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RESEARCH ARTICLE

FROM SILENCE TO RESISTANCE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN ANGIE THOMAS'S THE HATE U GIVE

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Abstract

This study builds on previous research on Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*, which has been extensively examined through the lens of racism, police violence, and the Black Lives Matter movement; however, the connection between residential segregation, racial inequalities, and the protagonist's gradual development of critical consciousness remains less explored. From this perspective, the study seeks to answer the question of how racialized spaces and the experience of police brutality contribute to the development of African American critical consciousne ss. To this end, the analysis draws on the principles of Critical Race Theory and African American literary criticism to examine the relationships between race, power, space, identity, and resistance. The results of the analysis show that these racialized spaces are not merely backdrops but function as mechanisms for the production of political and racial consciousness. They also show that critical consciousness in the novel goes beyond the mere recognition of racial injustice to become an ability to identify power structures and act against them. The study thus highlights that *The Hate U Give* contributes to contemporary African American literature by making fiction a space for political education, consciousness-raising, and social critique.

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Introduction:-

Literature has long served as a powerful medium through which marginalized communities articulate their lived experiences, challenge dominant ideologies, and reclaim their humanity. Within this tradition, African American literature has consistently exposed the historical and contemporary manifestations of racial oppression while affirming Black identity, resilience, and resistance. In recent years, contemporary African American fiction has increasingly engaged with issues such as systemic racism, police brutality, racial profiling, and social inequality, reflecting the persistence of racial injustice in the United States despite significant legal and political advances. Among these works, Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*(2017) has emerged as a landmark novel for its compelling portrayal of the everyday realities of African American youth confronting structural racism and state violence.

Existing scholarship has long examined the novel as a literary response to systemic racism, police brutality, and the Black Lives Matter movement. It has also demonstrated that the novel foregrounds the vulnerability of African

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American youth by exposing the persistent conflict between Black communities and law enforcement, while emphasizing its educational significance in discussions of racial justice. Similarly, it contends that Thomas portrays institutional racism as a deeply embedded social structure and presents activism as an effective means of resisting racial oppression. More recently, it has expanded the scope of criticism by exploring environmental justice and Black ecological consciousness in the novel, and confirmed that *The Hate U Give*is a powerful literary intervention against systemic racism and an important contribution to contemporary African American literature. Nevertheless, relatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to the interconnected roles of residential segregation and the struggle for equal citizenship in shaping African American critical consciousness. Although these two dimensions profoundly influence Starr Carter's personal and political development, they have rarely been examined as complementary mechanisms through which racial awareness develops into critical consciousness and collective resistance. By investigating this relationship, the present study seeks to fill this gap and contribute to current debates on African American literature, race, citizenship, and spatial justice.

To investigate this issue, the study combines Critical Race Theory (CRT) with African American Literary Criticism. Critical Race Theory provides a conceptual framework for analyzing how residential segregation and discriminatory policing reproduce racial inequality and shape the lived experiences of African Americans. Complementing this perspective, African American Literary Criticism offers analytical tools for examining the representation of racial consciousness and resistance in literary texts.

Against this background, this study seeks to answer the question of how racialized spaces and the experience of police brutality contribute to the development of African American critical consciousness. By foregrounding the relationship between space, equal citizenship and critical consciousness, this work examines how residential segregation shapes the construction of critical consciousness, how the pursuit of equal citizenship fosters political awakening, and how collective resistance enables African Americans to assert their agency against systemic racial inequality.

Literature Review :-

The Hate U Give and Contemporary African American Fiction:

Since its publication in 2017, Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* has become one of the most influential works of contemporary African American fiction. The novel has attracted sustained scholarly attention because of its engagement with systemic racism, police violence, racial identity, youth activism, and social justice. By narrating Starr Carter's experience of witnessing the fatal police shooting of her childhood friend Khalil, Thomas explores how structural inequalities shape the everyday lives of African Americans while exposing the persistence of racial injustice in contemporary American society.

Scholars generally agree that the novel extends the tradition of African American protest literature by foregrounding the experiences of Black youth within institutions historically marked by racial inequality. Its representation of police brutality, educational disparities, media discourse, and community activism has positioned *The Hate U Give* as a significant literary response to contemporary debates surrounding race and citizenship in the United States. Consequently, the novel has been examined not only as a work of fiction but also as an important cultural text that contributes to discussions of democracy, equality, and social justice.

