



15

**MARGINALISATION, IDENTITY POLITICS AND THE GENRE: A STUDY OF A
BLACK AMERICAN RESISTANCE TEXT**

Dr Bagui Debabrata

*Assistant Professor, Dept. of English
Nabagram Hiralal Paul College,
Nabagram, Hooghly, West Bengal, India*

I no longer believe in genres, as the people have never believed in them. The people sang ballads, and rhymed couplets, used theatrical and narrated forms, and subordinated all of that to the effectiveness of the message, and the people never got stuck on one thing. I think our peoples still have much to tell in their own tongue, not in the one invented for them to undermine them.

- Miguel Barnet, "Afterword", *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, 1966

Angela Davis was intimately involved in the Black Power Movement in the United States with her commitment to radical leftist politics and the building of a society free of race and class oppression. Disinclined to seek concession within the existing socio-economic structure, she participated in revolutionary activism that sought to expose and aggressively challenge the structural underpinnings of race and class oppressions in America. Chronicling her experiences during the Black Power Movement, she has produced herself narrative *Angela Davis: An Autobiography* (1974) that gives voice to "oppositional or counter-hegemonic ways of knowing that repeatedly invite readers to challenge their own assumptions and level of comfort with the status quo" (Margo, XII). The paper argues that, this dimension of the text that has been built up simultaneously with its collective and oppositional consciousness against the oppressive state rule and with the "language of empowerment, to use Henry Giroux's term" (Margo, XII), refuses to be fit within the framework of traditional western autobiography and invites the reader to examine it through the lens of the genre of *testimonio*.

Davis was a political prisoner when she began penning the narrative. In the introduction, she makes it clear that hers is not a conventional self-representational narrative. Her "instinctive reserve" (Davis, VIII), she admits, would not allow her to write a thoroughly confessional text. As an intensely private, self-effacing individual and a very reluctant public figure, she does not want to "personalize and individualize" (Davis, VIII) history; rather, she wishes to assess the public significance of her experiences. The narrative focus is not on the personal but on the political dimensions of her dramatic and eventful life as a member of a racially oppressed community.

At the core of Davis' narrative is an alleged crime. In February 1970 she had become actively involved in organizing the campaign to free the Soledad Brothers. One of them was George Jackson, with whom she was said to have developed a romantic friendship. On August 7, 1970, there was an armed revolt at the Marin County Courthouse initiated by Jonathan Jackson, George's seventeen-year-old brother. The shootout resulted in the deaths of the presiding judge, two Black defendants, and Jonathan himself; several guards, attorneys, and spectators were wounded. One of the guns used by Jonathan Jackson was registered in Davis' name. Although she was nowhere near the scene of the violence, she was implicated in the revolt and charged with



murder, kidnapping, and conspiracy. She had been, for quite some time, under surveillance by local and federal law enforcement agencies because of her memberships in the Black Panther Party and

the Communist Party. Jonathan Jackson's use of her gun therefore became a convenient basis to criminalize her and then attempt to silence her politically. In bearing witness to that era, Davis' writing is not an act of self-discovery; it is an act of "political communication" (Elinor, NYT) aiming in part to educate and in part to mobilize the anticipated readers. Taking its structure from her arrest, imprisonment, trial and acquittal and, showing the intersections of race, class, and gender, the text becomes an extension of the narrator's political activism during the turbulent era in the United States. It can be analysed less a history of the movement (or of women's involvement in it) than an exploration of the politics of storytelling for an activist who chooses to write her life; how she uses her narrative to connect her life to those of other activists across historical periods; how she emphasizes the link between the personal and the political; and how she constructs an alternative history that challenges dominant or conventional ways of knowing. A close scrutiny of the introduction and the text of Davis' narrative reveals that, as a piece of resistance literature, there the narrator emphasizes the story of the struggle over her own personal ordeals; uses her own story both to document a history of the struggle and to further its political agenda; provides a voice for the voiceless; honours strategic silences in order to protect the integrity of the struggle as well as the welfare of other activists; exposes oppressive conditions and the repressive tactics of the state; and uses the narrative as a form of political intervention, to educate as broad an audience as possible to the situation and issues at stake. Davis uses the introduction to a recent reissuing of her narrative to argue for the need to "demystify the usual notion that history is the product of unique individuals possessing inherent qualities of leadership" (Davis, VIII). As Davis recounts events in her life, she imparts unique views and insights not shared by her male activist counterparts. She disputes mainstream assumptions about race, class and gender; and reveals how the Black Power struggle profoundly shaped her identity.

