

AN INTERPRETATION OF RACIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN ANDREA LEVY'S *THE LONG SONG*

Mr. Parmeshwar Bira Thorbole

Research scholar

Department of English

Shivaji University, Kolhapur

thorbolepamu22@gmail.com

&

Dr Prabhanjan Mane

Associate Professor

Department of English

Shivaji University, Kolhapur

pbm_eng@unishivaji.ac.in

Abstract

This research paper strives to interpret 'racial consciousness' in Andrea Levy's last novel The Long Song (2010). The term 'racial consciousness' is basically understood to mean racial awareness of an individual or a group of people that formulate the socio-cultural life of an individual along with a group of people. Racial consciousness is a form of socio-cultural consciousness that plays a crucial role in the development of racial relations. In fact, racial consciousness is a struggle to retain the identity. It is also racial conflict between white dominate and black dominated people which is the core problem in the development of racial relations. So the aim of this research paper is to interpret racial consciousness in the mind of major characters in Andrea Levy's novel The Long Song. In this paper, racial consciousness is interpreted in order to explore racial conflict among white colonisers and negro people during the time of British imperialism (during the early nineteenth century) in Jamaica. This paper exclusively comments on the racist and slave practices during the colonial era in Jamaica which consider negroes as non-human beings.

Keywords: Levy, race, racial consciousness, racial prejudice, racial conflict, white guilt, identity crisis, slavery, etc.

Andrea Levy (1956-2019), a well-known black British woman novelist, was born in 1956 in north London to Jamaican parents, who sailed from Jamaica to England on the *Windrush* ship in 1948. Recently she died on 14 February 2019. Levy delves profoundly into racist circumstances during the colonial and postcolonial epoch in Jamaica and in England. Her earlier novels concentrate on the issue of 'race' and immigration in London, but her fifth

novel *The Long Song* foregrounds the exploitation of negroes and their status as slaves during the early nineteenth century in Jamaica.

Andrea Levy's fifth and the last novel *The Long Song* (2010) is a slave narrative. Levy received the prestigious Walter Scott Prize for historical fiction in 2011. *The Long Song* is the result of Levy's insightful research and wide reading about slave history. This novel explores the incredible story of slavery and colonialism and its impact on the survival of negro slaves in Jamaica during the early nineteenth century.

While exploring genesis of *The Long Song* in her explanatory essay, "The writing of *The Long Song*," Levy argues that the issue of slavery and its fatal impact on young Jamaican people is matter of pride for her. She mentions that she never felt ashamed of her Jamaican roots; on the contrary she takes pride in her slave ancestors. In addition, she considers that Jamaican roots or slave ancestry are grand and honoured heritage. She elucidates:

If our ancestors survived the slave ships they were strong. If they survived the plantations they were clever. It is a rich and proud heritage.¹

So, Levy feels proud of it. She puts forth her racial pride in the form of sentiments, thoughts, and reactions as well. While reviewing *The Long Song*, Reanna Ursin in her article entitled "Telling her Story" rightly points out that the novel is outcome of "an affirmation that descendants of the black diaspora have a heritage of which to be proud."² Levy's racial consciousness reacts to racial prejudice that was more unpleasant and hostile. So she glorifies slavery, race and its past, and history in the form of novel. As a result, she decided to expose the issue of slavery in Jamaica. Moreover, she gets the inspiration of slave ancestry from her family milieu, which was the first source of its history. In fact, she writes:

When I was growing up, my parents, who were from Jamaica, were at pains to distance themselves from every aspect of that slave ancestry. My mum would sooner say her family were slave owners than that they were once slaves. (408)

So, she admits the horrors of slavery throughout the novel. The racial study of slavery discusses that slave is a sign of inferior status and suppression of negroes or blacks. In fact, during the long dark era of slavery, it seems that white dominant people deny the independence of blacks or negroes. They also reject their humanity. As a result, the Baptist war took place during 1831-32 that was the revolt against the white colonizers in Jamaica. Levy raises the voice of the deprived and underprivileged negro people throughout her novel.

