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Search for Identity

In Toni Morrison's "*The Bluest Eye*"

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a Master Degree in Literature and Civilization

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Dedication

I dedicate this humble work to my lovely parents. Azzedine Abdou and Naima Hamed .

To my sisters and brothers.

To my supervisor Dida Nacer Eddin.

To my teacher Afaf Mega.

To Moussa and all my dearest friends.

Romaissa

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents Abed Raouf and Habiba Dogga

To my brothers Oussama, Ilyes ,Taj Eddin and my sister Selma.

To my grandmothers, Zohra and Zainb Hada.

To my supervisor Dida Nacer Eddin.

To my teacher Mega Afaf.

My beloved friends Raja ,Soumia, Sabrin, Fatima , Hamida and Roumaissa.

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Abstract

The present dissertation explores the issue of identity in Toni Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye* (1970). The primary purpose is to examine the effects of white dominance upon black female's attitudes towards her own beauty and blackness. It also, focuses on how the African-American author fictionally represents racial and domestic violence against black girls in a white community. It provides a practical demonstration of how racial and sexual stereotypes enfeeble black women's identity and self-image. It draws on two theories : New Historicism helps to argue that the author's novel is a mere reflection of a strong commitment to demonstrate how the black female's identity is constructed; regarding feminism, some of its principles have been embraced of the true nature of the black female's character and behaviour. The aim is to investigate the possible links between the black female's conception of and white youth's misconception about beauty. It also aim at showing the relevance of a historical reality of racism and its effects and the black female's sense of inferiority. Furthermore, Post Colonialism is applied to clarify the psychological impact of the colonizer's cultural practices on the identity development of the colonized . The findings points to the conclusion that the construction of black identity is rooted in socio-economic, political and historical factors ;also addresses the consequences of racism again and stand its corrosive influence upon their personality. Finally, self-loathing is constructed by myths invented on black female's sexuality.

Key words : Feminism, Identity, New Historicism, Post Colonialism, The Bluest Eye.

List of abbreviation

AIW : AINT I A WOMEN.

BSWM : Black Skin White Masks.

NM : Negritude Movement.

PC : Post Colonialism.

RWRF : Reconstruction Womanhood Reconstructing Feminism.

SS : The Second Sex.

TBE : The Bluest Eye.

THR : The Harlem Renaissance.

UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Contents

Dedication	I
Acknowledgments	III
Abstract	IV
List of Abbreviation	V
Contents	VI
General Introduction	1
Chapter One: Identity Politics: Girlhood and Blackness	
1. Introduction.....	10
2. The Rebirth of the Author: Toni Morrison and commitment.....	11
3. The Psychological Impact of Slavery.....	14
4. Blackness as The Other.....	18
5. Beauty and Blackness.....	24
6. Whiteness as the Phallus.....	29
7. Schizophrenia.....	30
8. Conclusion.....	34
Chapter Two: Cultural Practices : Local Issues of Black Identity	
1. Introduction.....	37
2. Hegemony and Culture.....	37

3. Blackness and Squalor.....	41
4. Domestic Slavery and Labour.....	45
5. Child abuse and The Consequences.....	49
6. Incest and Sexuality.....	52
7. Conclusion.....	56
Chapter Three: Blackness and Representation.....	
1. Introduction.....	60
2. Myths.....	60
3. Invisibility.....	64
4. Self Loathing.....	69
5. Conclusion.....	78
General Conclusion.....	79
Works Cited.....	82
91.....	الملخص

General Introduction

Background of the study

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) is Morrison's first novel. The *Bluest Eye* narrates the sad story of a young African American girl post the great depression (1940). She desperately yearns for blue eyes in order to get a foothold in society and earn the love and respect of her neighbours and white community. Sadly she was raped and impregnated by her father. Her pregnancy eventually ended with miscarriage due to a premature birth. She was traumatized and driven insane. Toni wrote the novel to illustrate the effect of racism, sexism, and the societal norms of beauty images which exclude the black. These standards of beauty imposed by the white are highly likely to impact on young black girls' own images of themselves. Precisely on little black girls and how it impacts the self image of young children. This study demonstrates some serious internal conflicts resulting from and the outcomes of self loathing as well as the social pressures on black adolescences girls. Writers undertook the sole responsibility to represent the racial construction of the white society.

Research Tools

Two main theories are applied: The New Historicism and Feminism theory. To examine the historical context and events of the novel. We first used the New Historicism. The founding father of the literary theory is the English professor Stephen Greenblatt. As well as Harold Aram Veese who wrote a collection of essays introducing the major principles of the theory. The main aim of the theory states that every human action is actually the effect of a network of a martial practices. The reason behind applying this theory is based on the concept that literature should be interpreted within a context that takes into consideration the history of the author as well as the critic. We seek to illustrate to what extent which *The Bluest Eye* is a rebirth of the author. Another key principle is the

relationship between language, culture and capitalism. Morrison's novel is very likely to be a mere reflection of the author's experience poured into the novel and its characters. The author attempts to reflect the reality of black's long journey of suffering and the domination and oppression of Western standards into the novel and to remind the world of the harsh conditions blacks had to endure several centuries. We believe that Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* can be interpreted from Feminist perspectives.

The historical context is the prime concern of New Historicism; therefore, we noticed that we should include Feminism because it takes female subject as its main concern. Feminism attempts to establish equality between the sexes moreover to end violence and rape. We mainly used Bell Hook's book *AIN'T I A Woman*. The book is about Black women and Feminism and Racism and Feminism. We focused on sexism which discriminated against women on the grounds on sex and the slave experience so as to, understand the main factor of the troubled identity construction. We also stratify Patricia Hill Collins's *Black Feminist Thought* because it covers black women's experience as the centre of analysis. Most importantly, we used Simone de Beauvoir's book *The Second Sex*. The reason behind using the book lays in the fact that it is considered as an autobiography to Women's issues through history. It contained a revolutionary uplifting feminist philosophy.

Since literature is the product of the real world we used Post Colonialism as a secondary theory. To show the writer's commitment by using literature to report the issues of black people. Among the activists of the theory: Edward Said, Albert Camus, Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon. Their theory is founded by Edward Said with his book named *Orientalism*. In his book he examined the exploitation of the West to the East. Using the binary opposition involving the relationship between blacks and whites, West and East. He stressed the importance of developing a cultural identity free from west's domination and influence. The identity of the colonized is blended with the one that of the colonizer. Because they start to

mimic Western's culture which leads to a culture loss. We used Frantz Fanon's book "*Black Skin ,White Mask*". The book shows the impact of racism and Western culture left by the imperial colonialism . We used Edward Said's second book *Culture and Imperialism* where he explains the power and mission of colonizer to civilize what they consider uncivilized . The Post Colonialism also shows the so-called dominance of the superiors over the inferior. The colonizer seeks to demolish the colonizer's free identity and consider it an inferior 'Other' and attempts to reshape it according to what serves its needs. Post Colonialism helps us shape support the argument that even "beauty" is a matter of domination and submission And attempts impose its ideology over the other. Blacks established several movements like *Negritude Movement* and *The Harlem Renaissance* in order to retrieve their being and stolen identity. As well as to introduce black's lives using literature as a form of establishing identity. Finally we used the MIA 7th edition to organize our research.

Literature review

Many researches have been conducted on Morrison's first novel *The Bluest Eye*. And each research took a different angles. Zsofia Agnes Sneider wrote a dissertation in 2010 entitled *Strategies of dealing with Individual and cultural trauma in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye and Songs of Solomon* .Her dissertation is about how previous experiences and white cultures traumatizes African Americans; and the measurement taken to cope with their traumatized lives .In 2011 Whitney Renee Smith conducted a research entitled "*Quite as it kept*":*Secrecy and Silence in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye, Jazz, and paradise*" .She studied the novels from the angle of silence as a barrier to constructing a strong communities then ,she demonstrated how fighting silence could be an act of seeking salvation .Brigit Kristine Aas Holm explores *Sexuality in Toni Morrison's works* in 2010.She examines in her dissertation to the extent to which women and children are affected by the sexist and patriarchal in American society .She further construes sexuality as an extreme use of power

and dominance. Pauline P Anderson 2012 highlights the natural elements in the novel including Earth and Water in *Earth, Water and black bodies :Elements at Work in Toni Morrison literary landscape* .Anderson argues that there's a link between destructing nature including trees and forests with the mistreatment of black bodies. In her dissertation Melissa Sue Smoak 2014 *The Bluest Eye , Alice Walker's The Third life Grange Copeland ,and Fae Myene Ng's Bone* was broadened from the perspective to involve the psychological effects of oppression on both African and Asian Americans. Smoak emphasized how society plays a part in developing a sense of self-hatred .Lin Li ting 2015 examines the novel in terms of self-loathing as a result of white community's lack of appreciation to blackness. Self-hatred is the outcome of unreasonable norms set by a superior community .In her dissertation Jessica Duncan 2016 *Hateful Prairie: Violence and Ecophobia in Twentieth Century American Gothic* .Jessica dealt with the gothic historical violence as well as the ecophobia which is the fear of the world in the novels including *The Bluest Eye*. From our perspective we analyzed the novel from the angle of identity construction .We explored the different reasons behind the destructed identity of blacks .

Research Problem

Our research problematic is related to the aspects of black identity and its development ,as well as the construction of identity in the shade of white dominance. We shall endeavour to clarify the reasons behind the fragmented identity of blacks and black females specifically ;moreover we attempt to explore the relationship and interference between some important binaries :periphery/centre; black/white; black/beauty; ugliness/dominance. Our primary focus will be constantly directed towards the development of the black female's identity during her girlhood and her conceptions of beauty .

Research questions

To fulfil the aim of our research about identity and its reflection in the novel these research questions are formulated ,

To what extent does the white dominance impact on the black female's appreciation of her own beauty and blackness ?

To what extent would racial and domestic violence exacerbate the black female's sense of inferiority?

To what amplitude could racial and sexual stereotypes enfeeble the black female's self-image and, consequently, identity?

Research hypotheses

To answer questions of research, We shall suggest some hypothesis :

Blacks are placed in the lowest economic hierarchy. Poverty may affect the true sense of blackness .

