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Toni Morrison's "Recitatif" as a Narrative of Participatory Culture: Presenting Transracial identity to Overcome the Racial Presuppositions

Evidence of racial segregation, its experiences, psychological outcomes and a voice for justice are common in the narratives of both black and white authors. In these narratives, readers have the chance to encounter the dialogues between the binaries of the white and the black characters.

We often find differences between documented history, state archive and narrated memory. As soon as history is regarded to be a discipline, its connection with the collective memory of a community happened to be more debatable and thoughtful, constrained by the standards of science and the regulations of evidence. Although the form of narration and the poetic objective are existing; the focus still lies on the documented factualness. Also, sociologists mostly do not ponder over memory and sufficiently about history. This paper intends to crack this long tradition by exploring the pervasiveness of the past and how significant a role the collective memory plays in the process of identifying. The idea of differentiating racial identities between two binaries can be put in a framework of cultural trauma. This research paper is structured along with a model that centres along with the theories of collective memory, cultural trauma and narrative on the basis of acquired or inherited knowledge which became conventional racial prejudices.

Toni Morrison's "Recitatif" portrays an interracial relationship between two girls; one black, one white. Morrison never exposes their races to us. Here each speculation unfurls the reader's racial preconceptions. According to the Brechtian analysis, the musical performance version of this short story attempts to bring its readers within its sphere of dialogue and thus, invoking the collective participation from readers and audiences. Making their attributes unidentifiable from a racial lens, Morrison makes the binaries fluid and brings a comparative judgement to both catagorized roles and attached traumas.