

The Culture Heritage Protection: Suggestive Themes and Views of August Wilson's Fences

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Abstract

Identity, values, history, language and principles of a man all compose the cultural form of a cultural form of an individual. Man becomes the focal point of most subject matters of the modernist writers who focus on the concept of humanism. In the light of Marcus Garvey "people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots". Therefore, this study aims at investigating how Wilson seeks to rediscover African- American's history and culture via multi-messages besides the play's title. Wilson had played a great role in raising global issues affecting most societies in the 20th century. Wilson' dramatized the life of his fellow people to visualize their suffering and plight within American society. As he was trying to supply the black people with determination to gain freedom, he depicted exploitation, abuse and slavery. Wilson's plays have clearly displayed the tensions among blacks who wanted to clutch their African legacy. This study concludes that losing the individual's culture will create identity disturbance and rootlessness that lead to the lost generation of Afro-American people.

Keywords: Culture, Identity, Fences, Afro-American People

1. Introduction

There no doubt that people are influenced too much by the world around them, and that they possess unique individual experience and personality, likes and dislikes, behaviors and aspirations. An artist is no exception in this regard, especially a dramatist who was influenced by the past occurrences, that s/he witnessed during the course of his life, and which later, become the source of his inspiration in respect to culture, gender, race, politics and socio-economic status. In America, the gap between one generation and another normally manifested through a misplaced anger, which under certain conditions, escalates to violent reaction. White assimilation threatens the black identity itself. Wilson's plays are characterized by their intrinsic authenticity. In this context, Wilson states that his " focus is on their dreams, their restlessness, and their struggle to find practical and spiritual havens in an essentially hostile society " ([Pereira 3](#)).

Wilson's use of imagination in order to visualize dramatic situations was consolidated through his experience with *whites*. We ought to mention that Wilson attempts to rediscover and crystallize *the Blacks'* identity as well as their true nature as human beings with their own culture, throughout his treatment of relevant themes to reveal his objectives. "Wilson sees himself as a kind of chronicler, taking the oral tradition of Africa and setting it down in a uniquely African American form" ([Gordon](#) 29). Wilson's concentration on history with the purpose of rediscovering the history and culture of the African Americans through his plays' titles and characters, in his plays "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Fences, The Piano Lesson, Two Trains Running, and so on. His purpose is to send "the messages to the audiences include the complicated conditions of the blacks, their difficulties, hardships and suffering. Therefore, Wilson "insists that African Americans must rediscover their own history if they are to come to terms with their present" ([Elkins](#) 17). Wilson's *Fences* should be analyzed from a spiritual, mental and physical perspectives. It can be approached as a cultural protection to any physical or mental aggressions from the behavior of society. Wilson's central focus includes the struggle of the blacks for their representations of their cultural values. At that time, the whites, as implied in Wilson's play "Fences", carry the message of their ancestors, who had deteriorated the original identity of the red Indians throughout their racial acts.

Wilson's idea is that, no matter how tall the fence you build, you still need to live in a society where your fences do not hold. When Troy finally manages to put up the fence, he completely isolates himself from society. This is not protection, but antisocial behavior, derived from the oppression that the African-Americans have suffered: "Fight fire with fire". Anyway, *Fences* discusses the exponential growth of blues and jazz along the lines of the rising interaction among the African American groups and the key stream of society ([Sanders](#) 151). Wilson tries to show how the black community protects their cultural identity. In "Fences", Wilson attempts to explain his message to the world, which implies that any race ought to protect its culture by building up invincible fences as a protection for its culture, and it is identity. At the same time, it is a message to the world, especially the countries in which racism works against minorities. The main problems underlying the literature of the blacks mainly deal with issues related to *abuse, oppression* and *racism*, which *the whites* used for subduing the black society. Most texts about black people talk about these topics. The bad conditions lead to the rise of a new literary genre: black literature or African-American literature. Therefore, those unwanted conditions seem to be advantageous from the black point of view, because they allow them to shape a new form of literature that is typical to their culture and identity. "Fences" depicts a drama in which family relationships are set within the template of different cultural background, the blacks' culture.

