



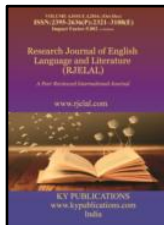
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## THE IDEAL BLACK MAN IN ALICE WALKER'S *THE THIRD LIFE OF GRANGE COPELAND*

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### ABSTRACT

Alice Walker's first novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* published in 1970, showcases the evil effects of racism, sexism, classism and gender dissonance amidst plantation life. The then plantation system in America bestowed untreatable wounds on the psychological and emotional planes upon individuals involved in sharecropping. Generations of blacks could not find a way out of the rut and rammel like system, that ate away the vitality of umpteen number of African Americans. The dehumanizing aspects of sharecropping under racism have been clearly stated by Walker through the novel. Doing so, she has shown how blacks have been undone under white hegemony for generations together. Walker has criticized the negative portrayal of men and has shown how black men should be and should not be, through the black male characters in the novel, rather than demeaning them. Walker through the novel has shown a benevolent black male role model and the ideal black man in Grange Copeland. *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970) is a significant novel in the African American literary canon as it vouches and ushers in a new world of possibilities for black men and women despite racism, sexism and classism when one develops womanist awareness to overcome the taboos associated with racism, sexism and classism. Walker through the novel has stressed on the fact that men need to contribute wellness, nurturance, love, trust, faith and proper understanding of life for the upliftment of their female counterparts and their successive generations. Walker through the novel has shown how black men have to really mould themselves, in order to establish true black masculinity, proper family relationships, and a better black community.

Alice Walker's first novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* published in 1970, showcases the evil effects of racism, sexism, classism and gender dissonance amidst plantation life. The novel depicts the sufferings of yesteryear blacks under the plantation system. It focuses on three generations of a black family trying to survive in a world, torn by racism, sexism and classism that are heightened by the plantation system. The plantation system under

which yesteryear blacks lived was one full of drudgery, and never ending slavery for generations of blacks without any hope to come out of it. The white man's plantation was a death maze for blacks who worked on it. Walker through the novel explores the "black man's search for self-worth" (Weston 161) amidst racism, sexism and classism. The novel depicts how "social constructions of black womanhood and manhood are inextricably

linked to racial hierarchy, meaning system and institutionalization” (Brewer 17). While men only faced racism and classism, black women had to bear racism, classism, and two fold sexism. **Many black critics like MadhuDubey commenting on the novel have “censured its unsympathetic portrayal of black men”** (108). This paper takes up the onerous task of negating the aforesaid statement, as Walker has shown how black men should be and should not be, through the black male characters in the novel, rather than demeaning them. Walker further has shown how black men are maligned by an oppressive racist, classist and sexist system. Indeed, Walker has shown a role model black man in the novel.

The then plantation system in America bestowed untreatable wounds on the psychological and emotional planes upon individuals involved in sharecropping. Generations of blacks could not find a way out of the rut and rammel like system, that ate away the vitality of umpteen number of African Americans. Blacks down South with an agrarian economy have had no better means of livelihood, other than working as sharecroppers. As pointed out by Truider Harris:

**“In the 1930s, sharecropping was as much a system of slavery as that which had existed for blacks in this country prior to 1860. Invisible chains of debts took the place of rope and shackles, but the mental state which existed during slavery did not change much. . . . few acceptable changes escapes existed (and) men who have been brave enough to steal away . . . could just as easily find themselves hanging from trees the next morning or find themselves on new plantation which were really no better than the ones from which they escaped. (34)**

The dehumanizing aspects of sharecropping under racism have been clearly stated by Walker through the novel. Walker to write the novel has used her first-hand knowledge of sharecropper’s lives and the oddities faced by them, and their families, to showcase the plight of yester year blacks under the plantation system. She was a live witness to the plight of sharecroppers as a young child. Alice

Walker as a child has had experienced the drudgery and poverty involved in the plantation system, as her parents were sharecroppers who made less than three hundred dollars a year. It was extremely difficult for her father Willie Lee to get Walker treated, when she has had an eye injury that left a scar in her eye. As a sharecropper’s child, poverty was a reality of her life. The sharecropping system in America was one where there were **“no incentives to improve their lot of life; the harder and longer they worked and the greater their output, the less their reward”** (Quarles 246-247). Doing so, she has shown how blacks have been undone under white hegemony for generations together. The plantation system in America made the black man the perfect host of servitude till his death. **“The novel graphically delineates the ways in which racial oppression denies the status of full subjects to black men”** (Dubey 108).