Social pressures on black males might be the reason behind their abusive personalities

Myths regarding black women's sexuality may hinder their healthy representation in society and, contributes in developing a sense of self-loathing.

Research Structure

Our research is divided into three chapters .The first chapter entitled *Identity Politics: Girlhood and blackness* is a theoretical part where we trace back the origin of the oppression including women's life under slavery and, how it stirred the prime cause of the troubled identity of blacks in general and black females precisely. Black female's continued

designation prior slavery is yet, provoked by practices based on sex and race. Women since ancient times has been considered as an 'Other' who is objectified and defined in terms of their relationship to men. Females were ranked second to males ;therefore, her role and efforts have been demolished by man to secure their position. Power and the social hierarchy rank blacks in the lowest levels and whites in the highest levels of human existence ;basically because, who is in power controls the society. In addition we shall try to examine the beauty standards and its psychological effect on black women in the racist community .Moreover we shall also show the ability of such imposed beauty standards and its affects the healthy identity construction and self respect of black women. The instable identity leads some people to lose their grip of sanity .

The second chapter entitled *Cultural Practices: The local issues of black identity* is a practical part where we tackle the issues of violence and rape the reasons behind these acts. In “Domestic slavery and labor” we discuss black woman ‘s journey with violence she endured in her work place and at home as well .Furthermore we shall point how black men beat their wives as means of venting their anger. The violence that practiced on black women is a radical cooperation between black and white men to ensure gender differences. She and the children were the vulnerable links of society. Thus, their identity was tremulous as a result of what women and children passed through .Another reason to identity fragmentation is children’s “Abuse and its Consequences” .Black woman passes violence she endured to her children. As a result the identity of these children is affected and traumatized as it happens with the protagonist Pecola Breedlove. Rape is the focal point where identity of the main character is not only damaged but also vanished.

The third chapter entitled *Blackness and Representation* is a continuation and further detailed section about the novel’s major focal points involving myths invented regarding black women. Labels about black female’s sexuality started since the first years of slavery to

justify white master's sexual exploitation of female slaves. Being called sexually loose ,evil temptress ,dismissed as being emotional and several de-humanizing and identity damaging labels. It prevented black women from recognition in society and distorted their image .The myths about blacks in general and women specifically empowered class segregation to continue and reach another level of racist practises. The classification of people authorised man in power to overlook blackness and consider it invisible. Sexism is a subdivision of racism that affects women's healthy identity formation and the ways in which women respect themselves .The impact of racism, sexism developed sort of self rejection which contributed to the distortion of identity of black females.

Chapter One

Identity Politics: Girlhood and Blackness

Outline Chapter One

1. Introduction.....	10
2. The Rebirth of the Author: Toni Morrison and commitment.....;	11
3. The Impact of slavery.....	14
4. Blackness as an ‘Other’.....	18
5. Beauty and blackness.....	24
6. Whiteness as the Phallus.....	29
7. Schizophrenia.....	30
8. Conclusion.....	34

1.Introduction

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison was written in the second half of twentieth century. Literature of that phase is significant in the sense that it tackles all the obstacles of black people since slavery to the contemporary period . African Americans witnessed all forms of segregation, marginalization, sexist and racist oppression. Nevertheless they try to take measures to obtain recognition and form their own identity.

In the present chapter we attempt to shed the light particularly on black woman's journey and how the identity of blacks in general and women specifically is moulded . We are willing to trace back the impact of the slavery era on black women and how it stirred the beginnings of the troubled identity formation .Despite the fact that slavery was long gone but it exists in another shape .Blacks were enslaved by the superior look of the white society which resulted in a discrimination based on race. This chapter is an explanation to what extent racism is crucial to the essence of the identity. The novel was written when women was in cultural combat with male's dominance whether in literature or in all aspects of life this combat is named "Feminism" .The following chapter is an endeavour to manifest the ways in which the social construction participates to refute women's partnership in society by labelling her as the other . In this chapter we try to focus on the depth of white beauty standard on the black female's views about themselves and how the society emphases on demolishing the diversity of beauty by centring certain criteria that partake in the self rejection of black women and constitution of their identity. Rape thematic concerns have been always associated with African American literature hence, we bid to investigate its impact on the psyche of black women and what are the main reasons behind it. When the society fails at accepting the diversity of its community , its members will struggle form withdrawnness and that certainly results in multiple mental and psychological illnesses . We

attempt to apply the New Historicism theory in order to better understand the circumstances of the novel .

2. The Rebirth of the Author: Toni Morrison and commitment

According to Dean William (1988) new historicism is a theory emerged in America in the 1976 (3). In this the theory both the author and the text are historically and culturally included and the outcome of historical circumstances (Foucault 361-362). Former theories have rejected the relationship between literature and history considering it as a solely restricted thematic data . In Post 1970's, the constrains between literature and history were omitted considering it as a converse structured by "literary imagination" and "power relations". It is impossible to separate between history and textuality , Lia Chung-siung (2006) ensures that: " By breaching disciplinary boundaries between the text and history, and between fiction and reality, New Historicism, eventually and inevitably, has now come to terms with the decision to set up its priority in a place between textualism and contextualism(4)". New Historicism is a literary theory by which writers write their books to deal with circumstances occurred in a certain phase in history .

The title of the novel itself is a focal point as it somehow refers the pronounce "I" therefore, refers to the main character Pecola; basically because ,her skin was very dark and ugly Suranyi Agnes (2007) agrees that:

The title *The Bluest Eye* calls attention to itself immediately: the superlative degree of color as well as the singular form of the noun in the title is rather unusual, resulting in a pun. The singular noun may refer to the damaging white gaze; the omitted plural to the object of desire, an epitome of beauty according to mainstream society; or alternatively, to the saddest story of the demise of a

child's identity (the "eye" as "I"), integral to the blues sung by Claudia's mother. (11)

Morrison also responded in her novel about the famous Dick and Jane book which was widely used in elementary school programs of America back then. The book pictures the ideal life of whites. The first prologue used from the Dick and Jane book in the first page in the novel is a straight forward message about the tendencies of the novel and reports that not all people live in an ideal rosy world (Suranyi13). The book was published mainly when the Civil Rights movement was started to demolish which ignored children's rights (Werrelin 194).

The ancient history of Toni Morrison's family descends from three generations. The first generation suffered from slavery, the second are her parents who emigrated to the north, the last one was her generation. She was an educated , collage success and has better rights regarding education and job employment, therefore ,Toni Morrison is always concerned with themes of women's oppression during slavery, racism, sexism and violence (Li 1-4). In the 1960's and 1970's black people took measurement to shift the body discrimination of blacks in terms of skin colour and physicality named "*Black is beautiful movement*" . This movement is an attempt to cease stereotyped standards of beauty to determine women's worth and value . The movement emphasizes on racial pride . Duvall John (2000) reports that: "Morrison comes of age as a writer drafting (TBE) from 1965 to 1969. In terms of racial identity ,this means that she is squarely in the period of the black is beautiful movement that called on African American to rethink their relation to white culture"(11). Morrison (2008) in an interview about her motivation for writing (TBE) said that: "Some people felt apologetic about their skin being very dark ,we used to call each other names, obviously when we were children ,but it was not serious. But you actually take it in"(Dec 4). And when she wrote (TBE) it was about that and what you bottle in inside. She started

writing when *The Black is Beautiful movement* was at its highest levels, she comments before all blacks decide that they are all beautiful: "Let me speak ,for just a moment here, for some of us did not get that right away. So, I was deeply concerned about the feelings of being ugly. Just how it feels with most vulnerable people in the world is that children, female children, female black children" (Dec 4). Morrison's first novel was written to deal with the effects of class separation , racism, and gender injustice on little black children.

Suranyi Agnes (2007) also affirms in his essay about the phase when the novel was written is significantly related the "*black is beautiful movement*" ideologically grounded in the 1960's : "Black is beautiful movement entered into the popular...Morrison worried that this slogan of racial pride would be unable to dispel the long- term psychic effects of prejudices rooted in racialism and sexism " (11). The author wants to ensure people are reminded of the psychological impact which has been endured for centuries and not a simple pride movement would erase the painful journey. The novel was written based on a true event happened when Toni Morrison was at elementary school. A friend of hers told Toni about her desire to have a blue eyes Lister Rachel (2009) affirms that: "In the novel's afterword, Morrison traces her engagement with its issues to an incident that occurred at elementary school, when she heard a girl expressing her wish for blue eyes; Morrison was aghast, wondering how the girl could fail to recognize her own beauty"(25). The wish is born out of a deep conflict that involves self rejection and unstable identity: "The sorrow in her voice seemed to call for sympathy" (TBE x). Duvall John (2000) discusses Morrison's presence in the novel, he notes:

I turn to her personal history that manifests itself in all of her writing—her literary and social criticism, as well as her fiction. What results is a reflexive intersexual space: between her nonfictional self-representations and her novels

that represent identity formation, there emerge curious traces of Morrison's own complicated becoming. (3)

The writer's presence in the novel is strongly manifested whether it involves the timing, the setting as well as some characters. Her writings encode Morrison's building of identity as a writer. Toni's real name is Chloe Ardelia Wofford. She managed to shift her real name as a form of constructing a new identity. The "A" of feminine Ardelia becomes the "A" of masculine Anthony, "oring" for Toni (Duvall 51). The location of the novel as well as the historical events which happened in Morrison's life regarding the great depression and where the author was born and raised are the same where Pecola and characters of (TBE) live (Lorain, Ohio). Li Stephanie (2010) in the chapter of the early life and family of Morrison reports: "Lorain continues to be a town largely dependent upon the steel industry, Morrison grow up among working families of all colors, families who struggled through the Great Depression" (1). It is the time setting where the novel takes place. In addition to the location, the characters are also closely similar to the people and family of Morrison. The author's mother is always singing exactly just like Pauline Pecola's mother. Since Morrison was raised in a family where storytelling about passed relatives and singing is an important part of life (Li 5). Claudia and Frieda MacTeer as Toni Morrison said that those sisters resemble her relationship with her sister. As in the novel Claudia is one year and a half older than Frieda. Morrison has a strong relationship with her one year and a half older sister Lois (Li 5). The writer's first experience in writing in some cases is reflection to his/her own life. The Impact of slavery era is yet endured by the blacks in a new shape which is racism.