In one of her interviews, she admits that she wants to expose a big issue of 'slavery' in the form of a novel. She says:

After the success of *Small Island* I had a big audience, so I thought, "I need to write about the big one." And the big one is slavery. ... *The Long Song* was the most grueling thing I've ever done in my life.³

That is, Levy explores the tradition of slavery and its horrible history during the British imperialism in Jamaica. While talking about the British colonisers' racist practices with slaves, she comments:

Racism as belief system had become truly endemic in Britain at this time; making 'negroes' into non-people - into subhuman livestock - was an important aspect of justifying slavery. (407)

It seems that racism was the common system during the period of colonisation that makes "negroes into non-people." This is a major aspect of slavery. Slavery is a racial conflict that makes 'negroes' into non-people. It is a struggle between white dominant and negroes, who were dominated during the era of British imperialism. Thus, Levy used slavery as a metaphor to explore sufferings and anger of negroes during the early nineteenth century in Jamaica.

The Long Song is compiled as "public or collective (national) history"⁴ of slavery during the British imperialism in early nineteenth century in Jamaica. In other words it is "a novel for those who believe that the story of a single woman is a story of the ages, for those who understand that a slave woman's history is History, indeed."⁵ The novel takes place in Jamaica, and it tells the story of a young Jamaican slave girl named July, who is a daughter of a black mother, Kitty and a white father, Tam Dewar. Kitty was a slave and Tam was a white overseer at the sugar plant named Amity in Jamaica. She also lived at a sugarcane plantation named Amity in Jamaica. That is, the novel is "really a story about a person's life and the times they lived through." (415) She survived through the last years of slavery, the Baptist War, Emancipation, and the transition to freedom in Jamaica. Moreover, this novel explores the encounters between July and white colonisers- Tam Dewar, John Howarth, and Caroline Mortimer. In fact, she realises her inferior status as a negro slave girl on every path of her life. In this novel, Levy comments on British racist and slave practice that was common system during the period of British imperialism in Jamaica that savagely humiliated and exploited negro slaves. As a result, Levy used slavery as a metaphor to explore the sufferings and anguish of negroes during the nineteenth century in Jamaica. Therefore, the story of the novel intervenes with the threads of slavery and racism, British colonisation, sugar plantation, superior and inferior inheritance, and conflict of transition for freedom in Jamaica.

The novel opens with a Foreword by Mr Thomas Kinsman- July's son, printer and editor. He is revealing the story of his 'mama' who was born as a slave. The novel is divided in five parts which are further divided into chapters. It is seen in the history of racial study that the conflict of inferior to the superior mindset of the particular groups of people is old. It is revealed during the time of slave trade and sugar plantation white people considered themselves "as masters, were the superior race; the blacks, as slaves, were the inferior race."⁶ That is, as far as 'race' is concerned, white people considered themselves as superior and blacks as inferior. It is clearly reflected in *The Long Song*. Caroline Mortimer was a white lady, and sister of Mr John Howarth, who was the owner of a sugar plantation at Amity,

where negroes were working as slaves in Jamaica. Kitty, a slave woman, was living and working in sugar plantation at Amity in Jamaica. White characters like Caroline Mortimer, John Howarth, and his wife, Agnes, always considered themselves as masters, as a result, they tortured and exploited negroes during the early nineteenth century in Jamaica. In the novel, Agnes suggests Caroline Mortimer that they are masters, and Kitty is a slave woman. Levy writes:

‘You must show them who is master and who is slave. Leave them no room to fool you. Them is tricky, Caroline,’ Agnes said when instructing Caroline on the management of slaves. (35-36)

In the above quote, the sophisticated prejudiced mindset of Agnes is exposed. The narration also reveals that the white people like Caroline Mortimer and Agnes, consider themselves superior to Kitty. In other words, they consider Kitty as inferior. As a result, as a negro slave woman, Kitty experiences irritating and humiliating treatment. It seems that racial prejudice and superiority complex is a typical feature in the minds of white dominant people, who dominated negroes as slaves during the early nineteenth century in Jamaica. Thus, it also appears that the racial consciousness of white characters creates racial conflict that makes negroes non-people.