**“Walker though the novel demonstrates the relationship between the racist sharecropping system and the violence that the men, women and children of that family inflict on each other”** (Christian *Black Feminist* 84). The Copeland family showcased in the novel is represented by Grange Copeland, Margaret Copeland and Brownfield Copeland in the first generation. The second generation of the Copeland family is represented by Brownfield Copeland, Mem Copeland, and the third generation of the family is represented by their three daughters Daphne, Ornette, and Ruth Copelands. The three generations of the family face extreme conditions of racism, sexism and classism. After hectic back breaking work throughout the day, for the whole year, the Copelands find it difficult to make both ends meet. The life of Grange Copeland can be demarcated by three different periods based on his life in South, his sojourn up North, and his return, to his home down South. The first phase of his life, as a helpless sharecropper terribly crushed under the plantation system down South, has nothing remarkable. The second stage as a vagabond up North doing odd jobs far away from the depreciating plantation system, trying to make his invisibility visible, shows him his true strength. The third stage of his life marked by his return to his homeland, as an old man with grit and substance,

makes him a role model black male. The three stages of his life show how a black man can change for the better. Slavery through plantation system eats out the vitality of the Copelands. **As pointed adroitly defined by Betty Wood in *The Origins of American Slavery* "The word slave meant a piece of conveyable property, a chattel, with no legal rights or social status whatsoever" (9).** The Copelands lead most of their lives as insignificant black slaves with no legal rights and back breaking hard work that pays them nothing.

Walker through the novel has shown that the masculine identity of a black man has always been under question in a white run system as both the black man and woman have been subjected to oppression on the sexual front as well as emotional front under slavery. The masculine identity of Grange Copeland is at question whenever he meets his white boss Mr Shipley. The promiscuous relationship between his wife Margaret and Mr Shipley ruins his emotional and psychological makeup altogether. As a young man, Grange works under his white boss Shipley along with his wife Margaret. With supplanting debt under his white boss, he becomes more of a robot, than a living being. He gets stuck up in the system of sharecropping where sharecroppers like him, do not make much money. In a constant state of debt, Grange even thinks of selling his wife Margaret, to clear his debt. He ill-treats his son Brownfield. The helplessness in him turns out to be open belligerence and anger, towards his family members. He gets stuck up in the blame game and falls down on his own. He gets addicted to drinking and womanizing. Margaret tries to help her in all possible ways. She works as a domestic helper at Shipley's home. When Grange gets drunk and mismanages things on the domestic and professional fronts, Margaret becomes the mule and manages home and tries her level best to keep it together. Grange becomes more of a lethargic gruesome man, with least care and concern for his family in days of his youth, hard pressed by the American social structure. Walker through the novel has adroitly shown how :**"The American social structure turns the Black man into a beast—suppressing his human qualities and accenting his**

**animal tendencies. The Black man in turn reflects his violent relation with his white [counterpart] in his relation with his wife and [children] "** (Hogue 49-50). Unwittingly, Grange as a young man does not take care of his family properly, but only blames his fate and whites around. Out of naivety, he does not think of coming out of the oppressive plantation system, or moving to a better place, to make a far better livelihood. The psychological manipulation reserved for him turns on and on, and comes into play whenever he tries to muster courage, to come out of the rut and rammel of slavery. Walker through the novel has clearly shown how **"the pernicious effects of racial caste system corrode the sensibilities of men" (Hariston 177).**

Walker through the novel has shown how the victimization of black men and women, reflects on each other without an iota of doubt. Under slavery, black women were the mules of the household. Margaret manages all the responsibilities on her own. She suggests Grange that they go northwards, and come out of the rut and rammel of the plantation system forever. Margaret's sister and her family with their children have made a better living up North and Margaret ponders on the idea of going abroad. Grange never likes this idea, and he brushes it aside. To add to all the remorse at home, Grange carries on his on and off affair with Josie, a prostitute, much to the dismay of Margaret. With the neglect of Grange, Margaret slowly turns into a wantonly woman, who least cares about her moral propriety. She begets a second child named "Star" who turns out to be Brownfield's half-sibling. In due course of time, Grange totally neglects Margaret, leaves her, and goes away. Unable to bear Grange's carelessness, belligerence and negligence, Margaret commits suicide with her baby "Star." Unwittingly and unknowingly, Grange abets the suicide of Margaret. Grange stands as a true representative of **" the very notion of the potent black patriarch" (Weston 94).** Walker's male characters like Brownfield are victims of a society **"where injustices have been imposed individually. Rather they have functioned in a racial climate where oppression has been administered systemically to black people collectively" (17).**