Davis' tend to evince a relational understanding of self is marked by both a redefining of the self through the story of the Movement, and a notable uneasiness with the project of autobiography because of the genre's historical emphasis, within the Western literary tradition, on heroic individualism. In fact, human rights activists cross-culturally insist that their individual plight not be read in isolation from the communities they represent. The narratives of Winnie Mandela of South Africa, Rigoberta Menchu of Guatemala, and Domitila Barrios of Bolivia are exemplary. In "Part of My Soul Went with Him Winnie Mandela remarks: I have ceased a long time ago to exist as an individual. The ideals, the political goals I stand for, those are the ideals and goals of the people in this country" (Winnie, 26). Menchu's narrative opens similarly with emphasis on the extent to which her own experiences are paradigmatic of others'. She says: "I'd like to stress that it's not only my life, it's also the testimony of my people.... The important thing is that what has happened to me has happened to many other people too: My story is the story of all poor Guatemalans" (Rigoberta, I). It is, perhaps, Barrios who captures the ethos of their shared project best when she speaks of her own narrative as the personal experience of my people (Domitila, 15).

Attempting vigorously in the preface to downplay her uniqueness and individualism, which is "too tightly tied into decadent capitalist culture", (Perkins, 15) Davis is most concerned that she not be viewed in isolation from the mass struggle with which she identifies. She perceives that it is, in fact, the struggle that gives her speech legitimacy. In the introduction that appears with the book's second printing, Davis is less timid, though still inclined to explain her decision to write. She explains: "I did not measure the events of my own life according to their possible personal importance. Rather I attempted ... to evaluate my life in accordance with what I considered to be the political significance of my experiences" (Davis, VIII). In the second preface with the

advantage of increased distance from the events narrated she is, however, confident that the work constitutes “an important piece of historical description and analysis of the late 1960s and

early 1970s” (Davis, VIII). In the introduction to the second printing she mentions her continued activist work and, thus, re-establishes her continued authority to write.

Davis is emphatic in affirming the importance of connection to her marginalized Black community. In addition to using her narrative to educate, to expose, to correct, and to document, she takes the opportunity to acknowledge a community of support and repeatedly alludes to her sense of solidarity with others. Since focus on aspects of the struggle always takes precedence, there is little room for exposure of her interior life. Like the uneasiness with or subjugation of the personal “I,” features and procedures in Davis’ narrative tend to disrupt the kinds of values traditionally encoded in Western autobiographical practice. In recent years, certainly, the expectations for autobiography have undergone considerable changes, partly because of, the contributions of feminist and poststructuralist theories, and to scholarly attention to texts produced by narrators outside the dominant culture. Yet, the conventional conception of the genre has been that it is the narrative ordering of an individual’s life that highlights, in the process, his or her uniqueness or individuality. In fact what presumably entitles the prospective autobiographer to write in the first place is this distinctiveness. The tendency of contemporary critics to mention Georges Gusdorf’s claims indicates that it was his observation of the genre of autobiography that properly explained the ethos inherent in the Western autobiographical project. In “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography” he maintained that “autobiography is not to be found outside of our cultural area: one would say that it expresses a concern peculiar to Western man, a concern that has been of good use in his systematic conquest of the universe” (Gusdorf, 28). Gusdorf claimed that it is fundamentally the concern or desire for preservation of self, the individual as he stands in relief to his surroundings, which paves the way to autobiography. If Gusdorf’s points can be counted as capturing the ethos of the Western autobiographical tradition, then Menchu, Barrios or Davis narrate—to varying degrees—against this norm. Their narratives, for them, are vehicles used less to explore and glorify their individual uniqueness than to examine those experiences that connect them to their marginalized communities.

How does, then, Davis’ narrative look in the light of this “individualistic” tradition? This essay argues that the text must be treated as *testimonio*, atrocity narratives that document trauma and strategies of survival of the large section of African-American community. As a testimonial life-writing, the narrative enables Davis to share her tale of pain so that the personal testimony becomes accurate historical witnessing of a social structure of traumatic oppression.

