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**Racial Discrimination and Class Struggle in Solomon
Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853) and Shyima
Hall's *Hidden Girl* (2014)**

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Abstract

This research undertakes a marxist analysis of Solomon Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* 1853 and Shyima Hall's *Hidden Girl* 2014. Although the two narratives were written in different periods, they tackle the issue of slavery during the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries. This study analyses the horrific impact of capitalist patriarchy on the authors in the light of the Marxist literary theory. Hence, this study examines slavery in America from its beginnings to its current state, defining the many forms of ancient and modern slavery. Furthermore, by taking into consideration the unique socio-historical circumstances in which these memoirs were written, this study demonstrates how Solomon Northup and Shyima Hall were dehumanized and deprived of all their rights in their everyday lives as slaves. Most importantly, the aim of this research is to examine the major aspects of Marxism within the abovementioned literary works in order to better understand the protagonists' suffering at the hands of their masters, and the oppression, discrimination, and exploitation they endured.

Key Words: Marxism, Slavery, Modern Slavery, African American Literature, Exploitation, Racial Discrimination, Class Struggle.

Dedications

This work is sincerely dedicated to.

To all those who believed in me,

To those who helped me through hard times.

I shall be forever thankful for my beloved family's support during this work,

my parents and brother for their motivation and guidance.

A special dedication to my dearest bestfriend Mellysa, as well as my cousins Ryma and Lilia.

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General Introduction

Slavery is regarded as one of the most significant chapters in American history since it affected the country economically and politically, as well as the development of American society. Slavery was the oldest historical type of exploitation in which a slave became a private property of the slave master. The abolition of slavery, which is the effort to eliminate slave trade and human exploitation, went through several periods, beginning with the British Abolitionist movement of the 18th century, to the United States outlawing slavery in 1865 with the 13th amendment in the United States constitution. Child and adult slavery and forced labor are still prohibited in practically every country. Human trafficking for labor and sexual enslavement, on the other hand, continue to harm tens of millions of people and children worldwide.

As claimed by Laura T. Murphy, slavery still exists in many countries even though it is illegal, as she stated in her book *Survivors of Slavery: Modern-day Slave Narratives* : “Slavery unfortunately did not end with its abolition in any country in the world. Instead, it went underground” (T.Murphy). Despite the fact that countries all over the world have attempted to abolish slavery since the beginning of the nineteenth century, it has never been totally abolished, and slavery remains a lucrative industry in many countries, including the United States.

Literature has always been a means for the quiet souls to express their ideas and feelings. The slave narrative is a literary genre that includes personal tales of enslaved Africans, notably in America. Slave narratives were largely used by escaped or former slaves in the nineteenth century to assert their independence and to provide real and truthful historical facts from a first-person perspective. Besides, modern slave narratives are memoirs and autobiographies that are written by people who have been victims of modern slavery, and Solomon Northup and Shyima Hall should be held up as great examples of authors who present in their writings a frightening and accurate depiction of slavery in the United States in the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries. This is reflected in their novels entitled *Twelve Years a slave* (1853), *Hidden Girl* (2014).

These two novels share a similar pattern reflecting on the subject discussed above. *Twelve Years a Slave* was written during a time when slavery was at its peak while *Hidden Girl* was written during a time when people do not place much emphasis on this issue, which they believe has disappeared. We chose these two novels to investigate the dehumanization of slavery and its impact in two different periods but with a similar motif.

There are several interpretations of slavery; in addition to the survival of traditional types of slavery, the notion of “modern slavery ” has evolved. Silvia Scarpai outlines the following practices in her book *Trafficking in Human Beings: Modern Slavery (2008)* : forced and bonded labour, debt bondage, forced prostitution, child labor, forced marriage and finally trafficking (Scarpai 4). Child trafficking is the most recent type of slavery, and it, like the ancient slave trade, originates in Africa and moved to Europe, America, Asia, and other areas of the world. Child trafficking is a phenomenon in which rich individuals of society exploit children for personal benefit, with or without the approval of the parents. Persons under the age of 15 are considered victims of child trafficking. It was the case of Shyima Hall, a young girl sold by her parents to a wealthy family in order to pay her sister's debts.

Euckay U. Onyeizugbo wrote an article *Child Trafficking A New Slave Trade : Why It Thrives In Africa*, in which he speaks about child trafficking and the reasons of its practice in Africa. According to him, children that serve as domestics come from poor and illiterate parents and are often sold in the expectation of earning more money . These children are frequently deprived of affection, social activities, and education. According to the International Labor Organization, forced labor occurs when someone is coerced into working using violence, harassment, or manipulation (International Labor Organization).

According to a research paper entitled *Modern Slavery In The Memoir Hidden Girl By Shyima Hall: A Review On The Main Character Shyima*, the primary character, is subjected to three types of modern slavery: human trafficking, domestic enslavement, and child slavery. She went through transfers and transit from one location to another, Egypt-United States, with the intention of being utilized as a slave.

African American slaves in the United States experienced discrimination both during the slave trade period and during the years of their enslavement. These problems were mostly caused by the harsh physical punishment they suffered from their owners and traders. Slaves who survived the difficulties of the trip to their new locations were unlikely to endure the violent abuse of their owners.

As explained by Richard D.Wolff, slave economic systems separate people who produce and distribute commodities and services into two groups: masters and slaves. The masters have complete control over wealth, power, and cultural supremacy and own the slaves. Northup was subjected to a number of abuses as a result of his enslavement, including physical violence, which happens when a person uses a bodily part or an item to dominate

another person's behavior. Psychological and verbal violence happen when a person utilizes threats and instant dread to take control and remind the slave of his or her inferiority.

The current study aims to study aspects of slavery illustrated in Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* and Hall's *Hidden Girl*, to show its brutality and to reveal that slavery still does exist in different other forms. This dissertation provides a comprehensive picture of slavery in America, from its inception to the current state of human trafficking. Furthermore, it defines and explains the different forms of ancient and modern slavery portrayed in the two works, and demonstrate the similarities between the two. This paper provides a thorough understanding of the slave narrative as a genre that assisted African Americans in making their story public in the nineteenth century and of the modern slave narrative as a flourishing literary genre in the twenty-first century.

A Marxist approach is used because it exposes the bad conditions of slaves in ancient and modern slavery in general, and particularly in the two chosen narratives as they were both oppressed in a society which ignored their human rights and saw them as impoverished, weak, and ignorant. The Marxist approach theory is utilized to shed light on their battle to achieve their major objectives of equal rights for all Americans regardless of class or color, as well as to analyze and understand the characters' resistance along their enslavement journey.

The present dissertation is divided into two main chapters. Two study backgrounds are presented in the first chapter. The first part is a historical background that examines characteristics of ancient and modern slavery in America, beginning with identifying these two and referring to their many forms. The second part includes the literary backgrounds of *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl*, as well as plot summaries and biographies of Solomon Northup and Shyima Hall.

The first part of the second chapter explains and defines the Marxist theory in general as it is utilized in the study of the two novels to comprehend the context in which they were written. The second part represents a Marxist analysis of the many aspects of slavery that Solomon Northup and Shyima Hall convey in their narratives, illustrating the damaging effects of slavery on slaves and their families, as well as the physical and moral abuse they faced during their enslavement

Chapter one

Historical and Literary
Background of “*Twelve Years
a Slave*” and “*Hidden Girl*”

Introduction

This first chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section deals with the historical background and literary background of Solomon Northup's *Twenty Years a Slave*, and Shyima Hall's *Hidden Girl*. The historical background describes the major events that characterized America during the life of Solomon Northup and sheds light on the Pre-Civil War period which was a sensitive period in the history of America, especially the history of slavery; then, forms of slavery will be explained. The last part of the historical background is devoted to slavery and child labor in modern history, and the second section deals with the literary background of *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl*. The literary forms of the two selected novels are presented, then, we introduce Solomon Northup and Shyima Hall to the reader by presenting their biographies and their literary achievements. A brief summary is given for each novel to have a clear insight into the main events of the stories.

I.1 The Historical background of *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl*

I.1.1 History of slavery during the pre-civil war era (1700- 1861)

The Pre-Civil War period was a time of drastic changes and tremendous growth that took place as the United States came of age. During these years, the country was converted from a rural and frontiersman's country to a modernized economic powerhouse. Five primary tendencies dominated American economic, social, and political life during this century as the industrialized North and agricultural South got increasingly divided.

During the antebellum years, slavery contributed greatly to the nation's wealth. Slaves were kidnapped and sold for the plantations of the south to work harshly. They were mistreated and beaten, sometimes until death if they ever disrespect their owners, and masters. Slavery's beginnings and long history may be traced back to Western Europe's growth of power, which began in the fifteenth century and lasted until the twentieth, for a number of economic, technological, and demographic reasons.

Slavery started to become a famous trade when European first colonized the north American continent. The land was vast and the work was harsh, European settlers were unable to do the work, and it was hard to find cheap labor from other sources, so white settlers increasingly turned to slaves imported from Africa. Booker T. Washington in his book *“Story of Slavery”* wrote:

In one of the reports setting forth "the true state" of the colony of Georgia it was said that, "hardly one-half of the servants of working people were able to do their masters or themselves the least labor: and the yearly sickness of each servant, generally speaking, cost his master as much as would have maintained a Negro for four years. With the introduction of rice planting the necessity of employing Africans was doubled, because, as it was said, white servants would have exhausted their strength in clearing a spot for their own graves. (15)

As a result, slavery was developed on the mainland to replace white servitude, just as it had developed in the West Indies to replace native Indian slavery.

By the early 1700s in British North America, slavery meant the enslavement of Africans. Slave labor was used on southern plantations to make the American colonies profitable, and they generated large export goods like tobacco, rice, forest products, and indigo. Many Northern merchants made their fortunes in the slave trade or by exporting slave labor goods. Slave labor played a key role in the establishment of British North America. By the end of the American Revolution by 1783, as tobacco prices fluctuated and began to fall, slavery became less profitable and useful. The cotton gin, created by northerner Eli Whitney in 1793, allowed textile mills to use the sort of cotton that was most easily grown in the lower South. The invention of the cotton gin brought about a robust domestic slave trade. As the lower South became more established in production of cotton, the region then needed more slave labor, which they received from upper South slave owners whom was looking to offload their excess of slaves.

The United States abolished the international slave trade, as well as the importation of slaves, in 1808, which only raised interest for locally trafficked slaves. In the upper South the most profitable cash crop was not an agricultural product but the sale of human lives (African slaves). By 1860 the South's "Peculiar Institution" was inextricably tied to the region's economy and society.

In 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of America. During his campaign, Lincoln opposed and banned the expansion of slavery into US territories. Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. It was not the first step toward freedom, since 1861 several thousand slaves had already freed themselves, but it was the first significant effort by Union authorities to assure freedom. Abraham Lincoln in one of his speeches said:

I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free, and that the

Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.
(Lincoln)

Lincoln's declaration led to free approximately three million black slaves, the Emancipation Proclamation removed the confederacy labor and put international public opinion on Union side. Though the Emancipation Proclamation did not officially end slavery in America, the abolishment was officially realized by the passage of the 13th Amendment after the Civil War's end in January 31, 1865.

I.1.2 Forms of slavery

The word slave comes from old French word “*esclave*”, which came from the Medieval Latin *sclavus*. This word comes from the ethnonym Slav, because in some early medieval Wars age, many Slav people were captured and enslaved (Oxford English Dictionary). Slavery refers to a condition in which the individuals are owned by others. The owner called master who owns them as a property and controls them whenever they want. The owner can sell them, force them to work, abuse, and kill them. Despite considering it as inhuman, slavery already existed in many times and most places, and it is an old practice since the ancient civilizations. Most of the ancient nations had slaves to build their civilization.