2. August Wilson

August Wilson is considered one of the most considerable black playwrights whose works have attracted worldwide readers, researchers and audiences. August Wilson is an exceptional dramatist of the twentieth century who, "brings black lives to the stage. He has established himself as the preeminent figure in African-American theater, both for his individual aesthetic triumphs and his sustained creativity" ([Gates & West](#) 345). He is regarded as the closest playwright to the problems of the black community, who "focus on black culture as a specific and unique culture" (Menson-Furr 64). He brings new themes from American real life to the popular American stage, that are closely related

to the lives of the poor who bravely endure poverty and other injustice brought to them by the world surrounds them. The middle class he concentrates as he “noted that he had consciously included characters from the African American middle class” ([Nadel](#) 162).

To what extent Wilson succeeds in transferring his messages to white society as he resorts to his personal experience during writing his dramas. He attempts to use many methods to express his protest voice hoping that this kind of voice is to be grasped by his audiences and readers as well. The silent voice is expressed both directly and indirectly by means of many different images, symbols and other means of expressions in his plays. In a word, his voice is symbolic to the hidden protests inherent in the mind of his people, the blacks who are confronted with a great oppressive power represented by the whites with their harsh outlook and attitudes towards black people. He relies on the human values and beliefs of the blacks that cannot be described other than as humane as he knows his people very well and he is able to depict what is going on in their minds. Of course, the blacks have their own ways to treat and confront the whites, which is explicitly indicated in Wilson’s manipulation of his characters. Wilson’s aim is to provoke the blacks to think of their distinctive identity as human beings with human aspirations and ambitions, or at least that they aspire to be treated in the same way that other human beings are treated to have their full rights as human beings, capable of building up their own country, America. August Wilson tries to make the African American conscious and satisfied with their history and legacy and to change what he called to be "the Kim Powers of 1984", as he states:

“...the glancing manner in which America looks at blacks and the way blacks look at themselves. We have different philosophical ideas, different ways of responding to the world. Different ideas and attitudes, different values, different about style and linguistics different aesthetics-eve the way, we bury our dead is different.” ([Wilson](#) 3)

Wilson focuses on the values of family, friendship, and community. He also describes the "culture of his community along with its problems in an attempt to find solutions for them" ([99](#)).

3. Fences: A Cultural Protection

Fences is a play that can be considered to be, as the title indicates, a perimeter protecting invaluable constructions, which form a symbol protection and resistance. One of the connotations of the title is that there ought to be certain elements that are meant to protect the cultural representations of any nation, especially the African-American one, which functions in the same way a physical perimeter does ([Burke & Liston](#) 10). The African-American culture is represented by the American Blacks’ vernacular, folklore, stories, myths and lifestyle, not to mention their thought or their preferences. Wilson’s message is that the identity of the blacks needs to be protected by as steady as fences meant to protect what they surround. On the other hand, the blacks need to build up fences so that their identity could be protected from the whites. " Fences is riddled with conflicts. From its title on through its final scene" ([Menson-Furr](#) 80). Fences projects the playwright's points of view and make white Americans more open to listening to them.

Troy Maxson's strong ambition is the main theme in "Fences". He is a black baseball player who has not succeeded to be accepted as a member of the team he wanted which implies that Troy's identity is not

protected and that he has to work hard to achieve his goal. Wilson uses magic realism in order to voice a critique about realist representation where unique visions to the African American experience are expressed. The struggle of black people for the sake of protecting their cultural values was portrayed by their struggle for their own freedom in America. For the peaceful coexistence between humans, a consistent social behavior is essential. Wilson's play "Fences" presents the story of Troy Maxson, who is a skilled baseball player, but never had the opportunity to improve his ability due to the social obstacles set on his race and community that resulted in his bad treatment to his family.