Taking up a journey to find the true personality of a person is of utmost importance to the womanist concerns incorporated in the novel. Grange takes up a journey in search of cultural and economic freedom, while Brownfield goes in search of economic and sexual freedom. The only difference between their journeys is that Grange takes up a journey into his inner self, and finds ways and means to change his life forever, while Brownfield never takes up such a journey. Brownfield as a young teenager is left to fend for himself, with none to care for him. Grange emotionally remains undeterred by what has happened at home. He neglects his responsibility as a father. Josie, who sleeps with Grange, does not mind bedding with Brownfield, in the pretext of helping him. The Mother daughter duo, Josie and Lorene exploit him as a sex slave, taking advantage of his innocence. Brownfield thinks that he is being approached by women for his sexual prowess. To him, asserting his sexual self becomes a symbol of his masculinity, macho and power. He hates and dislikes the fact, that his mother has bedded with Shipley and stays nonchalant about her wellbeing. Brownfield as a youngster has no role model to emulate, or seek inspiration from. Grange moves northwards not knowing what to do, as he is terribly fed up with things and circumstances around him. The physical and emotional journeys taken up by Grange Copeland up North, aid in the making of a better man out of him who is strong, alert, kind and compassionate.

Walker through the novel has argued that the race issue cannot be handled unless and until sexism and intra-racism are curtailed on the personal front by African American men and women. Walker through the novel has argued that awareness about one's own condition is an important aspect of personal and societal change that leads to transformation of a person on all fronts. Grange does not have the aforesaid awareness because of which promiscuity and nonchalance towards life and his family become his routine as a young man. He in fact, gives her disharmonious reasons for his life style and argues that he can have whores while she can bear her sons, which itself is an instance of sexist and

misogynist stance. To him owning women, and making them do things gives great relief. He tells Margaret: "If I can never own nothing, . . . I will have women. I love you, . . . I trust you to bear and raise my sons; I love Josie because she can have no sons" (**Walker *The Third* 177**). Grange does not try to find out what has happened to his wife and child, after he goes North. He leaves them to their individual fate. The failure of the first generation of the Copeland family to a greater extent, lies upon Grange. Though he has few reasons to show disdain for Margaret, he has no reasons, to show disdain for his son Brownfield. Yet, he treats him unkindly and leaves him to fend on his own. The helplessness in Grange turns out to be open belligerence and anger towards his family members. He gets stuck up in the blame game and ruins his life, not doing anything significant. African American women like Margaret have been sexually subjugated on plantations by their white owners, which is a testimony to the white man's atrocities on black women. The helplessness in Grange manifests as open belligerence and anger towards his family members. The racism, sexism, classism and gender chasm along with their own personal negligence sucks the whole family into lifelong slavery, as they have no womanist awareness.

Creating one's own identity is a very important aspect of individuation that leads to self – realization, and freedom of the real sort which is created by social mobility. Walker through the novel has argued that black men at least need to have minimum social mobility, for them to help create a better society with black women. Grange as a sharecropper has never had the opportunity to experience upward social mobility in Georgia. The whites, for whom he works, never consider him a human entity. During his sojourn in the North, he realizes that racism is an omnipresent thing in America, that cannot be done away with. Though he is far away from the de-humanizing conditions down south, he feels invisible up North. Grange shouts out his name aloud, to make his presence felt. He takes up many odd jobs, to make both ends meet. He sleeps in parks and gardens and earns a meagre livelihood. With the new available social mobility, Grange manages and sees the world

around, and understands it with a new perspective, much to his amusement and bewilderment. Walker through the novel puts forth the idea that social mobility is an essential aspect of creating a black man's identity and self-worth. Walker through the novel has shown that self-realization and consciousness about one's position come when positive social mobility is bestowed on an individual by society and family. She argues that social mobility is a treasured commodity for blacks in a hostile white run world, where mobility within the black community itself is made a rarity by a white run world.

