

O'Neill's Treatment of Racism in *All God's Chillum Got Wings* and the Emperor Jones

Asim Karim

GC University, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract: Society and culture of a particular place is governed by certain elements that have substantial impact on personality and behavior of people of that very place. These elements range from such micro ones as home and family to such macro ones as religious affiliation, ethnic and sectarian belongingness and economic conditions. Impact of these cultural elements could be substantially meaningful in developing healthy personality traits or regressive behavioral defects. American literature provides rich study of what could be the disturbing role of such factor as racial belongingness on personality and behavior. O'Neill's plays provide an instance of the role of racial factor in personality disintegration and psychic derangement. However, this study evaluates this in with reference to his *All God's Chillum Got wings* and *The Emperor Jones*. Secondly it asserts that the peculiar psychic states as highlighted in *All God's Chillum* in particular cannot be taken in isolation as they bear characteristic similarity with regressive personality and behavioral trends in his other plays not concerned with racism. Thus the personality regression here in these plays is in line with similar states in other plays.

Key words: American literature, culture, human behavior, O'Neill's Drama

INTRODUCTION

Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953), the pioneer American dramatist made drama in America a serious literary endeavor. He rescued it from such dramatic modes of Naturalism and Realism as in vogue in the contemporary American theatre, but most significantly from the predominantly commercial profit-oriented melodrama of disproportionate emotionalism and sensationalism. He was as Beard (2005) writes "interested in avoiding realism and pseudo realism that dominated mainstream American theatre at that time". Being a pioneer, he embarked on a new and unfamiliar literary landscape, which unlike poetry and fiction looked for inspiration to European theatre and theories. American fiction and poetry in particular found its inspirational model in Emerson's ideas on transcendentalism and Self-Reliance which acquired almost religious passion in the contemporary and succeeding American novelists and poets (Gorely, 1997). Bloom (1987) terms O'Neill as "the most non Emersonian author of any estimate in our literature. . . . O'Neill from the start seemed to know that his spiritual quest was to undermine Emerson's America religion of Self-Reliance". He turned to such European dramatists as Strindberg (Hartman, 1966) and Ibsen and such philosophers as Schopenhauer (Alexander, 1993) and Nietzsche (Levin, 1996; Hinden, 1993) for inspiration both in content and style of his plays. Hartman (1966) analyzes O'Neill's adoption of Strindberg's "style and subject matter to native material", and Blackburn (1941)

reads continental influences on O'Neill's expressionist drama. His association with contemporary critics Kenneth McGowan, the playwright Glaspell, and George Cram Cook-the founders of the Provincetown Players, whom he joined in 1915-transformed the decadent American theatre into a vibrant art. They particularly liberated American theatre from the style in vogue in both technique and content. Along with his associates of the Provincetown and other leading professional production company, Washington Square, he made use of the two related modern developments in dramatic art. First was Strindberg's Naturalism (Templeton, 1990) which had already become popular in European theatre. It helped O'Neill tremendously in introducing overdue naturalism to American theatre. His dissatisfaction with the prevalent mode of realism in contemporary theatre on the other hand made him carry out an other revolution in American theatre which pertained to his introduction of popular Expressionism in American drama. Besides, his theatrical innovations also coincided with the growing interest in Freudian views on sex (Wyatt, 1984), anti Puritanism in morals (Curran, 1975), and middle class materialism (Alexander, 1954). All these and related factors needed to be expressed in the theatre. O'Neill represented them on the stage, and so introduced essential western modern content into the American drama. This study evaluates specific impact of racism in personality/behavioral disintegration in O'Neill's *All God's Chillum Got wings* and *The Emperor Jones*. Society and culture of a particular place is governed by certain elements that have

substantial impact on personality and behavior of people of that very place. These elements range from such micro ones as home and family to such macro ones as religious affiliation, ethnic and sectarian belongingness and economic conditions. The impact of these cultural elements could be substantially meaningful in developing healthy personality traits or regressive behavioral defects. American literature provides rich study of what could be the disturbing role of such factor as racial belongingness on personality and behavior. O'Neill's plays provide an instance of the role of racial factor in personality disintegration and psychic derangement. However, This study evaluates this in with reference to his *All God Chillum Got wings* and *The Emperor Jones*. Secondly it asserts that the peculiar psychic states as highlighted in *All God's Chillum* in particular can not be taken in isolation as they bear characteristic similarity with regressive personality and behavioral trends in his other plays not concerned with racism. Thus the personality regression here in these plays is in line with similar states in other plays.

