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## The Religious Transformation In Go Tell It On The Mountain And God Save The Child

This essay will discuss the two main characters' bildungsroman, or quest of self-identity in regards to their personal experiences and hardships. The first part will concentrate on Morrison's *God Save the Child*, while the second will focus on John Grimes' religious transformation in Baldwin's *Go Tell it on the Mountain*.

Bride's story is a finding one's identity. In her adolescence, Bride, as Pecola or Duckling, is exposed to critical and terrible racist treatment. As Razia Iqbal states that the separation points of contemporary prejudice are ever-present, yet the multifaceted nature of the bigotry disguised by African Americans is additionally there. The effect of that secondary hierarchy system of prejudice is the foundation of Lula Ann's story' (2015). As an adult, however, Bride, who ends up being a beautiful ebony woman, needs to look past the beauty because she cannot obtain total self-satisfaction in her materially thriving, yet pointless life. She has 'relied on her beauty for such a long time—how well it worked. She ha[s] not known its shallowness or her own weakness—the crucial lesson Sweetness taught and nailed to her spine to curve it' (God, 2015, p. 151). Bride searches for acceptance and acknowledgment in a 'colonized' community. Her effective occupation in the beauty business epitomises her disguised racial self-stigmatization. In *God Help the Child*, Bride's traumatic experiences in her adolescence continue to haunt her, therefore showing how torment incurred in childhood traps and totters the adult (Scrivener, 2015). While conversing with Booker 'certain things [she] had covered came up crisp just as [she] was seeing them out of the blue'. Her mental scars, representative of the injuries of dark American history, have rotted and never scabbed over (P. 134). Her self-assurance and boldness are only the 'thrillingly successful corporate woman façade of complete control' (P. 134), while, similar to poor Duckling, she desires for affection and acknowledgment. When Bride confronts the ghost of her childhood visiting a 'child molester' (Sofia Huxley, the educator she dishonestly blamed for abusing children) in jail, Booker rebukes her, 'You, not the woman I want' (P. 10), and abandons her. Furthermore, Bride has, for quite a period of time, attempted to make harmony with Sofia—a demonstration that needs to certify graciousness and compassion—fails, and she is ruthlessly beaten. Bride feels 'excessively powerless, too frightened to even think about defying Sweetness, or the proprietor, or Sofia Huxley' (P. 79). She cannot profess as a confident woman any longer. Bride's life is self-destructing, and she searches for comfort in medications, liquor and sex.

Booker's angry words haunt her and she sinks into an identity crisis, feeling dismissed and deleted (P. 38), which Morrison speaks to by fiddling with magical realism. Bride encounters a physical relapse 'back into a scared little black girl' (P. 142), 'losing' her womanhood. Her change is delineated through extraordinary components: the vanishing of her pubic and underarm hair, her ear piercings and her breasts. Her menstruation stops and she even shrinks the size of a youngster. However, 'Nobody else seems to see these differences. Regardless of whether they are genuine or just the result of Bride's own imagination, it's difficult to tell; yet the imagery is clear: she cannot get away from her past and she cannot get away from her body' (Scholes, 2015). The deconstruction of her womanhood parallels Bride's voyage of self-revelation, which prompts the inevitable development of her actual womanhood through love and pregnancy. Bride is a lost dark soul due to the impact of the intensely materialist white

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prevailing society. She has succeeded in the glamorous universe of makeup, but, she has lost her self during the time spent converging into that society. In the hunt of material achievement, she has denied her actual identity and legacy. Morrison's suggestion is that it is fundamental for one to return to her traditional culture, nature and one's actual self, in this manner owning a feeling of belonging. (2012: 39). Bride's journey of self-definition turns into 'a journey for love, for substantial sexual experiences, and, most importantly, for a sense that they [black women] are commendable' (Bakerman, 1981, pg. 541), self-esteem detached from material qualities. In *God Help the Child*, Brooklyn's story appears differently in relation to Bride's. Brooklyn additionally flees from the maltreatment she experiences from her uncle and alcoholic mother and reevaluates herself. Nevertheless, while nothing can prevent Brooklyn from accomplishing her material life objectives, Bride does not waver to desert everything. She sets out on a character adventure to California, in search for her boyfriend and confront him in regards to his rejection and unexpected flight, 'which was simply equivalent to facing, going to bat for herself' (P. 98). Her mission for self-acknowledgment and self-forgiveness, 'both literal and metaphorical [... ] includes the letting of old ghosts to rest for the two' (Scholes, 2015). Her first stop was at a burger joint, when a server gives her the look she received during the first days in school —'Stun, just as she had three eyes' (P. 81), returns her to her troubled youth. Later, Bride starts losing all those things that still keep her attached to her materialistic life: her car, her mobile phone, her clothes, etc. As Namwali Serpell writes, Bride "confronts her mortality [and] loses her material and emotional comforts" (2015). Hence, this trip symbolizes her return to what is essential in life. After her accident, in the forest and in the middle of the scary night, Bride feels "world-hurt—an awareness of malign forces changing her from a courageous adventurer into a fugitive" (P. 83). During her recovery from the car wreck, she receives selfless free care without judgment or special interest from a white hippy couple, Evelyn and Steve. Shallow and spoiled, Bride is faced with people who live, she believes, "the barest life", but they consider as the 'real life.'