Legally and traditionally, "Fences" reveals the bitter arguments between neighbors; black and white as there are often private laws to deal with these problems. However, the whites who disenfranchised black people for many years set these laws according to their perspectives. The fence is regarded to be a sort of protection and isolation, but it becomes like a prison of Troy and his family from sharing a good relationship with their neighbors. Laura McAtackney and Randall H. McGuire explain the meaning of a fence as it "is a vertical structure that encloses an area, typically outdoors, that builders usually construct from posts connected with boards, wire, rails, or netting" ([McAtackney & McGuire](#) 4). In America or any country all over the world, the first settlers claimed land by fencing it so that fences were normally set up on the measured line as precisely as possible. In a few issues for provincial and urban property proprietors, laws in America required neighboring landowners to share the obligation regarding a typical limit for the fence line. Wilson tries to seek a recognition of the identity of African American who attempt to isolate and protect themselves from the racial harm of the American society. Wilson "seeks the recognition of the African American identity – the acceptance of the fact that AfroAmerican mythology is not... natural part of life" ([Gussow](#) 39).

Throughout the American literature and culture of the twentieth century, the worth of fences has been largely debated since life is shaped by land and the spiritual bond between people and environment is set up. This linkage is shown through traditional practices regarding specific places. The connection to the land is also presented by the strong attachments to their ancestral homelands. Thereupon, fences are regarded as an important part of the heritage value of a place and they are reflected in the literature, age, style and culture of Afro-American people. In this respect, Wilson states

"I wanted to present the unique particulars of black American culture as the transformation of impulse and sensibility into codes of conduct and response, into cultural rituals that defined and celebrated ourselves as men and women of high purpose. I wanted to place this culture onstage in all its richness and fullness and to demonstrate its ability to sustain us in all areas of human life and endeavor and through profound moments of our history in which the larger society has thought less of us than we have thought of ourselves." ([Zaytoun](#) VIII)

4. Fences as Racism

Wilson attempts to focus on the impact of historical patterns, cultural aspects of the African Americans and customs of ethnic segregation on the fatalities of his drama. This is also the case of the main character, Troy, who lacked the opportunities that were denied to African-Americans: "Racism occurs in a wide variety of social situations, including on buses, in schools, taxis, state offices and

neighborhoods, and at all times of day"(Alexander 7). Understanding those standard circumstances reflected upon regular daily existence calls for strong reactions. Wilson wants to emphasize a history of racism, violence and hate practiced in America against the African Americans to whom he belongs:

...this is a history of hate in America – not the natural discord that characterizes a democracy, but the wild, irrational, killing hate that has led men and women throughout our history to extremes of violence against others simply because of their race, nationality, religion or lifestyle. ([Bullard](#) 4)

Wilson's intentions to recreate the position of African Americans is shown through "Troy's stories reach beyond the conventional temporal and spatial limits. Reexamining history, re-creating and positioning him within the fabric of the historic narrative, Troy constructs his past in the present" (Elam :12). The practice of discrimination against the black Americans has played a considerable role to encourage Wilson for conveying various messages through his dramatic works, reflecting the injustice and suffering of the African- Americans. Maltreatment of colored people as if they are slaves by Whites made Wilson feel anxious yet this motivated him to stage various themes concerning these issues. African people are not slaves, but they are humans like the others, therefore; "slavery is something that blacks do not teach their kids—they do not tell their kids that at one time we were slaves. That is the most crucial and central thing to our presence here in America" ([Savran](#) 295). In Wilson's plays, the characters are created to mirror plight of African-American people in the modern, and idealized country, America.

Discrimination refers to unfair contacting with human being in which some people dehumanize or devalue others because of their religion, color, gender, and races. It is a kind of disease that inflicts humanity and deforms the peaceful life of the world besides it is not fault of the discriminated people to be born in this condition. In this context, Wulf D. Hund states:

Racial discrimination is any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. ([Hund](#) 17)

In Wilson's plays, the characters are produced exactly mirror the lowest of the African- American individuals. These men fight for a power that is distant to them because others, particularly the whites, retain the influential power in terms of socially and politically. Despite the fact that it can be argued that this battle for equality is found in most of Wilson's plays, such as his protagonist Troy from *Fences*. Troy's dad has significantly affected Troy since Troy says that he realizes that his dad never adored him, however his dad remained with the family since it was his obligation to deal with his kids .