Now, what is the *testimonio*? The two most frequently cited explanations of the term can be attributed to John Beverley and Marc Zimmerman, and George Yudice. Beverley and Zimmerman explain it as follows: “... the *testimonio* is a novel or novella-length narrative, told in the first-person by a narrator who is also the actual protagonist or witness of the events she or he recounts. The unit of narration is usually a life or a significant life episode (e.g., the experience of being a prisoner)” (Beverley, John and Zimmerman, M., 173). Yudice’s description is much the same: “[T]estimonial writing may be defined as an authentic narrative, told by a witness who is moved to narrate by the urgency of a situation (e.g., war, oppression, revolution, etc.). Emphasizing popular, oral discourse, the witness portrays his or her own experience as an agent (rather than representative) of a collective memory and identity. Truth is summoned in the cause of denouncing a present situation of exploitation and oppression or in exorcising and setting aright official history” (Yudice, 44).

Testimonial literature stands out within the current of Latin American post-boom literature, i.e. writing produced since 1970. Georg M. Gugelberger describes it as one of the most significant genres of Latin America's post-boom literature. Alongside their male counterparts, women are in

the forefront of *testimonialistas* in Latin America, where key figures include but are not limited to Claribel Alegria (El Salvador), Alicia Partnoy (Argentina), Domitila Barrios de Chungara (Bolivia), and Elena Poniatowska (Mexico). Definitely among this group there is 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu (Guatemala) whose testimonial work *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, has been described as “the most interesting work of literature produced in Latin America in the last fifteen years” (Beverley, 271).

The very meaning of *testimonio* suggests the act of testifying or bearing witness in a ‘religious or legal sense’. The terms *testigo* (witness) and *testimonio* (testimony) derive etymologically from “testes”; moreover, there is no female form of the Spanish noun so when women are witnesses, they are referred to as “la testigo” (Sternbach, 92). It follows that [s]ince women do not have testicles, they cannot really be qualified to testify—give evidence.²¹ Considering women's generic exclusion from testimonial discourse, their “appropriation of the genre and ascendancy appear all the more noteworthy” (Sternbach, 92).

The *Testimonio* per se emerged “as an adjunct to armed liberation struggle in Latin America and elsewhere in the Third World” (Maier, Linda and Dulfano, I., 03) in the 1960s (Beverley, 281). After its inception in Cuba, the genre of the *testimonio* was exported to Central America, and further developed in Latin America in response to 1970s military repression like Argentina's “dirty war” and the Chilean coup which overthrew Salvador Allende. “Although testimonial literature is clearly positioned within the context of Third World or resistance literature”, (Gugelberger, Georg and Kearney, M., 199) its nature and forms are not so clear-cut. It derives from and overlaps with a number of disciplines—anthropology, ethnography, history, journalism, literature, politics, sociology, and women's studies, crosses genre lines—art, film, music, narrative, poetry, theatre—and involves the eclectic use of “competing discourses” (Sommer, 121). Kavita Panjabi observes:

From the point of view of literary study, it inhabits the zone of indeterminacy between historiography, autobiography and the novel. It narrates history but is distinct from historiography in terms of its foregrounding of hitherto silenced voices, and its nurturing of collective identity and consciousness; it is not autobiography in that it comprises eye-witness accounts of collective struggle; and while possessing literary quality in terms of its ability to interweave aesthetic and narrative dimensions, it is not exactly fiction in that it represents lived experience, and does make claims to “truth”. Finally, the genre of the *testimonio* is not to be confused with testimonies delivered by witnesses in courtroom trials either... (Panjabi, 01).

Testimonial narrative, therefore, is situated at a political, social, and economic disjuncture. Panjabi examines the links between the development of women's selves and larger political struggles against repression; looks for clues for the construction of counter-hegemonic political consciousness as women, and suggests that “these genealogies of the political self are different

from the narrative of the coming-into-being of the individual female self of liberal feminism” (Alexander, Jacqui, M.. xxxviii).

The part of the debate over the literary “worthiness” of testimony centres on its often blatant politicization. Opposing the traditional taste and belles-lettres sensibilities of high culture, sometimes testimony has been devalued as “anti-literature”. At times it has challenged the very

authority of those who establish the “standards” of taste. Being situated at an “intersection” or “crossroads”, testimonial discourse is characterized as “contradictory,” “indeterminate,” “ambiguous,” “liminal,” “interstitial,” and the site of “unresolved tensions” (Maier, 04).