3. The Psychological Impact of Slavery

Toni Morrison is the prime advocate of the black people and more precisely women. Using literature Morrison have managed to illustrate the horrific and the painful journey of the slave experience which Africans and several coming generations yet to endure. Works

as *Beloved* (1987) and *Mercy* (2008) Morrison wants to emphasize on remembering the slavery phase and its psychological impact on blacks in general and women specifically. The way of writing and the narrating techniques of Morrison are much similar to those of William Faulkner and Virginia Wolf. Bloom Harold (2009) explains that: "Morrison, Both in prose and style and in narrative mode ,has a complex and permanent relationship to Faulkner and Wolf"(1). The term slavery according to Davis Angela (1971) means that: "Slavery is an ancient human institution of slave labour in its traditional form and of serfdom as well" (3). Slavery dates back to the year 1619 a Dutch cargo ship brought 20 Africans to the British colonies in the New World precisely to Virginia to the colony of Jamestown in the north (Brion Davis xi) to work in cotton and tobacco fields. Europe considered Africa a fertile land of goods and labour force . Slavery spread throughout the colonies basically because it helped to build the economic foundation of the new growing nation. The cotton plantation was the reason behind solidifying the need of slavery in the southern colonies according to the UNESCO (1979): "The rapid development of the West Indies and the American colonies would have been impossible in that period without the mass employment of cheap man power"(17). Without African slaves the colonise would not be able to exist or prosper (UNESCO19) .

In the first ships bringing slaves to the New World females made up one-third of the gathered slaves simultaneously because, they were easily kidnapped and they could not resist capture (AIW 16-17) .To prevent any resistance and retaliation among the ship slaves went through a horrifying experience in order to ensure the submission of the slaves when arriving to the new world. Hooks Bell (1982) asserts that the slave ship experience had a tremendous psychological impact on the psyche of black women and men: "So horrific was the passage from Africa to America that only those women and men who could maintain a will to live

despite their oppressive conditions survived" (AIW 20). Black female was exploited in both fields and in the domestic households.

The slavery stirred the first beginnings of the troubled identity of black people since they are the descendents of blacks who has been once enslaved. Fanon Frantz notes that: "The black is a black man ,that is as the result of a series of aberrations of affect, he is rooted at the core of a universe form which he must be extricated" (2). The first element of these series of affects is slavery.

In an interview Rose Charlie (May 22 2016) asked Toni Morrison about why racism is such a dominate ideology in American? she answered: "racism is about feeling good" ,it made racists fill an empty void inside them ,she adds: "Racism like a profound neurosis that nobody examines for what it is. It a feels crazy. It is crazy. And it has just deleterious effect on white people and possibly equal as it does for black people". The profound impact of racism on black's identity in general and women precisely is perfectly illustrated in Morrison's first novel (TBE). Suranyi Agnes (2007) states that: "The Bluest Eye is concerned with racial self loathing ,the loss of identity, and shame" (11). (TBE) is written to show to what extent racism can affect the lives directly and identities indirectly. In Baum Rosalie Murphy (2007) criticism on Toni's The Bluest Eye thematic concerns he argues that: "On a societal or subcultural level, poverty and racism are the destructive elements in *The Bluest Eye* "(11). The elements of racism and gender are crucial to the matter of identity construction in Toni's works .

Slavery in its broad sense has finished several decades ago yet, its impact on the lives of African American is not over . Blacks are exposed to the social pressures of racism hence, it is the major cause of their struggles .King and Scott in their book comprised of a collection of essays reports Omrey's Karen (2006) words involving the impact of racism has

a significant factor in the development of the racial identity of blacks and the black American writers who attempts to transmit this idea in their works: "This idea of ethnic identity as a dynamic and infinite process of creation and re-creation is relevant for both Baldwin's and Morrison's writing... these two authors seek productive ways to consider ethnic identity and rewrite the historical processes that laid so much stress on the biological conceptions of race" (12). Rodney et al (1999) defines the social apartheid as : "Racism is operationally defined as a belief, institutional arrangements, and acts that tend to denigrate individuals or groups because of phenotypic characteristics or ethnic group affiliation" (805). Gordon Dexter B (2003) introduces a definition on the term race: "Race, then, is a social category. Still it functions problematically to homogenize large groups of people and to facilitate the continuation of racism, with its systematic advantage to one group over another" (1-2) . Racism is used as a means to maintain white supremacy over blacks. The racist psychology is directly connected with issues of dominance and power (RWRP 195). Blacks were considered as an obstacle for the society in which they hinder the stability of America as in *The souls of black Folks* Du Bois addresses this concept and how whites perceived them "How does it feel to be a problem"(7). A problem that would risk white's rank in the social scale.

Black identity is often fragmented due to race, gender, and social class (Russell 1). Despite the fact that both of the races live in different living conditions, there was something shared among them. Religion hence, Christianity. Alexander Allen (2007) reports that Biblical and religious quoting in Morrison's novels as an important factor : "Religious references ,both from Western and African Sources, abound in Toni Morrison's fiction ,but nowhere intriguing or perplexing than in *The Bluest Eye*" (111). Morrison has presented through the bluest eye indication to god's unfairness towards blacks and demonstrated besides the Christian beliefs of Trinity: The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. Another

side of god that suggests all sorts of inequity and wickedness in the world (Alexander 111). Blacks and whites were related to their religious beliefs. Despite the class segregations and skin color, churches even though separate made them equal. It also gave blacks the sense of equality even though in one thing. Morrison descends from a quite religious, musical, chaotic family as result Biblical prose are constantly found in most of her novels. Lister Rachel (2009) argues that: "In Morrison's novels usually takes the form of acknowledgments of her engagement with the oral and musical traditions of her heritage"(14). The writer's attachment to religion is manifested when the heroine Pocola asked God first for the blue eyes. Krupa N Dyva (2015) affirms that: "The characters in the novel are projected as Christians, god-fearing and faithful. They seek god for help "(147). Sings of religious beliefs is highly manifested in the novel. The blackness is always classified as an inferior to the whiteness, therefore, blacks are considered as an 'Other' .

4. Blackness as 'The Other'

In an interview about Toni Morrison's motivation for writing (Dec 4 2008) said that (TBE) was written in the era where black men writers were the most dominant . They were dealing with revolutionary novels and considered as an uplifting but, those writers skipped something which is the long journey of endurance nobody will remember. Duvall John (2000) expresses that: "In terms of gender identity Morrison is clearly aware of feminist challenge to masculinist culture ,even though some of that awareness is expressed as disavowal"(11). Morrison wrote (TBE) in the period when the feminist movement was crystallized into a theory in literary criticism. Plain Gill and Seller Susan (2007) insists that:

Feminist literary criticism probably begin in the aftermath of second wave feminism ,the term usually given to the emergence of woman's movement in the United States and Europe during the Civil right campaigns of the 1960s ...

its eventual self-conscious expression was the culmination of centuries of women's writing, of women's writing about women writing. (2)

Toni Morrison in an interview said she writes to remind people of how painful it was to be black nevertheless a woman. The source of Toni's inspiration to write is the female experience with racist and sexist oppression; basically because, black woman journey was richer, deeper than any other labels (Morrison Dec 4 2008). Researchers faithful to examine female works regarding subjects as race and gender definitely will compliment her special dedication for woman's experience (Kérchey37-38). As a black female author Toni introduces the fact that the identity is rather build and shaped due to multiple factors than being something related to biology. Duvall John (2000) suggests that: "What characterises the former is Morrison's construction of useable identity as an African American woman novelist; what characterizes the later is the author's working out the implications that follow from the recognition that identity maybe a construction than a biological essence"(8). In the second half of the twentieth century the most two significant writers who formulated the frame of Afro-American literary contribution to the world literature more than Toni Morrison and James Baldwin. Both of the writer's elegance, skilful and honest style of reporting significant incidents of blacks experience gained them a world wide acclaim. The writers undertook the sole responsibility to represent the racial construction of the society. Toni was influenced by the Baldwin's strong language and works. In Morrison's words to him she states that "You gave me language to dwell in, a gift so perfect it seems my own invention. I have been thinking you spoken and written thoughts for so long. I believed they were mine" (King1-3).

Feminism is an important aspect in Toni's writings. Feminism and racism have played crucial roles. Morrison reflects the humanistic side of people through Feminism: " Any writer's feminism comes out in her writing only when she deals with issues in ways that go

beyond what would be of general interest to the author herself, as well as her potential relationship" (RFRW 164). Black women were the subject sexism ever since they set foot on the lands of the New World . Brownmiller Susan (1975) comments that: " The myth of black female during slavery which was all black woman were sexually loose; has contributed in the devaluation of the image of black woman in society (53)". Such myths are used as a form institutionalized oppression to limit women's freedom. Discrimination takes place when people are treated deferentially due to their sex or race . Woman always ranked second in the hierarchy scale in her relationship to men: "Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being...she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the absolute, she is the Other" (SS xvi). Fanon Frantz (1986) affirms that "To be "The Other" is to feel that one is always in a shaky position ,to be always on guard ready to be rejected "(As cited in BSWM 55) . Black women are in constant fear of rejection.