Critical Consciousness in African American Literary Studies:

The concept of critical consciousness occupies a central position in discussions of social transformation and resistance. Originating in Paulo Freire's educational philosophy, critical consciousness refers to the process through which oppressed individuals develop an awareness of structural inequalities, critically interpret their social conditions, and engage in collective action to transform them. Although Freire developed this concept in the context of education, contemporary literary scholars have increasingly employed it to examine how fictional narratives represent political awakening, identity formation, and resistance to oppression.

Within African American literary criticism, critical consciousness is closely connected to the historical struggle against racial discrimination and the affirmation of Black identity. African American literature frequently portrays characters whose personal experiences of racism evolve into broader political awareness and collective resistance. Rather than presenting racism merely as an individual experience, these narratives reveal its structural foundations and encourage readers to interrogate systems of domination. From this perspective, *The Hate U Give* illustrates the progressive transformation of Starr Carter from a hesitant witness into an active participant in the struggle for racial justice.

Residential Segregation, Citizenship, and Racial Inequality:

Residential segregation has long constituted one of the principal mechanisms through which racial inequality has been reproduced in the United States. Critical Race Theory demonstrates that segregation is not simply a geographical phenomenon but also a structural system that shapes educational opportunities, economic resources, political participation, and access to justice. The separation between predominantly Black and predominantly White neighborhoods reflects broader patterns of institutional inequality that continue to influence the lives of African Americans.

In *The Hate U Give*, the contrast between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep symbolizes these unequal social realities. The movement of Starr Carter between these two spaces reveals the psychological and social tensions experienced by many African Americans who negotiate different racial environments. Existing scholarship has often interpreted these contrasting spaces as representations of social inequality or racial identity. However, fewer studies have examined how spatial segregation actively contributes to the gradual development of critical consciousness by exposing structural injustice and encouraging political engagement.

The question of equal citizenship is equally significant. Although legal equality has formally been established through civil rights legislation, African Americans continue to encounter unequal treatment in policing, education, housing, and public institutions. Contemporary African American fiction therefore represents citizenship not merely as a legal status but as an ongoing struggle for recognition, dignity, and equal participation in democratic life. Thomas's novel illustrates this tension by demonstrating how Starr's pursuit of justice ultimately becomes a broader demand for full citizenship and social equality.

Research Gap:

Despite the growing body of scholarship devoted to *The Hate U Give*, three observations emerge from the existing literature. First, previous studies have primarily focused on police brutality, the Black Lives Matter movement, youth activism, racial identity, and media representation. Second, while some scholars acknowledge the significance of residential segregation and educational inequality, these issues are generally treated as contextual elements rather than as central analytical categories. Third, relatively little attention has been devoted to the relationship between residential segregation, contested citizenship, and the development of African American critical consciousness.

This article argues that these three dimensions are intrinsically interconnected. Rather than considering segregation and citizenship as separate themes, it examines how they jointly shape Starr Carter's political awakening and transform her understanding of racial injustice into collective resistance. By combining Critical Race Theory with African American Literary Criticism, the study offers a more comprehensive explanation of how contemporary African American fiction represents the formation of critical consciousness under conditions of systemic racial inequality. In doing so, it contributes to ongoing debates on race, space, citizenship, and political agency in contemporary African American literature.

Theoretical Framework:-

Critical Race Theory:

Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s through the pioneering works of legal scholars such as Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, and Jean Stefancic. Developed initially within legal studies, CRT challenges the assumption that racism is merely the product of individual prejudice. Instead, it argues that racism is systemic, institutional, and deeply embedded in the legal, political, educational, and economic structures of society. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2017), racism constitutes an ordinary feature of American social life rather than an exceptional phenomenon, shaping access to opportunities, justice, and citizenship.

One of the central assumptions of CRT is that racial inequality is reproduced through social institutions that appear neutral while perpetuating unequal power relations. Residential segregation, unequal educational opportunities, discriminatory policing, and unequal access to public resources are therefore understood as structural manifestations of systemic racism rather than isolated social problems. CRT also emphasizes the importance of counter-storytelling, through which marginalized voices challenge dominant narratives and expose forms of racial injustice that are frequently ignored or minimized.

