

# Skin and Story: "An Intersectional Exploration of Racial Trauma, Identity, and Displacement in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*"

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## Abstract

This article investigated the interplay of historical narratives and racial trauma within literature. Equally disturbing, racialized experiences are disseminated throughout epochal literary pieces, i.e., Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Lahiri's *The Namesake*. Using critical race theory as a heuristic device, this manuscript reveals literature's role in reflecting hegemonic power structures and systemic inequities, this study will reveal that how skin both as a literal and metaphorical boundary functions as a site of both suffering and resilience. To that end, this research closely explored the correlation between narrative form and literary devices with the exposure of skin color and its proximity to or distance from eyes and bodily visibility. With the binding of personal narratives and collective trauma, this investigation concludes the impact of literature on perpetuating imperial power relations. This article also conceptualizes linguistic capital in fostering injurious values, such as patriarchal power imbalances, between different people. This topic collectively strikes dialogical processes about anti-blackness and literature's role in effecting social change. Mutinously, this discussion also begins to revise the reasoning behind pathways to reimagine more equal life experience for black people.

**Keywords:** racial trauma, symbolism of skin, skin as a physical representation, systemic inequalities, skin color, bodily visibility, colonial power dynamics, skin as identity marker, marginalized voices

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## Introduction

Racial trauma is a lasting mental and physical injury caused by experiences of racial discrimination, oppression or violence. Texts by Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; and Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake* allow us to grasp what race signifies both publicly and privately. Racial trauma is the deep, often invisible marks left on individuals and communities who endure systemic racial discrimination and violence. This trauma impacts not only the mind, but also the body, as the effects of racism become physically and psychologically inscribed in the victim over time. Other key ideas in this analysis include writing about place as yet another subject and through focusing on these interacting identities, we gain a greater understanding of how systemic inequalities subject people to disparate experiences. Through these texts we see that skin is not only a biological feature but also a social sign. It carries in its coloring the collective suffering of those who have been marginalized. It is the pain, resistance, and survival symbolically reflected both on personal and communal histories of racial trauma (Watanabe, 2011).

The linkage between dermatology and narrative provides a powerful tool for seeing how racial trauma is written on the body. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Uncle Tom and *The Namesake's* Gogol Ganguli show us symbolically prescribe a battleground that is skin. Skin stands at the line of separation between body exterior and inside. It symbolizes the psychological and physical experiences of identity. Its color, texture, and appearance often serve as symbols by which information about a person's worth and standing in society are read outward to others, intertwining with their experiences of racial trauma and shaping how they are viewed by society (Cohen 2003).

This article examines how skin, race, and oppression intersect with each other to create racial trauma in narratives contained within *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake*, using the knowledge of dermatology. Both stories situate racial trauma on the body, writing it into the skin and showing how literature can shed light on this process. As part of the literary and medical subdiscipline, this paper brings narrative together with the science of medicine. Just as current medical thinking emphasizes the importance of storytelling in uncovering individual pain, these texts demonstrate not only how racial trauma is written onto the skin but also how it forms part and parcel of a person's lived experience. By blending personal hardship with structural wrongs, these works advocate for an all-encompassing look at racial trauma: one which puts medical knowledge and narrative in dialogue with each

other so as to produce a more humane understanding of healing and identity (Charon, 2000).

## Review of the Literature

Washington (2023) in his study, *culturally responsive reading: Teaching literature for social justice*, offers a reference to which can be turned for understanding how writing literature can provide tools of racial justice and awareness. Another way in which Washington's works echo the contents of this investigation is that he encourages readers to view characters' sufferings more thoroughly: their myriad paths towards disenfranchisement before finally reaching conclusions about ethnic or documented identity in the US. With Washington's call for the church to act and literary activism, and literature providing a space for opposition, texts are useful seeds of thought or tools in uncovering that historical impact which has been felt by individuals and their communities. His request is also in line with the argument advanced in this study: that literary works like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* do not merely reflect social contradictions; they present maladies in society to once again consider as such. (Washington, 2023)