Referring to women as the other deprive females from joint acknowledgement. And women are yet jailed within "particularism" of her maternal assignment , sex as a physical features and gender as merely a community clarification . De Beauvoir is influenced by the existentialist views regarding sex and gender explaining woman's sex does not determine her position as a woman: "Existence has no fortuitous attributes, no content which does not contribute toward giving it its form, it does not give admittance to any pure fact because it is the process by which facts are drawn up" (SS 44). Humans were thrown into existence without self definition with their encounter with the world they develop self definition this idea is explicitly shown in her famous quote: "One is not born ,but rather becomes, a woman" (SS 330) .Woman are trained to be submissive, subordinate and inferior to men. This subordination is strongly firm in the psyche and psychology of the women: "The segmentation of the sexes as being a biological facts , not a phenomenon in human course of

pedigree... she is the Other in a totality of which the two components are necessary to one another. Indeed woman has no autonomous history"(SS xix). Despite the fact that females and males are biologically separated both of the sexes complement each other. Woman's contribution is yet, invisible in a world where the male is the sole power and women are the amenable: "At that moment women are beginning to take share in the making of the world, this world still belongs to men, men have no doubt about this, women barely doubt it" (SS 30). Male's mastery over women was considered as right demanded by men to women: "Those who made and compiled the laws, being men, favoured their own sex, and the juries consults have turned the laws into principles"(SS 31). In Karl Marx's words regarding the oppressed and the oppressor: "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas" (The German ideology). The other formed a threat to the position of males, therefore, men used all sorts of religious, philosophical and scientific measure to ensure women's incapability and prove her constant dependency on men for instance as Du Beauvoir Simon (2009) explains that: "What people have endlessly sought to prove is that women is superior, inferior, or equal to men: created after Adam she is obviously a secondary being "(SS 35). Furthermore Mills Sara (2008) argues that men's sincere dedication to eliminate women's progress through blaming women for their incapability whether it is related to physicality or mentality: "It seems as if in order to attack particular women... newspapers can refer to a set of negative characteristics stereotypically associated with women as a group, such as concern with attractiveness or emotional crises, in order to undermine them politically or professionally"(40).

Such arguments strengthens sexist oppression over women. Guillemin (2003) argues that: "Relation of domination, exploitation, inequality are held socially necessary and, furthermore, they are sometimes dressed up in terms of 'complimentarily" (172). The social construction of the society reinforces the position of the dominant class and sex over the less

fortuned group. This idea is clarified in Karl Marx 's distinction of the social system into two classes are the upper class who are the oppressor. The people of this class are the holders of the power , Karl called them the "Bourgeoisie"; the class that obtains power and money. It is the dominant division of the society. In addition the lower class whom are the worker, but they are oppressed by the upper class. They are referred to as the "Proletariat". According to Marx and Engels (2004) in their article "*Manifesto of the community party*": "The society as a whole is more and more splitting into two great hostile camps ,into two great classes directly facing each other Bourgeoisie and Proletarait" (15). Li Stephanie (2010) assumes that : "This narrative approach Marks a significant shift from some of the most influential mid twentieth century afro-American texts by exploring the inner workings of an independent and deeply complex black social structure" (33). (TBE) major concern is the lowest social class in the American society .

The novel's main character endured sexist oppression as well as racist from the upper class of society .It caused her an inner conflict and formed her troubled identity. Frantz Fanon (1986) affirms that: "The Negro problem does not resolve itself into the problem of Negroes living among white men but rather of the Negroes exploited, enslaved, by a colonialist, capitalist society" (157). Du Beauvoir calls to create social equality thus, the society must be reformed: The revolutionary thoughts of Simon du Beauvoir radically changed the view of feminism along with women's position in society .By separating sex and gender further more reporting woman's suffering with social discrimination by obtaining a secondary place thereby objectified. Du Beauvoir Simon demanded for both sexes to be subjectified hence, woman can rise to the glorified rank the males obtain: "... The modern woman accepts masculine values: she prides herself on thinking, acting, working ,and creating as the same basis as male ;instead of trying to belittle them, she declare herself their equal" (SS 850). Equality is in all aspects of life.

Sexism is not merely limited by denying women equal recognition as men or through segregation and marginalization of women's existence. Sexism occurs in literature. It is transmitted through language. Sexism is used whether consciously or unconsciously for instance generating both sexes by using the pronoun "He" to refer to both males and females. Miller Sara (2008) argues that: " Sexist usages are still available but they are more stigmatized than they were in the past. Feminist alternatives to sexism are available for usage...for some people, they appear to be marked forms, seeming odd or difficult to use" (9). Even literature women are exposed to marginalization .

Black Women's endurance with sexist oppression is significant in the sense they suffered both discrimination based on sex and race. Those images are implemented in the consciousness of the public in order to, ensure male as well as white supremacy "Common-sense ideas about black woman being 'sensuous' , 'animalistic' , 'good in bed', 'loose' , 'promiscuous', 'prostitutes', 'breeders', and 'sapphires' may be used by 'white' people to justify denying black woman equal access to social and economic resources as well as political rights" (RFRW 20). This institutionalized theory is used to disempower black woman. Negative stereotypes regarding black woman is encouraged so as to, black women remain a minor. According Li Stephanie (2010): "Morrison tries to uplift the status and identity of black women and shift the idolized images on them. Morrison used her status as a public intellectual to explore the ways racial categories affect individual and ideas about national identity" (123). Moreover Toni uses literature in order to report the African American identity formation experience. Li Stephanie (2010) affirms that:

The scope of Morrison's aim as well as the beauty of her language require a new wholly understanding of the reach and new possibilities of literature. Here was fiction that moved beyond conventional notions of the literary to offer a new vision and understanding of African American life. (32)

The new usage of literature by Morrison's writings offered a clear concept of identity construction of blacks. Duvall John (2000) explains the thematic concern of Morrison's novels: "Morrison's personal and professional implication in the things she critiques. Examining this implicated critique helps bring into focus the very cultural scripts of identity" (3). Douglas Christopher (2007) also adds: " In fact ,a cornerstone of our current paradigm of literary multiculturalism is this novel's rejection of integrationist law and assimilationist social science ,although the novel's discomfort with fix notion of identity formation is not characteristic of the multiculturalism it helped inaugurate" (210). The author attempts to illustrate in (TBE) the affects of the white outlook on blacks and , how they perceive themselves .These perceptions are directly related to relationship between the color black and the beauty standards of the white culture.

5. Beauty and Blackness

Among the warfare used to challenge Black feminism was the use of female beauty to hinder women's progress . Prior achieving several rights black female was yet , exposed to various number of sexism involving discrimination founded on woman's appearance . The term "Beauty" refers to a sort of an incarnation of certain qualities which woman desire and males who want to rejoice women who possesses such qualities . Those particularities are resolved by political physical criteria (Wolf 14). Another type of body discrimination which refers to verbal violence thus referring to black women by their body parts ,and making sexual references so as to decrease their value (Collins 151). In general blacks suffered from racist verbal references as "Nigger" due to, their black skin complexion and several hurtful terms (Collins 121); Black female's personality and self-esteem is exposed to vulnerability due to, the beauty standards offered by society (Wolf 15). (TBE) tackles the issue of beauty as its main subject and how it affects the identity of women and young girls. According to Roshan and Golipour (2012) :

Morrison challenges Western standards of beauty and demonstrates that the concept of beauty is socially constructed. Morrison recognizes that if whiteness is used as a standards of beauty or anything else, then the value of blackness is diminished and this novel works to subvert that tendency. (12)

Black females are affected by the social norms of beauty involving : gender, ethnicity, social class , skin complexion, hair and eye colour . Blackness has been always associated with badness, sin , evil and ugliness ,but whiteness is associated with goodness , purity, god and beauty (AIW 34). The protagonist's yearning for a blue eyes came as a result of the racism practised on her by her own community and whites which considers her ugly . Pecola thought if her wish is granted society will finally accept her and considers her beautiful. Roshan and Golipour (2012) adds that: "The first obvious appearance of social identity in The Bluest Eye come with the example of Pecola, who prefers above all other containers to drink out of the Shirley Temple cup. ... True beauty, Shirley's beauty, was something no black girl could ever aspire achieve" (13). Pecola knew her entire life she was ugly the whole society emphasized on that thus, she yearned for blue eyes in particularly Shirley's eyes .Her picture were pasted all over the new papers and in TV and more importantly she is beautiful as well as loved Pecola desired that love and beauty.

The social colorism scale that favours lucid skin over coloured complexion ,makes it troublesome for black woman. They did not find their way in society . Evidently, women with white skin have better chances to strive after their goals in terms of job employment , perusing education and better success in social relationships .Superior and inferior are separated in terms of skin colour. Whenever the skin is lighter people have better chances in society .Within black community itself separation in terms of different shades exists. According to J. Mathews Tayler (2013): "Among Africans there exists an arrangement of skin tones with varying degree from light to dark ; some shades are considered more

acceptable than others (1)". Another reason for Pocola's troubled identity is the segregation which originated from her own race .They treated less fortunated blacks with a look of superiority due to, their lighter skin complexion and the benefits that brought by that (Roshan and Golipour 13).

Skin variation affects children since early ages ,it can cause serious mental issues and how children perceive themselves (J. Mathews 2). Identity According to H. Carter James (1972) refers to a state of mind rather than beauty standards related to hair , face or practicing ancient African costumes , to be black and proud (237) .Various studies underpin the theory of identity formation which is affected in children's first years. Children evolve racial sensibility in terms of skin colour differences by the age of four. Self -loathing , therefore, appears through racial awareness since early ages . Hence, it is incarnated in the personality due to social pressures (H. Carter 236). Obstacles regarding identity creates a permanent inner conflicts with blacks own self portrayal and, attempts to rise to the white position through assimilation. It is because the black belongs to an inferior race ,which he seeks to be like the superior race (BSWM 167). The impact of the inferiority complex creates sort of internal conflict in which it affects the identity and its stability. Fanon Frantz (1986) argues that: "Moral consciousness implies a kind of scission, a fracture of consciousness ...In order to achieve morality, it is essential that the black, the dark, the Neggro banish from consciousness .Hence a Negro is forever in a combat with his own image" (BSWM 150).This image is destroyed by white culture ideologies.

The environment black people live in contributes in the alienation of blacks .H. Carter (1972) further argues that black's identity is strongly established due to, social pressures: " It is error to believe that personality patterns formed among blacks are reflective of inherent racial tendencies; they are instead reactions to environmental stresses (237)". Rejection from higher community reflects on the minds of lower community in self- loathing. These feelings

are what happened to the protagonist. Fanon Frantz (1986) in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* explains that: "Affective self rejection invariably bring the abandonment-neurotic to an extremely painful and obsessive feeling of exclusion of having no place anywhere" (As cited in 55).