Chapter 6 of the novel exposes the humiliation and exploitation of negroes that reveal cruelty at the time of slavery in Jamaica. *The Long Song* highlights:

...how the legacy of slavery corrupts most relations between white and black people, as well as distorting interactions among black people in the field and in the house. While many of the white landowners treat black people in ways that are purely hateful, exploitative, and cruel.⁷

That is, this novel explores tyranny of the British Empire against negro slaves. White people always assume that they are inherently superior to negro people. So, during the time of slave trade and slavery, white people always keep negroes under their control and torture them inhumanly. In this case, July’s “missus” Caroline Mortimer behaves very savagely and insensitively with her. When she notices that the dress repaired by July is not fit and proper, she throws it on the floor, and grabs July. Levy graphically portrays the scene:

With July’s hand splayed in front of her, she picked up a needle, twisted it to perform like a dagger, and stabbed July upon her hand four times with its sharp point. (66-67)

Here, July experiences inhuman physical punishment. She cries and yells bitterly for emancipation from the hands of white militancy:

‘Mama, Mama, Mama!’ July yelled as she jumped up and down upon the spot. ... ‘Your mama is sold away. She is sold away, you hear me? Sold away. You are mine now.’ And her puffing cheeks were red as Scotch Bonnet pepper as July cried out for her mama once more. (67)

The scene presents July as a poor helpless black slave girl who is brutally and physically tortured by Caroline. Caroline categorically reminds July that her mama is sold away and she owns July.

The chapter 9 of the novel interprets the incident of the Baptist war in Jamaica. The Baptist War, also known as the Christmas Rebellion or the Great Jamaican Slave Revolt of 1831-32, was started on 25th December, 1831 and continued for eleven days involving 300000 slaves in Jamaica. It is called the 'Baptist War' because this rebellion or uprising was led by the black Baptist preacher- Samuel Sharpe. The following dialogue between Thomas Kinsman and July provides the reference of the Baptist War:

'But this is the time of the Baptist War, Mama,' he tell me. 'The night of Caroline Mortimer's unfinished dinner in your story is the time of the Christmas rebellion, when all the trouble began.' (101)

That is, this chapter elucidates the rebellion of slave negroes against their masters or planters, who colonised negroes. In this novel, there is a reference to Sam Sharpe, who led the rebel against the militant colonisers. Racial awareness of Sam Sharpe inspired and ignited racial consciousness of black slaves. He revolted against the white planters in the early nineteenth century in Jamaica. Sam Sharpe and his followers rebelled on the Christmas and tried to destroy the Christmas dinner party. Sharpe's rebel against colonisers paved the way for emancipation of the black slaves. They burnt the plantations in Amity. July witnessed racial violence of rebellion:

What I do know is that when those fires raged like beacons from plantation and pen; when regiments marched and militias mustered; when slaves took oaths upon the Holy Bible to fight against white people with machete, stick and gun; when the bullets sparked like deadly fireflies; and bare black feet ran nimble through grass, wood and field—at Amity. (103-104)

In the above episode, Levy vividly presents negroes' struggle for freedom and their salvation from colonisers. They revolted against the white dominant masters, who always exploited them. Sam Sharpe led the rebel and tried to abolish slavery at time of British colonisation in Jamaica. He fought and struggled for emancipation and rights of negroes. This episode discusses the fight between white colonisers and black negroes. Thus, it seems that racial consciousness is resulted into a racial conflict between white and black people during the time of British colonialism.