Within the context of *The Hate U Give*, Critical Race Theory provides an appropriate analytical framework for examining how residential segregation, police brutality, and unequal citizenship shape the everyday experiences of African Americans. The opposition between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep reflects spatial manifestations of

structural inequality, while Khalil's death reveals institutional practices that criminalize Black bodies and reinforce racial stereotypes. Through Starr Carter's testimony, the novel constructs a counter-narrative that contests dominant representations of race and advocates social justice.

Theory of Critical Consciousness:

While Critical Race Theory explains the structural dimensions of racial oppression, Paulo Freire's Theory of Critical Consciousness provides a framework for understanding how oppressed individuals become aware of these structures and develop the capacity to challenge them. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Freire conceptualizes critical consciousness (conscientização) as the process through which individuals move beyond passive acceptance of social injustice toward critical reflection and transformative action.

Critical consciousness involves three interconnected dimensions. The first is critical reflection, whereby individuals recognize that social inequalities are produced by historical and institutional forces rather than personal failure. The second is political efficacy, which refers to the belief that collective action can transform unjust social conditions. The third is critical action, through which awareness is translated into social engagement, resistance, and political participation.

Contemporary scholars such as Shawn Ginwright have further argued that critical consciousness enables marginalized youth to transform experiences of oppression into civic engagement and social activism. Rather than remaining victims of structural inequality, young people become active participants in movements seeking justice and social change.

This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant to Starr Carter's development throughout *The Hate U Give*. Initially reluctant to speak publicly about Khalil's death, Starr progressively recognizes the structural nature of racism, questions dominant narratives surrounding police violence, and ultimately assumes a public role in demanding justice. Her transformation illustrates the progressive movement from silence to critical reflection and finally to collective political action.

Residential Segregation and the Construction of Critical Consciousness:

Residential segregation constitutes one of the most significant manifestations of structural racism in *The Hate U Give*. Rather than functioning merely as a geographical division, it organizes unequal access to education, security, economic opportunities, and social recognition. Through the opposition between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep, Angie Thomas illustrates how racialized spaces produce distinct social experiences and gradually shape Starr Carter's critical consciousness. From the perspective of Critical Race Theory, these spaces are not neutral settings but institutional expressions of systemic racism that regulate power relations and reinforce racial inequality. Starr's movement between these two environments therefore becomes the catalyst for her political awakening.

Garden Heights as a Racialized Space of Identity and Collective Memory:

Garden Heights initially appears as a marginalized urban neighborhood characterized by poverty, gang violence, and limited economic opportunities. However, Thomas deliberately avoids reducing this community to negative stereotypes. Instead, she portrays it as a cultural space where solidarity, family relationships, and shared historical experiences reinforce African American identity.

Starr's attachment to Garden Heights is primarily expressed through her interpersonal relationships. Her friendship with Kenya, neighborhood celebrations, and everyday interactions illustrate the community's capacity to preserve cultural continuity despite structural deprivation. As Starr observes, "Kenya is about the only person I hang out with in Garden Heights" (Thomas, 2017, p. 13). This seemingly ordinary statement reveals a profound sense of belonging that extends beyond friendship to encompass a shared cultural identity. Garden Heights functions not simply as a residential area but as a social space in which African American identity is continuously reproduced through collective memory and communal practices.

Thomas further reinforces this representation through scenes of communal gatherings such as Big D's party. Although interpersonal tensions remain visible, communal celebrations encourage coexistence and solidarity rather than confrontation. These episodes suggest that cultural practices constitute important mechanisms through which marginalized communities maintain social cohesion despite structural inequalities. Such representations resonate with Bell Hooks' understanding of Black communities as spaces of healing, care, and resistance, where love and collective responsibility provide emotional resources for confronting oppression. Likewise, Paulo Freire's

conception of dialogue as the foundation of critical consciousness helps explain how shared experiences within Garden Heights nurture reflection rather than resignation.