Female slaves were the subject of sexual disturbance by their white masters. These acts resulted in children who's half white , half black which are indicated as 'mulattoes'. Such children had endowments favoured them from pure blacks therefore they were granted the right to work as servants rather than slaves . Mulattoes were conscious of the difference between them and pure blacks , it allowed them to consider themselves superior on their darker skin fellows. Basically because, lighter skin women were cleaner, more acceptable and attractive in terms of facial traits , straight hair and lighter complexion. These features which are closer to the once of whites granted them social characteristics in education , job employment and social relationships than their black peers. White or a lighter skin, every complexion is not a black is a reference to beauty and fascination (J. Mathews 15-20)

Mulattoes were yet, not fully recognized, Bantum Brian (2010) explains the status of mingled race children as being: "Mixed race children were in between the categories of colonizer and colonized , human and nonhuman, slave and free" (1). So far they are treated superior than sole blacks. Even in the period post slavery period lighter skin black gained favourable opportunities .

Black woman were ashamed of their somatic traits. So they tried to imitate white women, which led to bewilderment and self rejection to all what is black. The role of families is important in building racial attitudes ,and that some people identifies blacks as being the commune who's predecessors were once enslaved (BSWM 124). He further affirms that white children are raised with same racial views ,regulations of their parents: "The family is

the miniature of the nation" (109). There is a relative relation between the construction of the family and the construction of the society (BSWM 109). White children were born in a racist family ,therefore, they developed a racist views basically because the family is where the children learn their first lessons.

Beauty concepts has profoundly affected the lives of black women. Self esteem is based on other people's perception and confirmation to ounce's self. Black women endured from low self esteem due to, their appearance which do not match the beauty criteria set by the society .Criteria which emphasises on the relation between beauty and whiteness. Fanon Frantz (1986) reports that: "I am white :That is to say I possess beauty and virtue, which have never been black. I am the color of the daylight" (31) .Such criteria is destructive to women's identity and ,how black women handle themselves (J. Mathews 18-21). (TBE) demolishes and resent those criteria .It also refuses how beauty determines women's value .Douglas Christopher (2007) points that: "While doing certain things and holding certain values must abstractly define membership in a culture, the text devalues such membership in favour of an identitarain ,body-based, essentialist "culture" which has its origin and true value in race"(211) . Black women were differentiated from white women due to, their skin colour. "whiteness" symbolizes purity, virtue, beauty and God. In contrast to "blackness" which was merely related to filthiness, sin, ugliness and evil (RWRF6). Li Stephanie (2010) affirms that: "Morrison closes the gap created by socially mandated categories of identity such as race or class" (36). Morrison in (TBE) reflects on her experience as a black women because, at that times writers did not write this kind of books so, she wrote it in order to, read it (Li 31). Toni declared her desire to write (TBE) in various forms including saying this book is "about me" about something I want to read. Women all over the world suffers from all sorts of violence whether it is physical or verbal but, black women are the subject of an even serious issue rape.

6. Whiteness as the Phallus

An additional form of violence experienced against black females is rape. One of the stereotyped fables told about black males is they are rapist, who tends to go after women. Black males were known as wild, sexual beasts, and violent. Fanon Frantz (1968) suggests the reason behind black male's violent behaviour is that: "To rid his life of the compulsive quality that makes it so like the behaviour of the phobic. Affect is exacerbated in the Negro, he is full of rage because he feels small, he suffers from an inadequacy in all human communication, and all these factors chain him with an unbearable insularity" (BSWM 35). So, the black male vent his anger developed by the social pressures in forms of dangerous and abusive attitudes including rape.

Rape is used as a means to maintain males domination over women. And white male's mastery over both black males and females. The use of sexual exploitation as an arm so as to, prevent women from revolting. Brownmiller Susan (1975) notes that how males use their physical traits in order to intimidate woman hence man's physical assembly allow them to rape:

Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important prehistoric times...From prehistoric times to the present, rape has played a crucial function. It is nothing more or less than conscious process of intimidation by which all man keep all woman in state of fear. (5)

Rape act is a means of creating a halo of fear to ensure males power over females as well as a mechanism to slit the anger and anxiety. Males take advantage women's vulnerability to rape them. Pecola Breedlove is raped by her father when he was drunk while she was washing the dishes. Scott Lynn Orilla (2006) proposes that: "Incest stories and incest

themes have provided specific challenges and opportunities for African America writers, because incest has been long associated with the poor and people of color" (83). For Morrison the incest theme is about racism and self-hatred. Scott Lynn Orilla agrees that: "In order to interrupt Pecola's destruction the novel asks that we understand the relationship between an ideology of white supremacy and a discourse of incest that promotes and maintains that ideology" (88). The writer signals the rape of Pecola by her father at the preface of the novel (Scott 88). Cholly's rape of his daughter is a mixture of several emotions. Scott Lynn Orilla (2000) states that: "Cholly's rape of his daughter is infused with his memory of the affection and tenderness he felt for Pauline" (89). (TBE) shares a similar story involving incest rape theme with Alice Walker *The Color Purple* (2011). Walker stated clearly the child exploitation is often done by a person who is related to the abused child, a close neighbor, or a family friend and more horrifying it could be a father or a brother "She went to visit her sister doctor over Macon. Left me to see after the others. He never had a kind word to say to me. Just say You gonna do what your mammy wouldn't " (Walker Letter01) . Celie was raped by her father while the mother is absent from the house. This action is repeated whenever her mother is far away, and after her death, later on the father was trying to do the same action with the younger daughter(Walker, Letter01-02). The rape incident was fatal to Pecola's identity first and her mental well being second .Claudia said that her father is the only one who loved her enough to touch her but, his touch was damaging .Black's identity is strongly fragile which is the prime grounds of several serious mental illnesses.

7. Schizophrenia

Being exposed to constant segregation, discrimination based on skin colour and gender may result in serious psychological affect including depression, anxiety and schizophrenia. The heroin's yearning for blue eyes is sign of a troubled identity due to, her thinking if she

had a blue eyes the world would see her differently ,therefore, accept her. Fanon Frantz (1986) explains that: " For the black man there is only one destiny .And that is white"(WSBM 4). Pocola's identity was damaged due to, her strong desire to assimilate white beauty standards and multiple types of racism. Douglas Christopher (2007) argues that: "In what we might call a generative moment in history of literary multiculturalism the novel tells the story of black girl in (1941) who is all but destroyed by her desire for white beauty and by other African Americans acting in response to the oppression of white cultural normativity" (210).

The concept of assimilation controlled the protagonist's mind and made her think her salvation is in granting one of the white's criteria. The concept Du Bois W.E.D (2007) refers to as the "double consciousness" . It is a two personalities black people carry within them . The first one is once actual self and, the other refers to how black perceive themselves in the eyes of society. As result to the destroyed self image formed by racist perceptions: "It is a peculiar sensation ,this double-consciousness ,this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (8). The concept of "double-consciousness" is also argued by Duvall John (2000) in his book *Identifying fictions of Toni Morrison* he states:

W.E.B Du Bois early in the last century argued the case of African American double-consciousness; black American rather than experiencing themselves and the world as an identity, could only view the world in a double fashion since their sense of themselves as Americans was constantly undermined by the fact of being black. (10)

Racism has profoundly influenced the identity of blacks to the point where they were not able to define themselves unless through the approval of others. Du Bois's concept is

similar to the one of Fanon Frantz (1986): "As long as the black man is among his own ,he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflict ,to experience his being through others" (WSBM 82). Pocola tried to run away from her skin ;basically because, hers was very dark and the whole community considered her ugly ,she attempted to give away her identity Fanon Frantz (1986) adds that: "In the man of color there is a constant effort to run away from his own individuality ,to annihilate his own presence" (WSBM 43).The protagonist was yet, exposed to another kind of marginalization caused by her own mother Lister Rachel (2009) reports that :

Pocola sense of identity is more fragile because the impact of the white gaze has infected her relationship within her own family when an incident occurs in the kitchen of her mother's employer, Pocola distress goes unattended as Pauline Breedlove rushes to reassure the mistress's daughter. (26)

At the end Pocola's constant endurance was repeated over and over every day. With racist and sexist oppression and finalized with being raped by her own father and the death of her baby contributed in construction of her fragmented identity . It resulted in a psychological shock. Kids who suffers from violence are required to get a special medical care , if neglected probably they would suffer from severe mental and physical illnesses (AIW 61-65). Pocola goes mad and this madness is called "Schizophrenia". Lister Rachel (2009) confirms that : "When the reader next meets Pocola, she is talking to an imaginary second self, asking for confirmation that she now has a blue eyes" (25). Scott Lynn Orilla (2000) also adds that: "Increasingly desperate to have a blue eyes ,she eventually loses her grip on sanity ,she becomes silent ,speaking only to an imaginary friend" (90). According to Oxford dictionary Schizophrenia is: " A long term mental disorder of a type involving a breakdown in the relation between thought ,emotion ,and behaviour leading to faulty perception ,inappropriate actions and feelings ,withdrawal from reality and personal

relationships into fantasy and delusion ,and a sense of mental fragmentation ". People with Schizophrenia tends to left alone. Bloom Harold (2010) ensure the consequences of Pecola's endurance on her identity :

Throughout the novel ,we see the consequences of the failure to show love in Pecola's reaction to the world. Since she has received only harsh treatment at home ,she expects only harsh treatment from the world outside .She is forever crushed into herself in anticipation of rejection, and her belief that she is ugly, combined with the physical fact ensure that rejection. (71-72)

The Protagonist could not find safety and acceptance where she supposedly to be the safest "Home" .Her mother's neglect as well as her father's abusive personality managed to be destructive to her identity . Three characters enjoyed Pecola's company and looked at her without discussed eyes was the three prostitutes. Lister Rachel (2006) also adds that: "Three of the most self-defining people in the community are the prostitutes who befriend Pocola and who show no concern with white conceptions of privilege, beauty, and priority" (26). They have considered Pecola as a friend. The story was told by adult Claudia in remembering her adolescent years reflecting on her mistakes and blaming herself and the society of Pocola's sorrowful destiny. Duvall John (2000) remarks that: "From this adult perspective ,she speaks a theory of radical implication ,one that refuses to blame Cholly entirely for Pocola's fate and sees rather the entire community's role in what befalls Pocola. Nor does Claudia excuse herself in her communal self critique" (29). Morrison makes the reader question everybody's action with Pecola and what led to her madness.