In *God Help the Child*, Bride's materialism is set against the hippy couple's optimism: Bride's created 'Hollywoody, teenagery' name, impression of her vanity, and alluring life are as a distinct difference with those of Evelyn, a genuine Eve. She helps Bride to remember the forties or fifties film stars who had recognizing faces 'dissimilar to now, when haircuts alone isolated one star from another' (P. 86). In Evelyn and Steve's home, Bride ends up mindful that everyone had hated, dismissed her whole life, and marvels: 'What did she think at any rate about useful for the wellbeing of its own, or love without things?' (P. 92). In her revelation, Bride, far from her refined life, acknowledges how materialism cannot compensate for her horrible youth.

Bride's self-fulfilment trip brings her profound into the woods, her inner identity. There, in Morrison's rendition of 'Hansel and Gretel', Bride pursues 'a breadcrumb trail to the home of—a witch's cave' (P. 145)' (Scholes 2015) and experiences Queen, Booker's auntie—the red-haired 'witch' who at last dies burned. Queen makes Bride feel again as though she was the terrible, too-dark young lady in her mom's home (P. 144), deprived of her beauty and glamour. She recollects Booker's words about racism: 'Scientifically, there's no such thing as race, Bride, so prejudice without race is a decision. Taught of course, by the individuals who need it, yet at the same time a decision. People who practice it would be nothing without it' (P. 143). Like Bride, Queen had likewise been extremely beautiful and thought that was sufficient—that is the way the old woman person had lost her Children—, until she comprehended that she 'must be a genuine individual, which means a thinking one' (P. 158). In rural California, Bride likewise meets Rain—a semi-non domesticated young woman who had been prostituted and relinquished by her mother and, later, saved and taken in by the old couple—, a meeting that 'summons her [Bride's]

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subdued sentiments of racial dismissal' (Sturgeon, 2015). It is not by chance that Rain is the person who discovers Bride after her mishap. Her experience with the young woman is reminiscent of 'Alice in Wonderland'. Whenever Rain, the emerald-eyed girl stumbles on the black woman after her car wreck, she is carrying a black kitten the hippy couple had got her. Rain gazes at Bride 'with the greenest eyes [she] had ever seen' (P. 83). Like Lewis Carroll's always smiling feline, Rain observes how Steve salvages Bride with her mouth open. The girls likewise show up and vanish as in a mysterious world. The Cheshire Cat is the main character in Wonderland who genuinely gets Alice (Bride). Rain informs the blue-black woman regarding her horrendous encounters on account of her mom. Her story reflects how in reality, as in Wonderland, 'nonsense reigns' (as childhood abuse illustrate), while the inquisitive Alice/Bride attempts to make sense of what an all the more fulfilling life is about. As opposed to Bride's fake friendship with Brooklyn, her short evident friendship with Rain and her genuine endeavor to save the child are a recuperating knowledge for Bride, a true demonstration of compensation. In the end, she confronts Booker and her confession to him makes he feel reawakened: 'Never again compelled to remember, no, outlast the hate of her mom and the relinquishment of her dad' (P. 162). Bride reveals her pregnancy and he offers her 'the hand she had wanted for her entire life, the hand that did not require a lie to merit it, the hand of trust and caring for' (P. 175). The title of *Go Tell It on the Mountain* establishes the concept of a heralding of some important news. The main character is announcing, in other words, to the world that he is ready to declare his identity.

Baldwin's underlying work of fiction, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, discusses the theme of a fourteen-year-old boy's bildungsroman. The plot happens inside the time-range of twenty-four hours, starting with John's enlivening on his fourteenth birthday celebration to his religious conversion that night. Baldwin's first character and hero is worried about the revelation of identity through religion. Baldwin initiates his first part with 'I looked and I wondered,' which sets up the possibility of one chasing or searching for something, but then not totally fulfilled. All through Part I John Grimes is seeking - however, he does not know for what at first. It was felt by everybody that John would be a preacher. On the other hand, he had not in any way given this thought any idea until he awakened that morn in May. He had gone to service, however the brilliant feeling of inclination and real conviction were not there. His substantial presence was there, yet he had not accomplished an identity.