Henderson and Wells (2021) research is their work, *Environmental racism and the contamination of black lives: a literature review*, on environmental racism has a trenchant significance as it digs into the systemic nature of racial. *Environmental racism and the contamination of Black Lives*, carefully documents are how marginalized communities, particularly people of African descent--are unequally subjected to environmental hazards because they live within or downwind of them (Henderson, 2021). This environmental character of racism corresponds to a broader understanding, that sees systemic oppression not only in the way race is handled through social spheres, but also considers how it discriminates against black people. This, then, is environmental racism. Both in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* emotional and social forms of racial trauma are transformed into physical symptoms; they are not only powers working on the mind but visible marks left by their violence on our bodies and identities. Their interpretation complements the discussion of how racial trauma is manifested in the body, taking into account not just mental wounds but also physical and environmental effects. (Wells, 2021)

Landor (2019), in his work *Skin-tone trauma: Historical and contemporary influences on the health and interpersonal outcomes of African Americans*,

introduces the concept of "skin-tone trauma," suggesting that historical and current ramifications underlying Colorism result in an additional overlay of trauma for African Americans and other marginalized groups. This concept is applicable in the context of Lahiri's narrative, where experiences of racial and cultural identity intersect with physical appearances of the characters. For Gogol, rejection of his ethnic identity and the discomfort associated with his name are tied to societal perceptions of his skin and heritage, manifesting as a personal crisis that evokes both shame and a longing for connection. The skin of them becomes in fact a symbol showing how they have to constantly strive to synthesize their dual identities and try to fit into a world at once accepting, exclusionary and beyond the reach of belonging. Inherited legacies of persecution faced by their parents also make them grapple day after day with whether or not they can really be assimilated into society. Recent empirical evidence highlights the experiences of colorism—those distinctions made based on skin tone among racialized individuals—which compounds the stress of trauma these characters go through. (Landor, 2019)

Watanabe (2011) explore the concept of Indian American experiences and identity crisis in his work *Crossing borders and transcultural negotiations: Exiled bodies and diasporic identities in Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake*. *The Namesake*, by Jhumpa Lahiri, in contrast, explores the experiences of Indian immigrants in America. There the focus is on skin, memories and the immigrant experience as a construct of identity. In this narrative, characters like Ashima Ganguli and her son Gogol try to make sense of being different from their own background living in a strange land. Lahiri's depictions of first-generation characters who keep in touch with their homeland stand in sharp contrast to the second-generation figures, who often feel alienated from both their Indian roots and American mainstream culture (Watanabe, 2011). Although he still bears the same skin, so to speak, their two very different treatments show how this factor added extra layers of meaning and suffering to the lives of the characters.

The intertwining of skin, identity and trauma has become increasingly important in both literary criticism and medicine. A review on Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* examines how skin functions as a site of racial trauma and identity formation. The implications of dermatological science and critical race theory inform this investigation into the many aspects of racial trauma in relation with skin color, culture clashes, and memory (Watanabe, 2011). Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* provided an early and powerful

record of the racial trauma suffered by African Americans in slavery. Employing skin as metaphor, the novel captures physical and mental suffering inflicted from racism and dehumanization. With emphasis on the embodied nature of trauma, Stowe shows that experiences brutality by characters are marked down onto their skins. Thus, skin becomes not only a reflection of their suffering but also a signifier for identity. This is something that is constantly being negotiated in an environment where the race hateful. The visits of characters such as Tom and Eliza are stories painfully aware of their past history under racism; these traumas engrave themselves into their bodies providing physical signs of earlier humiliation (Charon, 2000).