Troy managed to open an incredible door by his own qualifications and determinations as he was a talented baseball player during his youth. Troy and the various characters in the play expected that he would have played in the Major Leagues ([Wilson](#) 5-7), if he was not African and has dark complexion. He is angry about his color which it has kept influencing him in his adulthood. This event has a great

impact on his further choices even the future of his son Cory who reject to allow him to be famous player as he was assured that he will face the same of his father's failure ([Arnold](#) 4).

Although Troy has a reasonable job, he does not feel fulfilled. He has faced so much injustice in his life that he cannot perceive any positive aspects about the situation he achieves. He only sees injustice at work as he works as a trash collector. In any case, he is annoyed in light of the fact he is not doing something he loves. Troy considers this mistreatment, he realizes that, nevertheless, he has an occupation that is granted to both white and black men, and the racial side is still precisely strained ([Arnold](#) 5). He crosses this side since he cannot deal with racial partialities any longer. Troy attempts to take control as a man by shifting his job circumstance. He understands the prejudice inside his work environment and tries to modify it.

Troy tries to recapture his energy, but he misses the goal of his life and destroys himself and his family. He expects to get away from his home and his issues to be with somebody where he can get his identity. Troy is not able see that he had control over more than one part of his life, but that was excessively stressed to demonstrate his value, and therefore making it impossible for others and for himself to demonstrate his worth to his own partner. He is alone, and he has destroyed her joy since he craved more control over his own life. With all the mistreatment and treacheries Troy was confronted in his life, as a child, as a player, and as an employee, he attempts to reclaim the power in his life (Arnold 5-6).

The main character is Troy who has many dreams of the blacks about living in America. The harsh truth is revealed to him, that by law, he is a free man, yet he is as abused as a slave by social regulations. He is not free without having the power to make his own decisions. Through his life story, the reader sees the fantasies and desires for the man whose dreams are deferred because of racism and persecution of the American society ([Bogumil](#) 223). Wilson depicts his own people struggle and endeavors to acquire power and control. Shannon confirms that the "black men frequently lash out at their sons or other blacks as alternate targets instead of confronting head-on the emasculating racism or the social and economic pressures they encounter" ([Shannon](#) 158). They have created a vicious cycle of dreams, for both themselves and the people surrounding them.

5. Fences as a Prison

Wilson highlights the quest for identity and the idea of slavery in most of his drama, recognizing and acknowledging one's individuality, which is an essential condition for a peaceful. As to his attitude towards the nature of self-respect and control, he believes it confers life, confidence and purpose in one's life, but one category of people in society has exploited this power. In most of his dramas, Wilson raises issues of racism, slavery and loss of identity because slavery is faced by most of the migrants who are isolated from homes, families, and rural culture.

Using a symbol of a fence as a representation in portraying racial treachery in Toni Morrison's works, Wilson's play "Fence" demonstrates to this day that it is troublesome for youngsters to get a decent grip on the past. This is particularly the situation when discussing the historical backdrop of African-

Americans in the United States and the results of racial shameful and the social distinction in the American society. The fence alluded to by the play's title is built over many years and it is done during the last act of the play. It is not clear why Troy needs to build it, but an emotional obstacle in the second act indicates how he conceptualizes it as a moral story. The fence is emblematic of the boundaries that Troy maintains between him and his children. Rose needs Troy to build the fence as methods for securing what was her own, keeping what is needed inside her family, and keeping out what should stay out ([Bogumil](#) 30).

Troy's past and experience in prison strongly influences his adult identity. Moreover, prison turns into the typical growth of his own association with his father who used to beat him bitterly. The disregard, manhandle, and absence of mental well-being in that connection affects Troy's behavior into awful one as in reality, something that finished with his capture for murder and burglary. The life and demise of African-American Troy Maxson is explored in Wilson's play "Fences". After fleeing from home, he settled in Pittsburgh where the inability to make money drove him to steal. In prison, Troy learned how to play baseball, however he was excessively old, making it impossible to play in the significant associations when the color skin-hardship at national baseball finally raises ([Shannon](#) 159).