While commenting on the significance of the Baptist war with reference this novel Reanna Ursin aptly observes that:

...the protagonist July found the Baptist War significant insofar as it initiated a series of events that sent her back to the negro village of her birth for a fleeting reunion with her long-forgotten mother, Miss Kitty.⁸

Through a brief episode after the Baptist War, Levy presents the height of inhuman physical torture by a white to a small black boy. The chapter 13 of the novel underlines how

John Howarth humiliates negro boy because the negro boy yells as “RUN! RUN! GET FAR from here. Trouble! White man’s trouble! Flee!” (137) As a result of the rebel against them, John Howarth exploits the negro boy, who runs with news about the revolt. He seals the negro boy into a drum which is crudely stabbed with over twenty-five lengthy nails hit into the shell. Here, he gives very inhumanly punishment the negro small boy. He behaves very brutally with that boy. The narration exposes a cruel act in the novel as follows:

John Howarth did shake his head in mild reproach at the punishment of a negro boy ... the boy was then sealed into a barrel which was roughly pierced with over twenty-five long nails hammered into the shell. The boy, still trapped within that spiky cask, was then rolled down a hill. (148-149)

In the above passage, John Howarth wants to punish the negro boy for his ‘crime.’ The negro boy experiences violence against him. Howarth gives brutal punishment to the boy. This novel explores oppression and violence of British colonisers against negroes during the nineteenth century in Jamaica. Thus, it seems that the novel broadly underlines the issue of the tyranny. It also exposes white colonisers’ domination that makes negroes as non human beings.

In chapter 14, Levy presents a dramatic episode and heightens racial conflict between the white British colonizers and colonized black slaves. Kitty, the field slave, used to take risk in order to know the whereabouts of her daughter July. Despite Miss Roses tireless warnings, “Kitty had seen July on a few occasions during the eight or so years that had passed.” (160) At one such occasion, when Kitty was trying to see her daughter, she was caught. Levy graphically presents Tam Dewar’s darker and inhuman bestial aspect of the personality. Obviously, he is very angry and he is brutally and ruthlessly punishing Kitty. Although she was pleading with Tam Dewar for mercy but it was of no use. A cattle man, Benjamin Brown was helplessly “watching this torment” (170), and spontaneously he tried to intervene in order to save Kitty. But Tam Dewar gets more angry with this negro. Tam holds the negro and starts shaking him aggressively. Moreover, he considers that “all the dirt of the world resided within this black-man’s bones.” (170-171) The statement clearly indicates Tam Dewar’s prejudice and negative attitude towards black people. Further, he threatens the negro-man and tortures him expressing racial slur and abusive names as “nigger”, while he yells at him as: “Don’t look at me, nigger. Don’t look at me!” (170-171)

Further, Tam Dewar brutally fists Kitty on her face, and she falls on the ground. Afterward, the narration of the novel explores that Tam Dewar whacks helpless Kitty using a hammer. Here, Tam behaves very inhumanly and savagely with Kitty. He gives Kitty very inhuman physical punishment. Levy writes:

But the girl—oh, she did spit and claw and thump her fists upon the overseer. Until, with one blow from a hammer fist, Dewar whacked her so hard within the face that she fell to the ground. (170-71)

The poor negro sacrifices his life while saving Kitty. Levy writes:

... the negro overseer pointed his pistol at man's head and ... boom! ... the negro's face simply exploded." (171)

This cold-blooded murder presents Tam Dewar's sadistic and inhuman nature. After losing her patience:

The girl, bloodstained as a butchered hog, grabbed Dewar around his ankles to plead for her salvation. He seized her by a fistful of her hair to hold her steady as he rearmed his pistol. 'No, massa, no, massa, mercy, massa, mercy,' she struggled savagely. Some defiant spirit within her fought to keep her life. The overseer could hardly hold her. 'Shut up, you dead fucking nigger, shut up.' It was as the overseer raised his hand to strike her with his pistol that Kitty flew. (170-171)

Thus, Tam Dewar is killed at the hands of a negro slave. The novel is interspersed with such vivid and graphic scenes of brutal and inhuman exploitation of the negroes in nineteenth century in Jamaica. Here, Kitty experiences racial brutality. Thus, the novel highlights a very sensitive issue of racial oppression and exploitation of the blacks. At last Kitty is taken to the jailer for her crime.

