

# The Subaltern Treatment of the Characters of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Lonely Londoners*

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## **Abstract**

The legacy of racism, and particularly slavery, has been present in the West since the advent of mass colonialism. Slaves were subjugated, marginalised, and dehumanised throughout the era of the slave trade. This article will analyse the legacy of the slave trade, especially as it is depicted in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*. These novels provide insight into slavery in the United States of America and the United Kingdom respectively. This research will consider the role of the subaltern in the select texts and provide textual analysis to explore the miserable conditions of slaves. It will give some contributions to future researchers to know the perspectives of the select authors about the slaves during colonialism.

**Keywords:** Slavery, Subaltern, Suppression, Colonialism, Postcolonial Literature.

## **Introduction**

The phenomenon of slavery, race, and racism had been common in the West during colonialism. The slaves were treated badly; moreover, they were oppressed and subjugated by their respective traders and owners. They did not have any voice, say, or rights. They were subjugated, marginalised, dehumanized, and victimized in Western countries. The West had been practicing racial discrimination against the migrants who had immigrated from the Third World to their countries. The problem of displacement was not only in England but also in other European countries; however, this immigration increased the slavery system in Western countries. The Blacks of the African countries migrated to the west and worked as laborers there. The West started trading the Black slaves. Subsequently, the slave trade became common in America during the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries. It became prevalent, particularly in Britain, and then spread across America. Slaves were being brought from African and Caribbean countries and sold in England and America. In America, the population of Blacks increased which led the racial discrimination against them. The White people discriminated against them based on their colour and ethnicity. "Mostly, racial discrimination is shown by the White people's acts. The Negro is commonly getting racial discrimination from White people. White people are commonly bullying and humiliating Black people."<sup>1</sup> They were deprived of their right to work. Blacks were being kept as slaves in the families of the White people. The slavery system became widespread there. The slaves were being sold and brought according to the convenience of the owners.

Black literature and the literature about slavery depict the conditions of Blacks during colonialism. Blacks have mentioned their horrible experiences of slavery and suppression in short stories and pamphlets which became the source of Black and slave narratives, which they wrote without the consent of their owners. It illustrates the treatment which was being met by the Black people. Colour and racial discrimination were not only prevalent in European countries but also in the Third World where the Whites lived as a colonial power. Black literature depicts the plight of the Blacks and slaves in the West: "One important trend is a revival of interest in African-American, as opposed to African, folk stories. African Folktales have been available in collections and single-story picture book format for several years but until recently African-American stories have not been so easily found."<sup>2</sup> Afro-American literature is dedicated to the Black people and the slaves. Moreover, the Harlem renaissance came into existence to raise the issues of Blacks and slaves in America in particular and the other parts of the world in general.

The conditions of Blacks and immigrants in England were similar to the conditions of the slaves in America. "British settlers and policy makers were responding to prior contact with other racial groups, be they Irish, Jamaican, San or Aboriginal Australian. Ideas of difference originated in the

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Jibril Mabarroq, 'An Analysis of Racial Discrimination Towards Uncle Tom in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Novel' (Undergraduate Thesis, Uin Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2020), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rudine Sims Bishop, 'Walk Tall in the World: African American Literature for Today's Children', *The Journal of Negro Education*, vol. 59, no. 4 (1990), pp. 556-565.

colonies, before being formalized at home, where they were disseminated, and taken again to the colonies.”<sup>3</sup> Samuel Selvon has described the conditions of the Black migrants in England who migrated from the Caribbean countries to England for better possibilities. Likewise, Harriet Beecher Stowe depicted the conditions of the slaves in America through her novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

Stowe is, therefore, an anti-slavery activist and pro-feminist woman who makes people reflect on the topic of slavery and the horrible situation that black people were going through in America. Nevertheless, the novel was criticized by pro-slave society that supported slavery and slave trade.<sup>4</sup>

This article analyses the slave trade in the colonial world and focuses specifically on the conditions of slaves in England and America. It explores the predicament of slaves in the context of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Samuel Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners*. Samuel Selvon was a postcolonial writer who wrote about the migration and the conditions of Blacks in the Caribbean. Likewise, Harriet Beecher Stowe was an American novelist; slavery is also one of the subjects of her novels. Both novelists have depicted the conditions of slaves in colonized countries. This research aims to apply the theory of subalternism in the select texts and accomplish textual analysis to explore the miserable conditions of slaves in Western countries.