8. Conclusion

The period of the second half of the twentieth century was a rich grounds and source of inspiration for various black female authors whom used literature to make their voices heard. And report women's conditions back from the historical events of slavery era till the contemporary period. Toni Morrison most significant thematic concern in most of her novels is related to the identity construction and how it is developed rather than being a scientific fact. *The Bluest Eye* is an example of such themes where the author demonstrated the side affect of being exposed to constant racist, sexist oppression and all sorts of segregation which may contribute in the destruction of black people's identity and how they perceive themselves.

Chapter Two

Cultural Practices :Local Issues of The Black Identity

Outline Chapter Two

1.Introduction.....	37
2.Hegemony and Culture.....	37
3.Blackness and Squalor.....	41
4.Domestic Slavery and Labour.....	45
5.Child Abuse and The Consequences.....	49
6.Incest and Sexuality.....	52
7.Conclusion.....	56

1.Introduction

This chapter is a deep analysis to Toni Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye*. In this chapter we attempt to examine the effects of imposing white American ideal living standards on developing the identity of African American people and African American women in particular . Moreover we seek to clarify the impact of colonization on the colonized people's culture using the hegemony and showing to what extent to which the racial oppression of whites have influenced blacks' self-assurance and the way they perceive themselves. This chapter also is an attempt to illuminate the way blacks are perceived in the shade of white outlook .In addition we seek to demonstrate the state of black women in home and in work place and how the woman was treated as enslaved. Moreover we pursued to represent the child abuse and exploitation and its subsequent results. It also tackles the issue of incest and sexuality .We further attempt to study how those previous mentioned factors influence the formation of black people's identity and how all of that is reflected in their life.

2.Hegemony and Culture

In early times African literature was in the form of poetry and storytelling. Africans were expressing their life through dancing and singing before their culture was mixed with that of the colonizer. Whites hold a strong belief in their supremacy which they as whites have the duty to civilize the illiterate Africans whom they consider as lower in rank and inferior. Frankenberg Ruth (1999) clarifies that: "Colonizing forces encountered the native people of Africa, Asia, and the Americas, they for the most part viewed them as irremediably different from, and inferior to, themselves" (192-193) .The ideology which states that whites hold superiority over other cultures lined the idea of whiteness with cleanliness, purity and nobility whereas blackness is restricted to dirtiness, impurity and degrading. In *The Bluest Eye*, Morrison Toni (1970) incarnates this when Pauline start working in white people house:

" Here she found beauty, order, cleanliness, and praise" (127). The idea of beauty is not restricted just to facial complexions, but even to the white people comfortable living conditions and social practices. In *culture and Imperialism*, W. Said Edward as one of the founders of Post-colonialism illustrates the idea of superiority and inferiority saying that: "Allowed decent men and women to accept the notion that distant territories and their native peoples should be subjugated...decent people could think of the emporium as a protected, almost metaphysical obligation to rule subordinate, inferior, or less advanced peoples" (10). The colonizer attempted to make the colonized accept their inferiority.

The imperial power tries to make the colonized nations believe that they should accept the idea of being controlled by them. The white masters consider Africans as uncivilized creatures with no identity. The United States President Truman presented the West as a model to the whole world, he affirmed the civilized mission saying that: " I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them to realize their aspirations for a better life" (As cited in Ahluwalia, 11). The colonizer uses the civilized mission as a pretext in order to justify their colonization spreading the hegemony to civilize what they consider uncivilized.

The West which illustrates the power in hegemony over African colonies consider these colonies as a part of Europe; Ashcroft indicates that: "The idea of 'Africa' is one that comes from Europe "(As cited in Ahluwalia 12). Ashcroft also adds that this concept of Africa as a part of Europe still exists at present (As cited in Ahluwalia 12). The same conception shared by all the colonizers—whether they were European colonizers, British colonizers or French colonizers—is embodied in the fallacy that the colonized nation are savages and barbarians who have no history or identity. As in the French colonizer in the Third World countries in Africa which it is their responsibility to transform this barbarians to Frenchmen and eradicate totally their African culture. Crowder states that: "Africans were

considered to be people without any history, without any civilization worthy of name, constantly at war with one another, fortunate to have been put in touch with the fruits of French civilization "(As cited in Ahluwalia 37). Ahluwalia points out to Fanon concerns about the colonial concept which is even after the colonies periphery people get their freedom by rebellion, their real culture and identity will be attached to the one of the colonizer: "What worried Fanon was the insidious nature of the colonizing culture; which could so easily become part of the culture of the very people that it dominated" (Ahluwalia 39). We believe that the colonized nations became hybrid with the African culture which caused a lost identity conflict.

A movement has been established by African writers named Negritude Movement. It is coined by Aime Cesaire . This movement came as rehabilitation to the African culture in order to retrieve to blacks their humanity and identity which they have been deprived from through centuries of deformation and atrocity by the colonizer (As cited in Ahluwalia 24). Senghor (2001) adds that negritude represents the African culture as a whole: "For Senghor, negritude is the 'sum total of African cultural values' "(As cited in Ahluwalia 25). The writers learnt to write and express their concerns using the white colonizer language and culture which shows clearly the affect of the colonizer on the Africans identity. The poets of (NM) learnt how to write and read using French language, this affection reach the way they refer to their ancestors as saying 'our ancestors the Gaul's' instead of 'our ancestors the Africans' (Newell 26). It appears that the way of thinking of the colonized people become attached to the colonizer culture which reflects the success of the colonizer intentions.

Post-colonialism effect directly children identity. It become hard for them to have one pure culture or to belong to just one culture, the one of their hometown or the one of the colonizer. Frantz Fanon as Algerian born in France was exposed to the problem of identity, he found himself neglected by French people who he grew between and considered interloper

between his real country people, Algeria (Ahluwalia39). Therefore his identity was undermined due to the colonization's impact on him. We notice that Toni Morrison in (TBE) links directly the identity issue with the (PC) interval, where Africans were seeking to manifest their identity which is the same issue happen with African American. Ahluwalia Pal (2001) says that: " It must be emphasized that the question of identity is one that links African studies and post-colonial studies" (12). In the novel, Geraldine acts affirm that she was detached from her African identity and this what the colonial power worked to reach. Douglas Christopher (2007) says that: "Geraldine's genealogy is typological, not familial. She is one of a type of people who are losing a cultural identity that is rightfully theirs because of their racial ancestry" (209). People are still affected by their ancestors views and beliefs and this is what led to the continuation of racism in the black community.

Africans revolts in a movement named *The Harlem Renaissance*. This movement came to show to whites and the world the lost culture of these colonies. They want to be independent in their culture in literary works and report about black people's traumas. Not just in the form of traditional arts and folklore. Toni Morrison is one of African American who adopt (THR) in their writings stating in a pure way, the problems and the crises her community endured. Locke Alain (2004) says that:

The Negro today wishes to be known for what he is, even in his faults and shortcomings...The pulse of the Negro world has begun to beat in Harlem... Our greatest rehabilitation may possibly come through such channels, but for the present, more immediate hope rests in the revaluation by white and black alike of the Negro in terms of his artistic endowments and cultural contributions. (14)

(THR) have been considered as a starting point to African literature. And independent identity. It is a significant in the sense that, it underlies their being, as well as establishing a footprint for their identity. The African want to retrieval their being as showing to the world that they are really exist and they are truly have a culture which can stands alone without reliance to the colonizer culture. Blackness is the main reason for all that they have experienced during their arduous journey of enslavement and denial of their identity which led to the continuation of mastering white men supremacy in other forms.

3.Blackness and Squalor

Toni Morrison in (TBE) manifests the black struggle for life under the conditions of class segregation and oppression. The author offers an interest regarding the racial oppression which exist in African American community as a result to slavery remnants. This oppression incarnates in the class segregation from the oppressor toward the oppressed.

Racism build upon the class segregation which manifests two different ranks, the "Bourgeoisie" who indicates the white upper class, and the "Proletariat" who are the periphery blacks who represents the lower class. Toni Morrison in the novel gives a spectacle in which she describes the difference between whites and blacks in domination, one part is the powerful where the other one is the powerless. Morrison (1970) describes the difference between the power in America over the powerless: " They were big, white, armed men. He was small, black, helpless"(150). It shows the hegemony and power of whites in front of the weakness of blacks. The difference between blacks and whites reached the standard of living, white people live in the neighborhoods of luxury which reflect their nobility, while the slums were for the blacks Morrison (1970) incarnates that:

The lakefront houses were the loveliest. Garden furniture, ornaments, windows like shiny eyeglasses, and no sin of life. The backyards of these houses fell away in green slopes down to a strip of sand. And then the blue Lake Erie,

lapping all the way to Canada. The orange-patched sky of the steel- mill section never reached this part of town. This sky was always blue. (105)

Morrison also shows the differences between the living conditions between whites and blacks where Claudia and Frieda were going to see Pecola in her mother place of work, the house of whites which she holds:

We reached Lake Shore Park, a city park laid out which rosebuds, fountains, blowing greens, picnic tables. It was empty now, but sweetly expectant of clean, white, well-behaved children and parents who would play there above the lake in summer before half-running, half-stumbling down the slope to the welcoming water. Black people were not allowed in the park, and so it filled our dreams. (105)

It is the life which blacks will dream about, however they know that they will never reach to approach . In the other hand, she led the reader to comparison and imagination over how blacks' neighborhoods look like which was completely different from whites' luxurious life. Toni Morrison embodies that in the way of Breedlove's living: " The Breedloves did not live in a store front because they were having temporary difficulty adjusting to the cutbacks at the plant. They lived there because they were poor and black" (TBE 38). Toni deliberately shed light on how blackness was also related to poverty. We perceive that the blackness and poverty of the Breedloves is attached to their economic incapacity and their belonging to the lower class, and Pecola ugliness is also related to her family social class (Khan and Rahman 201).