Slavery, in other words is someone who has power over someone else; it is exercising power on a weakened group and the lower class. Marxist writers have traditionally understood slavery as a mode of exploitation corresponding to a definite economic stage in the evolution of human society. According to Kevin Bales in his book *Testing a Theory of Modern Slavery* slavery takes various forms:

It is a simple yet potent truth that slavery is a relationship between (at least) two people. Like other common and patterned relationships in human societies, slavery takes various forms and achieves certain ends. The ends or outcomes of slavery tend to be more similar across time and cultures, the forms less so. The different outcomes of slavery are exploitative in nature: appropriation of labor for productive activities resulting in economic gain, use of the enslaved person as an item of conspicuous consumption, sexual use of an enslaved person for pleasure and procreation, and the savings gained when paid servants or workers

are replaced with unpaid and unfree workers. Any particular slave may fulfill one, several, or all of these outcomes for the slaveholder..while the outcomes of slavery tend to be similar, the forms of enslavement are more varied. (1)

Slavery has never existed in only one form, there were always various forms of slavery, and it can be presented in many ways. In order to classify forms of slavery, we will rely on the claim of Dana S.Hathaway, that focused on agricultural and domestic slavery in the United States. Her research provides a greater understanding of different types of slavery as well as the ability to recognize them. She investigates several forms of slavery as they exist today and as they are frequently defined. We will also refer to the research made by the theorist Kevin Bales on slavery, and its forms. Here are the forms of slavery according to the researchers cited above:

I.1.2.1 Debt Bondage

The 1956 Convention lists debt bondage as “a practice analogous to slavery.” It defines debt bondage as:

The status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or of those of a person under his control as security for a debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined (Conference of Plenipotentiaries).

According to Dana S.Hathaway, this is the most common form of slavery. It amounts to a kind of advance of money with repayment being serviced through the debtor’s labor. This does not seem to be problematical, as long as logical and fair terms are established. In fact, many migrants who came to colonial America did so under a system such as Indentured Servitude or Peonage. Some of them were treated respectfully and were free to leave their station of work when their traveled and other related debts were paid off. Their migration to the New World was possible with this advance of money. Others, however, were trapped in debt bondage, because of the unscrupulous people who took advantage of their vulnerability. Through false accounting, exorbitant interest rates, extortion, or unreasonable collateral, repayment was never actually possible and the victim is forever indebted, sometimes passing on the debt to subsequent generations(Dana S.Hathaway).

I.1.2.2 Contract Slavery

This type of slavery is similar to bondage slavery in that it is based on a mutual agreement between the employer and the employee as a mutual benefit relationship. In other words, it is a labor for money exchange. However, when the employees are escorted to their place of employment, they are unaware that they have been enslaved. The contract serves as a trap to catch people into slavery. It is also a way, if required, to make slavery appear legal. Hard labor, violence, lack of freedom of movement, and unpaid servitude are all threats to the slave.

I.1.2.3 Forced Labor and Forced Prostitution

According to Bales, in Africa, approximately 100.00 child soldiers are forced to labor as posters, messengers, cooks, sex slaves, human mine detectors, and armed combatants. Forced labor, as a form of slavery, affects approximately 12.3 million people worldwide. A Forced labor includes any work that is not classified as contract slavery or debt bondage. Forced prostitution, also known as sex trafficking in the media, is the promotion and exchange of sex services for money. It is a type of slavery that involves sex and sexual exploitation for financial benefit. It can occur alongside debt bondage, contract slavery, or forced labor. The victim may be offered some form of money and may be subjected to excessive, harsh, and violent treatment and exploitation.

I.1.2.4 Child Labor and Human Trafficking

It Describes all child labor, or work obtained from individuals under the age of 18 through the means of force, violence, deception, or coercion. Children can be enslaved in debt bondage, forced labor, prostitution, armies, domestic work, and other forms of hazardous work.

The way by which some people become enslaved is considered as human trafficking, which can be understood analogously to the historical trans-Atlantic slave trade. The 1926 Slavery Convention defines the slave trade as:

all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or disposal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging him; all acts of disposal by sale or exchange of a slave acquired with a view to being sold or exchanged, and, in general, every act of trade or transport in slaves (Slavery Convention 1).

Based on theory of Bales regarding forms of slavery, and Hathaway on human trafficking and slavery, we conclude that slavery has six forms but with the same interest. The master's interest in economy or material benefit to satisfy their greediness, by absorbing life from the weak people. All of the slavery forms are related to forced labor, and all the slaves were under the oppression of the slaveholder.

I.1.2.5 Modern Slavery and Child Labor

Slavery is one of the most descriptive and emotive words in the English language. At first glance, the name conjures up pictures of despairing individuals imprisoned on transatlantic ships or toiling away in the sweltering heat of the American Deep South. It is a topic that has recently dominated Hollywood films and best-seller lists, and many industrialized countries, most notably the United States are still coming to grips with their involvement in the horrific system of slavery.

Slavery from the past is a recurring theme in today's media: candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination in the United States frequently call for reparations for slave descendants, and many countries and institutions have requested information and inquiries into how they used slave labor for economic or other personal gain. Traditional slavery is now banned in all countries, and it is widely acknowledged as a heinous crime against humanity. Mauritania was the last country in the world to abolish slavery in 2007, making it the last country in the world to do so. Slavery appears to be confined to the darkest eras of world history in many ways (McDermott et al. 8).

Research supports the surprising fact that there are more people enslaved today than at any other time in history (Patterson & Xiaolin Zhuo, *Modern Trafficking, Slavery and Other Forms of Servitude*). According to statistics, approximately 13 million people were captured and sold as slaves between the 15th and 19th centuries; this stands in contrast to the International Labour Organisation's most recent estimate that today there are more than 40.3 million people currently living in some form of modern slavery (*Global Findings*).

I. 1.3 Modern slavery

The modern term, according to the *Dictionary of Anthropology*, is an attitude and morality which is a guideline to be able to live according to the demands of the present (*Dictionary of Anthropology*. 261). Whereas, according to Barker in *Cultural Studies*:

Theory and Practice“, modernism is associated with the philosophy of enlightenment of rationality, science, universal truth and progress” (Barker 169). Both of these definitions and understandings have a common thread that runs through them: modern and modernism both refer to current progress. Current slavery has an actual definition that is similar to slavery in general, or as we have all known it in the past, but it is devoted to the notion that it is occurring now, in the modern period. According to an article of the modern anti-slavery organization, “Anti-Slavery International” : “modern slavery is a condition when someone is exploited by someone else. Today slavery is literally people owning other people - although that still exists more about being exploited and completely controlled by someone else, without being able to leave” (Anti-slavery organization).

Modern slavery according to an article of the Walk Free Foundation refers to a situation when someone seizes someone else's freedom with the purpose of exploiting that person “What Is Modern Slavery?”. According to the many definitions above, contemporary slavery is a type of slavery that still exists today. Slavery in general has a definition that includes modern slavery, which is defined as the violation of a person's freedom. As previously said, modern slavery can be classified as a variety of human crime behaviors.

I .1.3.1 Child Labour

Child labor has been around for a long time and is still common nowadays. According to an article published by the International Labour Organization, it is any activity that robs children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, as well as being hazardous to their physical and mental development. As reported by the ILO, you can read that child labour refers to a work that “is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work”. (ILO)

The ILO emphasizes that not all employment done by minors is considered child labor and must be eliminated. When the work has no negative impact on their physical, mental, or personal development, or interferes with their schooling, it might be viewed as a good experience. Children's work around the house to assist their parents, or when they earn some pocket money before or after school or during their school holidays, are examples of such labour. This form of employment is beneficial to the development of children and the well-being of their families. Children who participate in such activities earn experience and abilities that will help them prepare to be useful members of society as adults (ILO).

There are also very extreme kinds of child labor, such as children being enslaved, separated from their relatives, or subjected to severe violence, risks, and sicknesses. When determining whether work is considered child labor, the following factors are considered: the age of the child, the type and hours of work performed, the working conditions, and the goals pursued by individual countries. This means that each country provides its own response, and thus the responses differ from a country to another (ILO).

I.1.3.2 Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the business of stealing freedom for profit. In some cases, traffickers trick, defraud or physically force victims into providing commercial sex. In others, victims are lied to, assaulted, threatened or manipulated into working under inhumane, illegal or otherwise unacceptable conditions. It is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to 24.9 million people around the world (What Is Human Trafficking?).

It is a type of modern slavery that involves the illegal transportation of individuals for commercial and economic advantage by force or deception. Those individuals are compelled to work and exploited in sexual activities or other forms of forced labor in which others benefit. Human trafficking is a major concern for children. They are compelled to work and, in some circumstances, sold by their parents. It's one of the most cruel forms of child labor.

1.2 The Literary Background of *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl*

1.2.1 The Slave narrative

There has never been a more effective and reliable manner of reconstructing historical experiences than and literature. Slave narratives are autobiographies and memoirs of African Americans, former slaves who suffered from slavery before the Civil War. Not only were they used to preserve memory and the historical fact conveyed in these accounts, but also used by fugitives or former slaves to proclaim their freedom in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, and preserve the true historical events from a first-person perception. And because of the restriction of educating slaves, the beginnings of slave narratives were spread orally as stories, tales, and songs. Slave stories and songs served as the foundation for their future literature. Certain themes and ideas, as well as characters, were drawn from American stories, but slave tales were unique. They were based on African mythology, but were enhanced with Biblical narrative or characters and mostly had religious

elements. They are also used to describe numerous topics, such as how to respond in certain situations or how to live and survive. The stories also highlighted familial interactions.

Despite the fact that the majority of African American authors could not speak English, once gaining their freedom, they acquired English, which enabled them to recount their awful experiences as slaves. The most famous ones are: *Incident In The Life Of a Slave Girl* By Harriet Ann Jacobs (1861), *Narratives Of The Life Of Frederick Douglass* By Frederick Douglass (1845), *Slave Life In Georgia: A Narrative Of The Life* By John Brown (1855), *Twelve Years A Slave* By Solomon Northup (1953), and many others. Nonetheless, several works are written and published by people who are still enslaved nowadays. As an example: *Hidden Girl* By Shyima Hall (2014) , *Bakhita* By Veronique Olmi (2017), *Girls Like Us: Fighting for a World Where Girls Are Not for Sale* By Rachel Lloyd (2011), *Made in China: A Memoir of Love and Labor* By Anna Qu (2021).

Before the American Civil War, several authors published fictitious stories of slavery in order to generate support for abolitionism describing slave life, slave interactions, contacts with white owners and overseers, abolitionism, revolt, and rebellion. Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on 1852, is a great example. The popularity of her work, along with the social tensions of the period, elicited a response from white southern authors, such as *Aunt Phillis's Cabin*; or, *Southern Life As It Is*, written by Mary Henderson Eastman (1818–1887), and *The Cabin and Parlor*; or, *Slaves and Masters*, written by Philadelphian Charles Jacobs Peterson (1819–1887). These books are called Anti-Tom novels. According to Lucinda MacKethan : "Slaves in the Anti-Tom works are generally the happy, singing, childlike stereotypes that Stowe herself helped to cement... The vision that these novels promote is of a South in which slaves and masters enjoy a mutually supportive, familial bond that is only severed by the ignorant or greedy machinations of abolitionists..." (Lucinda MacKethan) .The books detailed the horrors of slavery for many northerners who had no personal experience with it. The majority of white southern whites condemned the works as inaccurate and unjust narratives of their unusual society, and that Stowe's has exaggerated the inhumanity of slavery she told in her novel.