It is possible, nonetheless, to detect certain salient features shared by testimonial texts and observed by critical theorists. The narrator of such a text belongs to an oppressed, excluded, and/or marginal group and speaks/writes as a member of that group. To word it otherwise, the individual first-person singular subject (“I”) is replaced by the representative agent of a collective identity (“we”), thus introducing previously suppressed, subaltern voices into the mainstream. The testimonial narrator, as Lillian Manzor-Coats explains, “is entering/attacking hegemonic institutions from a marginal position” (Lilian, 05). As an expression of a demand for social change, women’s testimonial literature cannot be dissociated from political considerations; it serves as “the site of nexus between the much-used feminist category of the personal and the political” (Sternbach, 97). In any case, a testimonial text arises from specific circumstances or events experienced or witnessed by the narrator who is compelled to document them. As a “narration of urgency” (depicting incidents of war, oppression, revolution, imprisonment, etc.), “a testimonial text often presents a subjective impression of an objective yet inexpressible reality” (Maier, 05). Like other forms of resistance literature, such texts communicate a message of protest and are considered a “weapon on the cultural front” (Gugelberger, 09). The main objectives of testimonial literature are threefold: “(1) self-representation of the Other, (2) denunciation of injustice and human rights abuses, and (3) consciousness-raising” (Maier, 05).

Exposing the vulnerability of a decentred subject and the agendas of the power brokers, postmodernism has rent the monolithic facade of the great narratives. Fredric Jameson asserts that all cultural products are “socially symbolic acts” (Jameson, 20). Literature is no longer “reflective” of a social reality but performative, an act. “Marilyn Randall underscores the heightened political role of literature in liberation struggles where texts become political acts designed to stir the consciences of the people.³⁵ Now the question is, state Beverley and Zimmerman, not whether ideology is present in the text but what ideology is present” (Beverley, 04). The *testimonialistas* speak on behalf of marginalized populace who are oppressed, bullied and tormented by the dominant group of their societies and are characterized by “collective unaware and largely silenced and buried under a heap of false and perverted rhetoric. And in this, the writer can’t help but perform a political act, because reality is political” (Craft, 10).

In “The Margin at the Centre” Beverley maps the parameters of the testimonial discourse, focusing on the material conditions that produce this form of expression. Stating that literary forms that developed in the period of colonial expansion do not merely reflect social relations but act as agents in the formation of hegemony, Beverley views testimonial literature as part of the struggle to resist and subvert the colonial discourse of literature. The *testimonio*, thus, challenges the hallowed categories of singular authorship, literary aesthetics, and the elite cultural construction of “masterpieces.” It, Beverley puts, “is a fundamentally democratic and egalitarian form of narrative in the sense that it implies that any life so narrated can have a kind of representational value” (Beverley, 38). The solitary hero figure of the romantic novel theoretically disappears. Whereas the romantic hero is unique, superior, and exemplary—a metaphoric signifier, as Sommer explains—



“the testimonio’s protagonist leans toward the metonymic, an extension of the collective and in many cases the plural” (Sommer, NJPS).

For Mikhail Bakhtin, observes Michael Holquist, “Literary texts are tools ... they serve as a prosthesis of the mind. As such, they have a tutoring capacity that materially effects change by getting from one stage of development to another” (Holquist, 83). Understood in these terms, while the *testimonio* offers no promise to change the world directly, it does offer readers a means of changing their minds about the world - a development that may, in turn, lead to activism. The locus of action remains the place of the individual reader, for whom the testimonial text is one of many sources of information to be considered when contemplating action. In the preface to her narrative, Davis notes that she wrote with two primary objectives: first, to raise the consciousness of readers by helping them better understand the particular conditions that necessitated resistance struggle by African Americans and other oppressed groups; and second, to encourage others to join the struggle. She elaborates: “In this period . . . there was the possibility that more people— Black, Brown, Red, Yellow and white—might be inspired to join our growing community of struggle. Only if this happens will I consider this project to have been worthwhile” (Davis, XVI). Through her *testimonio* she demonstrates the potential for individuals to actively transform their material conditions. Autobiography presupposes an autonomous individual subject. *Testimonio*, on the other hand, is a genre where the narrator stands in for the whole social group. Davis’ constant movement from the individual to the collective suggests that her narrative is less an autobiography than a *testimonio*. Unlike autobiography where the narrator is a person of some social stature, *testimonio* is about the common (wo)man, but a common (wo)man who metonymically stands in for the community. There is no problematic hero as in a novel, but there is a problematic collective situation.