RACISM IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

American literature especially fiction and drama provide searching study of racial and regional factor in American society and their impact on human psychology. Indeed some of the most powerful works in American literature are those that deal with what it means to be a racially inferior in terms of color. The black in particular suffered from social segregation, assimilation and other serious social, economic, cultural problems that have lead to psychoanalytic study of the essentially black in the American experience. The plight of the Black can be imagined by the fact that until about 1940 no black author could present the black experience convincingly to the reading public and the task to the task was left to the white American writers to create black representative literature and images for the readers and audience. Therefore writers like Melville, Twain, Conrad, Faulkner, and O'Neill came forward to project the back experience to the contemporary society. But it was not less than a challenge as these white intellectual had to write without the very personal experience of being black in the white racist majority as well as the larger social problem of acceptance of black as theme of universal meaning. They had also to confront the established negative myth of a Negro (Long, 1987). Years of suppression, however, gave rise to Black arts movement that like The Black Power concept was related broadly to the Afro-American's desire for self-determination and nationhood. The term Afro-centricity was coined to study Africa and Afro American culture through Afro centric perspectives (Okur, 1993). But, during 1960s and 70's black theatre in America earned a reputation as one of the most controversial and

dynamic movements in the world. Plays by black dramatists boldly portrayed black life in relation to oppressive political and social institutions in the United States. Blacks founded hundreds of theatre groups which produced plays by at least 200 dramatists (Austin, 1988). Widespread interest led to a proliferation of black theatre articles, dissertations, and scholarly books. The works of Johnson (Bower, 2003), Hurston (Sadoff, 1985; Krasner, 2001) and Childress (Curb, 1980) etc have strengthened the Black voice in the Modern and post modern American Theater. Bower (2003) has clearly interpreted along psychoanalytic lines black American Female writers to highlight the problem of racism and its painful role in the life of the artist and their works. Discrimination, deprivation, poverty, insult, humiliation, and torture (physical, spiritual, emotional and psychological) in fact, writes Bower (2003) created a complete discourse of various abnormalities in the affected group. Faulkner (Martin, 2001; Towner, 2002) among the writers of fiction has treated terrible racial problems with particular reference to poverty ridden predominantly black populated American South. In works such as *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Go Down, Moses*, Faulkner critiques the sexual and racial injustices wrought by the racial bias and prejudices. For instance, ethnic discrimination on color results in fundamental clash in Faulkner's *Light in August* (Snead, 1987; Duvall, 1987; Andrews, 1993). Kartgarner (1987) analyses the novel as a a discourse of conflict between blackness and whiteness that merge in Joe, mulatto or "the imagined mulatto" (10) that creates a crises of identity for him. Sundquist (1987) interprets Joe's life in terms of two conflicting and complementary forms of anxiety that springs from his mixed blood/white nigger status and heritage (85). If his murder of Joanna reflects his anger, frustration to liberate himself from the circle, ruthlessness and brutality involved in Joe's murder, and his castration reflect the violence that racial hatred had generated in that region. Andrews (1993) analysis of the treatment of miscegenation issue in Faulkner highlights the same distortion in public attitude. He argues that in Faulkner, the social structure promotes white male hegemony over black female as well as a form of double standard which tolerated one form of miscegenation, between white men and black women, and opposing the opposite of this type. In fact in a white male domination, miscegenation almost came to mean "only the taboo form, thus silencing the reality of white male exploitation of black women" *Elision's Invisible Man*, Hurston's *Their Eyes were Watching God*, Morrison's *Jazz* are landmark achievements in mirroring the socio-cultural perspectives of the American south and being black in hegemonic and prejudiced white majority. Jazz in particular highlights the strange, bizarre and aggressive human behavior caused principally by years of racial discrimination and violence in American south (Cannon, 1997).