Whites used different sorts of racism in workplaces, at schools, or outside by using some utterances which discriminate and de-humanize blacks existences . Toni Morrison presented this idea in the scene where two white men called Cholly using the term "nigger"

which means you are a black and disrespected (TBE 42), such racist terms as in Morrison's words racism in its all forms verbal or physical, made whites feel good about themselves and to feel an empty void.

Blackness was considered as sort of unworthiness and ugliness and was related to squalor. Pecola was always seen with the eyes of disgust from the other people, whites and even blacks themselves: "And it is the blackness that accounts for, that creates, the vacuum edged with distaste in white eyes" (TBE 49). Her blackness is noticeable and exposed to much racist oppression more than the other, It was the reason behind her identity instability. So whites keep calling the other using such terms, Toni incarnates that when Maureen and the three girls Pecola, Frieda and Claudia quarreled with Maureen, Maureen start saying words that reflects racism: "... black e mos..."(TBE 73). Such acts and terms give the non-black the feeling of superiority, mastership and self acceptance in contrast it seeds the self-loathing and the desire to disguise the identity to blacks. The character Maureen who is the daughter of Peals family is in a extremely way holds the oppressor mentality because, her family is considered from the upper class not like the Breedloves and Mac Teers who belong to the other. Mbalia Doreatha Drummond (2004) says that: "Clearly, Maureen sees herself as superior because she looks more like her oppressors" (35). She have the European- American girl characteristics and represents the Marxist concepts. Colonialism develops the concept that blacks are savages and that their blackness is provenance of disgust, degeneration and retardation even within blacks themselves who denied their being indicates the lack of self assurance. Alexander Allen (2007) states that:

Geraldine, a black woman who is said to have suppressed her racial identity by getting rid of "the dreadful funkiness of passion, the funkiness of nature, the funkiness of the wide range of human emotions" in order to appease the white man's "blunted soul" (68), treats Pecola as not only a nuisance or blight, as

does Mr. Yacobowski, but as a threat to the“ sanitized”—i.e., anti-black—environment that she has constructed around her son. (112)

Geraldine despite being black has removed the sense of belonging to her blackness and denied this fact and worked to transfers the same sense to her son Junior, based on this context Khan Md. Reza Hassan and Rahman Md. Shafiqur (2014) state that: "As these black people do not possess a place in the domain of white beauty, they derive a complicated impression of beauty from humiliating people of their own community. In this way Pecola and her family turn out to be the focal point of the whole community's self hatred" (201). We perceive that Geraldine's family remove the connection with its African link which reflects their pertinence to the ruling class. They are colored people. Mbalia Doreatha Drummond (2004) states that: "The family members consider themselves to be *colored*, a term that for them signifies some nebulous group of Africans who are neither European nor African: Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud "(35). The colored members inside the black community was divested and denied the blacks as if they were white. The racial oppression practiced toward them, pushed them to deny their being and identity. In the light of the lost identity and how the oppressed side act when they face who is less than them:

They seemed to have taken all their smoothly cultivated ignorance, their exquisitely learned self- hatred, their elaborately designed hopelessness and sucked it all up into a fiery cone of scorn that had burned for ages in the hollows of their minds -cooled- and spilled over lips of outrage, consuming whatever was in its path. (65)

Black children inherited the self- hatred from the adults. As a result for that they learn how to transfer that to other victims who seem hopeless to them. As joiner directed his hatred towards people or animals lower than him/herself .Such practices are due to, the racial oppression practiced on these children. The psychological pressure resulting from these acts

of racial discrimination, reduced their value as human beings, especially to women and children, was a good reason led black women to carry out a feminist movement in order to demand for their rights.

4.Domestic Slavery and Labour

The Black women emancipation movement is a concept has been forever linked to women's strive for equality for black women with men of both races as well as white women. Among women's main goals was to cease violence in black communities and its serious affect on the families specially little children. L. Harris Melanie (2010) states that: "These women try to deliberate how race, class , gender, sexual identity effect the community"(51). Bharati Megha and Joshi L.M. (2009) report that: " Black women in America being black, female and poor have been victimized by racism, sexism, and classism, not only from the white world, but also from their own men" (38). Feminism is a reaction to the civil rights movement black women established the black woman's movement demanding equal rights as well as to cease all sorts of violence whether it was domestic violence or public violence. The violence was practiced in several kinds: verbal, physical, psychological, and even sexual harassment is to be considered as an implicit form of violence against women and children . Dias Dais Lilian Fonseca (2009) pointes out the black female exclusion: "The black female characters in *The bluest eye* are constantly bombarded by female condition and roles which exclude them and which do not provide them with any sense that they really exist, so that they are injured in their deepest selves" (8).

Among the types of violence experienced by Black women was domestic violence such as beatings, humiliation or rape, which is one of the reasons of women's psychological distress. Violence in general is capable to lead to more violent behaviors as each act leads to a reaction. Women persecution generates another type of violence which they unleash such aggression in their children ; we learn that the origins of violence on people, is strongly

related to our first experience in life, the one of 'reinforced performance'; whites exercise their aggressive dominance against African Americans, whether men or women. Men force themselves against women as a means of venting what they suffer abroad from their white masters, and thus the woman finds herself practicing another violence against their children as the vulnerable link. Mainly this is due to the psychological effects of the violence practiced against them (Dutton 47). In (TBE) Toni Morrison takes black women journey as a case which should be discussed. Toni takes it as her duty to speak about his women issue since Africans history neglects Kuenz Jane (2007) argues :

The disallowance of the specific cultures and histories of African-Americans and black women especially is figured in *The Bluest Eye* primarily as a consequence of or sideline to the more general annihilation of popular forms and images by an ever more all-pervasive and insidious mass culture industry. (98)

Toni Morrison has put forward very revealing scenes of violence against women and children as well, Bharati Megha and Joshi L.M. (2009) say that describing the life of African women is because of being a black female: "However, black women were more oppressed physically and mentally and their cause of grievances was greater. Pushed to the periphery on account of their gender, a black woman's life was full of horrors" (TBE 38). Morrison represented the domestic violence in Breedloves's family life and how Mr. and Mrs. Breedloves used to fight each other, she notes:

Cholly and Mrs. Breedlove fought each other with a darkly brutal formalism that was paralleled only by their lovemaking. Tacitly they had agreed not to kill each other. He fought her the way a coward fights a man –with feet, the palms of his hands, and teeth. She, in turn, fought back in a purely feminine way –with frying pans and pokers, and occasionally a flatiron would sail

toward his head. They did not talk, groan, or curse during these beatings. There was only the muted sound of falling things, and flesh on unsurprised flesh. (43)

We deduce that the domestic violence negatively affects the family environment and threatens the emotional bonds between the family members, especially children stability and identity. Morrison talks also about African American women exploitation whether in her work or between her family members: " White women said, "Do this." White children said, "Give me that." "White men said, "Come here." Black men said, "Lay down." The only people they need not take orders from were black children and each other" (TBE 138). In here we find that Toni is showing how black women are treated as a machine to receive and execute orders by their white masters and black men, all what was required from her (woman) is to listen and obey.

Black people struggle for life is closely similar to the concept of living within the laws of the jungle, the strongest eats the weakest . Black men used to taunting their women as a result to the violence they endured in their work: " They ran the houses of white people, and knew it. When white men beat their men, they cleaned up the blood and went home to receive abuse from the victim" (TBE 138). Women have to endure the same violence generated by the same pressure and violence on their husbands as they were the weakest link for men and community in general. It comes to our mind that when the image of the black man was shaking in his work place in front of his family, he had to rebuild that image by harassing his wife at home as part of self-restoration. Morrison Toni (1970) adds that: " They plowed all day and came home to nestle like plums under the limbs of their men. The legs that straddled a mule's back were the same ones that straddled their men's hips. And the difference was all the difference there was" (138).

Women have to work outside home and to continue other works to her husband, Toni shows to what extent it was hard and weary. Black women worked in many hard labour which were equal to those of men back to slavery era. Thus, stereotypes as black women lack femininity originated; despite the fact that slavery era has been long ended yet, black women were suffering from similar hard working conditions. She have to work though minor jobs, she was most of the time the sole economic provider to the house holding. Most black men would not accept minor jobs, black female had to continue the work in her house under the pressures and violence of her drunk husband. Toni described what they were suffering in detail and in which she explains to what extent it was tiring and exhausting for them:

Then they were old. Their bodies honed, their odor sour. Squatting in cane field, stooping in a cotton field, kneeling by a river bank, they had carried a world on their heads. They had giving over the lives of their own children and tendered their grandchildren. With relief they wrapped their heads in rags, and their breasts in flannel; eased their feet into felt. They were through with lust and lactation, beyond tears and terror. They alone could walk the roads of Mississippi, the lanes of Georgia, the fields of Alabama unmolested. They were old enough to be irritable when and where they chose, tired enough to look forward to death, disinterested enough to accept the idea of pain while ignoring the presence of pain. They were, in fact and at last, free. And the lives of these old black women were synthesized in their eyes- a puree of tragedy and humor, wickedness and serenity, truth and fantasy. (139)

Morrison described in detailed manner what black worked women passed through and what she endured while working in the hard fields. We notice that black women have to be a worker, mother and mean to perform her master's orders by which it stirred the first troubled

identity signs. The exploitation of black women considering her a vulnerable link by black men and the white community has not stopped there , but it have gone beyond that reaching other victims which are the children.

5.Child Abuse and the Consequences

As the cycle of violence spins around. The strongest eats the weakest, the weaker part in this case are children. The oppressed woman was pouring her anger at her children, while the children of her masters were treated with feeling of motherhood which was bestowed upon her children; in a book titled *The abusive personality* by G. Dutton Donald (2007), the writer talks about the affection of violence on children state of mind and personality. G. Dutton Donald (2007) states that: "The impact of such experiences as violence between parents, angry divorce, rejection and shaming can take a toll on everything from the self-concept and the ability to self-soothe/tolerate aloneness "(206). We realize that the domestic violence is the prime reason behind black children's psychological problems and their fragmented identity. We also find that in the scene where Cholly practiced violence against his family members trying to burn them and the house when he was drunk (TBE 189). Also when Cholly and his wife get into a violent arguments while their children are watching. Their family's constant fights made Pecola's elder brother intend to run away from the house multiple times.