Until the Great Depression, slave narratives dominated African American writings, but till nowadays they continually push readers to question issues of race, social justice, and the meaning of freedom. Slavery flourished throughout the great civilizations of ancient Greece, Egypt, Rome, China, and several African tribes. It is being practiced today and called

Modern Slavery , except with concealment. Although it is true that slaves are no longer traded, there are more than 40 million individuals in the world currently who are subjects to modern slavery, mostly women and girls, as well as almost 15 million children (International Labour Organization). William Hannibal Thomas, *The American Negro What He Was, What He Is, And What He May Become* talks about slavery as an awful system of American trade, the physical and moral suffering that the slaves endured, and their integration into society after spending decades in chains. He said : "Negro slavery was a many-sided affair, for at one and the same time it constituted a political force, an industrial factor, an ethical agency, a social institution, and a domestic feature. The character of the slaves themselves was largely affected by these several phases of enthrallment" (Thomas 14-15).

Slave narratives are filled with stories of physical abuse. Some of the most frequent abuses described by slave narrators are whippings, rape, imprisonment, and lack of food and clothes. One of the most popular descriptions of slavery comes from Moses Roper's narrative (1999), which includes graphic details as well as images of the torture equipment used by Roper's owner, Mr. Gooch. Solomon Northup's describes in chapter 14 of his novel *Twelve Years a Slave* all the time he witnessed his master being brutal with the other slaves : "The existence of Slavery in its most cruel form among them, has a tendency to brutalize the humane and finer feelings of their nature. Daily witnesses of human suffering—listening to the agonizing screeches of the slave—beholding him writhing beneath the merciless lash—bitten and torn by dogs—dying without attention, and buried without shroud or coffin—it cannot otherwise be expected, than that they should become brutified and reckless of human life" (Northup 135). However, not all forms of abuse were physical. Many narrators argued that the ban of education left scars even deeper than the whip could, Frederick Douglass, is probably the most known narrator to highlight slavery's intellectual constraints, thought that learning to read provided authority : "The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest my enslavers" (Douglass 278).

In 1833, abolition got increasingly radical, having a significant impact on narrative form. The emergence of anti - slavery organizations contributed in the development of a broad abolitionism print culture. Many former slaves shared their stories in abolitionist newspapers, magazines, and other media. This helped to create more awareness about slave's life and inspire other slaves to write their own story and share their personal experience. Many stories are beings shared and published around the world about people who been kidnapped and suffered from slavery, which was the case of Shyima Hall's autobiography *Hidden Girl*.

Through the depictions of their characters, the authors report the truth about slavery in America nowadays and to condemn the inhumane experiences that people continue to endure at the hands of their slave masters and family members. Bernard Bell, a literary analyst, used the term "neoslave narrative", in his book *The Afro-American Novel and Its Tradition*, to describe this kind of literature, and to strengthen his idea with an example which is, according to him, the first "Neo-slave narrative" that was ever published : " In Jubilee, the , Margaret Walker gives us our first major neoslave narrative: residually oral, modern narrative of escape from bondage to freedom" (Bell 289).

1.2.2 The Autobiography

Autobiography is a self-written chronicle of a person's life. It provides enormous details about the subject's life experiences. Autobiographies strive to present the actual experience of a person's life from beginning to the end in a chronological order. However, some parts will receive more emphasis than others. An autobiography is written in first or third person and is generally written by famous people only in order to learn more about this famous figure. Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, which covers his life from boyhood until his release from jail in 1990, is an exceptional example. Historians usually perceive autobiographies as a sort of history and consider them as crucial references because it emphasizes facts and deals with history. The most known autobiographies are : *An Autobiography: My Life and My Experience with The Truth* by Mohandas K.Gandhi, *The Diary Of A Young Girl* by Ann Frank , *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcom X.

1.2.3 The Memoir

A memoir is a narrative written by the subject himself. It may include family history and other non-related information. Memoirs can also be written about a particular topic, such as health, a trauma , violence. It focuses on a certain period or event in the author's life that caused him to change, such as a turning point or a tragedy. It seeks to describe how the person benefited from his experience or improved himself. A person who writes a memoir will focus only on the emotional consequences of the event. A memoir is less formal than an autobiography since it can be written by anyone that has an experience to share. A memoir is not structured and does not follow a chronological order. It can begin at any point. Some of interesting memoirs are Roxane Gay's book *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body* (2017), Darin Strauss's *Half a Life: A Memoir* (2010) .

1-3 Biography of Shyima Hall

Shyima Hall, born Shyima El-Sayed Hassan, was born on 29 September, 1989 in Alexandria, Egypt. She is known nowadays for being one of the greatest Human Rights Defenders, protesting against human trafficking. She is an author and a public speaker. Hall had given numerous presentations at high schools and colleges across the United States to raise awareness about human trafficking and promote her memoir *'Hidden Girl* in which she talks about her own experience as a former slave and how she has recovered from the darkness to build her own future. She once said in an interview : " I'm happy where I am now, having been thorough all of that" (Hall 32:48-33:00)

Shyima was the seventh child out of eleven of a necessitous family. She describes her childhood as a happy one even though her father was abusive. She did not go to school. She played with her siblings and friends and had a strong relation with her maternal family members. She is an arabic, muslim young girl, wears a scarf and speaks only arabic.

Shyima lived with her family until the age of eight, when her parents sold her to a wealthy family in Egypt to a man named Abdel Nasser Eid Youssef Ibrahim and his wife Amal Admed Ewis-Abd El Motelib, even though it was against Egyptian law. The Child Law prohibited the employment under the age of fourteen, but allows children between the ages of twelve and fourteen to receive vocational training from employers and to participate in seasonal agricultural work, as long as the work " is not hazardous to their health and growth, and does not interfere with their studies" (Vikram Parekh). Hall was sold to the family in order to redeem the debt owed by her older sister, Zarah, who was their former employee. After spending two years in Egypt working for them, the father decided to relocate the family to the United States, even Shyima. Once they arrived in Irvine, California, the torture became even more horrific and the miserable life of an enslaved child begun.

In 2002, one of their neighbors noticed her and called the child services who alerted the police. They immediately intervened and freed Shyima from her captors. During a conference that she gave in Sam Houston State University, Shyima recounts that day as the worst day ever, she thought her life was over. What she did not know is that her journey to freedom has just begun. She learned gradually over time, with the support of her savior Mark Abend, the ICE employee who played a crucial part in Shyima's rehabilitation. She was able to have courses at home for three years, then at the age of fourteen she went to public school (Eighth grade), where she discovered the world. Shyima appeared in court where she would

face the Ibrahims and her mother. As part of their plea deal, the couple was sentenced to jail and had to pay \$152,000.

On January 21st, 2014, Shyima Hall wrote her first novel entitled *Hidden Girl* with Lisa Wysocky published by Simon and Schuster. It is an inspiring and compelling memoir of a young child in which she shared her experience as a domestic slave and recounted some of the crucial events that contributed to her liberation. These events catch the reader's interest as Shyima's life is shattered and she is condemned to live the life her parents sold her into. *Hidden Girl* highlights the critical topic of human trafficking, which many Americans connect with foreign nations but which is often secretly brought. Shyima's narrative raises awareness and informs Americans about all they can do to actually prevent it.

The publication of her novel *Hidden Girl* had a tremendous impact on readers and made Shyima famous. It provided her with the chance to address publicly against human trafficking in the United States. She was indeed able to speak freely about her captivity horrors in several interviews in raising public awareness in society, what shaped her in becoming a famous anti-slavery activist.

Shyima previously stated in an interview that writing her work was a form of therapy, that sharing her experience repeatedly helped her overcome her traumas. It benefited the author's psychological health, transforming her from an emotionally ignorant personality molded by accepting commands from her slaveholders to a more robust one with social relationship concern. Shyima Hall's four years of enforced enslavement weakened her physically and mentally. Shyima was deprived of her childhood; she did not attend school, and was duped into being a less expensive and more obedient slave. Her employers used her lack of knowledge and language to their advantage to dominate her.

Shyima had been offered the opportunity to settle in the United States, and had obtained the American citizenship in 2007. Currently, she is a single mother living in Banning, California with her two children. She has not published another book, preferring to focus on her fight against child labor and human trafficking.

1.3.1 Plot summary of *Hidden Girl*

It is the story of a child named Shyima Hall (born Shyima El-Sayed Hassan) living in Egypt. She was the seventh child of desperately poor parents and abusive father. But that did not prevent her from having a memorable and happy childhood. Despite her young age,

Shyima was working as all of her old siblings. Her elder sister, Zahra, was working as a maid for a wealthy family : Abdel Nasser Youssef Ibrahim, Amal Ahmed Ewis-Abd El Motelib and their five children, until the day she stole from them money and the employer called the parents to complain and demand a refund. The parents were not able to return the money, as reconciliation, Hall was sold to repay her sister's debt. Hall went with her parents to her new employer's house without knowing that she will spend the rest of her life with them.

Shyima was there against her will working long hours in an exhausting environment. At the age of eight, she was treated like a maid, nanny and slave. When she was ten, her captors decided to move to Irvin, California. She was chosen among the other servants to go with them. She saw her parents one last time in the airport and they told her that she will stay a few months and come back to Egypt. She did not attend school, was not taught English, she was prevented from medical treatments and was mainly kept hidden. According to Hall, her typical routine included getting up at five a.m., getting the children dressed for school, and do household chores. The children were taught to say that she was their step-sister and she will be leaving soon.

After about two years, a neighbor noticed her and alerted the social services. It took the authorities three days before intervening and rescuing her and placing her in a place called Orangewood. A day later, she had her parents on the phone, they blamed her and called her ungrateful. Soon after, she knew that her captors gave her parents extra money, and her elder sister, Zarah, got married with it.

Throughout her teenage years, she was placed in three different foster parents. Each foster family has its own set of privileges and inconveniences. Her first foster family was Arabic because she did not speak a word in English. She stayed with them three years, but ended up leaving , describing them as "Hardcore Muslims". The second foster family was Muslim and Arab, and they resided in San Jose. They provided her with the opportunity to attend public school, where she experienced what it was like to live freely. She was with them for one year. Finally, her third family, where she got her last name Hall and got adopted, was in California. They were not Muslim, and spoke only English. With them, she was allowed to attend public school and she adored the siblings.

Shyima Hall's case lasted from 2002 to 2007. It was determined that Hall would not be called to the stand but she ended up speaking and blaming her mother for abandoning her and stealing her childhood. Her mother had no regret; on the contrary, she was upset since

they were summoned to court on Aid Day and had to leave their other children behind. Even her sister Zarah came to testify against her with the support of the Ibrahims. The Ibrahims pleaded guilty to the charges and were convicted and sentenced to prison. Amal Ahmed Ewis-Abd El Motelib was sentenced to 22 months in jail and deported to Egypt, while Abdel Nasser Youssef Ibrahim was sentenced to three years in prison. The Ibrahims agreed to pay Hall \$152,000 as part of their plea agreement.

Shyima Hall's ultimate objective was to become a citizen of the United States, which she attained at the age of twenty-one. After graduation, she started working as a manager at one store, where she met her former boyfriend named Daniel with whom she had a daughter named Athena. Shyima continued her fight against human trafficking and became a well-known human rights activist.

1.4 Biography of Solomon Northup

Solomon Northup was born in July, 1808 in Minerva, New York as a free African American. In 1841, he was dragged south and abducted. He was enslaved for more than a decade in horrifying harsh conditions. He was brought to New Orleans, bought by a planter, and detained as a slave for 12 years in Louisiana's Red River region. He is known for his memoir untitled *Twelve Years a Slave* that he published one year after regaining his freedom in January, 1852. Solomon Northup presented dozens of speeches around the Northeast about his experiences in slavery.