Further, in chapter 15, Levy also comments on the issue of subjugation of negroes. The white jailer takes Kitty in the courthouse for her crime against a white man named Tam Dewar. The white jailer exploits Kitty:

The white man pulled on her hair to wrench up her head so she could see the three stiffened corpses swinging upon the gibbet before her. 'You want freedom, don't you?' he said. 'This is the sort of freedom we'll give you, every last devil of you. Sabbiedat, murdering nigger?' (176)

The above lines illustrate extreme kind of brutality towards Kitty. The white man drags Kitty's hair and threatens her. The white jailer not only physically exploits to Kitty, but he tortures her mentally. She always encounters violence against her. She experiences insulting treatment, sufferings and painful life as a negro slave woman in Jamaica. It seems that the novel highlights Kitty's anguish as a slave woman in Jamaica. Further, the narration reveals that July witnesses the punishment given to her 'mama,' Kitty, by the white people and she also experiences misery, wretchedness, and violence against black woman as:

Her mama struggled. Her mama choked. Until, at last stilled, her mama hung small and black as a ripened pod upon a tree. (177)

Without taking into consideration Kitty's justification of Tam Dewar's murder, the judicial system in the hands of white colonizers have already passed judgment and given her the punishment. The above scene highlights the militancy of the colonisers against the negro slave woman- Kitty, who gets bestial punishment. The novel pinpoints the sensitive issue of slavery and its savage tradition during the time of British colonisation. Therefore, the slave people become victims of race and slavery during the nineteenth century in Jamaica. Thus, it

seems that racial consciousness is a racial conflict that makes slaves non-people in the period of British imperialism in Jamaica.

It should be noted that Levy is trying to depict the positive, sympathetic, and humane aspects of a few white people. In other words, Levy accepts that not all white people are racially prejudiced but they do have 'white guilt.' That is, it is kind of guilt experienced by some white people for the inhuman racist treatment given to black people. The chapter 17 of the novel reflects the 'white guilt' that is a form of racial consciousness or awareness which explores some white people's guilty feelings regarding black people or negroes, who suffered by white dominant people during the colonial era. The white guilt leads to racial equality and social justice that indicates the changing attitude of white people towards black people. In this novel, there are some characters like James Kinsman and Robert Goodwin, who exhibit kindness and sympathy for black people. They feel guilty for keeping black people under their control. The novel reveals July survives her life as a slave in the house of Caroline Mortimer, but her son, Thomas Kinsman, who was a black man, was "not a slave, but a freeman." (188) He lives happy life with English preacher named James Kinsman, who baptized July's son as Thomas. Even James Kinsman presumes that the emancipation of black people makes them learned as well as civilised people. Levy writes:

'The salvation of the savage' was Mr Kinsman's mission. He believed that even the blackest negro could be turned from sable heathen into a learned man, under his and God's tutelage. (188)

By juxtaposing two types of white colonisers, Levy is trying to present faithful and objective portrayal of the white people in Jamaica. On one hand we have characters like Tam Dewar and Caroline Mortimer who are racially prejudiced and always torture and exploit negro slaves, on the other hand we have characters like James Kinsman and Robert Goodwin who are not only sympathetic towards the black slaves but they are trying their best to treat them as civilised people.

Robert Goodwin, like James Kinsman, is, another gentleman, who thinks about emancipation of the negro slaves. He considers that slavery is a horrible and outrageous sin. So he wants to eradicate this dreadful evil. His words show sympathy for slaves: "Behold, a new morning has broken. Slavery—that dreadful evil—is at an end." (214) Moreover, when he visits fields of negroes at Amity, he realises the wretched and miserable condition of the negroes. While talking to Caroline Mortimer regarding wretched and pathetic condition of black people, he comments: "Such a number of poor, miserable black people I have never seen before, Mrs Mortimer. Their houses and gardens have been neglected—some are in perfect ruin." (214) Then, he expresses his positive approach towards negroes as: "Negroes are simple, good fellows ... They need kindness—that is all. When it is shown to them then they will respond well and obediently." (215) Afterwards, he declares his purpose of arrival to Jamaica:

I have come to Jamaica. It was my father's wish ... My father believed wholeheartedly that slavery was an abomination. "Take kindness to the negro, Robert," he told me. "Show them compassion. Pledge yourself by all that is solemn and sacred to never be satisfied until the negro stands within society as men." (216)