Nevertheless, Thomas refuses to idealize Garden Heights. Alongside solidarity, she depicts gang violence, territorial conflicts, and insecurity as consequences of long-standing structural neglect. Starr's observation that Garden Heights has become "a battlefield" because of territorial wars (Thomas, 2017, p. 24) demonstrates that violence should not be interpreted as an inherent characteristic of Black communities but as a symptom of systemic exclusion. From a Critical Race Theory perspective, these conditions reflect institutional inequalities that have historically concentrated poverty and limited opportunities within predominantly Black neighborhoods. By juxtaposing resilience with structural deprivation, Thomas challenges deficit-based narratives and encourages readers to recognize the broader political forces shaping urban life.

Williamson Prep and the Experience of Racialized Difference:

If Garden Heights represents cultural belonging, Williamson Prep symbolizes access to educational privilege within a predominantly White social environment. Starr's attendance at this school exposes her to a different system of expectations in which acceptance often depends upon minimizing visible expressions of Black identity.

Thomas demonstrates that racial inequality is reproduced not only through material disparities but also through everyday interactions. Starr repeatedly modifies her language, behavior, and appearance to avoid confirming racial stereotypes. This strategy of self-regulation illustrates the psychological consequences of navigating spaces governed by White normative expectations. Rather than feeling fully accepted, Starr occupies a position of conditional inclusion.

The limited number of Black students further intensifies this experience. Starr ironically remarks that because Ryan is the only other Black student in her grade, everyone assumes they should become a couple "to preserve the blackness" of the school (Thomas, 2017, p. 79). Humor therefore becomes a rhetorical strategy through which Thomas exposes tokenism and the reduction of individual identity to racial categorization. Williamson Prep thus illustrates how institutional spaces can reproduce symbolic forms of exclusion even when they appear socially inclusive.

Negotiating Two Worlds: From Double Identity to Critical Reflection:

The opposition between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep places Starr in a permanent condition of negotiation. She is simultaneously criticized in Garden Heights for attending a "White school" and stereotyped in Williamson Prep because of her Blackness. Her reaction, "Not even five minutes ago, I was stuck-up because I go to Williamson Prep?" (Thomas, 2017, p. 15), reveals the contradictory expectations imposed upon African American youth who move between racially differentiated social worlds.

Rather than interpreting these tensions solely as an identity crisis, the present study argues that they constitute the first stage in the development of critical consciousness. Freire maintains that critical consciousness begins when individuals recognize that personal conflicts originate in structural social contradictions rather than individual shortcomings. Starr gradually reaches this realization as she understands that neither Garden Heights nor Williamson Prep defines her identity completely. Instead, her experiences reveal the operation of systemic racism across both environments.

This process corresponds closely to Freire's notion of critical reflection, through which oppressed individuals begin questioning the social structures responsible for inequality. Simultaneously, African American Literary Criticism emphasizes that negotiating multiple cultural spaces has long been central to Black literary representations of identity formation. Starr's movement between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep therefore illustrates not merely a personal dilemma but a broader African American experience of navigating racialized institutions while preserving cultural identity.

Residential Segregation as the Foundation of Critical Consciousness:

The Hate U Give demonstrates that residential segregation extends far beyond physical separation. It structures educational opportunities, shapes interpersonal relationships, influences identity formation, and determines access to social recognition. By moving between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep, Starr progressively recognizes that racial inequality is institutional rather than accidental. Her growing awareness transforms everyday experiences of exclusion into critical reflection on the structural nature of racism.

Consequently, residential segregation becomes the starting point of Starr Carter's political education. Through the interaction of contrasting spatial environments, Thomas illustrates the transition from lived experience to critical consciousness, thereby preparing the narrative movement toward political awakening and collective resistance developed in the following sections of this study.

Equal Citizenship and Political Awakening:

The development of critical consciousness in *The Hate U Give* reaches a decisive stage with the fatal shooting of Khalil Harris. While residential segregation enables Starr Carter to recognize the structural nature of racial inequality, Khalil's death compels her to confront a more fundamental question: whether African Americans are genuinely recognized as equal citizens within American democracy. Through this episode, Angie Thomas demonstrates that citizenship extends beyond legal status; it also entails equal protection under the law, recognition of one's humanity, and access to justice. By exposing the discrepancy between constitutional ideals and the lived experiences of African Americans, the novel portrays political awakening as the inevitable consequence of systemic injustice.