Years later, based on Solomon Northup's memoir, two movies were adapted. First as a television film *Solomon Northup's Odyssey* in 1984, directed by Gordon Parks. Second, in 2013 feature film *12 Years a Slave* by Steve MacQueen that later won three academic awards. Later in the twentieth century, the book was republished multiple times.

Solomon Northup was the son of former slave Minuts Northup and a quadroon mother. He had only one older brother named Joseph. As a child, he received some education and worked on their farm. On Christmas Day 1829, he married Anne Hampton; she was of mixed ethnicity, African, European, and Native American. He had three children with her : Elizabeth, Margaret, and Alonzo. They were the owners of a farm in Harborn Washington country. Simon was a farmer, a rafter on the Champlain Canal, and a well-known local musician.

Following the sale of their property in 1834, the couple relocated to Saratoga Spring, New York, where they worked hard to provide the needs of their children. Northup made a name for himself as a skilled violinist. He was kidnapped in 1841, when he was approached by two men for a job offer in Washington D.C. They drugged him and took his free papers, then sold him to slavery in New Orleans slave market. He was initially sold to William Prince Ford, a cotton plantation owner, who treated him with dignity owing to Northup's various skills. Unfortunately, the master had financial problems after six months and sold Northup to Edwin Epps, an owner of a small cotton plantation in Red River, Louisiana, with whom he spent the rest of the twelve years. He was a brutal owner who punished slaves aggressively. His approach was to lash the slaves if they did not reach daily work targets of tons of cotton to be collected.

Northup attempted to flee numerous times throughout that time but was ineffective. Northup was able to negotiate for letters to be carried to friends in New York to notify them of his condition, and demand to be rescued only after a sympathetic carpenter from Canada, named Samuel Bass, visited Epps' property in June 1852. One of the letters got into his wife, Ann, and she immediately started gathering her husband's legal papers to rescue him. Provided with documentation proving that Solomon Northup was a free member of society, Lawyer Henry B. Northup traveled to Louisiana and managed to locate him. Solomon Northup legally obtained his freedom on January, 3rd, 1853 and rejoined his family.

One month after his rescue, Solomon Northup attempted to accuse the slave trader who kidnapped and sold him. However, due to his ethnicity, he was not permitted to testify. Short after Solomon returned to his family. He published his story *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853) with the help of a local writer named David Wilson. The book was a massive success; it was sold more than twenty thousand copies. He dedicated most of his time giving lectures about his twelve years as a slave. He then vanished from public, joined the Underground Railroad and devoted many years in New England helping fugitive slaves to reach Canada.

Solomon Northup appeared one last time in Ontario, Canada, in August 1857, and then disappeared. It is thought that he died around 1863 a short time before the abolition of slavery in America in 1865. His wife Ann died in 1876.

1.4.1 Plot summary of *Twelve Years a Slave*

Solomon Northup was born in 1808 as a free black man in New York. He worked for his father in a farm and also was able to read and write. At the age of 21, he married Anne

Hampton with whom he had three children: Elizabeth, Margaret and Alonzo. He was known for his many skills, but especially for his talent of violin player. In 1841, Solomon met two men named Merrill Brown and Abram Hamilton. They introduced themselves as members of a circus searching for a fiddler to perform in New York and offered him this job. He accepted the offer and went with them. But on their way, they persuaded him to go to Washington D.C with the circus crew, which he agreed. Expecting it to be a small trip, Northup did not notify his wife. After spending one day with them, Northup started to feel ill, what he did not know was that he was drugged.

When Northup woke up, he was chained in a dark cell. After a while, a man opened the cell door. It was James H. Burch, a slave dealer in Washington, escorted by his domestic Ebenezer Radburn. Northup immediately started protesting and complaining about his incarceration. Burch did not tolerate that, he beats him cruelly and threatens to kill him if he ever talked about freedom again. A few days later, Solomon discovered that he was held in William's Slave Pen with other slaves like Clemens Ray, Eliza Berry, and Eliza's children. One night, Burch and Radburn placed all slaves in a steamboat to transfer them to the pen of Mr. Goodin in Richmond, Virginia.

In Mr. Goodin's pen, Solomon meets other black slaves, as well as Robert, who like him, was free before being kidnapped and brought there. In the morning all the slaves were forced to continue sailing further in the river except Clemens Ray, whom Burch took back to Washington, and later succeeded to escape to Canada. In Norfolk, Virginia, more slaves were brought on board among them Arthur who was kidnapped with whom Solomon tried to escape but it was unsuccessful.

Arrived in New Orleans, Solomon was given to a slave trader named Theophilus Freeman, who gave him a new name " Platt" and put him on sale. He was sold with a another slave named Eliza, to a plantation owner William Ford. Ford was generous and kind with his slaves. However, he encountered some financial trouble, which led him to sell Platt to a carpenter John M. Tibbeats. He was going to work in Ford's Bayou Boeuf plantation, 27 miles away. Tibbeats was the opposite of Ford, he was brutal and cruel. After not being satisfied with Northup's work, Tibbeats tried to whip him, but the other slaves intervened. Northup took his revenge and whipped Tibbeats. Tibbeats later came back with two white men, who hang him up in order to execute Northup but William Ford's chargehand rescued him. Northup spent one

entire day tied to that tree, and no one dared to rescue him, until Ford arrived freed him. Day after. Tibeats sold Patt to Ford's brother in law, Peter Tanner.

A month later, he returned to Tibeats who continued to torture and mistreat the slave. After having a huge disagreement between the two, Patt escaped and crossed the Great Pacoudrie Swamp. He ended up safe in Ford's house where he spent four days. Patt was escorted back to Tibeats, Bayou Boeuf plantation by Ford. Afterward, he had a small passage in Big Cane Break to work for Mr. Eldret, then he was finally sold to the planter Edwin Epps, a cruel master with whom he stayed for the following decade. Throughout this time, Northup has been a driver, artisan slave, and occasionally worked on sugar plantation and as vilionist for Epps' entertainment. In that plantation, he linked up with many other slaves Abram, Wiley, Phebe, Henry, Edward, and Patsey.

The destruction of Epps' plantation led to the shifting of Patt to Judge Turner's sugar plantation. He became an overseer and was given the responsibility to whip other slaves. Northup had even gained an amount of money from his violin performances especially during Christmas. He was a spectator of Patsey's suffering who was sexually abused by the master. Edds and Northup had a violent altercation in which he tried to kill him. After that Epps hired a poor white man Armsby with whom Northup made a deal of transmit a letter for him but Armsby betrayed him and told the master. Northup succeeded and persuaded his master that Armsby is a liar. Throughout his captivity in Epps's plantation, Northup witnessed many slave executions, and escapades. One day, a white tanner named Mr.O'Niel, suggested to buy Patt, who confessed to Phebe that he would be happy to join him. The master's wife overheard him and told her husband. Northup was punished and kept in Epps' plantation. At the arrival of the summer 1852, Epps hired carpenters, among them Bass, a white man from Canada. Rapidly, Patt took his chance and asked him if he could help him send letters to friends in to Saratoga Springs. Bass agreed, but unfortunately there was no response. He promised Patt to travel personally to Saratoga Spring to try to contact his friends and family. Northup pursued his duties as a slave, and lost hope of seeing Bass again. Until the morning of January 3rd, 1853, when two white men came to the plantation and rescued him from slavery. On January 4th, 1853, Northup and the two man were on their way to the north where he found his freedom and reunites with his family. Northup tried to pursue his kidnappers, but it was unsuccessful and left unsatisfied.

Conclusion

Slave narratives served as a bridge between the past and the present by documenting what black people had to undergo as slaves at a given point in their lives. There are numerous ones written presently by individuals all around the world, victims of modern slavery, people who had been through forced labor, sex trafficking, and domestic servitude. In this chapter, we introduced the two writers, Solomon Northup and Shyima Hall, and their life before, during, and after slavery, as well as their biographies. Additionally, we supplied readers with a plot summary of the two works *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl*. In the next chapter, we will present the Marxist theory, explaining the main concepts and roots of this literary theory. Furthermore, we will analyze the two novels based on the Marxist theory, illustrating with passages from the novels.

Chapter Two

Aspects of Marxism in *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl*

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first one deals with marxism theory on which our work is based; the second section deals with the Marxist analysis and criticism of the two chosen novels. In the first section, a brief introduction to Marxism is given, then a definition of class struggle, and slave society, in order to present the chosen theory to the reader and to clarify what made us choose the Marxist theory. The second section is designed to analyse the two novels *Twelve Years A Slave* Solomon Northup and *Hidden Girl* Shyima Hall with a Marxist point of view. Hall and Northup were effective in sharing their stories. They both experienced oppression, brutality, and exploitation from different angles and in different periods. This chapter tries to illustrate the various ways in which both authors were dehumanized and provide a clear overview of their existence as slaves during two different eras.

II.I Marxist Theory

II.I.I General Introduction to Marxism

The 19th century saw the birth of an important philosophical ideology which is called Marxism according to Karl Marx, a German philosopher who developed this theory with Frederick Engels. Marxism is an economic and political theory which is based on class relations, class struggle and the development of societies. It rose against the Industrial Revolution, capitalism and the bourgeoisie, which he refers as the haves. In his theory, Karl Marx focused mainly on the oppression of the have-nots, the proletariat, by the haves as mentioned above. He rejected the idea of rich capitalists becoming richer by exploiting the lower class of workers and slaves. He developed in his book *The Communist Manifesto* a notion of communism; a program meant to critique capitalism, its social conditions, and the struggle between members of different socio-economic classes.

The Communist Manifesto begins with: “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle” (Marx1). It is important to keep in mind that Marx saw society's structure in terms of its major classes, and the struggle between them as the engine of change within that structure. He did not believe in equilibrium or consensus. Within society's structure, conflict was not a deviation, and classes were not functional aspects of

the system's maintenance. The structure was a byproduct of and contributor to the class conflict. His was a conflict view of modern society (Understanding conflicts and war).

Karl Marx explains that the heart of the conflict in the modern society is between the masters and the slaves, the workers and their master, and as he portrays it, the bourgeoisie and the working class. There are many concepts that are important for understanding the Marxist theory, among them class, alienation, ideology, base and superstructure.

II.1.1.1 Class

It is gathering of persons with comparable social situations in terms of labor and exchange is referred to as a class. The proletariat, for example, is a social class defined by the necessity to sell their work power in order to produce cash since they lack proper property. They are, in a word, the "have-nots." The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is a social class defined by the possession of the means of production and the ability to earn money without having to work.

II.1.1.2 Alienation

The term "alienation" refers to how workers are alienated from the fruits of their effort as well as from other people. When the workers make something but are unable to take pride in it, their effort only puts them in competition with others, and the quality of their job brings them no profit. They are alienated laborers in this case.

II.1.1.3 Ideology

Ideology is a society's or group's set of values and beliefs. Ideology is usually explicit, or at least has a substantial explicit component, and it distorts a society's material conditions to defend them. For example, capitalist ideology emphasizes self-reliance and "self-made," while also promoting free competition. This obscures the fact that those born into wealthy families have a huge competitive advantage.

II.1.1.4 Base and Superstructure

The base and superstructure of any society consist of material conditions and then explicit institutions, art, and ideology, respectively. In other words, the economic conditions of any society are the driving reality behind any experience or political action. This encompasses the means of production as well as the social production and exchange interactions. The superstructure includes everything in society that is not strictly necessary,

such as ideologies, art, and institutions. This encompasses both religion and normative political perspectives, such as liberalism (On Marxist Criticism).