Following his father's wish and advice, Robert Goodwin is convinced that slavery should be abolished, and that the negro slaves are badly in need of compassion and proper understanding. He also accepts the fact that negroes are simple, obedient, and good fellows. So, he declares freedom for slave negroes:

'Good morning to you all. Your mistress, Mrs Mortimer, who is seated here beside me has, by the grace of God, and the law of England, granted you your freedom. No one can now oblige you to continue to work for her.' (220)

It seems that Robert Goodwin is Levy's spokesperson or mouthpiece. He honestly acknowledges that abolition of slavery is need of the time, and it facilitated the equality among people in general irrespective of their race. Goodwin's generous and liberal approach is clear sign of 'white guilt.'

July encounters the dilemma of her racial identity. In chapter 22, Levy handles July's dilemma of her racial identity. July is a daughter of black mother, Kitty and white father, Tam Dewar. So, born out of miscegenation, July is a 'mulatto.' Her struggle for racial identity is revealed in her dialogue with Clara. At Miss Clara's Friday dances, white men were allowed to dance with the coloured women. So Miss Clara reminds July "dances be just for coloured women." (241) She comments about July's skin tone. The narration indicates the racial clash between Clara and July as follows:

'Me is a mulatto!' cried our July.

'Your papa be a white man?' Miss Clara scoffed. 'You is too dark for your papa to be white.' For July's skin had to be light. Honey to milk hues only, could Miss Clara approve. No bitter chocolate nor ebony skin ever stepped a country dance in her presence.

'Me tell you true, Miss Clara. Me papa be a white man.'

... You no speak true.' (242)

Moreover, Clara vehemently considers July as "full of negro," because her skin is too dark. On the contrary, she considers herself as fair. She differentiates July on the basis of physical traits. She considers that July is a dark nigger and she is not fine.

July innocently believes that there is a difference between a mulatto and a negro. The conversation between July and Robert Goodwin in chapter 23 reiterates this idea. July proudly and happily informs Goodwin that her father was from "Scotch Land," and "Me be a mulatto, not a negro." (253) She considers that being a mulatto, she is bit superior to a negro. She further adds and informs Goodwin- "You must not think me a nigger, for me is a

mulatto.”(253-254) Thus Levy handles the issue of racial consciousness even among the blacks.

Chapter 25 presents the love relationship between Robert Goodwin and July. July believes that being mulatto will make her attractive to Robert Goodwin. That is why she always tells Goodwin that she is “mulatto.” Of course, Goodwin falls in love with July. While proposing July, Goodwin expresses his feelings of love to her: “Miss July, you must know that I have come to love you. I love you.’ And he softly kissed her palm” (269). These words of Goodwin indicate his passionate love for July. However, Levy adds dramatic twist in this affair when Caroline accepts Robert Goodwin’s proposal for marriage. Caroline informs this news July:

‘I have such news, Marguerite. I accepted him just a minute ago.’ And she smiled broad, as she said, ‘I am to be married. I am to be married to Robert Goodwin.’ (272)

Goodwin’s affair with July- a slave negro girl- and his marriage with Caroline Mortimer- a white woman clearly exposes his hypocrisy as well as his double standard.

Levy highlights Goodwin’s meekness and his double standard. He can not challenged and revolt against the white customs by marrying July. Although he expresses his passionate love for July, she can not be his wife because after all she is merely a black slave. In fact, he respectfully calls July as his wife. He tells her: “You are my real wife ... This is my real home.” Out of this relationship, July gave birth to a daughter and she was “A fair-skinned, grey-eyed girl who was named Emily.” (292) Chapter 30 exposes Caroline’s positive attitude towards Emily. She expresses her racial feelings about Emily. She says: “She looks just like him. She’s so fair. Not like a nigger’s child at all. ... But she is adorable.” (324)