Charon (2000), in her study considered the ascendancy of narrative in patient care, reflects this shift in medicine. It points out an aspect of narrator which is crucial to our understanding of trauma. Narrative skill assists in not only the healing of individuals who suffer trauma but is necessary, in multicultural arena medical drug mansions to underpin understanding among peoples of different cultural backgrounds. This intersection is most pertinent in *The Namesake*, the making of memories and act of remembering are essential to dealing with displacement and an identity crisis. Moreover, in the crossroads of literature and healing arts demands understanding what kind of dialogue stories certainly can have with race rage. (Charon, 2000)

## Methodology

This study uses a racial trauma lens to see the intersection of race and psychology in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe and *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri (Stowe, 1852; Lahiri, 2003). Is racial trauma in these two works a historical legacy? Stowe and Lahiri's texts probe the intersecting the racial trauma, canvas to explore suffering under particular historical and cultural conditions--both as cause for its own effector conditions on which varieties depend. The research utilizes two key theoretical frameworks: intersectionality and racial trauma theory. By applying these perspectives, the study aims to uncover how, across different historical periods and cultural contexts, systemic racism influences a person's identity, sense of self and the experience of racial trauma.

## Theoretical Framework

Capitalizing on Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) theory of intersectionality, this research holds that individuals are subject to and navigate multiple, interlocking forms of oppression such as race, class and gender which impact their experiences of trauma. This framework will also be instrumental for understanding how race intersects with other identity markers in shaping the lived experiences of marginalized characters for better or worse, in both texts. Coupled with intersectionality, racial trauma theory will shape the analysis by paying attention to psychological and emotional effects of systemic racism, especially how racial violence and discrimination cause trauma among characters. This theory will provide a roadmap to explore how characters in Harriet Beecher Stowe and Jhumpa Lahiri both conceptualize or absorb racial trauma--and what happens next. And why does one option appear more appealing than another? By combining these perspectives, the research will explore how race and psychology are linked to each other. (Crenshaw 1989)

### ❖ Text analysis

This study applies a comparative textual analysis, based on the method of close reading developed by Catherine Belsay (2013) and extracted from Gabriele Griffin's *Research Methods for English Studies* (2013). By employing close reading this paper is able to dissect the details of narrative styles, character construction and themes present in both texts. Throughout the study, the use of language, imagery and symbolism relating to race and trauma will be meticulously explored; the results will reveal the nature of psychological and emotional impacts racial oppression generates within each text analyzed. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the researcher looks at how Stowe represents slavery and its dehumanizing effect on Black bodies through Uncle Tom's experiences. The analysis will examine both overt and subtle ways in which racial trauma is engraved into his physical person and psyche. In contrast, *The Namesake* will be considered from Gogol Ganguli's experiences with dislocation of race and culture. It will also inquire how his struggle for self-definition and sense of belonging reflects the trauma of immigration and racialization in a post-colonial context. This comparison of the pair will show that in fact each character experiences racial trauma in a unique way, determined by their individual historical and cultural conditions; but it will also show how out of the two texts a thread persistently runs of suffering, resistance to oppressive normative factors and reconceiving oneself. (Belsay, 2013)

### ❖ Contextual Analysis

This research also places these texts under their proper historical and cultural circumstances, in an effort to fully understand the impact of racial trauma. Qing it relates to this, the analysis will deal specifically with the period of pre-Civil War America when slavery was growing and racism institutionalized itself. By using this historical lens, we can get some insight into how Stowe's portrayal of race and identity fits in with the mainstream social structure in America at that time, as well as its racist ideologies. In contrast, *The Namesake* will be examined against contemporary immigrant experiences in the United States: specifically, how South Asian immigrants undergo racialization and identity-fluidity formation. The cultural context of ethnicity, migration, and post-colonial experience is indispensable for understanding Gogol's psychological and emotional struggles. By comparing these two different scenes, slavery and immigration -- in order to show how racial trauma functions across cultural divides, but keeps deeply embedded in the body and its experiences of racial violence. (Landor, 2019)