II.1.2 Class struggle

Sutrisno in *Cultural Studies: Challenges for Great Theories of Culture* defined class as the classification of individuals into groups based on socioeconomic conditions experienced together (Sutrisno 204). Sutrisno went on to say that class is a collection of social, economic, political, and intellectual inequalities. In class (group), power, which is one of the central parts of the subject in cultural studies, conceptualized as an impulse to achieve a goal (Barker 230-231). Furthermore, Barker in *Making Sense of Cultural Studies* (2002), stated that power is defined as a force utilized by individuals or groups to attain personal aims and interests that are in opposition to others' wishes. Slaves, according to Richard Ennals in *From Slavery to Citizenship* (2007) , have a lesser social rank than individuals in the lowest social class. They are thus, lower than the lowest castes as slaves. (Ennals 100) The existence of striking differences in social status between slaves and their masters.

The key to understanding Marx is his definition of class, which states that a class is defined by property ownership. Such ownership makes use of its authority to keep others out of the property and use it for personal gain. The bourgeoisie, who own the means of production such as machinery and factory buildings and whose source of income is profit; landowners, whose source of income is rent; and the proletariat, who own the means of production such as machinery and factory buildings and whose source of income is rent; are the three great classes of society when it comes to property, who own their labor and sell it for a wage. (Understanding Conflicts and War)

Class is determined by property rather than money or social standing. Distribution and consumption have an impact on these, reflecting class production and power relations. The social conditions of bourgeois production are defined by bourgeois property. As a result, class serves as a formal relationship between individuals.

Class interest is the factor that transforms latent class membership into a class fight. Individuals act in comparable ways as a result of similar class settings. They form a bond of mutual reliance, a community, and a shared interest that is linked to a common source of profit or compensation. Individuals form classes as a result of their shared interests, and

according to Marx, individuals form classes to the extent that their shared interests engage them in a conflict with the opposing class (R.J Rummel).

According to Marx's views on the evolution of class struggle, the conflict between classes was first restricted to particular firms. Individual battles gradually extend to industrial alliances as capitalism advances, the disparity between bourgeoisie and proletarian life conditions widens, and homogeneity within each class increases. On a social level, class struggle is becoming more apparent. Class awareness evolves, shared interests and programs emerge, and political power is wielded and disputed. Classes have become political forces.

Capitalism and class conflicts have been the primary causes of poverty and misery, as well as the existence of upper and lower classes, particularly in the slave society, which is a society in which the fundamental class conflict is based on the division of people into masters and slaves, with slaves being the dominant producing class and masters controlling ownership over this complete commodification of the human being.

Slave society, according to Marx and Engels, was the first form of class society. As a result of basing their understanding on the only ancient history knowledge that Europeans had at the time (on Rome, Greece, and Egypt), Marx and Engels believed that slave society arose when the tribal constitution was undermined by the presence of foreigners within the tribal community but outside the kinship system on which the tribal constitution was founded, and further, when the productivity of labor was such that the foreigners could be put to work. As Engels says :

The increase of production in all branches – cattle- raising, agriculture, domestic handicrafts – gave human labour-power the capacity to produce a larger product than was necessary for its maintenance. ... prisoners of war were turned into slaves. With its increase of the productivity of labour, and therefore of wealth, and its extension of the field of production, the first great social division of labour was bound, in the general historical conditions prevailing, to bring slavery in its train. From the first great social division of labour arose the first great cleavage of society into two classes: masters and slaves, exploiters and exploited. (Origin of Family)

Slave society had produced no class capable of overthrowing it, of making a social revolution. Atomized and reduced to the level of draught animals, the slaves were incapable of meaningful rebellion or escape, let alone of seizing power (Encyclopedia of Marxist).

Class struggle, according to Marx and Engels, is a conflict between two social classes, the rich and the poor, and their goal was to demonstrate that under Marxism, people will no longer battle for survival as they do under capitalism, and there will be no upper and lower classes.

Many literary works have purposefully or unconsciously revealed the contradictions inherent in the supposedly neutral or impartial superstructures of a society and its oppressive material base, as Marxist theory has been particularly influential in literature. Marxist literary theory includes criticism that exposes and examines those inconsistencies.

II.2 A Marxist Analysis of *Twelve Years A Slave* and *Hidden Girl*

II.2.1 Aspects of Marxism in *Twelve Years a Slave*

The main purpose of choosing Solomon Northup's novel *Twelve Years a Slave* is because he exposes the realities of slavery in the nineteenth century, detailing how the abused slaves suffered from their owners and explaining their emotions. Northup lived in America when slavery was in decrease, and many African Americans went there in search of a better future and lifestyle. The novel is a true story based on his own experiences as a slave, he states:

I can speak of Slavery only so far as it came under my own observation only so far as I have known and experienced it in my own person. My object is, to give a candid and truthful statement of facts: to repeat the story of my life, without exaggeration, leaving it for others to determine, whether even the pages of fiction present a picture of more cruel wrong or a severer bondage. (Northup 1)

Northup included in his novel a short definition of slavery according to his own experience as a slave. After spending several years under the control of several owners who treated him and all the other slaves like animals because of their color, whereas they have the same rights as human beings. He intended to speak about the violation of free men's rights and the abduction of free blacks from the North to the South, where they were sold into slavery. Northup declares:

The existence of Slavery in its most cruel form among them has a tendency to brutalize the humane and finer feelings of their nature. Daily witnesses of human suffering listening to the agonizing screeches of the slave beholding him writhing beneath the merciless lash bitten and torn by dogs dying without attention, and buried without shroud or coffin it cannot otherwise be expected, than that they should become brutified and reckless of human life." (Northup 97)

Northup lived more than thirty years in total freedom without any idea about slavery. He says: "I was too ignorant, perhaps too independent, to conceive how anyone could be content to live in the abject condition of a slave" (Northup 7). Suddenly after that his independence is stolen in the midst of his life, he is detached from his beloved ones: " Now had I approached within the shadow of the cloud, into the thick darkness whereof I was soon to disappear, thenceforward to be hidden from the eyes of all my kindred, and shut out from the sweet light of liberty, for many a weary year" (Northup 8). After accepting a job proposed by two men, Brown and Hamilton, he finds himself caught in the trap of slave trade and property of his future master : He answered that I was his slave-- that he had bought me, and that he was about to send me to New-Orleans" (Northup 15). In this concern, Salome Lee in her article entitled "Until We Are All Abolitionists: Marx on Slavery, Race, and Class" analyzed the writings of Karl Marx on slavery and racial discrimination in relation to society and economy. In the first chapter of her article, she talked about slavery as an economic category and its huge impact on the development of the American economy. She writes : The commercial buying and selling of African slaves transformed human laborers into fixed capital that produced the wealth enabling the Old World to develop the technologies for capitalist societies. (Lee 3)

In fact, Karl Marx went further in his words by defining slavery as the fundamental key to the evolution of the America we know today and her notoriety over the whole world, as also her economy was based on the incomes from the plantations of cotton, sugar, and Tabaco. He said:

Without slavery, North America, the most progressive country, would be transformed into a primitive country. You have only to erase North America from the map of nations and you will have anarchy, the total decay of

commerce and of modern civilization. But to let slavery disappear is to erase North America from the map of nations. (Marx 24)

The whole work is written in the first person narration with the use of " I ", with the exception of a part in it when Solomon spoke about himself in third person, most likely to show how he was perceived from others when Platt says: The young men and maidens of Holmesville always knew there was to be a jollification somewhere, whenever Platt Epps was seen passing through the town with his fiddle in his hand...Platt would draw his bow, and sitting astride his mule, perhaps, discourse musically to crowd of delighted children, gathered around him in the street (Northup 102).

With this opening, Northup wanted to attest the veracity and objectivity of his book, and asserting that none of the violence or abuse he describes has been exaggerated or copied. Throughout his narrative, he discusses several and essential issues concerning slavery and described his battle to free himself from the slave system. In contrary to many other slave narrators, he was a free-born African American from New York and the son of a liberated slave called Mintus Northup. He had a wonderful relationship with his family, his wife Ann and children, and is widely known locally for his talents as a violinist. He never ceased thinking about his wife and children during his twelve years in captivity, he described his love and affection for them as he says:

From the time of my marriage to this day the love I have borne my wife has been sincere and unabated; and only those who have felt the glowing tenderness a father cherishes for his offspring, can appreciate my affection for the beloved children which have since been born to us. This much I deem appropriate and necessary to say, in order that those who read these pages, may comprehend the poignancy of those sufferings I have been doomed to bear. (Northup 4)

Northup wanted to introduce himself in the most ordinary and modest manner possible in order to demonstrate that they are equal with Northerners. He works, loves his family and enjoys his freedom as human being, just like them. Racial discrimination emerged as a result of the white supremacist ideology, which is the basis of the majority of white characters' conviction in the memoir. The characters that have been racist toward Northup and the other slaves are both black and white, for instance: Burch, Theophilus, John Tibbeats, Bass, Mr. Epps, and Mrs Epps. They revealed their racism toward them by

being aggressive physically and verbally, as seen by the varied attitudes expressed by the characters, and we can clearly observe white pressure on the black from the language that the white choose while speaking to them. The verbal aggression was exposed in the memoir by insulting, teasing and threats. One of the examples of verbal aggression is the use of the word 'nigger' in order to humiliate and abase them: "Those niggers" (Northup 41), "cotton-picking niggers" (37), "Dance, you d—d niggers, dance, Epps would shout" (85), and "but all men, niggers, and monkeys ain't" (128).

The worst thing that can people endure, is to be taken away from his/her family against their will and be imprisoned for the rest of their life, which is called Social Alienation. *Alienation and Social Classes*, Karl Marx talked about the two social classes, proletariat and bourgeoisie. Due to their wealth, the rich took control over everything in society and made the poor their servants for their own advantage. He wrote,

It does this only by giving rise to the proletariat as proletariat—this poverty conscious of its own spiritual and physical poverty, this dehumanization that it conscious of itself as a dehumanization and hence abolishes itself. The proletariat executes the sentence that proletariat-producing private property passes upon itself, just as it executes the sentence that wage labour passes upon itself by producing others' wealth and its own povert. (Marx 143)

In the memoir, Solomon Northup was victim of family detachment, when he woke up in chains with his free papers gone, he notes,

I felt on my pockets, so far as the fetters would allow--far enough, indeed, to ascertain that i had not only been robbed of liberty, but that my money and free papers were also gone! Then did the idea begging to break upon my mind, at first dim and confused, that I had been kidnapped. (Northup 13)

Though Northup tried to proclaim his freedom, he kept repeating his name, but James H. Burch ignored him and forced him to confess that he is a fugitive slave from Georgia. After that, he was forced to alter his name. Despite the dehumanizing act of stealing their freedom, they have lost their dignity since they have been given a new identity. It is a way of showing them that they belong to someone and detaching them from

their previous life as "Free people". Through this change, the families had less chance and much difficulty to find them. They had no rights, not even the privilege to use their own name; slaves were obliged to have the same last name as their masters. Burch gives Solomon the name Platt: More than once I heard it said that Platt Ford, now Platt Tibbeats—a slave's name changes with his change of master—was "a devil of nigger" (Northup 57).