Troy's employment earns him cash, without him having to rely on the handicap benefits of his sibling Gabe who was injured in the World War II. Troy is in danger of losing his job when he believes that white specialists get the chance to drive the trucks, but finally he wins the work. He painfully loans cash to his player child, Lyons, but appears to be unhappily when Lyons can pay him back. He denies enabling Cory to start out for college on a football funding due to his child's obliviousness to his obligations. He dismisses Rose when he admits to an issue with Alberta, who passes away in childbirth. Rose consents to raise the baby, however cautions that Troy will be without a woman ([Hussein](#), 2012:8). Troy finishes the fence he promised Rose and restricts his obligations when he defeats Cory, in a fight resemble to that with his own father. Troy consents to submit Gabe to a remedial ability, a choice he had constantly avoided to make, and to get some of the social money for himself. The last scene describes Cory getting back home for his father's memorial service. He meets Raynell, who turns into a young woman. Gabe emerges from the hospital.

6. Fence as a means of Double Consciousness

Double consciousness in "Fences" stands for the impact that it has on the African-American people in general. Wilson presents to the reader a world not yet torn by the battle of a racial change. Nonetheless, its essence is still felt through the actions and behaviors of Troy Maxson as double consciousness acts both as a figurative fence. It compels Troy, and as a thought that will harm quite a bit of Troy's own life. Double consciousness fades not only because of its impact on the black race, but because it displays how the actions of a single person can affect the people whom they love. In addition, Troy can only see himself through the eyes of others as an attempt to evade his real life. The public and private struggle felt by most African-Americans, including Troy, had advanced to the point where they adopted two opposing views at times. This has led to confusion even among blacks, mainly because they do not realize what the reason behind this is. The attempt to see himself differently makes Troy stand for himself at the white establishment by his and prove himself to the white man that he is better than their

saying about him.

Troy Maxson is a strong man who has a metaphorical fight with death. His life depends on providing for his family and making sure they feel well, which is something that he lacked in his own adolescence. Additionally, influenced by his own damaging adolescence, he turns into a flawed father who tries to control his youngest son, Cory. Wilson brings into discussion issues that are related to the situation in the North, and he focuses on the loss of identity, "I think if we had stayed in the South, we would have been a stronger people. And because the connection between the South of the '20s, '30s and '40s has been broken, it's very difficult to understand who we are" ([Gussow](#) 39).

The past provides an original oneness as the spirit of existence and of life Wilson describes:

When we left [the South] we left people back there...[the] connection is broken, that sense of standing in your father's shoes...What I'm trying to do with my plays [is to] make the connection. Because I think it is vital. Having shared a common past we have a common past and a common future ([Bigsby](#) 297)."

Wilson's attempts at reexamining history, his intentions are to recreate the status of African- Americans which can be noticed through Troy: "Troy's stories reach beyond the conventional temporal and spatial limits. Reexamining history, re-creating and positioning him within the fabric of the historic narrative, Troy constructs his past in the present" ([Elam](#) 12). However, his unfriendly reaction to Cory for not playing football is roused by the thought of protecting him as a social request due to his race. The last act of the play, set upon the morning of Troy's burial, clarifies the influence of the past upon the present in the connection between Cory and Troy. Troy opposes his present; similarly, Cory opposes his past. Cory struggles with the thought of becoming an autonomous character in the present, free from the towering ghost of the past.

Throughout the play, Troy's conflicts create strains among family members, which considerably influence in the play. Troy Maxson has struggled most of his life to be a responsible person and an accomplished man fulfilling his obligations.