A previous study which had been conducted on the select texts is a separate study on each text; each text has been studied separately but these texts have not been compared so far. Moreover, the study of Blacks and slaves which had been accomplished is not based on the perspectives of these two writers. These two writers’ perspectives have not been compared, analysed, and understood in previous studies and research. Furthermore, the racism and colour discrimination faced by the immigrants from Caribbean and African countries have not been compared so far. The researchers have focused on Afro-American literature when it comes to Black literature and slavery. Slavery in the Caribbean and England has to be compared with slavery in America. Being a postcolonial writer, Samuel Selvon has depicted the plight of migrants and the deplorable conditions of the colonized through his works. His themes consist of Black literature, slavery, and

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<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Miller, ‘Louisa Meredith’s Idea of Home: Imagined Identity in Colonial Travel Writing’, *Literature & Aesthetics*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2014), pp. 63-82.

<sup>4</sup> Estefanía Ons Paz, ‘The moral value of slavery as represented in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*’ (Bachelor of Arts Thesis, Gothenburg University, 2014), pp. 4.

postcoloniality. His works have been studied from the perspectives of Black literature, slavery, and post-colonialism. However, his perspective seems to be akin to Harriet Beecher Stowe's where subaltern theory is applicable. These works have not been compared so far.

'Subaltern theory' was propounded by Antonio Gramsci and developed by Ranjit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Spivak proposes the use of "strategic essentialism" which was meant to enrich women to fight for their rights on a political platform. Spivak opines that there is no voice for the subaltern. The subaltern is the most oppressed community. This theory is applicable in select texts. Discrimination, exploitation, exclusion, harassment, abuse, and violence against the downtrodden are matters of general concern and leads slaves to be subalterns.

We know, slavery has existed for a long time ago. It happened not only in America but also in other countries. Slavery is a system under which people are treated as property to be bought and sold and forced to work. Slavery in America began when the first African slaves were brought to the North American colony of Jamestown, Virginia, to aid in the production of lucrative crops. Slavery was practiced throughout the American colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries, and African-American slaves helped build the economic foundations of the nation. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 solidified the central importance of slavery to the South's economy. Cotton is important.<sup>5</sup>

### **Slavery in the Caribbean**

During colonialism, the slavery system was at its peak in the West. The British established factories and industries in the Caribbean. Subsequently, most of the plantation owners were the British who used to live there. "Through whippings and lynching, slave owners lived out disastrous catastrophes on the plantations."<sup>6</sup>There was a demand for laborers and slaves, which led to the slave trade from Africa. Many slaves were imported into the Caribbean. The import and export of the slaves increased in the mid-seventeenth century. The plantation owners would make the slaves do the tedious work, and "normally punishments were used to force them to work, but the lash was also employed for a range of offenses or even in an offhand fashion, by the white men and women to whom brutality was a way of life."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Zarlina, 'An Analysis of Slavery and Its Impact Towards Black People in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*' (Undergraduate Thesis, University of Sumatera, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> Poonam Punia, 'Treatment of the Pastoral in Selected Afro-American Narratives' (Undergraduate Thesis, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Punia, 'Treatment of the Pastoral in Selected Afro-American Narratives', p. 47.

The British ruled the Caribbean; the people of the Caribbean, specifically the people of Trinidad and Jamaica migrated to England for a better future and prospects. They believed that they would lead luxurious lives and would have all the facilities of modern life in Britain. Ironically, it was the land of discrimination, where they had to work there as virtual slaves later. Jamaicans thought that they would find better jobs and living facilities in England as compared to their native countries. In England, the immigrants felt isolation, dislocation, and desolation. They faced cultural dislocation and crises. In the Caribbean “most slaves lived on large farms or small plantations.”<sup>8</sup> The natives of England kept the immigrants as their slaves, though they were not technically unfree. Immigrants were being treated as slaves and were not given equal rights. In slave-holding societies, Whites sold and bought the slaves according to their wishes. “Slaves are separated from their families. Slaves aren’t allowed to speak in their native languages, and it doesn’t allow them to effectively communicate.”<sup>9</sup>

In the novel, *The Lonely Londoners*, it is evident the people from Jamaica migrated to Britain to get jobs and modern comforts, but the consequences had been different, “in that his work largely disregards the impact male desire would have on women and on other ‘subaltern’ subjects.”<sup>10</sup> In the novel, the problems and predicament which were faced by the migrants have been highlighted. “The novel *The Lonely Londoners* is a collection of fragmented vignettes, collectively describing the experiences of a group of West Indian migrants in London in the 1950s. There is no protagonist per se, but there are several characters that play main roles.”<sup>11</sup> It is also evidenced from this novel that the migrants had been treated as subalterns who had no voice and say, whose voices were suppressed and unheard. “As a result, West Indians and other colonials who chose to migrate to England under the auspices of the Nationality Act found that the formal equality of subjecthood promised by the Act did not translate into real social