The radical significance of Davis’ text, therefore, is in how her words compel readers to grapple with the socio-political landscape outside of the text. This imperative is a salient feature of resistance literature. In defining resistance literature, Barbara Harlow has noted the way such writing “calls attention to itself, and to literature in general, as a political and politicized activity. The literature of resistance sees itself furthermore as immediately and directly involved in a struggle against ascendant or dominant forms of ideological and cultural production” (Harlow, 28). This description clearly situates resistance literature within a socio-political and historical context that challenges the apolitical bent of New Critical approaches to literary study. Treating Davis’ narrative critically and responsibly entails by necessity more than an aesthetic evaluation of the text and demands new ways of envisioning literary study with some engagement with the kinds of political issues the narrative addresses. That is, it becomes important to study the text not just as a repository of culture, but also as a pedagogical resource in the work of transforming culture.

Davis’ narrative is to be valued not only for what she says about her own life, but for her witnessing of events beyond her immediate circumstances. Her story is the witnessing not only of her own situation, but of a reality shared by many others as well. Like the Latin American *testimonialistas* who wrote as witnesses to the experiences under racist oppression in general, and wrote in the voice of participant-observers, Davis subordinates the uniqueness of her own experience to the way in which it reflects the shared reality of many, and therefore calling her narrative “autobiographical” is not doing justice to many its essential aspects. In her narrative prison experiences too are imbued with her identitarian politics. She, as prisoner and as the image of a prisoner, wants first to be identified with all Black women detainees. Besides, she tries to “identify as prisoners themselves such that they work to free all prisoners. The best political

strategy, as it develops in this text, is the one that identifies Blacks, and specifically Black women, as real and metaphorical prisoners, as a way into the objective analysis of societal oppression which places poor Black women at the bottom of an oppressive totality, still to be theorized” (Mostern, 179).

It is, however, worth noting that in spite of similarities with testimonial literature, North American Slave Narratives cannot be considered to be its precursor. While the *testimonio* records current struggles from below, most of the Slave Narratives were recorded or written after the emancipation of slaves.

In *Rewriting the Self: History, Memory, Narrative* Mark Freeman uses the term “development” that refers to a subject’s apparent move from a naive or less sophisticated state of (self/social/political) “awareness to a point of greater self-consciousness, understanding, and/or agency” (Freeman, 42). The issue of such development is an important and perhaps indispensable aspect of Davis’ narrative where the activist demonstrates the move toward revolutionary consciousness as a process. That is, the revolutionary within her are not so much born as made by the circumstances of her social milieu and by her exposure to critical pedagogy; “the people, the events and the forces in my life that propelled me to my present commitment” (Davis, XVI). Presenting this as process has an effect that both humanizes the subject and indicates that the examples are or might be repeated in case of other Black women of her community. Theorizing the significance of such moments Davis represents how her political consciousness is awakened and reveals the process by which the revolutionary within her is created. Davis’ narrative illustrates the birth and development of her revolutionary consciousness through telling of significant, early experiences that both shaped her understanding of the dynamics of race, class, and gender oppression in America and motivated her eventual involvement in political struggle. For the narrative reconstruction of her past such key moments become framing devices. Yet, what she wants to emphasize is that her experiences are not different from those of thousands of other Black women in America. Her sharing of her early experiences is a kind of testifying in which she expresses solidarity with other women. She notes that she wrote with two primary objectives; first, to raise the consciousness of readers by helping them better understand the particular conditions that necessitated resistance struggle by African Americans and other oppressed groups; and second, to encourage others to join the struggle. She elaborates: “In this period. . . there was the possibility that more people— Black, Brown, Red, Yellow and white—might be inspired to join our growing community of struggle. Only if this happens will I consider this project to have been worthwhile” (Davis, XVI). With this target the narrative testifies not only to the experiences of its narrator under racist oppression, but also to such experiences as related to systemic phenomena.

Davis’ text, therefore, repeatedly reveals that there is little separation between the two realms: i.e., what is personal is almost always political and vice versa. The effectiveness of her narrative as political intervention depends to some extent on her skill as storyteller: her ability to map the personal onto the larger political terrain in provocative and engaging ways. Ultimately, one of the most compelling aspects of Davis’ narrative may be the attention she inevitably calls to the politics of how history and truth are constructed. Because her narrative seeks to make vital corrections to the historical record, the issues of memory and truth would seem to have important implications for how readers receive and evaluate her stories. This is true not only with respect to how the narrative challenges dominant ways of knowing that are institutionally reinforced, but also with respect to how the narrator reconstructs the struggle and modes of being of her community during the period recounted.