Khalil's Death and the Denial of Equal Citizenship:

Khalil's shooting constitutes the central event through which Angie Thomas interrogates the meaning of citizenship in contemporary America. Although Khalil is an unarmed teenager stopped during a routine police encounter, his death is rapidly justified through racial stereotypes rather than objective evidence. Public attention shifts from the officer's actions to Khalil's alleged involvement in drug dealing, thereby transforming the victim into the accused. This narrative strategy illustrates one of the principal assumptions of Critical Race Theory: racial inequality is reproduced through institutional practices that normalize the criminalization of Black bodies.

Angie Thomas emphasizes that the legal system does not evaluate Khalil as an individual citizen deserving equal protection but through preconceived assumptions associated with Black masculinity. Starr immediately recognizes this injustice when she realizes that many observers are more concerned with defending the police officer than investigating the circumstances of the shooting. Consequently, Khalil's death symbolizes the denial of substantive citizenship, revealing the persistent gap between the democratic principles proclaimed by the American Constitution and their unequal application in practice.

This representation echoes the historical experiences of African Americans whose encounters with law enforcement have frequently reflected institutional discrimination rather than impartial justice. Rather than portraying police brutality as an isolated incident, Angie Thomas situates Khalil's death within a broader pattern of systemic racism that continues to shape the relationship between African American communities and state institutions.

From Silence to Voice: Political Awakening Through Testimony:

In *The Hate U Give*, Starr attempts to distance herself from the shooting. Fear, trauma, and uncertainty prevent her from publicly recounting what she witnessed. However, as media narratives increasingly distort Khalil's identity, silence becomes morally unbearable. Starr gradually realizes that remaining silent contributes to the perpetuation of injustice.

Her testimony therefore represents a decisive turning point in the development of her critical consciousness. Paulo Freire argues that liberation begins when oppressed individuals transform lived experience into critical speech capable of challenging dominant narratives. Starr's decision to testify before the grand jury exemplifies this transition from passive observation to political agency. Speaking publicly no longer serves merely to defend Khalil's reputation; it becomes an act of resistance against institutional racism.

Thomas further reinforces this transformation by contrasting official discourse with Starr's lived experience. Whereas institutional narratives depict Khalil as a criminal suspect, Starr reconstructs his humanity through personal memory, friendship, and shared history. Her testimony thus functions as a form of counter-storytelling, a central concept within Critical Race Theory that enables marginalized communities to contest dominant representations and reclaim their own voices.

Justice, Activism, and the Emergence of Political Agency:

Starr's political awakening is further strengthened through her interaction with April Ofrah and the activist organization Just Us for Justice. April encourages Starr to understand that individual suffering acquires political significance when connected to collective struggles against systemic oppression. Through this relationship, Angie

Thomas illustrates how political education often emerges from community engagement rather than formal institutions.

The slogan "Justice for Khalil" symbolizes this transformation from private grief to public activism. Demonstrations, community meetings, and peaceful protests challenge the legitimacy of institutional narratives that seek to justify police violence. Rather than representing spontaneous emotional reactions, these collective actions articulate a broader demand for equal citizenship, accountability, and democratic inclusion.

Significantly, Angie Thomas portrays activism as both personal and communal. Starr's participation in public demonstrations reflects her growing recognition that racial injustice cannot be overcome through individual resilience alone. Instead, meaningful social change requires collective action capable of confronting institutional discrimination. Her development therefore illustrates Paulo Freire's understanding of critical action (praxis), whereby reflection becomes inseparable from political engagement.

Equal Citizenship as Democratic Recognition:

Beyond the demand for legal accountability, *The Hate U Give* invites readers to reconsider the meaning of citizenship itself. Throughout the novel, African Americans repeatedly encounter institutions that fail to guarantee equal treatment despite constitutional promises of liberty and justice. Angie Thomas consequently distinguishes between formal citizenship, which grants legal membership in the nation, and substantive citizenship, which requires equal dignity, recognition, and protection.

Starr's political awakening ultimately consists in recognizing this distinction. Her struggle is no longer confined to obtaining justice for Khalil alone; it evolves into a broader challenge to systemic structures that continue to deny African Americans full participation in democratic life. In this sense, her activism reflects the transition from individual consciousness to collective political responsibility.