By employing intersectional frameworks of intersectionality as well as racial trauma theory, in this paper under examination to explore how race and identity is represented in literature--through the lives of those at the periphery who appear serviceable characters but whose stories are rarely told in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* compared with its Indian version *The Namesake* (Watanabe, 2011). This methodological approach insists that textual analysis be combined together with historical and cultural background information as to how these works represent something continuing: the effects both mental and physical of racial trauma. Again, under examination with an ethical guideline guarantee the individual and accurate examination of these complex matters by this study. It supplies readers a general view of directions in which literature can mirror as well as struggle against racial oppression. (Hochman, 2011)

### Analysis

The accounts of racial agony in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* give us some genuine feelings of tranquility to the mental unnerve and social results traveled in every other person. By examining the harsh realities of the racist world, Stowe sententiously shows the truth about slavery in ways that only she could, while Lahiri charts her way through the paradoxes of being an immigrant as well as cultural identity. Applying Critical Race Theory (CRT)

for a cross-textual analysis on race, skin, trauma, and identity in these two literary works we find that these two texts seem to suggest the intersectionality between individual experiences and societal structures. According to Critical Race Theory, racism is so embedded into the structure of society that it permeates through legal, cultural and institutional practices. It highlights that the lived realities of marginalized communities cannot be truly understood without an understanding of personal narratives, lived experience. The only thing that suits the power of their testimony as individuals who suffer racial trauma is how Lahiri and Stowe show us just how interconnected individual and collective suffering are.

### ❖ **Racial Trauma in Uncle Tom's Cabin**

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) Stowe evokes racial trauma in the context of slavery, offering a vivid portrayal of it through multiple characters and narratives to contrast its dehumanizing influences.

**Uncle Tom as a Symbol of Suffering:** Uncle Tom is the embodiment of the trauma of enslaved people. Stowe says of him "He was a man of God; he would rather suffer wrong than do wrong." (Stowe, 1852, p.123), Tom's virtue stands in strict opposition with the evil of slavery, thereby also emphasizing how much his pain really hurts just because of his skin color. Through studying his perseverance in the face of adversity, we see a model for how one can stay spiritually strong while under systematic oppression, tied to race and skin color. (Landor, 2019)

**Complicity of Whiteness:** The fact that Mrs. Shelby reflects Ambiguity and a white complicity in slavery seems questionable. While it outwardly seems sympathetic, privilege enables her to maintain exactly This system which she deplors. Stowe catches that struggle in her mind "I can't bear to think of the suffering and the wrong done to the poor creatures." (Stowe, 1852, p.46). This acknowledgment highlights how societal privilege can lead to a selective empathy, similar to how surface-level perceptions of skin may obscure deeper issues of inequality and injustice in the structures that oppress marginalized groups. (Belsay, 2013)

**Imagery of Desperation:** Through Uncle Tom's vibrant imagery his physical and psychological pain is conveyed of slaves. And in the famous scene of Eliza crossing the river on ice, this dangerous voyage is symbolic if not explicitly dramatic test for freedom. Context is key and Stowe writes "She had made a desperate leap... into the freezing water" (Stowe, 1852, p.212). In this moment, the violence of enslavement captures what it must have been like for enslaved people to lose their sense of self.

### ❖ Racial Trauma in The Namesake

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri delves into the experience of racial trauma suffered by Bengalis in America, treating this phenomenon as one among the multi-layered sufferings caused and endured by cultural displacement, identity crises, and intergenerational psychological scarring of an individual. It is in parallel to dermal science that an understanding of the physical and emotional effects of these traumas upon the body may be better appreciated.