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<sup>8</sup> Zarlina, ‘An Analysis of Slavery and Its Impact Towards Black People in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*’, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Zarlina, ‘An Analysis of Slavery and Its Impact Towards Black People in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*’, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> Lisa M. Kabesh, ‘Mapping Freedom, or Its Limits: The Politics of Movement in Sam Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners*’, *Postcolonial Text*, vol. 6, no. 3 (2011), p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Sofia Backlund, ‘Hybrid Identities in *The Lonely Londoners* by Samuel Selvon’ (Undergraduate Thesis, Karlstad University, 2022), p. 9.

or material equity.”<sup>12</sup> Samuel Selvon has mentioned that the people who migrated to England for a better future and better facilities faced lots of problems there. They became the subject of exploitation and subjugation. In this novel, the despicable conditions of the slaves and migrants have been described. In the Caribbean, the sugar plantations created a great need for workers. The planters and the owners of industries turned to buying and enslaving men and women. They bought them from Africa, Jamaica, and other countries. The British bought many slaves as the British were the owner of the major industries in the Caribbean and England. Their harsh and inhumane treatment was justified by the idea that they were part of an inferior ‘race’. Indeed, complicated ways of categorizing race emerged in the Caribbean colonies that placed ‘White’ people at the top, ‘Black’ people at the bottom, and different ‘mixed’ groups in between. Invented by White people, this hierarchy was an attempt to excuse the brutality of slavery.

The people of Jamaica and Trinidad had been called Creole because their language had been a mixture of many languages. This culture was not their original culture nor were they able to adapt to the foreign culture. The cultural crises had been the biggest problem among the creoles. “From the perspective of politics, the Creole immigrants experienced: the “blank period,” the stage of having no consciousness of politics; and the “primary stage,” the stage of organizing small-scale political activities.”<sup>13</sup>

In the novel, when Galahad also reaches England where Moses had been already living as an immigrant, Moses tells him, “Listen, you can stay here tonight - you will have to sleep on their chairs. But tomorrow, if the landlord doesn’t agree for you to have this room, you will have to find a place. And also you have to look for work. I not saying you is an ant, but it have enough ants already in London.”<sup>14</sup> The apprehension which Galahad has been going through at that time is the apprehension of every migrant who had migrated to England. The immigrants in England were forced to be servants of the landlords in England. They did not have any choice but to do so. Moses also feels a slave-like situation in Britain. As slaves had no identity, culture, or space in the West in the same way the characters of this

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<sup>12</sup> Kabesh, ‘Mapping Freedom, or Its Limits: The Politics of Movement in Sam Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners*’, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Tingxuan Liu, ‘Hybridization in Political Civilization in Samuel Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* and *Moses Ascending*’, *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, vol. 6, no 5 (2016), p. 1006.

<sup>14</sup> Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (London: Penguin, 1956), p. 12.

novel do not have their culture and identity. They are subject to marginalization, subjugation, and oppression. Their lives have been worsened in England as compared to their lives in Jamaica. The immigrants were considered criminals. They did not feel secure in England. Moses feels insecure and so does Galahad.

When he was able to look Galahad see a policeman near him. Again he panics, though he ain't do anything against the law. Still are so people do feel in Trinidad when police near them, as if, even though they ain't commit a crime, the police-man would find something wrong that they do and want to lock them up.<sup>15</sup>

In this novel, "The energy and optimism of the group are presented as great positives, and the figure of Galahad is a poignant reminder of something that is going out of the world."<sup>16</sup>

With the presentation of characters like Tolroy, Galahad, and Moses, Selvon has depicted how Black people were being treated badly in England. Slavery in America and the conditions of immigrants in England were similar. "In the novel Galahad reveals an identity crisis when he states that he is torn between a white mask and dark skin. From the state, there is some hope for Indians becoming truly modern and having a say in their destiny."<sup>17</sup> Besides Western powers and the colonizers, the colonized had also been somehow responsible for the deplorable conditions of the Blacks:

The majority of the Black people mainly because of the colonization factor already had that feeling of dominance in their mind, being psychologically influenced by the European, having the perspective that somehow these White skinned people are much better at dealing with life than other led to the belief that undermines one's own authority because of their own appearance.<sup>18</sup>

### **Slavery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin***

African-American literature has dived deep into slavery and Black immigration during the colonial era. Subsequently, the Harlem renaissance dealt with this issue, which became the lurking subject matter in those days

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<sup>15</sup> Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> K. Ramchand, 'Song of innocence, song of experience: Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* as a literary work', *World Literature Written in English*, vol. 21, no. 3 (1982), pp. 644-654.