RACISM AND O'NEILL

O'Neill's treatment of racial factor in the prevalent US culture did not develop into a set pattern. His fort remained exploration of the deeper emotive states and consciousness in the entire range of his dramatic art. Some of the early plays staged during 1916-1924, however bring forth some black characters playing secondary roles. Only *Gods Chillum* and *The Emperor Jones* are acclaimed as substantial contributions to this explosive issue and giving prominent representation to black on the stage. But the treatment of the black in his art is not free from controversies. General consensus on O'Neill's treatment of racial issue is that he mostly followed stereotypical impression of the black and white on the stage. Shaughnessy (1984) contends that a consistent "racial bias" continued to plague O'Neill till the end. Bogard highlights the similar stance in O'Neill plays concerning black themes. O'Neil writes Bogard (1988) projected a stereotypical image of black people in his plays as *Emperor Jones*. Orr (1981), agrees with the stereotypical projection of black image in O'Neill's drama, but adds, "While O'Neill never challenged these myths didactically in his works, at a deeper artistic level his tragic vision constantly undermines them. Holton (1995) on the other hand contends that O'Neill's "attempt at interpreting black life between 1918 and 1923 were both stereotypic reflections of then prevailing superior attitude towards black people in general, and also subtle, complex investigations that revealed a possibility for deeper cultural understanding". Following stereotypical image of the black in The US cultural history, O'Neill dramatized during the year 1913 to 1939 black character performance. It included sixteen black characters six male and ten female. The majority of such performances were staged between 1916 and 1924. Thirst, one act play in 1916 offered his first black male cannibalistic. Then he dramatized four West Indian Female Blacks in *Moon of the Carribies*. They are, however, minor characters, and serve as pleasure objects for the crew of the ship. They participate in the plot development through their free sex and liquor provision role for the multi-ethnic, white party. The play, however, does reflect ideas that suggest O'Neill's awareness of the social climate of the West Indies; and, "with particular attention to dialogue and mood, he explores varying racist attitudes articulated by members of the crew through their apprehension of black cannibalism before the women arrive, and through the crew's interactions with the women while on the ship" (Holton, 1995). In 1919, O'Neill produced first black drama *The Dreamy Kid* with urban setting of New York City. It was an all-black cast and was opened in the midst of nationwide racial chaos (Holton, 1995). It is again conventional play with specific focus on the racial issue in the American culture. Its stereotypical nature is

apparent in its dramatization of a young mulatto gangster who faces definite death at the hands of the prejudiced white racist police for slaying somebody in self-defense (Holton, 1995).

The study however, concentrates on the particular impact of racial belongingness on behavior which is regressive and leads to mental illness/madness. *All God's Chillum Got Wings*, a play of middle phase is concerned with inter racial marriage and resultant social and individual problems. The play's intention writes O'Neill is "confined to portraying special lives of individual human beings . . . and their tragic struggle for happiness. To dedicate any general application from *God's Chillum* except in a deep spiritual sense is to read a meaning into my play, which is not there" (Arthur et al., 1962). There are however strong voices like that of Bogard and Bigsby who have underscored a stereotypical treatment of racial issues in the play. Individually the main characters in the play are directly related to the thematic and plot development drift towards mental illness that is unusual for its intensity and rapidity.

O'Neill understanding of deep rooted racial factor in the culture goes to the very basics in this play. Skin color and not the personal name for instance is used to open the play. As the play opens, a group of boys and girls, named as white and black are engaged in casual talk. Early in the play, contrasts between black and white are made with expressionistic relentlessness. O'Neill says in his stage directions, which in *All God's Chillum* have their own narrative impact:

People pass, black and white, the Negroes frankly participants in the spirit of spring, the whites laughing constrainedly, awkward in natural emotion. Their words are lost. One hears only their laughter. It expresses the difference in race (pp: 301)¹.

Social segregation along body color line is further strengthened through the description of the street of the white, and street of the black and of the church in stage directions:

As if it were a signal, people-men, women, children - pour from the two tenements, white from the tenement to the left, black from one to the right. They hurry to form into two racial lines each side of the gate, rigid and unyielding, starting across at each other with bitter hostile eyes (pp: 302).

Contrasting music in these diverse streets reinforces the split. The world of Jim and Ella as children, where he is called "Jim Crow" and she "Painty face" (pp: 302) to indicate her rosy complexion, is a relative Eden for them racially. However, it is white Ella-Black Jim marriage that reinforces culturally conditioned mental illness and