Davis wrote that she was not a “‘real’ person separate and apart from the political person” (Davis, XV). Reflecting her radical commitment to fundamental social transformation, her *testimonio* proves to be a strategy of her larger emancipatory project in Black identitarian politics,

and constitutes one of the boldest interventions in the American political discourse. Written in the voice of participant-observers, the text subordinates the uniqueness of her own experience and reflects the shared reality of many. The political vision inscribed in it is shaped by a finely honed oppositional and collective consciousness. Literary conventions common to Davis' narrative invite its readers to situate the text along a continuum of marginalized women's *testimonios*. As with these writers, Davis' narrative too is valued not only for what she says about her own life, but for her witnessing of events affecting the life and psyche of the other Black women beyond her immediate circumstances.

WORKS CITED

1. Alexander, Jacqui, M. and Mohanty, Talpade, Chandra Introduction, in *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, New York and London: Routledge, 1997.
2. Beverley, John "The Margin at the Centre: On Testimonio (Testimonial Narrative)", in Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, eds, *De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992.
3. Beverley, John "The Real Thing" in Georg M. Gugelberger, ed., *The Real Thing*, Durham and London: Duke UP, 1996.
4. Beverley, John and Zimmerman, M. "Testimonial Narrative", in *Literature and Politics in Central American Revolutions*, Austin: U of Texas P, 1990.
5. Craft, Linda J. *Novels of Testimony and Resistance from Central America*, Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1997, p. 10.
6. Davis, Angela, *Angela Davis: An Autobiography*, New York: International Publishers, 1988.
7. Domitila, Barrios, *Let Me Speak!* Trans. Victoria Ortiz. New York: Monthly Review, 1978.
8. Elinor, Langer, "Autobiography as an Act of Political Communication", *New York Times*, 27 October 1974.
9. Freeman, Mark *Rewriting the Self: History, Memory, Narrative*, New York: Routledge, 1993, quoted in Perkins, *Autobiography*, 2000, P. 42.
10. Gugelberger, Georg and Kearney, M., "Voices for the Voiceless: Testimonial Literature in Latin America", *Latin American Perspectives*, 18 (199): 10.
11. Gugelberger, Georg M., Back cover. in Georg M. Gugelberger, ed., *The Real Thing*, Durham and London: Duke UP, 1996.
12. Gusdorf, Georges "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography", in James Olney, ed., *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1980.
13. Harlow, Barbara *Resistance Literature*, New York and London: Methuen, 1987, p. 28.
14. Holquist, Michael *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World*, New York and London: Routledge, 2002, p. 83.
15. Jameson, Fredric *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, Ithaca: Cornell UP., p. 20.
16. Lilian Manzor-Coats, "The Reconstructed Subject", in Lucia G. Cunningham, ed., *Splintering Darkness*, Pittsburg: Latin American Literary Review Press, 1990, quoted in Maier and Dulfano, p.5.
17. Maier, Linda and Dulfano, I., Introduction in *Woman as Witness*, New York: Peter Lang, 2004.



18. Mostern, Kenneth *Autobiography and Black Identity Politics*, Cambridge: CUP, 1999, p. 179.
19. Panjabi, Kavita “Transcultural Politics and Aesthetics: Testimonial Literature” in *Literary Studies in India: Genology*, Kolkata: D.S.A. Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, 2004.
20. Perkins, Margo, *Autobiography as Activism*, Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 2000.
21. Rigoberta, Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, London: Verso, 1984.

22. Sommer, Doris “Not Just a Personal story” in Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenck, eds., *Life/Lines*, Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1988.
23. Sternbach, Nancy Saporta “Re-Membering the Dead: Latin American Women’s Testimonial Discourse”, *Latin American Perspectives*, 18 (199): 92.
24. Winnie, Mandela, *Part of My Soul Went with Him*, New York: Norton, 1984.
25. Yudice, George “Testimonio and Postmodernism”, in Georg M. Gugelberger, ed., *The Real Thing*, Durham and London: Duke UP, 1996.

(The said article is already published in an anthology entitled, “Postmodern Narration: Literatures in English” Published in Feb.2011 with an ISBN-978-81-920675-0-6)



This is an Open Access e-Journal Published Under A Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

To Cite the Article: Bagui, Debabrata, “Marginalisation, Identity Politics and the Genre: A Study of a Black American Resistance Text”. *Literary Cognizance*, 1-1 (2015): 77-85. Web.