Consequently, *The Hate U Give* portrays equal citizenship not as an already achieved democratic reality but as an ongoing political project requiring continuous resistance against structural racism. By linking Khalil's death to Starr's progressive transformation into a public advocate for justice, Angie Thomas demonstrates that political awakening constitutes the indispensable bridge between critical consciousness and collective resistance. This progression prepares the final stage of the novel's emancipatory vision, namely the emergence of African American collective agency.

Collective Resistance and African American Agency:

Racism and systemic discrimination not only undermine the dignity of African Americans but also generate forms of resistance that extend beyond the individual. Although political consciousness often begins with personal experiences of injustice, it gradually develops into collective agency through the family, the community, and organized social movements. In *The Hate U Give*, Angie Thomas demonstrates that resistance is sustained by intergenerational education, communal solidarity, and the preservation of collective memory. The struggle for dignity therefore becomes both an individual and a collective endeavor.

From Individual Political Consciousness to Family and Community Resistance:

The first stage of collective resistance emerges within the family, where political consciousness is transmitted from one generation to another. Following Khalil's death, Maverick prepares Starr to confront institutional intimidation during her police interview. He advises her, "Don't be scared 'bout Monday. Tell the cops the truth, and don't let them put words in your mouth. God gave you a brain. You don't need theirs (...) Don't let them make you think otherwise" (Thomas, 2017, p. 65). The repeated imperative forms, "Don't be scared,""Tell the cops," and "Don't let them", highlight his determination to cultivate intellectual autonomy and moral courage. Rather than allowing his daughter to internalize fear, Maverick teaches her that telling the truth constitutes an act of resistance against institutional manipulation.

This political education is reinforced by historical consciousness. Starr explains that, "He agrees with the Nation of Islam on some stuff, but he can't get over the fact that they may have killed Malcolm X" (Thomas, 2017, p. 39). Maverick's attachment to Malcolm X illustrates how historical memory continues to shape African American political identity. His refusal to normalize racial violence enables him to transmit to his children an awareness of the continuity between past and present struggles against racism.

Family education also takes the form of explicit political instruction. Starr and her brothers learn the Black Panther Party's Ten-Point Program in the same way other American children memorize the Pledge of Allegiance. The declaration, "We want freedom. We want the power to determine the destiny of our black and oppressed communities. We want an immediate end to police brutality and the murder of black people" (Thomas, 2017, p. 320), expresses collective aspirations rather than individual demands. The anaphora "We want" transforms personal grievances into the voice of an entire community seeking justice, self-determination, and equality. Starr further observes that, "Daddy believes in Black Jesus but follows the Black Panthers Ten-Point Program more than the Ten Commandments" (Thomas, 2017, p. 39), suggesting that political consciousness occupies a central place within family education.

The political values cultivated in the household gradually extend to the wider community. Khalil's funeral becomes a space where private mourning evolves into collective protest. Starr notices that, "There are more people out here than in the church, holding posters with Khalil's face on them and signs that say 'Justice for Khalil'. His classmates have posters saying 'Am I next?' and 'Enough Is Enough'" (Thomas, 2017, p. 138). The slogan "Am I next?" reflects the shared anxiety experienced by young African Americans confronted with recurring police violence, whereas "Enough Is Enough" expresses collective frustration toward systemic injustice. The funeral therefore becomes a public denunciation of racism rather than merely a religious ceremony.

Community solidarity reaches its highest expression during the demonstrations that follow Khalil's death. Starr recounts, "There are at least a hundred people gathered on Magnolia Avenue. They chant for justice and hold signs, fists high in the air for black power" (Thomas, 2017, p. 141). The raised fist symbolizes unity, dignity, and resistance against racial oppression. Through chants, slogans, and collective occupation of public space, individual experiences of discrimination are transformed into organized community action. Angie Thomas thus demonstrates that political consciousness, initially cultivated within the family, ultimately becomes collective resistance through communal solidarity.

Social Movements, Cultural Memory and the Construction of Collective Agency:

Beyond community mobilization, African American resistance is strengthened through organized activism and broader social movements. Contemporary communication technologies play a crucial role in this process by facilitating the dissemination of information and the coordination of collective action. In *The Hate U Give*, Maverick frequently uses social media to denounce police harassment while celebrating his children's achievements. His posts illustrate how digital platforms simultaneously preserve collective memory, expose racial injustice, and reinforce community resilience despite persistent discrimination.