Here, one is able to recognize Baldwin with John Grimes in that Baldwin turned into preacher at the age of fourteen, 'no doubt feeling that he had found himself', hence changing his apprehensions and questions into happy fulfilment. John sees the presence of the saint's conviction through their intense, devout looks. Notwithstanding, he has not experienced that feeling yet, and hence cannot acknowledge it. John is continually watching and looking and seeking for ways to find his identity. 'John watched the-faces, and the weightless bodies and listened to the timeless cries' At some point, so everybody stated, this Power would have him; he would sing and cry as they did now. He watched... However John keeps on watching and look in the eyes of the saints for the hour when the prophecy of the churchgoers would be figured it out. Baldwin underlines John's search to demonstrate that John is in the phase of trying, for through being hopeful, one in the long run will achieve accomplishments. In relation with John's search for his identity is being open to an identity different from his father's. With John's search for himself is the possibility of John's tolerating a character not quite the same as his father's; for he had settled on his choice. He would not resemble his father, or his father's father. He would have another life, a world not of obscurities and obliviousness of his father's, with such a significant number of disallowances and dread. He needed an alternate life, an

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alternate identity from his predecessors.

With his familiarity of a need to establish an identity, John in a surge of tears cries to himself, 'What will I do? What will I do?'. He needs to escape from his daily routine, to be recognised as somebody extraordinary - to do things differently and to be an identity other than the John Grimes in the messy roads of Harlem. With the monetary birthday present from his mother, he attempts to escape from the ghetto of Harlem to the downtown area of New York. He sees the tall, straight high rises, transcending into the sky and wishes to relate himself to the tall and abundant structures. He thus desires a powerful world to accept him without question. He is the hero and the compelling. However his imaginary thoughts returned to reality and to 'narrow' way which he should acknowledge in Harlem. While at the highest point of the hill, John needs to distinguish himself with something gigantic, incredible, and unfavourable to his surroundings and his life in which he is so frequently deprecated by his father. He understands that he needs to understand and distinguish himself with something more dominant than him, yet he does not really comprehend what.

Throughout the disappointments and dissatisfactions of John's life come more discontents brought about by his family's turmoil and consistent fighting. Gabriel Grimes, John's father, cannot thoroughly acknowledge the bastard John as his child, which results in strengthening John's wish to truly know himself - to have an identity, a connection with a person or something. Discontent is additionally pervasive in different individuals from the family; disagreement exists between Florence, Gabriel's sister who lives with his family, and John; there is dispute among Gabriel and his significant other, Elizabeth; there is discord among Gabriel and his children, especially John, who is not his real son, and Gabriel. The reason for their arguments are due to Gabriel's biased and impatience that lead toward the abuse of John. However through these contradictions and discords inside this family, 'subtle and overt criticism' of his family or himself rises alas in John's affirmation of his identity. Dr. Wallace Groves of San Fernando Valley State College contends that religious conversion represents Baldwin's sentiment of 'moral energy as an artist which will enable him the power to tell the story on the mountain.

Thus, in the end of the book, John can acknowledge his life and identity, and continue moving forward. John has found himself and set himself up to help others in finding their identities, fulfilling the ideals of the people - at church and school - that John would be a pioneer of his people. Despite the fact that John only attains his religious identity at the end of the novel, it is implied he will be the leader in his church to counteract his father's dishonesty. Moreover, the peruser of Baldwin is not completely happy with religion serving in as the reason for the Negro's identity even in the life of John Grimes. Noel Heermance, the writer of *The Modern Negro Novel*, expresses that John Grimes' inquiry is an individual one, evolving out of the animosity and oppressive regimes in his home. Amid the night of his battling with torment and suffering, John 'chooses the personal religious answers rather than social or political ones. He becomes converted to Jesus, not to Ellison's Brotherhood or to the N. A. A. C. P. The answer is religious because the problem is seen in such personal terms.' The author understands the possibility that Baldwin is not happy with one looking for identity through religion. After several years of experiencing life's challenges due to one's skin colour, Baldwin and different Negroes have discovered that religion is not the appropriate response. Baldwin, likewise, did not recognise religion as the best approach to locate one's self or distinguish one's self racially. However, in *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, Baldwin empowers the hero, John Grimes, to accomplish a religious identity, and he ends the novel before John comes into contact with different individuals from

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the Christian faith outside of his environment. Despite the fact that Baldwin does not perceive religion as the method for recognizing himself, he plainly demonstrates that one may distinguish one's self and seem to gain proficiency with one's self through religion such as John Grimes. Although, as previously discussed, Baldwin stops the novel before John has started to consider himself to be an individual from a bigger Christian body, bigger than the little church with which he had moved toward becoming related, bigger than Harlem, bigger than New York City.

In a nutshell, both Morrison and Baldwin's novels speak about the alienation of minority characters from the rest of American society due to their non-identification with the mainstream American society. Both books through Grimes and Bride have sought for their personal identity and acknowledgement from others. They have unveiled how decolonization from the imposing white standards are related to these characters' acceptance of self-worth and racial identity. There is optimism in the denouement of both stories- in the optimistic belief in the triumph of good of Andersen's tales. Like the ugly duckling, Bride and Grimes can finally accept themselves for what they are which signifies that there can be no immediate fairy-tale transformation and the quest for self-identity is a long and tiring one.

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