



## The Self-Reflection in Hunger of Memory Critical Theory Psychoanalysis

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### ABSTRACT

This thesis is about the self-reflection in Hunger of Memory according to the critical theory. Critical Theory has a narrow and a broad meaning in philosophy and in the history of the social sciences. Critical Theory in the narrow sense designates several generations of German philosophers and social theorists in the western European Marxist tradition known as the Frankfurt school. According to these theorists, a critical theory may be distinguished from a traditional theory according to a specific practical purpose: a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation from slavery, acts as a liberating...influence and works to create a world which satisfies the need and powers of human beings.

The study of other self –narratives help readers compare and contrast their lives with those of self- narrators. This cognitive activity of compare and contrast engenders self- examination and self-learning. The variety of self –narratives only attest to their increased recognition in humanities and social sciences. In the next chapter I provide an in – depth discussion of auto ethnography, a form of self – narrative adopted in the social sciences

### Introduction

Self –narrative refer to a wide range of written accounts of self, representing divers, authorship, theme and writing styles. They not only record personal stories of self-narrators but also embrace the sociocultural contexts of the stories. Therefore, writing ones owns self –narratives and studying other self-narratives are valuable in learning about self and others, particularly in a cultural sense. The writing process evokes self-reflection and self- analysis through which self –discovery becomes a possibility. The study of other self –narratives help readers compare and contrast their lives with those of self- narrators. This cognitive activity of compare and contrast engenders self- examination and self-learning. The variety of self –narratives only attest to their increased recognition in humanities and social sciences. In the next chapter I provide an in – depth discussion of auto ethnography, a form of self – narrative adopted in the social sciences .

Critical Theory has a narrow and a broad meaning in philosophy and in the history of the social sciences. "Critical Theory" in the narrow sense designates several generations of German philosophers and social theorists in the Western European Marxist tradition known as the Frankfurt School. According to these theorists, a " critical" may be distinguished from a " traditional" theory according to a specific practical purpose :a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human" emancipation from slavery", acts as a " liberating

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... influence", and works " to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers of " human beings ( Horkheimer 1972 b [1992,246] Because such theories aim to explain transform all the circumstances that enslave human beings, many " critical theories" in the broader sense have been developed .They have emerged in connection with the many social movements that identify varied dimensions of the domination of human beings in modern societies . In both the broad and the narrow senses, however, a critical theory provides the descriptive and normative bases for social inquiry aimed at decreasing domination and increasing freedom in all their forms.

Hunger of memory is the story of Mexican-American Richard Rodrigues, who begins his schooling in Sacramento, California, Knowing just 50 words of English, and concludes his university studies in the stately quiet of the reading room of the British museum.

## **Chapter one**

### **1. Introductory Remarks**

#### **1.1. Statement of the problem:**

Self –narrative refer to a wide range of written accounts of self, representing divers, authorship, theme and writing styles. They not only record personal stories of self-narrators but also embrace the sociocultural contexts of the stories Therefore, writing ones owns self –narratives and studying other self-narratives are valuable in learning about self and others, particularly in a cultural sense.

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#### **1.2. Aim of the study:**

The aim of the Study is to explore the self-reflection in the context of the critical theory. Studding the others self-narrative to understanding the psychoanalysis of the texts.

#### **1.3. Value of the study:**

- 1- The study can hold the critical theory value inside the Hunger of memory.
- 2-The study sheds light on the significance of the critical theory in Hunger of Memory.

#### **1.4. The scope of the study:**

- 1-The study is associated with the critical theory in Hunger of Memory.
- 2-The study focuses on the critical theory that receives focus in Hunger of Memory.

#### **1.5. Hypothesis:**

The researcher sees four major hypotheses as guiding the Critical theory to language:

- 1- Critical theories aim to change and critique society as a whole by finding the assumptions in social life that prevent people from participating in a true democracy.
- 2- Critical Theory developed in the Frankfrut school from scholars such as Horkheimer and Adorno with an emphasis on examining and deconstructing fascism and mass media.
- 3- Habermaas continued the tradition of Critical Theory through his notion of the life world and the public sphere. He theorized that political and economic institutions had invaded public life, leading to a lack of nuance in discourse and preventing people from participating in a real democracy.
- 4-Critical Theory morphed in to Critical legal theory in the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century, which eventually gave rise to branches such as critical race and critical gender theory.

#### **1.6. Procedure and Date collection:**

- 1- Explaining the idea of self-reflection according to the critical theory.
- 2-Tackeling various types of self-narrative in Hunger of Memory.