**Cultural Displacement and Bodily Trauma:** For Ashima, the experience of displacement from her own culture is much like the response of skin to environmental stimulus. Just as skin becomes dry, irritated or inflamed after long exposure to unfamiliar climates and conditions- so Ashima feels alienated and cut off a sense of acute loss gnawing at her very heart. Her longing for Calcutta is like a person "who suddenly finds himself out high above a flooding river," as she tells her husband: "When I was in school [she explains to him again], it was a well-known thing for me." (Lahiri, 2003, p.92). But the psychological residue from emigration has been imprinted upon her life-a side effect perhaps still shaping her world view. The impact is just as unforgettable and heavy as a brand seared into skin memory. (Landor, 2019)

**The skin as a thematic analogy or symbol:** Gogol's inner struggle about his name goes far beyond a mere matter of nomenclature in dermal science. For the skin is at once a barricade between ourselves and others--its texture, color, thickness all signifying subtle but clear demarcations in identity. And Gogol, by renaming himself in symbolic tribute to the Western literary mainstream, is making a bid for assimilation. That brings a "sense of loss" (Lahiri, 2003, p. 93) which corresponds the psychological impact of turning one's back on his own roots. Just as skin acts as a barrier shield so his attempt to conform with social expectations brings out the agony of feeling an outsider, someone who must shed portions or all of himself to fit in. Identity in essence can thus be reconstructed and deconstructed just as skin is made and remade under external forces.

**Intergenerational trauma and dermal memory:** The relationship between Ashoke and Gogol illustrates intergenerational trauma, akin to the concept of dermal memory. Stories about his father's past cling to Gogol, like scars from history; these events are such things as Partition. And as he himself realizes: "he has inherited a burden." (Lahiri, 2003, p.133) This can be seen as the suppression of trauma

across generations: not only emotional health but physical well-being is also affected. In dermal science, skin conditions can be aggravated by stress and trauma: psychological histories have as much influence over our bodies than ours too. Gogol's experience reflects how deeply ingrained histories often take varying forms, leaving their indelible mark on self-identity and feeling of place in the world. (Watanabe, 2011)

### ❖ Intersectionality and Narrative Structures

Both Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Lahiri's *The Namesake* narratively expose the complexities of race-based trauma through the optic of intersectionality, revealing how combined identities shape these experiences. By letting these texts dialogue with dermal science, we can better understand how skin is a metaphor for identity and trauma, illustrating the physical and emotional scars borne by marginalized individuals. (Hochman, 2011)

### ❖ Intersectional Consciousness and Trauma from Race

Both *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* feature characters whose lives are shaped by a combination of race, class and gender. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Uncle Tom, for example, represents the fate faced by enslaved Black men whose identities are shaped by their social standing and the brutal conditions of slavery. Stowe observes, "He was a man of God; he would rather suffer wrong than do wrong" (Stowe, 1852, p.123). Similarly, in *The Namesake*, Gogol Ganguli grapples with his Bengali heritage in a predominantly white America, navigating the complexities of cultural identity. He states, "I am not Gogol," reflecting his internal conflict and desire to reject his name, which represents his heritage (Lahiri, 2003, p.93). This intersectional approach mirrors dermal science, which examines how skin responds to various internal and external factors—showing that just as skin reacts to multiple influences, individuals' experiences of trauma are shaped by the convergence of various identity factors. (Crenshaw, 1989)

### ❖ The Skin as a Metaphor for Experience

Both *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* draw a vivid contrast between the skin and identity. For Uncle Tom, his suffering in the flesh as a symbol of racial oppression forces him to experience pain both anew and continuously within his very body. As Stowe writes, describing Tom's physical suffering: "His wounds were not only in his flesh but in his soul." Here Stowe links physical and emotional pain closely (Stowe, 1852, p.310). Like those three layers of skin, Gogol's experience in *The*

Namesake comes in three parts-intersecting cultural heritage, private loss, and public responsibility. "I want to fit in somewhere," he suggests (Lahiri, 2003, p.120). Dermal science underscores this connection by investigating how skin conditions can be aggravated by emotional and psychological trauma, suggesting that the scars of racial trauma are not just figurative but can also appear on one's body. (Charon, 2000)

In this intersectional reading, it can be seen that how Stowe and Lahiri alike reveal the intricate interplay between identity, trauma, and society. Using information from dermal science to cast a different light on these themes, we can learn better meanings hidden in our stories and skin, casting liberalism to one side in favor of the enduring legacies brought about by racial trauma. (Charon, 2000)

## Results and Discussions

This paper examines the original worth of racial trauma and systemic disparities in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*. These specific examples substitute in part for extra definitions of social and emotional effects on race, identity and trauma grounded from Insights on How derivative suffering is linked.