<sup>17</sup> Saman Abdulqadir Hussein Dizayi, 'Immigrants Identity Crisis in *The Lonely Londoners*', *International Journal of Management & Social Sciences*, vol. 4, no 1 (2016), p. 186.

<sup>18</sup> Kawa Sherwani and Suman Dizayi, 'Resisting Dominant Culture in *The Lonely Londoners*: A Critical Discourse Analysis', *International Conference on Education, Social Sciences and Humanities* (2019), pp. 24-26.

among the post-colonial writers. This slavery system had been prevalent in America and many people migrated there during colonialism. Harriet Beecher Stowe was a great novelist who dealt with these slavery issues through her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin or Life Among the Lowly* (1851-1852). This novel deals with slavery in America. "The novel seeks to attack this law and create emancipation and freedom for all people. Stowe believes that blacks have sufficient innate ability to serve as equal citizens in a free society and make both equally suitable for freedom."<sup>19</sup> The characters of this novel represent all the slaves who lived in America. Stowe had lucidly portrayed the miserable conditions of the slaves in America. There have been many critics who criticized this novel; however, there are some who praised this novel for representing the reality of the slavery system. James Baldwin has bitterly criticized this novel in his book, *The Notes of a Native Son* (1955): "he asserts that Tom's character is deprived of his male identity which is indirectly a symbol of disrespect for the Black males."<sup>20</sup>

Writers and critics have criticized this novel for misrepresentation of the slavery of the Blacks. Those slaves had emigrated from Africa. "It is worth mentioning that Stowe's opportunistic representation of Blacks did not go unanswered as many writers of the period set out to parody Stowe and her Uncle Tom in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."<sup>21</sup> The harsh treatment which was being met by the slaves from their owners and traders has been manifested in this novel. "Today *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, though still controversial, is as central to the American literary canon as the works of the White males who dominated it for so long."<sup>22</sup> This novel became a bestseller because it touched on sensitive issues and was focused on Blacks and slaves. "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* describes slavery as frequently a brutal institution, in which slaves were whipped, beaten, abused, starved, worked to death,

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<sup>19</sup> Zarlina, 'An Analysis of Slavery and Its Impact towards Black People in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*', p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> Salma Javed, 'Racial Profiling and Sentimental Interiority in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Gone with The Wind* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*' (Doctoral Thesis, Aligarh Muslim University, 2020).

<sup>21</sup> Zohreh Ramin and Farshid Nowrouzi Roshnavand, 'Mimicry of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Formation of Resistant Slave Narrative in Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada*', *Journal of Language Studies*, vol. 17, no 4 (2017), p. 250.

<sup>22</sup> John Getz, Christiana Hartlieb, and Abigail Zhang, 'Visiting *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: University-Style Discussions in a Historic House Museum', *Journal of Museum Education*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2020), p. 26.



sexually violated, and even murdered.”<sup>23</sup>

The protagonist of this novel, Uncle Tom, becomes the subject of repression in this novel. He is a slave of Arthur Shelby, who treats him very well in the beginning but later thinks that he has to sell him because he falls into debt. Arthur Shelby wants to sell both Uncle Tom and Harry because he wants to emancipate himself from the debt into which he has fallen. In those days, the slaves had been the property of the people of America. They would sell and buy slaves according to their needs and convenience. “To mimic and parody Stowe’s generic and representational strategies, Reed got help from his native culture without which the process of postmodern, postcolonial appropriation would remain abortive.”<sup>24</sup>

Eliza is against the selling of her son, Harry; likewise, Master Shelby also is reluctant about selling his friend, Harry. Stowe has depicted how the slaves were being sold by their owners and were treated as subalterns. The choice of the slaves is not considered. Harry and Uncle Tom don’t rebel against their master, but Eliza left for Virginia with her son, Harry, to avoid his being sold. George, Eliza’s husband, had already been in Virginia. Eliza met George there and also encountered Tom Loker, who tried to catch them so that he could hand them over to Shelby. George injured Tom Loker, and then kept him in his house. Both the husband and wife and the son lived there for some time. It indicates that people would escape from slavery; they didn’t want to be a slave and be under the domination of anyone. It was their constraint that they had to live under such miserable conditions:

The challenge of representing slavery at the Historic Site does not stem from white denial or disinterest. On the contrary, the challenge emerges from the disjunction between the site’s material artifacts and figurines, including nineteenth-century black settlement and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as part of Henson’s story, and the hyper-invisibility of ‘Uncle Tom’ not as a character from the book, but Uncle Tom as minstrel character, racial epithet and an all-round negative stereotype of Black masculinity.<sup>25</sup>

Thereafter, Mr Haley took Uncle Tom and left. On the way, Augustine St Clare bought Uncle Tom from Haley. Uncle Tom had a good friendship

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<sup>23</sup> Zarlina, ‘An Analysis of Slavery and Its Impact towards Black People in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*’, p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> Raminand and Roshnavand, ‘Mimicry of Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and the Formation of Resistant Slave Narrative in Ishmael Reed’s *Flight to Canada*’, p. 250.

<sup>25</sup> Cheryl Thompson, ‘*Uncle Tom’s Cabin* Historic Site and Creolization: The Material and Visual Culture of Archival Memory’, *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, vol. 12, no. 3 (2019), pp. 304-319.

with Eva. Miss Ophelia, the neighbour of St Clare, considered slavery a good system. She wanted this system to be continued. Augustine was against slavery. After the death of Augustine St Clare, his wife sold Uncle Tom to Simon Legree who punished him. Tom was beaten by Legree, and very harsh and cruel treatment was being experienced by Uncle Tom. "Tom tells Legree, who has come to murder him, that he is ready to sacrifice even the last drop of his blood if it would help to salvage Legree's valuable soul."<sup>26</sup> Uncle Tom represent those slaves and colonized people who had accepted that they are born to be slaves and they are created to live in the conditions in which they are forced to live. He accepts slavery with folded hands and does whatever his owners tell him. Thus "many African American leaders and intellectuals, such as William Still, William Wells Brown, and Frederick Douglass, acclaimed the novel's contribution as propaganda for the anti-slavery cause."<sup>27</sup>

The slaves had to change faith and customs according to the directions of their owners. They had to bear all the oppressions and suppressions. Simon Legree was against the Christian faith. He did not like Tom's reading the Bible and his devout religion. He says "Liberty—electric word! What is it? Is there anything more in it than a name—rhetoric flourishes? Why, men and women of America, does your heart's blood thrill at that word for which your father bled, and your braver mothers were willing that their noblest best should die?"<sup>28</sup>

He dealt harshly with Tom and punished him badly. He wanted Tom to get rid of his religious faith and stop reading the Bible. In this story, there is the character of Casy, who killed her third child because she did not want her child to be sold as a slave. Legree punishes Tom many times for helping Casy and Emmeline. Enslaved people had to undergo severe physical punishments for not following the owners. In the end, Master Shelby went to Canada to save Tom, but he could not. Master Shelby pledged not to keep slaves but to emancipate and free them. This novel depicts all the aspects of the effects of slavery in America. The slavery system, its causes, and its effects have been depicted by the writer through the various characters in this

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<sup>26</sup> Ramin and Roshnavand, 'Mimicry of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Formation of Resistant Slave Narrative in Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada*', p. 248.

<sup>27</sup> Ramin and Roshnavand, 'Mimicry of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Formation of Resistant Slave Narrative in Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada*', p. 249.

<sup>28</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Boston: John P. Jewett and Company, 1852), p. 350.

novel. This novel is the complete manifestation of the conditions of slaves in America in the nineteenth century.

The critics maintain that the novel, in spite of its putative attempt to liberate Blacks and put an end to slavery, chained them now within the shackles of a demeaning representational strategy, thus another form of enthrallment. Consequently, Stowe's novel and her representation of Uncle Tom as the epitome of the "good" slave became the yardstick which regulated the production and reception of all upcoming slave narratives written by both blacks and whites.<sup>29</sup>

This novel is a postcolonial novel where the main theme is slavery. The writings of Harriet Beecher Stowe can be compared with the other writers of the Third World whose subject had been downtrodden and marginalized peoples. The conditions of slaves that the writer has presented in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* can be compared with the conditions of Dalits in India as presented by Mulk Raj Anand in his work *Untouchable*. Stowe has been more realistic while writing the present novel; she has attempted to depict the realistic picture throughout the novel. "It has been claimed in the Preface to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that its incidents, events, and episodes were real ... Mrs Stowe herself said that all the happenings of the story were true incidents, arranged by her in the form of a continuous story." Here it may be observed *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is more realistic than *Untouchable*.<sup>30</sup>