Being away from his family has made of Northup a depressed, melancholic, and upset man since his life as a slave was determined by what the master did and where the slave trader sold him. Families were divided as a result of the purchasing and selling of slaves. While not all Africans in America were slaves, a significant number of them were, especially in the southern regions. Northup has mentioned his family multiple times in his memoir, saying that he is in deep sorrow, and misses them to the point of dreaming of them :

I was heart sick and discouraged. Thoughts of my family, of my wife and children, continually occupied my mind. When sleep overpowered me I dreamed of them—dreamed I was again in Saratoga—that I could see their faces, and hear their voices calling me. Awakening from the pleasant phantasms of sleep to the bitter realities around me, I could but groan and weep. (Northup 16)

The slaves were in deep sorrow that they wished they were dead rather than being away from their loved ones, as Northup questioned himself: "Why had I not died in my young years—before God had given me children to love and live for?" (81). Family plays an essential role in maintaining hope for the African American to survive and escape slavery.

There are many other characters in the novels that had been through the same path as Northup. For example, Eliza. She was introduced in Chapter 3 as the " slave of Elisha Berry". She was born in a plantation, and had a child with her master. Northup and Eliza were close, they were both bought the same day to the slave market, where he witnessed Eliza seeing her child taken away from her:

All the time the trade was going on, Eliza was crying aloud, and wringing her hands. She besought the man not to buy him, unless he also bought herself and Emily. She promised, in the case, to be most faithful slave that ever lived. The man answered that he could not

afford it, and then Eliza burst into a paroxysm of grief, weeping plaintively. (35)

During the time they spent in the plantations with their masters, Northup and all the other slaves had to endure horrible and inhuman acts. The colored people who are considered inferior are deprived from decent conditions by their master. While the owner, who is a white person from the upper class, lives in a luxurious mansion mentioned as "the great house." which was permitted to be entered only by the cooks and slave houses. They were not allowed to build a relationship, whether friendly or romantic. For Eliza, her children were the only source of love and affection she had, and they deprived her of motherhood. The basic human rights are violated by the nobler white race which separates this caring mother from her babies. In chapter 6, Northup relates how many times he witnessed mothers in tremendous sorrow when their kid died, but he has never seen such intense regret for the loss of someone loved,

It recalls memories more mournful and affecting than any language can portray. I have seen mothers kissing for the last time the face of their dead offspring; I have seen them looking down into the grave, as the earth fell with a dull sound upon their coffins, hiding them from their eyes forever; but never have I seen such an exhibition of intense, unmeasured, and unbounded grief, as when Eliza was parted from her child. (37)

Northup would be enslaved for twelve years and suffer physically and psychologically on the basis of race and color. Racial discrimination is an ideology of superiority practiced by the white wealthy people over blacks. In *Measuring Racial Discrimination* (2013), racial discrimination is defined as mistreatment of a group of people based on their race, color or religion: 'differential treatment on the basis of race that disadvantages a racial group and treatment on the basis of inadequately justified factors other than race that disadvantages a racial group (55). However, it not only disadvantages a specific group but also violates their human rights. The whites were unconcerned about slaves' misery; they never had a sense of humanity or remorse toward them. The first day of his kidnapping, Burch whipped him for not receiving the answer he wanted. The following extract from the memoir attests Northup's captivity and torture:

When again tired, he would repeat the same question, and receiving the same answer, continue his cruel labor...All his brutal blow cools not force from my lips the foul lie that I was a slave...This was far more painful than the other. I struggled with all my power, but it was in vain. I prayed for mercy, but my prayer was only answered with imprecations and with stripes. I thought I must die beneath the lashes of the accrued brute. Even now the flesh crawls upon, as I recall the scene. I was all on fire. My sufferings I can compare to nothing else than the burning agonies of hell! ". (Northup 16)

It is definitely not the last time that Northup was whipped and tortured. Throughout his whole experience of being a slave, he not only endured those horrible acts, but also witnessed other slaves go through it, Patsy is one of them. She was described by Northup as as twenty-three years old, joyous, obedient, light-hearted girl. She was named " The queen of the field", because the owner was always satisfied of her task, however that did not prevent her from being bitten more than all the other slave, on account of the jealousy of the master's wife :

Yet Patsy wept oftener, and suffered more, than any of her companions. She had been literally excoriated. Her back bore the scars of a thousand stripes; not because she was backward in her work, nor because she was of an unmindful and rebellious spirit, but because it had fallen to her lot to be the slave of a licentious master and a jealous mistress. (88)

Patsy was not only a victim of racial discrimination like Northup, she had also experienced sexual discrimination as many other women during the period on enslavement, which led to her suicide. African American women are the ones who have been most affected by sexual discrimination by their white slave owners. They often got pregnant and their children, called "mullato ", were sold to other plantations because it was a telltale sign that the white master was unfaithful. Nevertheless, the white slave masters' sexual assault had a deeper significance, as the forced pregnancy of these women served as a symbol of the dominance relationship between black women and white men. As Jennifer Putzi states in her article entitled "Raising the Sigma: Black Womanhood the Marked Body in Pauline Hopkins's Contending Forces" writes, "Black female flesh was unprotected in the

institution of slavery, and the raping of female slaves by slave masters was not only a means of stripping them of physical agency, but a tactic used in order to destroy the social fabric of the entire slave community". (Putzi 5)

Northup was dragged to the slave market in Chapter Six to be traded under the name Platt. Slaves were required to clean themselves to attract attention of the customers, and were exposed to numerous physical examinations in to determine their worth before being sold, as well as how they were organized when displayed to their eventual future owner:

We were now conducted into a large room in the front part of the building to which the yard was attached, in order to be properly trained, before the admission of customers. The men were arranged on one side of the room, the women on the other. The tallest was placed at the head of the row, then the next tallest, and so on in the order of their respective heights. (Northup 32)

Another form of physical brutality that black people faced as slaves is forced labour that exceeded the capabilities of an ordinary human being and was performed in wretched conditions with pitiful incomes which is defined as "exploitation". It is a result of private capital possession and wage labor, as well as obligations that give the slaves little influence over what they do, thereby Marx defined the exploitation of slaves as the only source of income for the owner of the plantation: "the slave-owner buys his laborer [slaves] as he buys his horse. If he loses his slave, he loses capital"(Marx) .

In this memoir, Northup portrayed the economic exploitation he faced, and highlight his experience as a slave laborer in the cotton plantations of his different owners. The slaves were obliged to work until exhaustion from sunrise to sunset, regardless their physical and moral state. They did, however, labor in various contexts on plantations. Domestic workers included cooks, servers, maids, and craft workers. Others were allocated to jobs like as chariot drivers, and hostlers. This labor process does not appear to be rewarding or freeing to the laborer, but rather reminds him of his inferior human status as a slave: He, therefore, does not confirm himself in his work, but denies himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh and ruins his mind (Marx 64) .

As soon as Northup was bought by his master, he was ordered to begin work despite his sickness :

I was now compelled to labor very hard. From earliest dawn until late at night, I was not allowed to be a moment idle. Notwithstanding which, Tibeats was never satisfied. He was continually cursing and complaining. He never spoke to me a kind word. I was his faithful slave, and earned him large wages every day, and yet I went to my cabin nightly, loaded with abuse and stinging epithets. (Northup 47)

Northup describes his first master, the minister William Ford, as a very kind and noble Christian man, who was concerned by the slaves' physical and psychological state :

It is true there are many kind-hearted and good men in the parish of Avoyelles—such men as William Ford—who can look with pity upon the sufferings of a slave, just as there are, over all the world, sensitive and sympathetic spirits, who cannot look with indifference up. (97)

However, his second master Edwar Epps was cruel, he whipped his slaves for any reason, and pushes them to work beyond their limits and with no rewards. Northup declares:

Ten years I toiled for that man without reward. Ten years of incessant labor has contributed to increase the bulk of his possessions. Ten years I was compelled to address him with downcast eyes and uncovered head – in the attitude and language of a slave. I am indebted to him for nothing, save undeserved abuse and stripes. (85)

Everything is purchased and sold under the capitalist way of production. The bourgeoisie finds financial value in everything. It sets itself apart from all other class societies. Through Northup's experience in the plantations, the concept of exploitation, persons being molded into possessions, is well conveyed in the memoir. The slaves spent all their days in the plantations, working very hard beyond their abilities to avoid being whipped and hoping to satisfy their masters earn their wage and not be deprived of it. If the slaves were less efficient, they would be whipped and shown unable. The master devised a method in which every cotton picked by the laborers was weighed, and the required average per day for each picker was two hundred pounds. Because the labor and its output did not belong to the laborer, he was not free to realize his full capabilities while laboring. Slaves had to work for long hours as Solomon describes:

The hands are required to be in the field as soon as it is light in the morning, and, with the exception of ten or fifteen minutes, which is given to them at noon to swallow their allowance of cold-bacon they are not permitted to be a moment idle until it is too dark to see, and when the sun is full, they often times labor till the middle of the night. (77)

Despite the fact that Northup's energy was strained on the plantation by laboring from early dawn to late at night, he was never given approval for his labor. Regardless of the conditions in which he lived, he had a miserable income even after working hard, it was up to his master to decide how much he deserved to earn. For the slave-holders, the fact of giving them a shelter, providing them food and clothes should be enough to be grateful. Richard D. Wolff clearly explained in his book entitled *Understanding Marxism* the procedure of slave's wage in a capitalist society ruled by white people. A small amount of the income is paid to the laborer, while the other is kept by the master for his own consumption or to buy material for the development and growth of his wealth:

In slavery, the slaves produce the goods and services that become entirely – 100% - the immediate property of the master (as is the slave). The master decides whether, when, how, and how much of the slaves' output will be returned to the slave for the latter's reproduction (food, clothing, shelter, etc.). This result can be expressed by dividing the length of the slaves' working days into two portions: one is the portion whose products are returned to the slaves for their consumption. Marx called this the slaves' "necessary labor." The second portion of the slaves' labor yields products kept and used by the master; Marx called this "surplus labor." It was labor done by slaves beyond that necessary for whatever level of reproduction masters allowed them. (D. Wolff 10)

Moreover the African Americans are not just considered a source of income for the masters, they would also sometimes serve as a source of entertainment. The owner would therefore maintain his slaves awake all night performing and singing for him while he sipped his wine "Dance, you d—d niggers, dance," Epps would shout" (Northup85). In the case of Northup, he was frequently called to play violin, as he was a well-known violinist before enslavement, in some occasion like Christmas. He recounts:

All of us would be assembled in the large room of the great house, whenever Epps came home in one of his dancing moods. No matter how worn out and tired we were, there must be a general dance. (84)

Even if they did not sleep until late at night, slaves were required to rise up early the next day to labor in the plantation. Even if it was another kind of exploitation, Northup enjoyed it. It reminded him of his previous life, his freedom, and most of all it allowed him to earn a little more money, which led him being called "The Wealthiest Nigger" in plantation.

Another kind of oppression and unfair treatment that the whites have subjected to the blacks was depriving them of their freedom. The idea of regaining their freedom or having the privilege of leaving the plantation alone was unimaginable. The slaves needed a written permission from their master to leave the plantation, and a certain distance not to exceed. In this context, Thomas William Hannibal said in *The American Negro: What He Was, What He Is, and What He May Become: A Critical and Practical Discussion* :

They were forbidden to leave their place of employment without written permission from their employer; nor could they be absent after nightfall without liability to arrest and severe punishment. Moreover, should they quit their places of service, they could be arrested by any white man, and lodged in the nearest jail, to await identification and recovery. (Hannibal 49)

In the same concern, Northup confirmed this point by relating one of his chances to go out of the plantation, They have the right, either by law, or by general consent, to inflict discretionary chastisement upon a black man caught beyond the boundaries of his master's estate without a pass, and even to shoot him, if he attempts to escape. (Northup 113)

Slavery is portrayed in the memoir as a sickness that grew among an influenceable community, and as they grew aware of the presence of slavery, they were impacted by its brutality, and their personality became more accustomed to those atrocities inflicted on the people of color. Because their spirits were marked, it was practically hard to heal them from it :

It is not the fault of the slaveholder that he is cruel, so much as it is the fault of the system under which he lives. He cannot withstand the influence of habit

and associations that surround him. Taught from earliest childhood, by all that he sees and hears, that the rod is for the slave's back, he will not be apt to change his opinions in maturer years. (Northup 97)

From the moment Northup understood that he was a victim of slavery, he started to figure out how he could escape from his bondage. From the beginning, the thought of escaping and rejoining their families was in his head, "My thoughts, as usual, wandered back to my wife and children. The consciousness of my real situation; the hopelessness of any effort to escape through the wide forests of Avoyelles, pressed heavily upon me, yet my heart was at home in Saratoga. (41)

Despite the fact he knew the fate of a fugitive slave caught outside a plantation, he did not give up. Thus, he felt pessimism in certain circumstances of his escape, all the hazards that may menace him during his effort, and he understood that his prospects of escaping were slim. His impulse to escape was primarily overcome by his dread of dying.