### ❖ Racial Trauma and the Connection between Personal and Collective Suffering

**Uncle Tom's Cabin:** The suffering experienced by Uncle Tom is not simply a matter of one person but also reflects the unjust conditions which were built upon him through slavery. Tom's physical and spiritual suffering shows how this oppressive political system harms both individuals and the aggregate Afro-American community. The passage, "His wounds were not only in his flesh but in his soul," (Stowe, 1852, p.310) indicates what pain with life under forced labor has been pressed deeply into body and spirit alike. It reflects CRT's point that racism is embedded in social structures and that the effects of racial trauma cannot be understood without considering both individual stories plus inequities at a structural level.

**The Namesake:** Gogol's internal struggles with his name and cultural heritage is a trauma from being forced into another's culture. His wish to change his name in order to belong in mainstream American society reflects the broader issue of integration as well as psychological stress people experience from trying hard to fit

into a racialized society. The narrative shows that personal instances of alienation and identity crisis because of larger societal institutions which restrict individuals according to race and ethnicity the passage, "I am not Gogol," (Lahiri, 2003, p.93) expresses his intense discomfort at being trapped into a definition of identity he did not choose but which was systematically based on race.

### ❖ **Complicity in Systemic Oppression**

Uncle Tom's Cabin: Mrs. Shelby gives an exemplary illustration of the moral ambiguity surrounding white complicity with institutionalized discrimination. Even though she feels sorry for the slaves, she does nothing to change the system of slavery itself. This shows how privilege can sustain racial trauma, even while some individuals express empathy. The line "I can't bear to think of the suffering and the wrong done to the poor creatures," (Stowe, 1852, p.46) highlights how selective compassion based on privilege might mask more deep-throated forms of racial injustice. This supports the CRT viewpoint that racism is both institutional (Institutional Racism) and tends to be perpetuated by those who themselves benefit from the system; even though they may be personally sympathetic.

**The Namesake:** Ashima's feelings of rootlessness and immigrant anguish mirror how member groups in American society who are disadvantaged by structural inequities fare. Her longing for her native country and the estrangement she feels within her new home are not personal to her alone but reflect more broadly on the immigrant experience. Hers is a trauma which, though personal, is connected to the larger social and economic forces behind immigration policy.

### ❖ **Physical and Emotional Scarring: Dermal Metaphor**

Uncle Tom's Cabin: The narrative of wounds in both Tom's body and soul presents metaphorically the intrinsic connection between actual and psychological pain. In this way, racial trauma is a condition which is not only socially produced but also internalized by individuals, engrained right into their hearts. Tom's suffering is symbolical of how slavery was literally exertion made flesh along with emotional affliction, a form "dermal metaphor" that encases the human. Racial oppression may therefore be thought about not only in terms of an abstract social system, but also as something that is experienced in the bodies and minds of its victims.

**The Namesake:** Gogol's struggle with identity is perhaps best symbolized by his inability to accept the given name. He simply cannot grasp how someone else could

lay a label upon him without his consent, and so tries unavailingly time after time, running away but never managing. "Dermal metaphor" can also be employed here, accounting for the way in which racial discrimination leaves its mark on an individual's body as well as mind to form an emotional scar quite praiseworthy.

#### ❖ Intersectionality of Race, Class, and Gender

Uncle Tom's Cabin: Uncle Tom's life and suffering represent the intersectionality of race, class, and gender. As an enslaved Black man, his social status is subject to all three aspects of his Identity and his experiences are shaped by the harsh conditions of slavery. Stowe's portrayal of Tom's suffering makes us consider what happens when these intersecting identities coalesce to produce a kind only black men can suffer in an even slavery itself. This is in tune with CRT's focus on understanding the life experiences of marginalized groups and how these experiences are influenced by an individual's intersecting identities.