Troy has attempted to dissimulate this inclination into worry for his child, however cannot make peace with the thought that he is too old, which makes it impossible to play baseball professionally. Nevertheless, he keeps denying this benefit to Cory in concept of his egocentricity, as he feels the outcomes of double consciousness. The concept double consciousness serves the black group in their attempt to fight the other forms of segregation that stand against black's real integration in the American society. It is obvious, when Troy begins to blame the white community for most of his problems, it further weakens his legitimate claims. The two warring souls and two thoughts that are present in Troy appear to be his justification for family mistreatment. Double consciousness is also the cause of the entitlement that Troy feels as a result of his firm subjugation by the white race. Troy uses the fence physically to speak to the isolating line between Cory and him. However, the firm line that he has drawn between him and his family deserves to be explored in more detail. Troy grew up with an oppressive father, which makes him show negligence towards his family.

Wilson uses his play in order to explore the connection between Troy and Cory on the one hand, and between Troy and Rose on the other. Troy Maxson speaks to the fantasies of black America in a dominantly white world, a world where these fantasies were impractical because of the way that prejudice and demeanors were publicly acceptable. Troy Maxson is a representative of many blacks, their states of mind and conduct inside the social setting. Troy Maxson perceives how African-Americans are kept under control in the world where he lives. Troy complains disadvantages of being an African-American and how his American Dream of playing baseball was taken away due to racism. Although it can be argued that he struggles for control which can be found in most of Wilson's plays, two characters that be obvious are Troy from "Fences" and Levee from "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom". Despite the fact that these men experience their lives in different periods, they essentially have the same circumstances: both are abused by the white beliefs. Both Troy and Levee fight with their awful past and their present environment, and when they attempt to recover power over their lives, they come up short, and wind up dragging others down with them. Troy and Rose stand for the most compelling proof that "Fences" is a play on the conflict between the authorities of the other with the autonomy of the self. With all the treacheries, Troy has faced both a child, and an adult, he tries to reclaim the power of decision over his own life. Sandra Shannon comments: "These feelings of being passed over change Troy into a man obsessed with extorting from life an equal measure of what was robbed from him" ([Shannon](#) 95).

7. Fences in Wilson's View and Messages

The origin and causes of Wilson's intentions for writing this play were the result of the fact that the life of African- Americans was miserable. He tries to show that all the significant constructions and huge plans in America are standing on the shoulders of the cheap black workers. In the meantime, the blacks were left jobless, miserable and hopeless, as well as suffering from many constraints that are summed up by the simple word "fences". He explored the evolution of the experience and the insight into race relations. Through his play, Wilson shows the issues that have influenced specific groups, in the twentieth century, ought to have been illustrated, raised and analyzed more profoundly. Through his words of protest, Wilson can light up the spark of revolutionary motivation on behalf of his people, for the sake of their freedom. These attempts may have led the blacks to be push harder and express their dissatisfaction with their difficult situation at that time, which is a significant theme in "Fences":

It is clear that Wilson's plays are underscored by their inherent historicity. Accounts of slavery, displacement, poverty and personal trauma unite these individuals under a shared history, even as it separates them through the specificity of their individual hardships. (Elam 2)

The hardships that the blacks face function as a unifying factor for the voice of protest when speaking against the oppressions of the whites and the lack of reaction of the government as for improving their social condition.

Wilson uses the term "Fences" as a literary tool for making, creating and painting images in the reader's mind, showing how the blacks are deprived from their freedom and civil rights. In "Fences", characters

are both mentally and physically constrained by social, political, economic and moral fences that prevent the blacks from being a vital part of the society where they were born and are living. It seems that history and traditions have taken much space in Wilson's work, as shown through many characters that he has created. Wilson aims at pointing out to the fact that his people are gradually losing their old traditions and history besides identity, which shape a significant part of their identity: "it is nothing to be ashamed of. Why is it, after spending hundreds of years in bondage, that blacks in America do not once a year get together and celebrate the Emancipation and remind ourselves of our history" (Elam 78).