Walker through the Central Park incident in the novel shows that racial animosity between blacks and whites, does not dissuade them from exhibiting it, even during times of utmost crisis. She talks about the need to overcome racial rancour for overall development. Once while sleeping at Central Park, Grange sees a white woman trying to commit suicide by drowning herself. Grange runs to help her and tries to pull out the drowning woman. The white woman even on the verge of death denies being helped by a black man. She shouts at him, calling him "big burly head." The woman drowns herself, but the dollar notes in her hand, are picked up by Grange, after she drowns. The incident brings about a great change in his life. He realizes that whites are not demi-Gods in his life. He realizes that birth and death are the same for blacks and whites. Walker through the novel has argued that a positive attitude towards life seeps into a person when one develops pride and contentment in being who he or she is. The Central Park incident makes him realize that he is powerful, and plans going back home down South, as he has enough money to spare. Having experienced social mobility of a better sort up North, Grange develops racial consciousness and racial pride. He understands that blacks have their own way of life and life style as whites do, despite depreciating living conditions and systemic oppression and that there is nothing inferior about it. The new perspective changes his attitude towards life and makes him realize his strength. Moreover, he has money that he hasn't robbed at his behest. Grange happily moves to his home town Georgia, with a new penchant for life and freedom.

Walker through the novel has argued that passion for life is a sure possibility when one develops racial consciousness and the need to be financially independent despite circumventing circumstances. Grange musters courage to go to his home town Georgia not disgruntled by dire consequences, or whites but with a new passion for life. He changes his personality with the racial consciousness and racial pride, that he has developed during his sojourn up North. He shuns sharecropping and starts his own livelihood. After going to Georgia, he buys a farm, meets his ex-mistress Josie. He meets his son Brownfield after many years, and finds him stuck up, in the same panicky system of sharecropping. He promises him help and assists him monetarily. Grange realizes that the black man in America is abused to become an abuser of sorts. Grange's personality changes on the whole when he metamorphoses into a better human being with a strong humane individuality. He mellows as an old man and helps Mem, Brownfield's wife and his Grandchildren. In fact, he delivers Ruth, his youngest grandchild into the real world, when the mid-wife does not come in time. This act has a symbolic significance in the novel. It implies that though it is Mem who gives birth to Ruth, it is Grange as a grandfather, mentor, guardian, father and mother who prepares her for life, to be the audacious woman, she turns out to be. Walker has shown a womanist in the making through Ruth Copeland. Brownfield, foil to Grange in everything, hates the fact that his father loves and takes care of his grandchildren though he has been neglected by him. Grange expects that Brownfield would change for the better and turn into a new leaf. But the devastating white plantation system makes him a man with a murky mind that he suffers "from a malaise of the spirit, he was jealous of his children's fortune. He wished he did not have children down whose gullets the good fruit would go; he wished he were a child himself" (*Walker The Third 68*). Grange after two stages of his life realizes what it is to be a man. He comes to know that real masculinity lies in taking care and nurturing his own people. Brownfield with his degraded mind hates the fact that his children are being taken care by his father who never cared for him. Brownfield brutally kills his



wife Mem with his paranoid mind. After Mem's death, Grange takes care of his third grandchild Ruth, while the elder two Daphne and Ornette are taken by Mem's parents. Grange finds his anchor in Ruth Copeland, his grandchild, who is more like him, and makes him love life a lot.

Walker through the novel has vouched that positive version of a family changes a lot many things for people with the instance of Grange Copeland and Ruth Copeland. Grange becomes an ideal man though he has no role model men to emulate. With his wisdom and new found knowledge Grange turns into a good old grandfather taking care of Ruth. Despite racial hatred for whites, he understands the need to survive whole, and lead life the way one wants to. He turns optimistic with Ruth around him. After seeing the lives of three different generations in his family, Grange vows that he would never leave Ruth **"unarmed in a dangerous world"** (Hellenbrand 122). He stands on his word, as he pretty well knows that a black woman should be triply armed and triply prepared to face the inadequacies that life offers her. Grange plays the role of a **"rebellious storyteller"** (Hellenbrand 123). He pretty well knows that Black men are **"victimized by . . . extreme racism and poverty"** (Butler "Vision" 196) and have to constantly battle with racism and classism. Walker through the novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland (1979)* reinforces the idea that when black men can't find their way out, it would be extremely difficult for women to face the trisection of racism, classism and sexism, and be triply prepared. Grange understands the need to bestow positive version of a family, the most important aspect of black manhood, which neither he, nor his next generation could ever have, because of the systemic oppression of whites.