## **Chapter two**

### **2.1. Introduction**

studying others self-narratives is hardly a one-sided activity that result only in understanding others. Studying other in variably invites readers to compare and contrast themselves with others in the cultural texts they read and study, in turn discovering new dimensions of their own lives.

Self –discovery in cultural sense is intimately related to understanding others. If others refers to members of own community .The self is reflected in others in general sense. Values and standards up held by the

community are likely shared between self and others .Although people do not practice the values and standards of their community in minute detail ,the knowledge of the values and standards helps them understand others of similarity from their own community .Therefore understanding others could smooth the transition to understanding self, if others refers to members of other communities understanding the similarity between self and others captures only a portion of understanding others.

studying others has a value in self. However, consider that it has a greater purpose of helping to understanding self-Hall. Unapologetically argue that the real job of studying another culture is not to understand foreign culture but to understanding our own. The study of other cultural is the study of our lives, of our own ways of thinking and living whether seeing self through others or against others, the study of self-narratives through self-reflection is beneficial to cultural understanding.

## **2.2. Critical theory**

Held(1980 ,P25) Critical Theory has a narrow and a broad meaning in philosophy and in the history of the social sciences .Critical Theory in the narrow sense designates several generations of German philosophers and social theorists in the western European Marxist tradition known as the Frankfurt school .A according to these theorists ,a critical theory may be distinguished from a traditional theory according to a specific practical purpose :a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation from slavery ,acts as a liberating .....influence and works to create a world which satisfies the need and powers of human beings.

## **2.3. Definition**

Critical theory is a social theory that aims to critique and change society as a whole. Critical theories attempt to find the underlying assumptions in social life that keep people from fully and truly understanding how the world works.

Critical Theory, first emerging from Horkheimer (1993, P116) at the Frankfurt school, bridges its reach to ethics, political philosophy ,and the philosophy of history Critical theories claims that the social sciences must integrate philosophy into their methods to make its findings practical to advance the moral cause of freeing humans from circumstances such domination and oppression

While Critical theory is most associated with the Frankfurt school beginning with Horkheimer and Adorno and ending at Marcuse and Habermas.

Critical theory has extended to many other disciplines, such as feminism critical race theory, and critiques of colonialism.

## **2.4. Critical Theories of Gender:**

Critical theories of gender are concerned with the ways in which literature and other cultural media reinforce or undermine the economic, social, and psychological oppression of people of various genders. Critical feminist theories in particular focus on issues of power and seek to explain the organs and consequences of gender relations, particularly those privilege men.

They study the ways that assumptions and ideology around gender are produced, reproduced, resisted, and changed in and through the everyday experiences of men and women(coakley and Pike,2014 ,P122)

Like critical theories of race,critical theory of gender see their origins in critical legal studies.

## **2.5. Critical Theories of Race**

Parker and Roberts (2005, P176) mention that Racism is prevalent in ever day life and critical Theory scholars agree that the ideology and assumptions of racism are so ingrained in the political and legal structures of society as to be nearly unrecognizable. Of race and ethnicity is centered on examining the experiences of racial oppression in context in an attempt to challenge existing assumptions about the construction of race Critical theories of race can also trace its roots to philosophical, historical, and sociological critiques of oppression such as Marxism, feminist theory, and post colonialism (Parker and Roberts,2005, P177)

Critical Race Theory emerged as an outgrowth of the critical legal studies movement originating at Harvard Law School in the early 1980.

Law professors and students criticized how the law served to privilege the wealthy and powerful in US society while impeding the poor from using the courts as a means of writing their own wrongs (Parker and Roberts ,2005)

One of the main tenets of critical race theory is that, while classical racism remains alive, characterized by mundane practices and events infused with varying degree of racism, such as (micro aggressions) and other

subtle, automatic, non-verbal exchanges. For example, an educational institution can commit a micro aggression by creating hostile environmental by encounters for African Americans, such as seeing black males engages in black youth cultures as predatory.

## 2.6. Globalization

One criticism of the Frankfurt school is that it lacked a solid grounding in social reality.

(Kozlarek,2001,P167) argues that Horkheimer and Adorno take an overly euro-centric stance on the world, and that Euro centrism is a crucial impediment to critical theory, and suggests alternatives to the Euro centric world view in modern critical theory research. Rather than philosophically constructing ideas of what should be normal and an ideal society, Kozlarek claims, one must ask where the underlying assumptions of Critical theory come from, and what their socio-cultural functions were and are.