**The Namesake:** In America, Gogol struggles with his Bengali identity under the influence of race, class, and gender. As an immigrant from a lower middle-class background, he suffers discrimination not just because of his race but also on account of being an immigrant. His struggle with himself and desire to fit in with the mainly white society reflect the diverse pressures brought to bear on those whose racial and cultural identities do not coincide with the mainstream. His desire to drop his name and take on a more Western persona is thus defined by the intersection between his personal identity and social pressures of race and class.

#### ❖ Emotional and Physical Effects of Trauma on Identity

Uncle Tom's Cabin: Stowe uses Tom's sufferings as a way of illustrating how profoundly racism can influence an individual's identity. The emotional and physical effects of slavery are indistinguishable; when Tom's moral strength becomes tested until it is destroyed by a system that views him simply as property. When emotional and physical trauma work together in this way Racism is deeply buried within society itself. And it causes an individual's conception of self to be further harmed, so racial trauma becomes part of people's life experiences.

**The Namesake:** Gogol's travails with identity and name are emblematic of the trauma which immigrants often suffer in a racially defined society. The physical trauma of removal and the emotional hardships of being alienated leave lasting scar lines across his self-concept, which are then aggravated by external pressures to

assimilate. His emotional journey through *The Namesake* highlights the psychological scar lines resulting from lack of belonging or not finding one's own place in life. This reflects the internalized trauma many immigrants suffer.

The exploration of racial trauma in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* has provided people with a powerful lesson on how race, identity, and trauma are linked and influenced by bigger social structures. Both novels present conventional Critical Race Theory discussions by way of dermal science metaphor. They suggest that personal agony is a product of system oppression, and at point we see how the shadow of these traumas has left an indelible mark on individual identity.

## Conclusion

Through Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, this paper shows how literature profoundly influences public opinion on race and modern trauma. In reapplying Critical Race Theory (CRT) to these works, it can be seen that how racial narratives of pain and identity are intertwined with economic injustices. Both novels reveal the interplay between race, class and gender, showing how individual lives are influenced by wider structures of oppression in society. Stowe's harrowing depiction of slavery and Lahiri's study on immigrant trauma both acts as moving examples of the collective nature of personal suffering. People suffer not only because they are individuals but also because history and culture create their pain, shaping it into something that enters the mainstream consciousness.

The significance of this review lies in that it advances the current academic debate on racial trauma and, with analogies gleaned from dermatology, gives a hitherto-unknown view of how pain can interact with biological discomfort. As a barrier and as an emblem, the skin provides a way to conceive how racial injustice is both something imposed upon individuals metaphorically and actually stamped inside them physically. Moreover, it confirms CRT's contention that racism is woven into society's very fabric, touching the intimate life experiences of blameless groups in ways that are both personal and collective. And the implications of these findings are both practical and revolutionary, a new tool to help us grasp how literature can become a force for social change.

In practice, these works' reviews of call for deeper engagement with literature as a vehicle addressing contemporary issues of racially -base64encode. The way both *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* represented racial experiences as at once more complex and less foreign than commonly thought will likely make readers think again about how ongoing struggles for increased racial justice could be conducted. In stressing the continuing impacts of historical and cultural trauma on today's populations, these narratives help win for those subjects to institutionalized oppression psychological as well as emotional healing.

The insights gained from these novels have real-world applicability for race-based and immigration-related policy, as they provide a frame for understanding how displacement and racial discrimination can have far-reaching psychological ramifications.

Ultimately, this article underscores the role of literature in seeking justice. These stories found in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Namesake* are not just accounts of truism or fiction writing; they are urgent rallying cries for a better future, pointing out that we must continue to dialogue, have sympathy with one another even to mutual sacrifice and work closely together toward inner and racial recovery.

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