Walker through the novel has shown that **"dignity can be maintained amidst intense degradation"** (White 188) by black men when they work in unison with black women, and their families. A positive version of familial relationships is guaranteed to Ruth, representing the Copeland family's third generation by her **"special relationship to her grandfather [Grange] and by the tension between [Brownfield] and [Grange]"**

(Erickson 5). Grange does not make her mentally volatile, he rather shows her that despite decades of drudgery inflicted upon them by whites, they have the grit to come out of such situations. Grange pretty well knows that, he can't change what has happened in the past, but can work for a better future. Grange in his ripe old age realizes that **"societal change is invariably linked to personal change, that the struggle must be inner – as well as outer – directed"** (Christian 42). He pretty well knows that, he can build a wonderful future, far better than anyone else in the family. He not only gives Ruth financial, emotional and academic succour, but he even gives her the necessary intellectual stimulus to lead life whole. Emotional strength is something special that Grange gives himself and Ruth Copeland.

Walker through the novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland (1970)* has shown a benevolent black male role model. She has vehemently and sternly dissuaded, and answered her critics, who have accused her of negative portrayal of black men by depicting a benevolent role model male in Grange Copeland. Alice Walker in an interview with Claudia Tate in her collection of interviews titled *"The World Has Changed : Conversations with Alice Walker "* has defended herself saying : **"I will not ignore people like Brownfield. I want you to know . . . they exist. . . . Brownfield is too mean; nobody's this mean. . . . The people who criticize me about Brownfield rarely even talk about Grange"** (65). Walker in the novel does not bring into focus the most desirable image of being a black man, but talks about how black men should conduct themselves, to uplift their own kith and kin, and the black community. **Walker clearly insists that "Black men despite their own victimization must take responsibility for their treatment of black women"** (Gwin 463). She clearly shows how black men can help and aid in the making of stronger black women, and in turn create a world of new dimensions for the black community. She clearly states that unless black men and women work together for the upliftment of each other, neither the black family nor the black community can survive whole, in whites dominated America. By showing three generations in the same Copeland family, Walker has shown how the

collective development of blacks is far behind the collective development of whites, and how blacks terribly lag behind whites. She argues that unless and until blacks work as a collectivity, they cannot overcome the glitches of racism, sexism and classism.

Walker through the novel argues that emasculation of black men was done by Whites on many fronts under the system of plantation by Whites. **“Grange Copeland and his son Brownfield fit into this category of those who have been psychologically, socially, and politically emasculated because of the sharecropping system under which they initially live and work” (Harris 36).** Grange in his early life as Grange Copeland fails to understand that **“Societal change is invariably linked to personal change, that the struggle must be inner –as well as outer-directed” (Christian “The Black” 42).** Walker argues that the legacy of pain handed down to black men over generations, is extremely difficult for them to digest. Walker has cleverly contrasted Brownfield and Grange to show two different kinds of black men, to help black men decide how they should be and should not be. She has shown the best way a man should behave through Grange Copeland the protagonist of the novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970) in his later age. Of all the protagonists in Walker’s novels, Grange alone realizes that caring for the family is a masculine trait, though quiet late in his later middle age, in his third life as Grange Copeland. He realizes and experiences the power of masculinity, in being a father to his grand-daughter Ruth. He delivers and introduces Ruth to the material white world, and gives her the right to be the heir to his legacy of finances and success. Ruth’s successful life as showcased in the novel is a testimony to the invaluable contribution made by men to the lives of women. Grange experiences masculine virility on all fronts, after becoming a true contributor to the development of his family, his granddaughter and society.

Through the character of Grange Walker has shown, what black men need to nurture good and healthy families, and in turn build a strong black community. Though Ruth is only sixteen, she has education, finances, and happiness given by Grange

that make her move forward with the requisite courage to face life on her own. Grange knows the maladies associated with putting the blame game on someone else. He reprimands Brownfield and tells him:

**I know the danger of putting all the blame on somebody else for the mess you make out of your life. I fell into the trap myself! And I’m bound to believe that that’s the way the white folks can corrupt you even when you done held up before. . . . You gits just as weak as water, no feeling of doing nothing yourself. Then you begins to think up evil and begins to destroy everybody around you, and you blames it on crackers. Shit! Nobody’s as a powerful as we make them out to be. We got our own souls, don’t we? (Walker *The Third* 207)**