The play gets more complicated as new characters appear. The different representation fences as depicted by Wilson, along with his social portrayals, give readers beautiful and critical interest. The rediscovery of a character's personality is a result of his encounter and resignation with the past. Wilson's storytelling methods show how the past has its own effects on the present. Troy Maxson's failure to relinquish his past. Throughout the play, characters put up fences rationally, emblematically and physically for comfort and security, for instance, Rose protects herself from Troy. Throughout the play, readers can perceive how the fence is used as a security tool for the characters. Rose comforts herself by singing: "Jesus, be a fence all around me every day. Jesus, I want you to protect me as I travel on my way" ([Wilson; apud Shannon](#) 75).

While singing this song, one could observe Rose's need for comfort as to Rose, a fence symbolizes her adoration and wishing for a fence means that Rose looks for safety and affection. Bono demonstrates to Troy that Rose wants the fence to be built for the reason of securing herself and family. Bono believes that a few people build walls for security, while other people build wall to prison people in, a reference to Troy decision to keep his family away from the outer world.

Despite the fact that all characters in the play understand fences inversely, they all see them as a method of defense. While discussing Death, Troy hypothesizes on how he has crossed paths with of Death: "Death ain't nothing. I done seen him. Done wrestled with him. You can't tell me anything about Death. Death ain't nothing but a fastball on the outside corner" (Wilson 16). Here, Troy makes a memorable statement as it explains how Troy believes that a fence could protect him from death, but the fence that he built becomes the reason for his tragic end. Troy has another experience with Death when Alberta dies at work and right then he chooses that he will complete the fence as he says: "Alright Mr. Death. See now? I'm gonna tell you what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna take and build me a fence around this yard. See? I'm gonna build me a fence around what belongs to me. And then I want you to stay on the other side". ([Wilson](#) 77)

The fence is finally built by Troy, only because of his narrow-minded character. When Rose needs the fence, he thinks that it is an unnecessary and unproductive task, however when Alberta dies, he takes a break from what he was doing and assembles the fence. Troy builds the fence with specific goal in his mind: to be safe and far from death.

After Troy tosses Cory based on his belief that Cory "got the devil in him" ([Wilson](#) 77), he starts to mock Death, Troy takes a fighting position and initiates to see death as he says, "Come on! It is between you and me now! Come on! Anytime you want! Come on! I be ready for you, but I ain't gonna be easy"

(Wilson 89). This demonstrates that Troy dreads death to some extent, since he needs to dispose of everything that identified with death, if that is his own child. The wall stands for a significant battle between the physical and metaphorical meanings of humankind and obscurity.

Wilson utilizes Troy Maxson as aggressive and with a continuous imaginary struggle with death. He tries to support his family financially, providing things that during his childhood were not available for him. In addition, he is predisposed by his miserable childhood, and thus he becomes a smutty father with a control over his younger son, Cory. In Wilson's mind, people of his own origin and color have been discriminated based on cultural differences and race. Here, the researcher refers to the definition of racism given by the UN, which is seen through this part of study reflecting Wilson's standpoints and perception of the world discrimination:

Racism is an ideological construct that assigns a certain race and/or ethnic group to a position of power over others based on physical and cultural attributes, involving hierarchical relations where the 'superior' race exercises domination and control over others. (McKinley 18)

Conclusion

Wilson writes a play which represents the predominant impact of the past upon the present and future. Not exclusively is the history of Wilson's characters, but it represents the historical background of the African-American experience and their inspirations in their activities in the present. Within the play "Fences", August Wilson uses different characters to portray mistakes that anyone can do in his or her life. Troy left his father because of his father's total control over his life. Troy Maxson understands how African-Americans are subdued in the society in which he exists. By portraying his characters, and by his repeated attempts, Wilson wants to make it clear that the African-American should fight to find identity, equality, self-affirmation and integration in the American society, and to make their cultural heritage distinctive. Wilson had a profound consideration of the nature of the political, cultural and social life of the black people in America. August Wilson has stated that his goal in writing is to explore the African-American condition as part of the general human condition, and it appears that he has reached that goal, since his work had also a social impact. Wilson often said he did not write for black or white audiences, but rather about the black people's experience in America who have failed to get their recognition till now.

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