Organized activism is further embodied by April Ofrah, leader of Just Us for Justice. As both an attorney and an activist, she combines legal advocacy with media strategy. She explains, "The case is about to gain national media attention (...) but I don't want it to be at her expense. Besides being an advocate, I'm also an attorney" (Thomas, 2017, p. 139). Her intervention illustrates that contemporary social movements rely not only on public demonstrations but also on legal expertise, ethical responsibility, and strategic communication. Consequently, collective resistance extends beyond spontaneous protest to become structured political action.

Collective agency is equally sustained through the preservation of historical memory. In Maverick's grocery store, photographs of prominent African American figures remind visitors of previous generations' struggles. Starr observes that the walls display "photographs of civil rights leaders... There's a picture of Dr. King"(Thomas, 2017, p. 52). These visual representations function as symbolic reminders that present-day activism is rooted in the long history of the Civil Rights Movement. They preserve collective memory while inspiring younger generations to continue the struggle for equality.

Literary narratives likewise contribute to the construction of collective identity. In *Black, White, and Jewish*, Rebecca Walker rejects stigmatizing definitions of her identity by affirming, "I am not a bastard... I am a Movement child. My parents tell me I can be anything I want" (Walker, 2001, p. 24). Her statement demonstrates how family narratives and collective history replace shame with pride and self-confidence. Similarly, Ralph Ellison's narrator declares, "I'm not ashamed of my grandparents for having been slaves. I'm only ashamed of myself for having at one time been ashamed" (Ellison, 1989, p. 15). This ideological reversal transforms slavery from a source of inherited shame into a source of historical consciousness and collective dignity.

The affirmation of Black identity also resonates with Marcus Garvey's philosophy of Black Nationalism. Through the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), Garvey encouraged people of African descent to celebrate their African heritage and reject racial inferiority. His philosophy finds a literary echo in *The Hate U Give* through Starr's description of Cameron's grandmother as "an African queen" (Thomas, 2017, p. 69). This symbolic representation embodies cultural pride, historical continuity, and resistance to racial domination.

Finally, spirituality constitutes another dimension of African American collective agency. Maverick's prayer to "Black Jesus","Black Jesus keep them safe... Give them the wisdom they need to be their own people" (Thomas, 2017, p. 74),combines religious faith with political consciousness. Rather than encouraging passive submission, this prayer promotes discernment, autonomy, and perseverance in the face of systemic racism. Spiritual belief therefore complements political activism by providing emotional strength and reinforcing communal resilience.

Overall, *The Hate U Give* demonstrates that African American agency evolves through successive stages. Political consciousness first develops within the family, expands through community solidarity, and is ultimately consolidated by organized activism, cultural memory, racial pride, and spirituality. Angie Thomas thus portrays collective resistance as a dynamic social process through which African Americans transform individual experiences of oppression into enduring struggles for dignity, justice, and equality.

Conclusion:-

This study demonstrates that Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* portrays the development of African American critical consciousness through the interconnected experiences of residential segregation and the struggle for equal citizenship. The contrast between Garden Heights and Williamson Prep reveals how spatial and social inequalities shape Starr Carter's understanding of race, identity, and belonging. Moving between these two worlds enables her to recognize the structural nature of racism and the complexities of African American identity.

Furthermore, the work shows that police brutality, discrimination, and the denial of equal rights become catalysts for resistance and self-awareness. Through family support, community solidarity, activism, and the influence of historical movements such as the Black Panthers, African Americans transform grief and oppression into collective action and demands for justice. Starr's evolution from silence to outspoken activism symbolizes the emergence of critical consciousness and the affirmation of dignity, equality, and citizenship.

Ultimately, the analysis illustrates that critical consciousness is not only an individual awakening but also a collective process rooted in history, culture, and community. By exposing systemic racism while celebrating resilience and solidarity, the work demonstrates the power of literature to challenge oppression, promote social justice, and encourage social transformation. It therefore reaffirms African American literature's enduring role as a vehicle for resistance, empowerment, and the pursuit of a more equitable society.

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