regression towards ultimate abnormality at least of white Ella. It has some romantic beginning, he talking of drinking chalk water to become white, she wanting to be black as he is. But both carry a deep seated consciousness of their racial differences manifested in their color. During their teenage life, Ella, then the girlfriend of white Mickey takes no interest in Jim. In response to Jim's offer of help, she says, "You're certainly forgetting your place!" (All Gods Chillum Got Wings, pp: 310). However, after Mickey abandons her and having had a child who died of diphtheria, she starts to see Jim again, calling him the "only white man in the world!" (All Gods Chillum Got Wings, pp: 314). His kindness to her throughout the difficult period makes her accept his offer of marriage. They marry and go to France in hope of a better life. But they fail to elude the terrible racial heritage. A perfect but painful impact of the racial differences could be seen in their post marital life in France. Apparently they have moved away from cultural of racial discrimination and hatred in the native country, but the typical mindset developed there fails to leave them in a new environment. Their marriage seems to have not taken at all as both behave abnormally in establishing routine married relationship. Ella in particular shows least inclination for sexual relation with Jim as her husband. Therefore they live out their relationship more as brother and sister (pp: 325) than husband and wife. This pattern keeps their polarization in abeyance as long as they are in France. In fact mental regression continues to worsen in Ella case in particular as her mental condition starts to show downward trend, they return to face what they had tried to flee. At this point, the Congo mask is introduced into the play. Jim's sister, Hattie, who gave it to him as a wedding gift, describes it as: a mask which is used to be worn in religious ceremonies by my people in Africa. But, aside from that, it's beautifully made work of Art by a real artist-as real in his way as your Michael Angelo in the apartment where Jim and Ella join Hattie and Mrs. Harris, the mask has what O'Neill calls "a diabolical quality that contrast imposes upon it" (All Gods Chillum Got Wings, pp: 328). Bogard (1988) feels that the mask was "introduced into the play somewhat arbitrarily" and never fully integrated dramatically, but it helps O'Neill to define further the conceptual position of racism in the drama. From this point forward, intensity builds to its ultimate conclusion where both Ella and Jim are reduced to madness and insanity. Jim's effort continues to be focused on trying to rise, to pass the bar exam and become a lawyer. But he continues to face the torture of being black, and continues to dramatize very effectively the subtle racism he confronts. Of the reaction of his white classmates to his uncertain answers to questions, Jim says, "They don't laugh, hardly ever. They're kind. They're good people. ... They're considerate, damn them! But I feel branded!" At home Ella continues her fragmentation and regression. At times, she urges Jim forward. She says

at one point, "I want you to climb and climb" (All Gods Chillum Got Wings, pp: 329). While in one of her mad moments, she addresses the Congo mask that, for her, embodies Jim's blackness, saying, "How dare you grin at me? I guess you forget what you are! (That's always the way. Be kind to you, treat you decent, and in a second you've got a swelled head, you think you're somebody, you're all over the place putting on airs..". She also "confesses, I wouldn't let you sleep. I couldn't let you. I kept thinking if he sleeps good then he'll be sure to study good and then he'll pass-and the devil'll win! and Jim responds, "Honey, Honey, I'll play right up to the gates of heaven with you!" (Gods Chillum Got Wings, pp: 315). Then irritated by his blackness, and desire to succeed, she even tries to kill him with a knife. Jim on his part continues to be fully supportive of her in her mental illness; he even refuses to send her to an asylum certain, as he tells Hattie, that Ella's racism is "Deep down in her people-not deep in her" (All Gods Chillum Got Wings, pp: 328). Ella, when she learns that Jim has not passed his exam, stabs the Congo mask in a manner that is clearly reflective of her frenzied deterioration. She is ecstatic, insisting that "The devil's dead. Jim has to reject his dreams in favor of returning to childhood state. His failure to establish himself as white by graduating as lawyer can save her because it reasserts the constancy of the isolated world and reassures her sense of inherent pride in being white.

This outline of the main plot is a reflection of such psychic strains as fragmentation and gradual but definite progression towards madness. The grim human predicament in which Jim and Ella find themselves is here largely determined by the terrible cultural forces that obstruct normal growth of human relation and play havoc with human mental potentials and strength. Bernstein (2006) has analyzed the regressive behavior in terms of fragmentation in personality and conduct. Nowhere, writers Bernstein (2006) is fragmentation more evident than in the behavior of Ella. She oscillates between strong love and tempestuous hatred foe Jim. She has love for Jim, but she hates him too for he is black, and her marriage with him undermines her superiority complex. She desires that he should clear the law exam, but fears his passing as well as his success might make him leave her and, even generate superiority sense in him. She desires and even tries to murder him in Act II scene ii. The conflict makes her ignore the fact that she is absolutely dependant on him and married him for she wished him to care for and protect her. She loves him that is so definite in the play, but will not have child through him on the fear of begetting a black child. Her regression is rapid and consistent and at the play's end, she wishes to play with him as a child partner, or he to play the role of "old Uncle Jim" (pp: 337), i.e., her servant, so that she can maintain her social superiority. Jim too shows his regression, ambivalence and fragmentation. He wants to

be Ella's man, her caretaker and protector, yet also wants to be her servant. He wants her for sexual gratification, yet is ready to be with her as a brother and sister. Further he wishes to pass his law exam and prove himself as competent and efficient as the whites, yet has no hesitation in accepting his final failure in the exam, just because it will keep him at par with her. The fragmentation does not end up here as he even shows his willingness to commit suicide, if that would please Ella and give her health and longer life' but he wouldn't die because she would have to live her life without his support in this predicament. Clearly the dominant motif in the play is to show the deep split in the personalities of the both characters as the type of the problem that they are facing is beyond their control to accommodate normally in their lives. This fragmentation even threatens to shatter the remnants of sanity as the play moves towards its end. She receives the news of his failure in the exam in a frenzied state and slides into a psychotic childhood as the curtain are drawn. Jim as the doctor thinks also slides towards collapse and illness. Ella's behavior and his perpetual and frustrating efforts to have a law degree is made even more stressful as he links success in exam with white culture. This is sufficient to unnerve him terribly. His failure, therefore, and Ella's insanity, places him in a pressing psychological state (Bernstein, 2006). His regression and collapse is reflected in his frenzy outburst that shows Jim almost on the verge of madness:

Pass? Pass? [. . .] Good Lord, child, how come you can ever imagine such a crazy idea? Pass? Me? Jim CrowHarris? Nigger Jim Harris become a full-fledged member of the bar! Why, the mere notion of it is enough to kill you with laughing! It'd be against all natural laws, all human right and justice. It'd be miraculous, there'd be earthquakes and catastrophies, the Seven Plagues'd come again and locusts'd devour all the money in the banks, the second Flood'd come roaring and Noah's fall overboard, the sun'd drop out of the sky like a ripe fig, and the Devil'd perform miracles and God'd be tipped head first right out of the Judgment seat! (He laughs, maudlinly uproarious (pp: 339).

The behavioral regression as determined by racial factor in the play not only creates crises and severe maladjustment in the personal life of Ella and Jim, but equally leaves them in capable of fostering meaningful social bonds as well. Jim's frustration and subsequent self hatred on the the prospects of passing the exam leavaes him in a situation where it would not be possible for him to a healthy member of the soociety and play a meanignngful aprt in its natural development.

The Emperor Jones, the expressionist classic was the first play that won real first real recognition to the province town players from Broadway audiences. The

production in view of immense popularity was kept on for amazing 204 performances. For the black it was a great feast as prior to this no black person had ever played a key role in the American theatre. Charles Gilpin, the black community's very best actor was chosen to play the lead role, and its immediate success made the managers move it from the Players' theatre in the Village to Broadway. It was also hailed by the black intelligentsia, and had a tremendous impact on the Harlem Renaissance and on the black man image on the broader social level. The play as black narrative has attracted diverse responses from the critics. Colakis (1990) reads the play as a Seneca tragedy. Poole (1994) refers the play in terms of black and white discourses associated with the native and the western civilization respectively. He goes on to analyze these discourses and extends the play as an encounter between Modernism and African Culture". Abdo (2000) disagreeing with the social nature of the play and its protagonist, strongly stresses the individuality of Jones, who denies his racial and cultural heritage and who attempts to better himself and successfully make his mark on the world, and his struggle is against the demands of collective African experience imposed upon him and ultimately struggles to retain his selfhood as an individual. She disagrees with Poole analysis of the play as a representative of black discourse as it still place Jones "outside the discourse of white civilization". Floyd (1985) argues that the play is a milestone in its portrayal of white persecution, a landmark drama, not only in conception but also in production. Some critics, like Bogard (1988) on the other hand, while acknowledging the richness O'Neill imparted to his black characters, feel that the playwright fell prey to white prejudice. He believes that the character of Jones is by present-day standpoint an improper typecast of the Negro in terms of a crap-shooting, razor-cutting Pullman porter. "The fact that Jones was the first important role written for a Negro actor does not redeem the play; such theatrical excitement only serves to disguise the essential racism of a play which can no longer command respectful attention" Pfister (1966) similarly contends that although progressive and sympathetic to the plight of African-Americans, O'Neill's depiction of blacks merely mirrors the stereotypes found in the American history of racist iconography stereotypes easily accessible to O'Neill because they inhabit the cultural swamp of his literary imagination .

There is no doubt that the play does address the racial factor in terms of stereotypical nature of both black and white. For instance Jones' capability to establish his control on the islanders in West Indies after escaping from the United States where he was guilty of committing two murders substantiate stereotypical impression of black being ignorant, superstitious and culpable to control and exploitation even at the hand of one among themselves. He has also exploited their low