## Result and Discussion

Both the novelists Samuel Selvon and Harriet Beecher Stowe are post-colonial writers and both novels *The Lonely Londoners* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin: Life Among the Lowly* are post-colonial texts. Their theme is based on colonialism, oppression, suppression, marginalization, subalternity, slavery, and migration. These texts deal with an important issue which is about the lower section of the society. The people from the ground have been represented in these novels. The characters come from the downtrodden and lower strata of society. They are subaltern as their history, culture, and identity have been destroyed because of their inexistence. The conditions of the slaves in America and the Caribbean, the conditions of migrants in the West, and the conditions of Dalits and women in India had been similar

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<sup>29</sup> Ramin and Roshnavand, 'Mimicry of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Formation of Resistant Slave Narrative in Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada*', p. 248

<sup>30</sup> Banshelkikar Yashpal Murhari, 'Unsuccessful and Successful Struggles of Slaves: A Comparative Study of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Untouchable*, *Majya Jalmachi Chittarkatha*, and *Aaydan*', *The Indian Review of World Literature in English*, vol. 16, no 1 (2020), pp. 1-8.

during the colonial era. They had been the subject of marginalization, subjugation, and victimization.

The subaltern theory is applicable to those texts which have dealt with these marginalized people. The slaves in America and the Caribbean had been treated as subalterns. They were sidelined socially, politically, and economically. They didn't have any political representation, nor was their voice being heard, moreover, they don't have any identity and history of their own. Samuel Selvon's other novels also have postcolonial themes as they rest on the theme of the relation between the colonizers and the colonized. Likewise, "Harriet's first awareness of slavery as a national problem came in 1820 with the furious controversy over admitting Missouri as a slave state."<sup>31</sup> She has given a lucid depiction of the characters in the novel where each character represents some stratum of society and the etiquettes of that class. "Conditions varied somewhat from one area to the next, and the debate over the relative cruelty of the systems continues."<sup>32</sup> The Western countries found it an easy way to produce wealth. They used the labour of the colonized nations and accumulated wealth for themselves. "The slave mode of production proved a most efficient means of capital accumulation for Western Europe in the sugar-plantation colonies of the Caribbean."<sup>33</sup>

From the above research, it has been found that much research has taken place on the aspect of slavery and migration during colonialism. Moreover, select writers and their texts have been explored by the researchers. The findings of the present research are unique and distinguished in various features. Firstly, while comparing the perspective of these two different post-colonial writers, it has been evident that their perspective about the downtrodden and the oppressed has been the same. Samuel Selvon seems to be concerned about the immigrants who visited England and he has portrayed the conditions of the Black immigrants in the same way as Harriet Beecher Stowe. She is concerned about the conditions of the Afro-American slaves who lived in America. Furthermore, she has tried to show the real conditions of the slaves who lived in America. Though there has been a difference in terms of the portrayal of the scene between these two writers. Samuel Selvon has used the Creole language whereas

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<sup>31</sup> A. Krishnamurthy Rao, 'The Black Motif in the Anti-Slavery Novels of Harriet Beecher Stowe' (Doctoral Thesis, University of Madras, 1987).

<sup>32</sup> Rhoda E. Reddock, 'Women and Slavery in the Caribbean: A Feminist Perspective', *Latin American Perspectives*, vol.12, no. 1 (1985), pp. 63-80.

<sup>33</sup> Rhoda, 'Women and Slavery in the Caribbean: A Feminist Perspective', p. 32.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's language is British English which is easy to read. Secondly, the oppression of the slaves and the downtrodden had been somehow similar everywhere. The subalterns are everywhere. The poor, suppressed, and oppressed are subalterns. Their way of life, the way of resistance and rebellion has been similar throughout the world in general and in England and America in particular.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, the above research has been a textual analysis concerning two countries and two different writers. From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the Afro-American and Caribbean literature, which has depicted slavery, has been the biggest issue and the depth analysis serves the knowledge to the readers and the future researchers about the subaltern treatment being met by the poor people. The slaves and the migrants of America and England are the subalterns whose voices are unheard and who have no representation. The comprehensive analysis of these two select texts will let the readers know about the similarities and dissimilarities of the perspectives of Samuel Selvon and Harriet Beecher Stowe about slaves and the marginalized during colonialism. The research is a textual analysis and the qualitative approach has been followed during the process of collecting data.