Better late than never, Grange in his third life as Grange Copeland, realizes the need to be the mentor of his own life in his middle age. He inculcates the same qualities in Ruth when she is a young, fiery teenager. Grange does not make Ruth a cracker hater, as he realizes that racial animosity does not settle down without forgiveness. He realizes the need to make her life whole. He wants her to experience “joy, laughter, contentment in being a woman; Someday there must be happiness in enjoying a man, and children.” (Walker *The Third* 214). He writes and initiates the best possible life for her that many young black girls don’t have an access to. Walker through the novel has adroitly contrasted a better male role model in Grange, and the hopeless, cruel black man in Brownfield, to project the positive image of the ideal black man via Grange in his old age. The positive metamorphosis shown in his personality talks about the possibility of a positive change for everyone who musters courage to aim and change for the better.

***The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970)** is a significant novel in the African American canon as it vouches and ushers in a new world of possibilities for black men and women despite racism, sexism and classism when one develops womanist awareness to overcome the taboos

associated with racism, sexism and classism. The novel as black womanist treatise

**“only adumbrates the creation of a new world for black men and women on the basis of the destruction of an outlived, insupportable world in which violence and hate dominated in external conditions as well as in the consciousness of black people. Stopping the self-destruction of black men and women and beginning a process of constructive self-renewal, on a personal as well as family level is the novel’s thematic proposal” (Ensslen 218).**

Grange like Alice Walker believes in **“change personal, and change in society” (Walker *In Search* 252)**. In his third life as Grange Copeland, things change for the better for him on the personal and societal fronts. The novel ends on a positive note with Grange making a safe haven for Ruth, his successful grandchild, his successive third generation. Neither he, nor his fore fathers, nor his son’s generation have had the opportunity to discover and experience themselves completely except for Ruth. **“Survival was not everything. He has survived. But to survive whole was what he wanted for Ruth” (Walker *The Third* 214)**. He wants Ruth to understand that she can make a place for herself in a world that is hostile towards her position as a young black girl. **“Although Walker is deliberately vague about the end-point of Ruth’s journey in order to stress its open intermediate quality, she emphatically points out that it will be radically different from the failed journeys undertaken by several other characters” (Butler “Making a Way” 74)**. The novel affirms the positive note that Ruth will **“triumph where others have failed”** and she will make **“a way out of no way” (Butler “Making a Way” 76)**. Grange persuades Ruth to believe that **“everything has equal rights because existence itself is equal (Walker *Living* 148)**. Walker through the novel has shown how black men have to really mould themselves, in order to establish true black masculinity, proper family relationships, and a better black community. Walker though the novel argues that the worth of black manhood and masculinity are tested by means of

the care rendered not only to their selves, but even the care, elevation and progression rendered to family members, society and the black community by black men.

Walker as true womanist does not discriminate men from the realms of black womanist perspective. She argues that black men have the ability to ace against odds, and that they need to create the opportunities to come out of disorientation of sorts, to really lead a whole life. Walker through the novel has showcased that to be a role model black man **“the greatest value a person can attain is full humanity, which is a state of oneness with all things, . . . so that the best that has been produced can continue to live in someone else.” (Walker *In Search* 265)**. Grange certainly becomes one in his later age. She argues that black men need to develop the audacity to throw aside abatement of any sort. She argues that they have to take equal responsibility as mules of the family, who really look after the needs of the black family. Walker has shown the black male stereo type in the novel in Brownfield Copeland and has cleverly contrasted him with the older version of Grange to show how black men can change for the better. Grange as an old man has mellowed with grace, humility and success. She argues that black men can change for the better, and the only thing they need is an initiative to come out of the rut of racism and classism, and establish a Grange of happiness. Another important perspective put forth by the novel is the fact that ancestral connectivity and pride in one’s own culture, act as harbingers of true freedom and emancipation. Walker through the novel has argued that women’s lives need a significant contribution from men. Grange is the ideal man of all the male characters showcased in the novel ***The Third Life of Grange Copeland (1970)*** and Walker’s other novels too. Walker through the novel has stressed on the fact that men need to contribute wellness, nurturance, love, trust, faith and proper understanding for the upliftment of their female counterparts and their successive generations. Walker drives home the point that being macho, virile and belligerent is not being male, but being loving caring, and understanding is the most virile aspect of black manhood.



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