The African Americans were not protected by the law; on the contrary, even under the eyes of the law, the slaveholder had the right to kill or torture a black, since he was considered as his master's property. Northup has many opportunities to escape but he wanted a way in which he would be safe and out of danger. Slaves fantasized on owning a land that might feed them, working without fear of torture or hunger. They desired to travel freely, free of permissions and limitations. This was the freedom they desired. Besides, he claims that black people were not blind to the necessity of liberty. Black males are viewed as naive and clueless about liberty, they just did not have the right to express their thoughts. Northup states:

Let them know the heart of the poor slave—learn his secret thoughts—thoughts he dare not utter in the hearing of the white man; let them sit by him in the silent watches of the night—converse with him in trustful confidence, of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and they will find that ninety-nine out of every hundred are intelligent enough to understand their situation, and to cherish in their bosoms the love of freedom, as passionately as themselves. (Northup 97)

For nine years, Solomon continued dreaming of the day in which he would be a freeman, and that day came when he encountered Samuel Bass, who offered him his help by taking a letter to his family. Northup had faith in him and waited for him. One day the

Heriff and Henry B. Northup came to the plantation with Northup's paper as a free man, as he tells us in the novel: "Through the thick, black cloud, amid whose dark and dismal shadows I had walked twelve years, broke the star that was to light me back to liberty" (Northup 144).

In the novel, we find out that freedom is the dream of all the slaves, the freedom to work for their own, not to take orders from someone and above all, and not to depend on people. Karl Marx regarded freedom as the release of the alienated individual in the capitalist system. This emancipation involves freedom from the division of labor as well as freedom from class society. Enslaved Africans applied a variety of strategies to oppose their servitude, like deculture, dehumanization, and marginalization. For Northup, going back to the North as a free man to reunite with his family was not enough for him to be happy. His ultimate goal was to regain his honor as a black free man by taking revenge from all those who stole twelve years of his life. But in the North, the people of color did not have the right to denounce someone; their speech was not considered and is not credible in the eyes of the law. "I was then offered as a witness, but, objection being made, the court decided my evidence inadmissible. It was rejected solely on the ground that I was a colored man" (Northup 156).

In December, 1865 the 13th Amendment abolished slavery in the United States, and the war between the two social classes was finally over. Marx advocated the abolition of the practice of allocating Blacks to the lowest labor class as fixed sources of income as he states:

The present struggle between the South and the North is therefore nothing but a conflict between two social systems, the system of slavery and the system of free labor. The struggle broke out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side-by-side on the North American continent. It can end only with the victory of one system or the other. (Marx 93)

II. 2.2 Aspects of Marxism Depicted in *Hidden Girl*

The memoir *Hidden Girl* written by Shyima Hall is a suitable story in order to achieve the goal of this research; denouncing slavery in modern ages. The story of the writer is about her being a child, and being exposed to slavery at a young age, she experienced it in a modern era where slavery is officially abolished in all countries of the world.

Most people think that slavery in the United State was stamped out during the Civil War, but that's not true. Legalized Slavery is gone, but today as many as 17.500 people who are held in bondage are illegally brought into our country every year. And it is estimated that there are as many as twenty-seven million slaves globally. (Hall 9)

This memoir is a concrete proof that slavery still exists today. An eight years old girl named Shyima El-sayed Hassan, who was born in a poor family in a small town near the Alexandria, was sold by her family to a wealthy family in Cairo where she was condemned to serve her masters, and work in their house in Cairo, and California for several years, until she was saved thanks to the reports from local residents.

She was mistreated and forced to work every day without any rest. Shyima Hall wanted to denounce modern slavery, and to show to the world with her story that slavery still exists, and it's a reality that no one talks about in media and. Through the book we empathize with her woes and the misery she was living in. Being a child slave has caused Shyima many impacts on her life, she was psychologically destroyed, and didn't get a normal childhood; she was separated from her family, and didn't have the freedom to play and learn like any normal child. This has caused her the feeling of being inferior, and influenced her growth and development. Hall experienced modern slavery in many forms, among them: Child labour and human trafficking, domestic slavery, and debt bondage.

Hall opened her story with a powerful introduction, she lifted the veil on a dreadful and unspoken reality, a taboo, which is slavery in the actual world, the one we are living in, the one that is presented as peaceful, and developed. Hall began her story by saying, "Everyone has a defining moment in his or her life. For some it is the day they get married or have a child. For other it comes when they finally reach a sought-after goal. My life however, drastically changer course the day my parents sold me into slavery. I was eight years old. (Hall 1)

In this passage Shyima El-Sayed Hassan introduces human trafficking and child labour; a modern form of slavery which is a phenomenon in which people who are still minor, and do not exceed 15years old are sent to other cities, or countries in order to exploit them. Children find themselves working in domestic labour, agricultural and industrial settings, and forced prostitution. Hall experienced transfers and transportation from a place to another; and was exploited as a slave. Shyima Hall defines Human trafficking as follows :

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, human trafficking is the fastest growing industry in the world today. There are two different forms of human trafficking: in one a person is recruited under false circumstances, and in the second a person is sold without her or his knowledge or consent. The latter is what happened to me, and is slavery in its truest sense. (Hall 8)

Shyima was born in a poor family, and her parents have signed a contract with a rich family in Cairo that said that her sister Zahra is supposed to work for the family for 10 years, it is considered as a relation of mutual benefits; an exchange of money for labour, or an exchange of a slave for money, but they were not well paid. This is what we have seen earlier in forms on modern slavery, this form is known as debt bondage, which is very similar to contract slavery. This kind of slavery is based on an agreement between the employer and the worker, or the master and the slave; people exchange labor for money. But when the workers are taken into the work, they find themselves mistreated, and not well paid. Hall says: “My parents had arranged to Zahra to work for this family, and while she had been paid a pittance (which my mother had picked every month), she’d technically been held in bondage” (Hall 2)

Debt bondage occurs generally as a result of poverty, and when a family cannot meet their daily basics of life, they are caught into debt bondage, which is considered today as enslavement of people. Mike Key and Aidan McQuade have made statistics about bounded laborers, and as a result of their research they concluded that poverty is the cause of this phenomenon, they declared that “Just over 81 per cent of bonded laborers took a loan because they did not have enough money to meet their basic daily needs, or to pay for a specific event like a wedding or a funeral” (Mike Key et al, 4).

One of the concepts of Marxian theory is class; people are separated into classes, the proletariat “the have-nots” and the bourgeoisie “the haves”, the proletariat sell their labor to the bourgeoisie in order to satisfy their daily need, while in the other hand the bourgeoisie is a class that have sufficient properties, sometimes more than they need, and they use this power to exploit the lower class. Karl Marx wrote in one of his books entitled “Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844:

It goes without saying that the *proletarian*, i.e., the man who, being without capital and rent, lives purely by labor, and by a one-sided, abstract labor, is considered by political economy only as a *worker*. Political economy can

therefore advance the proposition that the proletarian, the same as any horse, must get as much as will enable him to work. It does not consider him when he is not working, as a human being; but leaves such consideration to criminal law, to doctors, to religion, to the statistical tables, to politics and to the poor-house overseer. (6)

In this case, Shyima's family is classified as the lower class "the have-nots", who sell their daughter to work as a slave for a richer family "the haves". It is a matter of class and power, and a fruit of capitalism, and imperialism. Shyima's parents were eventually forced to sell Shyima as a slave to a wealthy Cairo family as a result of this scenario. This demonstrates that there are significant disparities between the two groups of Egyptians. Shyima's family is depicted as poor, whereas Shyima's employer's family is described as wealthy, implying that they have the capacity to enslave Shyima. This reveals that class has a link to modern slavery, specifically; it is cause of Shyima's enslavement.

Shyima's sister had been dismissed because she had stolen money from the family's house, an amount of money that Shyima's family couldn't pay, so they made an arrangement that says that Shyima's family will provide the wealthy family, Mr Abdel Nasser Eid Youcef Ibrahim, and his wife Amal Ahmed Ewis-Abd Motelib with someone else to work to repay the debt, and they decided that Shyima will be that girl. Shyima notes, "Then I heard my mother agree that the fair thing for everyone was for another girl to work in Zahra's place. "All right. It's a deal" the woman said in Arabic. The pit of my stomach lurched when I realized the girl they were talking about was me" (Hall 4).

According to Mike Key and Aidan McQuade in their research paper entitled "Poverty, Development, and the Elimination of Slavery" another member of a family can also be tracked in bondage, and take the place of someone else for many reasons, they wrote : "Other family member may also become bonded. This may take place if the debtor dies or becomes too old or sick to work or if an additional loan is needed to pay for medicines, food or other expenses" (3).

Because of the debt they have over this family, Hall was brought to Cairo, the capital of Egypt, and condemned in domestic slavery, so Shyima was subjected to another sort of modern slavery, namely domestic slavery, as a result of her domain or work area, which was her employer's home. Domestic slavery refers to servitude that occurs within the house. Domestic slaves are responsible for completing all of their owners' domestic work and are not permitted to leave the property. Shyima had the same experience. She was segregated from

her biological family and confined to her employer's home where she was forced to clean and serve the members of the family. She declares: “My Sister had caused this family grief, and to make up for that I was expected to become their domestic slave” (Hall 6).

She was struggling every day, and she was mistreated by her masters, or as she calls them “The mom, and the dad”. “I had a lot of trouble adjusting from being the young girl who lived happily in a large improvised,” she notes, “but loving family, to live in a home where I was demeaned every day in hundreds of ways” (Hall 1).

Hall experienced what Karl Marx defined as “alienation”, which is when the workers do something, and receive no profits from what they have done, he calls them “alienated laborers”, he defines alienation as: “the breakdown of, the separation from, the natural interconnection between people and their productive activities, the produce, the fellow workers with whom they produce those things, and with what they are potentially capable of becoming” (Marx) He claims that the reason why the alienated labor exists is because of private property, I quote :

True, it is as a result of the *movement of private property* that we have obtained the concept of *alienated labor (of alienated life)* in political economy. But on analysis of this concept it becomes clear that though private property appears to be the reason, the cause of alienated labor, it is rather its consequence, just as the gods are *originally* not the cause but the effect of man’s intellectual confusion. Later this relationship becomes reciprocal. (Marx 33)

According to Marx, there are three main elements that constitute Alienation, the first one is that the work is not part of the worker’s nature, the second one is that the worker is forced to do the work, and it only satisfies the needs of others and not his, the third and the final one is that the work does not belong to the worker but rather to another person.