intellectual/superstitious nature that he is only vulnerable to silver bullet, and nothing can harm him. Then in the first encounter between Jones and Smithers, the play confirms the same stereotypical characteristics of both black and white. Jones appears substantially ridiculous in his false sense of stable authority and control on the islanders. He is utterly ignorant of a serious uprising against his authority among the islanders. Smithers' announcement to this effect surprises him. Equally ridiculous seems his manner of calling his guards, "He reaches below the throne and pulls out a big, common dinner bell which is painted the same vivid scarlet as the throne. He rings it vigorously then stops to listen. Then he goes to both doors, rings again, and looks out" (pp: 182)². Smithers own sense of superiority over the black Jones and the native islanders on the other hand establish negative psychic impact of belonging to a particular class and race. For instance, Smithers in the first scene expresses doubt about Jones's claim that he killed a white man before coming to the island: "from what I've 'eard, it ain't 'ealthy for a black to kill a white man in the States. They burn 'em in oil, don't they?" (pp: 181). Smithers himself represents racist attitudes that were there in O'Neill's society. Sporadic reference to Jones as a hateful black is made obvious through O'Neill's own words. O'Neill definitely qualifies him with some affirmative qualities. But he clearly excludes either Jones's black identity or his "typically Negroid" features from these affirmative features. On the contrary black is absolutely loathed and derided in the characterization of the protagonists of the play. Smithers, for instance addresses the old native woman as "yer black cow", and Lem, the native chief, is "a heavy-set, ape-faced old savage of the extreme African type," "dressed only in a loin cloth". Even when Jones is described as having "strength of will," "a hardy, self-reliant confidence in himself that inspires respect," and "eyes alive with a keen, cunning intelligence," his patronizing manner is noticeably underscored in "not altogether," yet certainly "ridiculous" (Carne, 2005).

Jones' flight into the dark forest to die in misery symbolically represents the personality crises that the blacks in racially biased the US culture of 1920s suffered. Jones flight anticipates Joe's flight for life in Faulkner's *Light in August*, which is one very strong case for the personality crises due to fear and impending death in a racially prejudiced American South. O'Neill uses expressionist technique to unearth the deep inner self and juxtaposes it with auditory beat of the drum. At deeper level, Jones is conscious of his racial background and the loud beat of the drum reinforce he fearful and persecuting racial forces that are after him. His flight in this context is not a heroic adventure or struggle to save life from the threatening forces. It reveals the terrible personality crises and sharp and clear regression that continues till he meets

his natural end in this situation. The fear and death follows him in his blood and he could feel its presence near through the regular beat of the drum. O'Neill artistically matches the rhythm of the drum beat with the increasing possibility of Jones psychological collapse and death. The terrible flight from impending death starts with his sharing of plan of escape as Smithers informs him that the natives have begun a dance of rebellion to prepare them for killing the emperor. Smithers tries to instill fear in Jones by referring to the natives' intention to send ghosts after him into the dark forest. At the moment Jones is firmly placed in his confidence and retorts by saying that he's not afraid of ghosts and that by nightfall he will be out of the reach of the natives. The flight starts causally through the forest at 3:30 in the afternoon. Tom-tom of the drum has already started as he was talking to Smithers. The beat of the drum is characteristic of increase in his pulse rate. It begins at a normal pulse beat-72 to the minute and gradually accelerates from this point to the very end of the play. When the beat is first heard, Jones "starts at the sound," and "a strange look of apprehension creeps into his face for a moment as he listens." Then he asks, "with an attempt to regain his most casual manner: What's dat drum beatin' fo'?" He is "a tiny bit awed and shaken in spite of himself", the real test of endurance starts at the forest. Here he undergoes the terrible disintegration in his mind as well as body. His mental disintegration can be examined through his fears in the forms of hallucinations that occur with rapidity and force, while the physical disintegration starts with his inability to find food that could sustain him in the ordeal. Furthermore his gradual discarding of the torn and tattered uniform, stifling heat in the day, physical exhaustion, inability to rest for the reappearance of ghosts and hallucination and the increased beat of the drum accentuate the typical psychic disintegration that would only lead to his death, that is inevitable and too obviously anticipated by the extreme characterization of the protagonist" (Carne, 2005). The death is explained as self immolation:

Brutus Jones dies because he has been unable to recognize and, consequently, reconcile both his communal and personal past with their present manifestations. Every time Jones shot a figure of his hallucinations, he killed a part of himself and therefore, by shooting the crocodile with the silver bullet reserved for him, he performs a ritual of self immolation as demanded by his rejection of his true image and history (Carne, 2005).