The novel reveals that initially Robert Goodwin is a “gentleman,” who was declared freedom for negro. But during the course of time, he is changed after his marriage with Caroline. In Chapter 31, one can notice drastic change in Robert Goodwin’s attitude towards July. It is surprisingly to notice his sudden change of mind. Robert Goodwin despises July. He expresses his feelings of anguish towards her. He shouts: “Do not touch me. Get away from me.” (332) He wants to get rid off July: “Get away from me, nigger, get away.” (333) These words of Robert Goodwin indicate his blunt double-standard and malevolent nature. The chapter reveals utter contradiction in Goodwin’s nature because he initially calls July as wife and afterwards he hates her. We can safely state that Goodwin’s intention towards July was not fair and honest. In other words right from the beginning, he was not at all sincere in his love for July. He used July for his physical pleasure only. July highlights racially prejudiced mindset of Goodwin. He demeans her.

Chapter 33 explores the ethnocentric attitude of Caroline towards July. She considers that negroes are inferior to a white man. Robert Goodwin was sick and bed-ridden. So July wants to meet him. Therefore, she kindly appeals Caroline to allow her to meet him, but she

experiences racial prejudice in the mind of the Caroline. The narration highlights the evidence as:

‘He must not see negroes,’ the missus had told her.

And July informed her, ‘But me is not a negro, me is a mulatto.’

Her missus ... replied ... You are still a negro, and it is negroes who have brought him to this. You will come nowhere near him, Marguerite. He does not wish to see you. He wants you to stay away from him. (348)

The above passage reveals the Caroline’s racial attitude of towards July. She considers that July is “a negro.” She rejects July as a mulatto. So she denies July to meet Robert Goodwin. Moreover, she reveals that Robert Goodwin does not wish to see her and he wants to stay away from her. It seems that both the husband and wife (Goodwin and his wife Caroline) are working in unison to keep July away from them.

Goodwin was strictly ordered his servants: “Miss July must be allowed nowhere near the house, or the garden. Do not let her return to her room until we are quite departed.” (350) Following the suggestion of a doctor, Robert Goodwin and Caroline depart from Jamaica to England for recovering his health. But it should be noted that they sailed “taking the pickney to England.” (353) That is, they are departed with Emily to England.

Chapter 35 reveals July’s pathetic tale. July experiences the breath-taking events in her life- she was taken away from her mother Kitty by Caroline; she lost her own children; she witnessed violence against her mother Kitty; and she got hurtful and demeaning treatment from the white ‘massa and missus.’ Yet she did not “dwell upon sorrow.” (395) Thomas Kinsman further adds that “July’s story will have only the happiest of endings.” (395)

The Long Song concludes with the afterword. In afterword of the novel, Thomas Kinsman speaks about July’s daughter and his half-sister- Emily. His mama becomes curious about Emily and asks him about her “whether Emily lives as a white woman in England? Does she reside within a fancy house or is she used as a servant?” (397) July recalls her past humiliation; so she is curious to know about her daughter’s welfare in England. Thomas Kinsman also appeals readers for information regarding his half-sister. He also feels that “In England the finding of negro blood within a family is not always met with rejoicing.” (398) This statement implies that it is very difficult to find a negro in a white family because racial consciousness of orthodox such a thing. Similarly, in her interview, Andrea Levy also says:

...there is no respect for who we are. We’re still having to fight very hard for that respect. That’s my battle, that’s my lot in life, that’s why I get up in the morning.⁹

So, as a daughter of immigrant parents, Levy’s struggle and journey reflects the troublesome and horrible experiences of racism throughout her works.

After the perceptive interpretations and analysis of Levy’s last novel *The Long Song*, this paper reveals that this novel covers various elements of racial consciousness such as the negative attitude of white people towards black people, racial prejudice among white people,

the dilemma of black people's identity, etc. Especially, this novel explores negroes and their exploitation as slaves during colonisation in Jamaica. This novel highlights that at the time of sugar plantation, white people like Tam Dewar, John Howarth, and Caroline Mortimer always consider themselves as masters, the superior race, while the coloured or blacks like July and her mother, Kitty as slaves, who are inferior.

Thus, *The Long Song* is the outcome of Levy's racial awareness that fully explores the conflict between coloniser and colonised people during the early nineteenth century in Jamaica.

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