## Chapter three

### 3.1. Author Biography:

Richard Rodriguez was born on July 31,1944 in San Francisco, California, to Mexican immigrants. Rodriguez, the third of their four children. When Rodriguez was still a young child, the family moved to Sacramento, California, to a small house in a comfortable white neighborhood (optimism and ambition) led them to a house many blocks from the Mexican side of town.

Rodriguez begins his schooling in Sacramento, knowing just 50 words of English. He has authored a (trilogy) on American public life and his private life *Hunger for Memory*, *Days of Obligation* and *Brown Concerned*, respectively with class, ethnicity and race in America.

Gngage (1981, P174) mentions that Rodriguez covers his first few confusing months in school, when he did not speak in class because he did not feel comfortable with what little English he knew. After a few of the nuns from his school ask his parents to speak English around the house. Rodriguez takes his first steps towards becoming a (public man). Such assimilation into American culture is necessary and valuable, he asserts. As the book progresses, Rodriguez relates the story of his growing up, the power and pain of family ties, the role of the Catholic Church in his life, and his staunch rejection of affirmative action for ethnic and racial minorities in education and in the workplace.

### 3.2. Self-narratives for understanding self and others in *Hunger for Memory*

Self-narrative refer to a wide range of written accounts of self, representing diverse, authorship, theme and writing styles. They not only record personal stories of self-narrators but also embrace the sociocultural contexts of the stories. Therefore, writing one's own self-narratives and studying other self-narratives are valuable in learning about self and others, particularly in a cultural sense. The writing process evokes self-reflection and self-analysis through which self-discovery becomes a possibility. The study of other self-narratives help readers compare and contrast their lives with those of self-narrators. This cognitive activity of compare and contrast engenders self-examination and self-learning. The variety of self-narratives only attest to their increased recognition in humanities and social sciences. In the next chapter I provide an in-depth discussion of auto ethnography, a form of self-narrative adopted in the social sciences.

In his article he said "I was a listening child, careful to hear the very different sounds of Spanish and English. Wide eye with hearing. I listen to sounds more than words. First, there were English (gringo) sounds. So many words were still unknown that when the butcher or the lady at the drugstore said something to me, exotic polysyllabic sounds would bloom in the midst of their sentences.

Self-narratives refer to a wide range of written accounts of self, representing diverse genres, authorship, themes, and writing styles. They not only record personal stories of self-narrators but also embrace the sociocultural contexts of the stories. Therefore, writing one's own self-narratives and studying others, particularly in a cultural sense. The writing process evokes self-reflection and self-analysis through which self-discovery becomes a possibility. Torres(2003,P188) says that the study of the other self-narratives helps readers compare and contrast their lives with those of self-narrators. This cognitive activity of compare and contrast engenders self-examination and self-learning. The variety of self-narratives only attests to their increased recognition in humanities and social sciences. In the next chapter I provide an in-depth discussion of auto ethnography, a form of self-narrative adopted in the social sciences.

In *Hunger of Memory*, Rodriguez chooses that of the pastoral into which he inserts the scholarship boy and Nava chooses the genre of hermetic white male detective. However, as these authors' narratives evolve, they move away, from their original models.

Attempting to define the immigrant experience in the United States he frames this narrative with the genre of comedy and tragedy in *Brown* where he returns to the more intimate perspective of *Hunger of Memory*. With *Brown*, however, the autobiographer now tells his paradoxical tale with confidence. The voice in *Hunger of Memory* was painful to hear; his loneliness is palpable.

After having painfully searched (class) ethnicity and (race) respectively in his three autobiographies, he concludes in *Brown* that the world is brown, (not skin), but brown as an impurity (sodomy) he states is among the brownest of thoughts. However, he does not say this sadly; the pain is no longer unbearable. He prefaces this statement with where there's a will, there is a way. Rodriguez will most likely be criticized for identifying brown with race, love and sodomy. The education is presented as a paradox because for Rodriguez, and for the fictional Rios, Mexican American homosexual is an uneasy identity. It has few literary and public models and stands in sharp contrast to familiar representations of the Mexican American male.

Rodriguez's autobiographies refer to a search for self that is outlined by specific literary genres. In *Hunger of Memory*, Rodriguez tells the reader that he found a portrait of himself in the uses of literacy by Richard Hoggart (I found, in his description of the scholarship boy, myself). He relates to the scholarship boy because they share a similar history: a working-class background, an educational journey, and finally as a result of education—a middle-class identity and the loss of family and community ties. He introduces this autobiography by calling it a kind of pastoral ... I write in the tradition of that high courtly grace) but not from an aristocratic perspective, rather from a middle-class perspective.

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