CONCLUSION

The analysis above links specific behavioral pattern with broader cultural determinants of behavioral pattern

and personality development like racism. The impact of the factor on the personalities in the play is substantially regressive and in *God Chillun* in particular, the characters regress into factual madness. The psychic disintegration in *The Emperor Jones* has been subtly executed through expressionistic technique and effective imagery. But it equally reflects the personality crises of a black in the backdrop of racial issue and culture. However, far from treating these as stereotypical projections, the particular behavioral pattern in these plays needs to be placed in the overall context of his art. O'Neill is characteristically inclined to dramatize acute emotive and psychic states with unparalleled persistency that could be found in the entire range of his art. In early sea play, O'Neill has dramatized low human conditions in terms of the quality of life and its outcome. The crews of the ships are predominantly inclined to violence, drink and prostitution in an apparent move to live out their existence. In *Desire* *Strange Interlude* and *Mourning Becomes Electra* Life is a sexual hell with pronounced emotive and psychic collapse of the principal characters (Karim, 2010). In *Long Day's journey* and *A Touch of Poet* the psychic collapse is treated through subtle juxtaposition of Freudian Oedipal myth with Moortondomestic/familial conflicts (Bogard, 1988; Floyd, 1985; Moorton, 1991). In *Iceman Cometh* several deranged are seen living out their existence in illusion and "pipe dream" (Bigsby, 1982; Berlin, 1988; Carpenter, 1979). Here in plays like *Chillum*, the personality crises spring from a particular cultural factor, but in terms of intensity and regression it equals the other plays and connects the wide range of his plays in uniform thread.

REFERENCES

- Abdo, D.M., 2000. *The Emperor Jones: A struggle for individuality in Mourning in The Eugene O'Neill. Review Edn., Fredrick Wilkins, 24(1-2).*
- Alexander, D.M., 1993. *Strange Interlude and Schopenhauer in Houchin, John H. the Critical response to Eugene O'Neill, Greenwood, London, pp: 105-117.*
- Alexander, D.M., 1954. *O'Neill as a social critic, Amer. Quart., 6(4): 349-363.*
- Andrews, K.M., 1993. *White women's complicity and the taboo: Faulkner's layered critique of the 'miscegenation complex. Women's Stud., 22(4): 497.*
- Austin, A., 1988. *The Present State of Black Theatre. TDR, 32(3): 85-100.*
- Arthur, Barbara and Gelb, 1962. *O'Neill. 1st Edn., Jonathon Cape, London.*
- Beard, D.M.T., 2005. *American Experimentalism, American Expressionism, and Early O'Neill" in a Companion to Twentieth Century American Drama. David Krasner, (Ed.), Blackwell, Oxford, pp: 58.*
- Berlin, N., 1982. *Eugene O'Neill. Macmillan, London.*
- Bernstein, S.J. 2006. *Making It, Madness, and Motherhood: The Deep Structure of All God's Chillun Got Wings in Eugene O'Neill Review, Zander B. (Ed.), Vol. 28.*
- Bigsby, C.W.E., 1982. *A Critical Introduction to American Drama. Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, London.*
- Bogard, T., 1988. *Contour in Time: The Plays of Eugene O'Neill. Oxford University Press, New York.*
- Blackburn, C., 1941. *Continental Influences on Eugene O'Neill's Expressionistic Drama. Am. Lit., 13(2): 109-133.*
- Bloom, H., 1987. *Introduction, Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey into Night: Modern Critical Views. Chelsea, New York.*
- Bower, M.G., 2003. *Color Struck" Under the Gaze: Ethnicity and Pathology of Being in the Plays of Johnson, Hurston, Childress, Hansbury and Kennedy. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.*
- Carpenter, F., 1979. *I. Eugene O'Neill. Twayne, Boston.*
- Colakis, M., 1990. *Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones as Senecan Tragedy in Classical and Modern Literature: A Quarterly, pp: 153-159.*
- Cannon, E.M., 1997. *Following the traces of female desire in toni morrison's jazz. Afr. Amer. Rev., 31(2): 235-247.*
- Carme, M., 2005. *Ghost in the Expressionist Jungle of O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones". Afr. Amer. Rev., 39(1/2): 67-85.*
- Colakis, M., 1990. *Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones as Senecan Tragedy. Classical and Modern Literature: A Quarterly, pp: 153-159.*
- Curb, R., 1980. *An Unfashionable Tragedy of American Racism: Alice Childress's Wedding Band. MELUS, 7(4): 57-68.*
- Curran, R.T., 1975. *Insular Typees: Puritanism and Primitivism in Mourning Becomes Electra. Drama for Students Edn., Ira Mark Milne, Detroit: Gale, 9: 371-377.*
- Duvall, J.N., 1987. *Murder and the Communities: Ideology in and around Light in August in August in William Faulkner's Light. Bloom, H. (Ed.), Chelsea, New York, pp: 135-159.*
- Floyd, V., 1985. *The Plays Of Eugene O'Neill: A new Assessment. Fredrick Unger, New York.*
- Gorely, J., 1997. *Emerson's Theory of Poetry. Rpt. in Poetry Criticism. In: Carol, T.G. (Ed.), Vol. 18, Detroit: Gale Research, 1931, Literature Resource Center. Gale. University of Maryland Baltimore County, pp: 263-273. Retrieved from: <http://go.galegroup.com.proxy-bc.researchport.umd.edu/ps/start>.*
- Hartman, M., 1966. *Strindberg and O'Neill in educational. Theater J., 18(3): 216-233.*