According to Shyima’s story, we conclude that during the period in which she was enslaved, she has been as we have mentioned an alienated worker, she didn’t receive anything from the hard work she was doing, everything she does was for the profit of her capturers. She wrote :

While I believed I had been paying off my sister’s debt as part of their deal with my parents The Mom, and The Dad were paying them a small amount each month, the equivalent of seventeen US dollars. Later I would learn that this arrangement was most likely a split-if, for example, my “ employment”

had earned me fifty dollars a month back in Egypt, The Mom and The Dad would have given my parents less, and the difference would have gone toward the debt my family owed. (Hall 11)

Despite the fact that Hall was not receiving anything from her daily work, she was also mistreated. Shyima was subjected to numerous sorts of torture as a slave, including verbal and physical torture, in addition to the emotional suffering caused by the psychological torment she endured. Shyima's boss, as well as Mom and Dad, frequently slap Shyima and call her a "stupid girl." The Mom and The Dad were abusing her verbally, and physically, "Life went on... and on", she notes, " Day after day I waited on this family, took care of their every need, and cleaned their house. I took their verbal abuse and received more slaps than I care to count. I never had a day off, even when I did not feel well" (Hall 1).

The girl was mistreated and we notice this in several passages of her memoir, in addition to the fact that she was not rewarded for her work, being abused emotionally, and physically, she was also not allowed to take any rest even if she was extremely sick, she was everyday expected to clean, make food, and care about every detail in the house, she explains :

The next day I felt far, far worse. By day two I had no voice and it hurt to swallow. Imagine this, on the top of my other symptoms. Plus I was wheezing and congested and had an even higher fever than the day before. But I was still expected to do all that I did everyday. The Mom didn't allow me any downtime, which meant no time to rest and recover. (Hall, Chapter Five,1)

Shyima was a victim of modern slavery not just in Egypt, but also in California, the United States. The captor family moved to southern California when Shyima was ten years old, smuggling her into the country with the help of a hired attendant (who traveled in first class, while Shyima went solo in steerage). She was illegally trafficked. Shyima was taken with her biological parents' permission. "Mother" and "Father" discussed with Shyima's biological parents the possibility of bringing Shyima as their sole servant to their new home in California. This created an internal problem for Shyima, specifically the conflict between her feelings of contempt and affection for her family. On the one hand, she hated her father and mother for selling her as a slave, but on the other hand, her family's memories were what enabled Shyima to survive the servitude she endured.

Shyima still cared about her family, particularly her siblings. She resided in a small windowless storage space in the three-car garage of a luxury home in a gated community for two years. Shyima, who had been part of a large crew in the five-story mansion on the enormous Egyptian complex, was now serving her captor family of two parents and five children on her own. Her situation deteriorates as she is the only one left to serve them, and she is held responsible if anything goes wrong. She cooks and cleans for up to 20 hours a day and only eats one meal each day. She doesn't attend school, isn't taught English, and is usually hidden away:

The work was never ending. When I was in Egypt, I'd had the help of the other workers, but I was the only worker/slave my captors had brought to the United States. At ten years of age I had responsibility of all of it. When the twins got home, I got their snacks ready, and because The Mom always wanted me to cook something, I started getting diner ready. Only on rare occasions did she cook. When diner was over, when the family was done eating, I could finally eat my single meal of the day. (Hall 12)

Along the story, we understand that Shyima was not the only one to be trapped in slavery in a modern era. Shyima meets a girl who came with a family to visit The Mom and The Dad, and who is enslaved like her. "One day either a friend or a cousin of The Dad came to visit. He brought his family. . . and a girl like me, a slave." (Hall 12)

In the beginning of the memoir, Shyima declares that slavery is something that happens usually in Egypt, and in many other countries. "I was too young to understand that slavery was not an unusual situation for Egyptian families of our lower economic status", she declares. "For my parents, for this family, this was part of life" (Hall 5)

These unanswered questions are typical of my life, and the lives many children (and adults) who are held in bondage. Slaves often lose track of family and places, and memories fade or become distorted. Unfortunately, there are thousands of us- children and adults who live their lives in slavery in Egypt, Europe, and even in the United States (Hall 6)

Shyima, who was said to be born in 1989, was still between the ages of eight and thirteen when the story was set in the early 2000s. Shyima's enslavement tactics are part of modern slavery, as evidenced by the time frame that begins in the year 2000.

Shyima was freed after two to three years of servitude in California. As a result, Shyima's release took place in the United States. In this memoir, the present writer becomes a symbol, namely a symbol of freedom in the United States. Shyima finds America to be a place of liberation for her because it is there that she is set free from slavery and becomes a totally self-sufficient individual. She finally became a US citizen and lived a normal life with the rest of the population.

Shyima, a former slave, aspired to abolish modern slavery. Shyima realized that slavery had stripped her of her rights as a human being, and she didn't want anyone else to experience what she had. Shyima fought slavery by imprisoning her former employers, Mother and Father, in order to accomplish her beliefs. She also spoke in current slavery discussion groups, sharing her personal story of servitude. Individual resistance to modern slavery was Shyima's manner of resistance, which she manifested by becoming an antislavery activist.

Conclusion

Shyima, the character in *Hidden Girl*, faced modern slavery and had a relationship with the class struggle. The upper class (the master class) and the lower class (the controlled class) are depicted in this book; Shyima's employer represents an upper class society with authority, while Shyima represents a powerless lower class society. This social divide led Shyima's employers to use their influence to enslave her.

Hall was a victim of three types of modern slavery. Based on the debate, the current writer concludes that Shyima was a victim of human trafficking since she was sold as a slave by her parents, and she was transported and transferred from one location to another in order to be exploited by her employer. Shyima was also a victim of domestic slavery because she worked in the home realm and completed all of her employer's household responsibilities. Shyima's existence revolved solely around her employer's home, and she was completely cut off from her biological family. Shyima's other form of contemporary slavery was child slavery, because she was enslaved when she was under the age of 18, and she was used for her master's personal gain as a child. Shyima felt compelled to fight as a result of her tragedy. She was able to defeat her previous employers by putting them in prison. Shyima also joined the struggle by sharing her story as a former slave in modern slavery discussion forums around the United States, with the goal of assisting in the abolition of the humanitarian problem.

Individually, Shyima demonstrated resistance to modern slavery by becoming an anti-slavery campaigner. As a result, based on the review of the main character in this memoir, it may be determined that class has a connection to modern slavery. The main character's modern enslavement is caused by her social class. This supports the theory that there is a link between class and modern slavery. Aside from the connections between class and modern slavery, the types of modern slavery stated by the protagonist can also be inferred. The main character is then subjected to three types of modern slavery: human trafficking, domestic enslavement, and child labour.

General Conclusion

In the antebellum era, when Americans and African Americans turned to literature, many ex-slave authors began to make dogged efforts to express themselves and all slaves in America by becoming members of antislavery groups through their writings. Slavery continues to be a global phenomenon and a viable economic source of income. And, like ex-slave authors, fugitives of modern slavery seek to condemn racism and oppression to the general public.

Marxism is concerned with economic phenomena and labor morals in communities; it examines the impact of capitalism on societies and how it is the primary cause of the establishment of class-based society, and hence the exploitation of vulnerable people by persons perceived to be in the superior classes. After analyzing *Twelve Years a Slave* of Solomon Northup and *Hidden Girl* of Shyima Hall and the experience of the two authors, it can be concluded that slavery is a genuine occurrence and that capitalism is the primary source of class conflict, exploitation, and enslavement.

Solomon Northup, a famous character in American black literature, is one of those writers who used the slave narrative to combat slavery. His work bears witness to human suffering under the bondage of slavery, including physical and psychological torture at the hands of the owner, the value of family and the difficulties of preserving family relationships while enslaved. According to the analysis, the features of Marxism in Solomon Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* are shown by highlighting the problems of being the lower class and the unjust treatment of exploitation by racism, as well as by showing how slavery has brought the gloomy veil of mankind.

The act of owning individuals in *Twelve Years a Slave* as private property for the purpose of upper class success and as a mere instrument to obtain more financial value, which is worse than cruel. The detachment of ownership of black people as slaves to attain the pretentious objective of demand, to develop proficiency via toiling the task without protest or even sound, is an example of social alienation. The next element is class exploitation is exemplified by discrimination through slavery and violence. The slave has been subjected to physical violence in the form of hanging and lashing. Accepting certain threats from his master exposes him to psychological assault. The difficult conditions of the lower class, along with the heinous behavior of the upper class have given the black people horrors. The upper class pushes the black people to work nonstop from sunrise to dusk for their personal profit. Economic distinction is exhibited by capitalists who want to control the economy and end up

oppressing others in order to earn more money. The civilized culture does not recognize this as a problem at the time, but they are governed by the economics and materialistic attitude to exist by sacrificing other humans, in this case the black people, the impoverished slaves.

According to the study of Shyima Hall's memoir *Hidden Girl*, the main character suffered contemporary slavery that had a link with class. She was reared by an impoverished family and sold to a wealthy family for the goal of profiting from her new owners. In this narrative, the ruling elite is the master class, while the lower class is the dominated class; Shyima's owner represents an upper class society with authority, and Shyima represents a powerless bottom class society.

Shyima was subjected to three types of modern slavery, and human trafficking because her family sold her into slavery, and she was transferred from Egypt to the United States in order to be exploited by her master. Shyima also faced domestic slavery since she worked in the home realm and performed all of her employer's household responsibilities. Shyima's second encounter with modern slavery was child slavery, because she was enslaved while she was under the age of 18, and as a youngster she was utilized for the financial profit of her boss. She was able to defeat her previous boss by imprisoning him. Shyima also joined the battle by sharing her story as a former slave on modern slavery debate forums around the United States, with the goal of helping to resolve the human crisis. The major character's experience with contemporary slavery is caused by class. This proves the premise that class has a link with modern slavery. The final conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that the main character's struggle against modern slavery as a person by becoming an anti-slavery activist is a type of rebellion against modern slavery.

Finally, Marxist ideology pushed individuals to take action in order to abolish capitalism, social classes, and attain social equality. To eliminate a reality in which some individuals are found to have more money than they need, while others face great poverty, famine, and cruelty by the higher classes. These autobiographical memoirs, *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Hidden Girl* paint a vivid image of slavery and the horrible realities of capitalism. Through this study, we have attempted to achieve our objective by addressing the study questions; we have depicted the forms of slavery in the United States in the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, and the hardships the slaves faced due to their color, religion, and class.

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Résumé

Cette recherche entreprend une analyse marxiste de *Twelve Years a Slave* de Solomon Northup et de *Hidden Girl* de Shyima Hall. Les deux récits sont écrits à des périodes différentes, mais abordent la question de l'esclavage au cours des XIXe et XXIe siècles. Cette étude analyse l'impact horrible du patriarcat capitaliste sur les auteurs d'après la théorie littéraire marxiste. Ainsi, cette recherche couvre l'esclavage en Amérique depuis sa création et son évolution constante et définit les différentes formes d'esclavage anciennes et modernes. En outre, en prenant en considération les circonstances socio-historiques uniques dans lesquelles ces mémoires ont été écrits, cette étude démontre comment Solomon Northup et Shyima Hall ont été déshumanisés et privés de tous leurs droits dans leur vie quotidienne d'esclaves. Plus important encore, l'objectif de cette recherche est d'examiner les aspects majeurs du marxisme au sein des œuvres littéraires susmentionnées afin de mieux comprendre la souffrance des protagonistes aux mains de leurs maîtres et l'oppression, la discrimination et l'exploitation qu'ils ont endurées.

Mots clés : Marxisme, Esclavage, Esclavage moderne, Afro-américains, exploitation, discrimination raciale, déshumanisation, travail des enfants.