elfriede. 


7. Martin, Del. 