- Holton, D.W., 1995. Black Women in the Review. Revealing Blindness, Revealing Vision: Interpreting O'Neill's Black Female Characters in *Moon of the Caribbees*. In: Frederick, W. (Ed.), *The Dreamy Kid and All God's Chillun Got Wings*, 19(1-2).
- Hinden, M., 1993. The Birth of Tragedy and Great God Brown in Houchin. In: John, H. (Ed.), *The Critical Response to Eugene O'Neill*, Greenwood, London, pp: 88-99.
- Kartiganer, D.M., 1987. The Meaning of Form in *Light in August*. In: Bloom, H. (Ed.), *William Faulkner's Light in August*. Chelsea, New York, pp: 9-41.
- Krasner, D., 2001. Migration, fragmentation, and identity: Zora Neale Hurston's "color struck" and the geography of the harlem renaissance. *Theatre J.*, 53(4): 533-550.
- Karim, A., 2010. O'Neill's concern with sexuality and behavioral disorders. *Stud. Language Lit.*, 1(1): 38-49.
- Levin, E.M., 1996. Postmodern Consideration of Nietzschean Perspectivism in Selected Works of Eugene O'Neill, Retrieved from: <http://e.oneill.com/library/Dissertations>.
- Long, R., 1987. A. The Outer Reaches: The White Writer and Blacks in the Twenties. In: Victor A.K. (Ed.), *The Harlem Renaissance Re-examined*, AMS, New York, pp: 43-50.
- Martin, L.W., 2001. Review: Race and Class in Faulkner, Reviewed work: *Natural Aristocracy: History, Ideology, and the Production of William Faulkner* by Kevin Railey.
- Okur, N.A., 1993. Afrocentricity as a generative idea in the study of African American drama. *J. Black Stud.*, 24(1): 88-108.
- O'Neill, E., 1982. *The Emperor Jones* in Eugene O'Neill: *The Plays*. Vol. 1, Modern Library Edition.
- O'Neill, E., 1982. *All God Chillun Got Wings* in Eugene O'Neill: *The Plays*. Vol. 2, Modern Library Edition.
- Orr, J., 1981. *Tragic Drama and Modern Society: Studies in the Social and Literary Theory of Drama From 1870 to the Present*. Macmillan, London.
- Pfister, J., 1966. Staging depth: Eugene O'Neill the politics of psychological discourse. *Theatre J.*, 48(1): 113-115.
- Poole, G., 1994. Blarsted Niggers: The EJ and modernism's encounter with Africa. *The E O'Neill Review*, 18(1-2).
- Sadoff, D.F., 1985. Black matrilineage: The case of Alice walker and Zora Neale Hurston. *Signs*, 11(1): 4-26.
- Shaughnessy, E.L., 1984. Eugene O'Neill: The development of Negro Portraiture. *MELUS*, 11(3): 67-91. Retrieved from: <http://www.Jstor.org/stable/467136>.
- Snead, J.A., 1987. Figures of Division: *Light in August* in William Faulkner's *Light*. In: Bloom, H. (Ed.), Chelsea, New York, pp: 117-135.
- Sundquist, E.J., 1987. The Strange Career of Joe Christmas. In: Bloom, H. (Ed.), *William Faulkner's Light In August*. Chelsea, New York, pp: 75-115.
- Templeton, A., 1990. 'Miss Julie' as a 'Naturalistic tragedy'. *Theatre J.*, 42(4): 468-480.
- Towner, T.M., 2002. Faulkner on the color line: The later novels. *Southern Lit. J.*, 34(2): 148-152.
- Wyatt, D., 2010. Bloom, Freud, and 'America'. *The Kenyon Review*. (1984), 64 Rpt. In: Deborah, A.S. (Ed.), *Contemporary Literary Criticism*. Vol. 103. Detroit: Gale Research, 1998. Literature Resource Center. Gale. University of Maryland Baltimore County. Retrieved from: <http://go.galegroup.com.proxy>, (Accessed on: 3 January, 2010).

End note:

- 1 O'Neill, E., 1982. *All God Chillun Got Wings* in Eugene O'Neill: *The Plays*. Vol 2, Modern Library Edition.
- 2 O'Neill, E., 1982, *The Emperor Jones* in Eugene O'Neill: *The Plays*, Vol. I, Modern Library Edition.