Pecola Breedlove the heroine herself received a great deal of physical and psychological violence which contributed in the loss of her identity. In one hand the psychological violence by the society which considers her ugly due to her strong and dark skin complexion and the racism practiced on blacks as a whole. On the other hand the physical violence sometimes practiced by her mother when she severely punished her and did not believe her when she told her that she was raped by her father. This matter proclaimed by two women who were talking about Pecola's dead child: " Well, it probably won't live. They

say the way her mama beat her she lucky to be alive herself " (TBE 189). We see that the little girl Pecola has been subjected to severe violence from her family.

The children, in turn, converted the violence and the neglect which was practiced by their mothers on them to animals or younger children: "As he grew older, he learned how to direct his hatred of his mother to the cat, and spent some happy moments watching it suffer"(TBE 86). In here Junior, Geraldine's son, finds a victim to direct his abuse toward, the same thing happen in the cycle of violence. The little boy went even further and started bullying little girls basically because they were the weaker part " More and more Junior enjoyed bullying girls It was easy to make them scream and run. How he laughed when they feel down and their bloomers showed. When they got up, their faces red and crinkled, it made him feel good "(TBE 87) . We detect that violence breeds only violence. Morrison Toni also incarnates sexism through the acts of Junior toward girls: "A group of boys was circling and holding at bay a victim, Pecola Breedlove"(TBE 65). Black children enjoyed bullying girls. They transfer their inner anger to other victims, Pecola is their victim since she has a lower self esteem that the other felt in her personality, her fragile identity is exposed to others.

In addition to the prosperous life of the noble class their black workers have to treat white's children with the affection and tenderness which their real children loss in their homes. In the novel we get that Toni Morrison attempt to underline the difference in how these black women treat their masters children versus their own children, she incarnates this in Mrs. Breedlove treatment to the little girl of the house she keeps: "Hush, baby, hush. Come here. Oh, Lord, look at your dress. Don't cry no more. Polly will change it "(TBE 109). She treats her kindly as she is her own child. The opposite done in the treatment of her real daughter: "Mrs. Breedlove yanked her up by the arm, slapped her again, and in a voice thin with anger, abused Pecola directly and Frieda and me by implication. Crazy fool ... my floor, mess... look what you ... work "(TBE 109). The way in which she speaks to her daughter

and friends is devoid of tenderness or motherhood emotions yet another role which contributed in Pecola's identity regressing. They drain their tenderness on white children and once they reach their homes, they change into a person without feelings, hence, their house is another ugly, tiring realm, while they were working in a highly cleaned environment with highly beautiful children. Dee Ruby (1971) explains why is Pauline acting that way:

Pauline, her mother, finds haven, hope, life and meaning as servant to the white, blond, blue-eyed, clean, rich, family to which she dedicates her love and her respect for an orderly life that poverty does not afford. From her kitchen throne, she comes to view the reality of her own family with disgust and almost hatred. (2)

In another spectacle where Geraldine and her relation with her son, Junior is devoid of the feelings of motherhood. Geraldine thinks that her son Junior duty on her are just physical needs and no more than that without the real care which the real mother suppose to give to her children as tenderness. But she shows the motherhood side with her cat. later her son Junior discovers the difference in his mother treatment between him and the cat (TBE 86). The same thing is usually done within black family. The relation between the mother and the son is devoid of any feelings that the mother should have with her child. Basically this fact is due to the past of blacks; slavery where the mother have to be in the farm working for her white masters. There is no time to take cares of her family and children. Those children when they reach a certain age are usually taken away by the master to work in another place far from their families to be slaves for someone else.

Children are likely to be the victims of domestic violence even if they were not directly beaten or insulted. The fact that they witness the problems between their parents, is damaging to their well being, in the novel Sammy whom is the protagonist's elder brother is

mostly affect by his parents violent fuels .Children's reactions to such scenario's are unpredictable and each kid deal with them in different manners. Sammy used to deal with his parents domestic violence by involving himself in the fight or escaping from home. He escaped twenty-seven times and his returning back each time was just a result to the circumstances (TBE 43). Sammy Breedlove confronts his parent's fights by escaping from home or rather escape from those problems, but Pecola confronts these crises in another way: "Pecola, on the other hand, restricted by youth and sex, experimented with methods of endurance, though the methods varied, the pain was a consistent as it was deep. She struggled between an overwhelming desire that one would kill the other, and a profound wish that she herself could die" (TBE 43). We understand that Pecola's reaction differs from the one of her brother's in ways gender control's her reaction to her family's fuels, he is old nevertheless, a man he can do whatever he pleases ; but she is young and woman she has nowhere to go, all she could do is to bottle her feelings inside and stand still. In these scenes we notice how explains how much gender affects people reactions and identities.

The way in which men behave is different than the one of women. This reflects the supremacy of males over females. The exploitation of children by mothers and fathers exceeded their denial or just their aggression it , went even further. Both children and women are vulnerable to sexual abuse and rape.

6.Incest and Sexuality

Among the significant reasons behind black women's emancipation movement is to cease rape and women's sexual exploitation further more to children abuse including rape. In (TBE) Morrison speaks about Breedlove's family in details. Trying to manifest their fragmented relation in hand and to set reasons to justify his acts with his family. Pecola's father Cholly Breedlove's life is full of crises. Cholly does not feel the taste of family , his mother abandoned him or when Cholly asks after his father's name in order to look for him ,

they told him that he never exist during his life and he does not know about his existence: " He wasn't nowhere around when you was born. Your mama didn't name you nothing. The nine days wasn't up before she throwed you on the junk heap. When I got you I named you myself on the ninth day " (TBE 133). The father is absent while the mother who suppose to compensate his father absence abandoned him. His aunt Jimmy then took care of him. This is one of the reasons which justifies Cholly's violence with his family. Other issue which damages Cholly's identity and the sense of family solidarity is when he became young in his first sexual experience with Darlene two white men come he froze what they were doing ,but they oblige him to continue what they are doing while they are watching as a sort of amusement for them(TBE 147-148). It traumatized , dehumanization and humiliated him which led to his self hatred and the girl too: "Cholly wanted to strangle her, but instead he touched her leg with his foot" (TBE149). As he is disgusted of what has happened because his manhood is taken from him.

The act in general reflects white's humiliation and discrimination to black people. Later when Cholly wants to know his father and he reaches to him. He have no idea about his mother name in order to tell his father about to know who he is (TBE 156).Toni Morrison attempts to show why Cholly is behaving in this way. She sets the reason behind his damaged personality and his violence to his family. We understand that Cholly mixed feelings and identity was the result of a long journey of neglect and freedom: " Dangerously free. Free to feel whatever he felt-fear, guilt, shame, love, grief, pity. Free To be tender or violent, to whistle or weep" (TBE159). His feelings are unclear and mixed due to the life he live.

All what happen in Mr. Breedlove's life push him to do what he has done. The first time when he raped his daughter is a manifestation of his mixed feelings toward his daughter at that time: "Cholly saw her dimly and could not tell what he saw or what he felt. Then he become aware that he was uncomfortable; next he felt the discomfort dissolve into

pleasure. The sequence of his emotions was revulsion, guilt, and pity, then love" (TBE 161). He is not able to know the feeling of the real family, and that she is his daughter at that time because he was also drunk. He raped her in the kitchen (TBE 161-163) Based on that, Khan Md. Reza Hassan and Md. Shafiqur Rahman (2014) point out a significant reason to Cholly's rape to his daughter: "This implies that the Cholly's perverse sexuality is related to repetition of the past pains and to an unconscious effort to master the humiliation of his own sexuality" (TBE 206). Cholly rape to his daughter is considered as returning back to his painful past and to the humiliation he get for being black.

Morrison sets more ideas and facts showing that Cholly never had the feeling of family and how to be a parent because he had never taste it: " Having no idea of how to raise children, and having never watched any parents raise himself, he could not even comprehend what such a relationship should be" (TBE 160). Since a person had never taste the feeling of fatherhood during his life, it would not be fair to blame him later when he does not know how to embody it.

In the second time Morrison reports the act of rape through a conversation. Two women were speaking about Cholly's rape to his daughter, Pecola at that time gets pregnant of her father's baby and she lost the embryo (TBE 188-190). We realize that Cholly did not feel guilty about raping his own daughter for the first time in which he repeated the act for the second time and fled .

The protagonist Pecola exposed to those obstacles and psychological trauma which led to her madness at the end. Her dark skin complexions, her ugliness, racism and social pressures, violence and being raped twice by her father and losing her baby are all facts which led her to become mentally unstable and to loss of her identity completely . Her rape by her father for the second time and getting pregnant then she loosing the embryo is the final shock that drives her to madness. Dias Dias Lilian Fonseca (2009) affirms that: "Pecola

turns to prayers and communion, pushing herself to an imaginary world where her wish comes true... the world of schizophrenia that Morrison ironically shows as an extension of the tradition that portrays women as schizophrenic and mad" (8). The community which surrounds Pecola effects her image in which she perceives herself. Her identity as a black girl is totally demolished. Riley Anna and J. Burke Peter (1991) notes that " The feedback that takes place during social interaction is part of a continuous loop from the input of the actor's perception of identity relevant meanings" (6). We discover that Pecola desire to have different facial complexions is her resort of all bad things happens to her, herself loathing, her blackness, ugliness, discrimination, the violence she exposed to and her father's rape. Sissman L.S (1971) says that : "Pecola feels that blue eyes are a talisman of whiteness, of pride, of security, and she seeks them through prayer, through the intercession of a spoiled priest...and, ultimately, through madness, when she believes blue eyes have been granted her" (1-2).

This little girl is presented as a victim to society pressures Davis Cynthia A. (1982) declares that: "Morrison shows the Look Pecola is the epitome of the victim in a world that reduces persons to objects and then makes them feel inferior as objects" (3). Morrison adds more in order to reveal that Pecola is a victim to her society which plays a big role in her tragic end:

All of us—all who knew her—felt so wholesome after we cleaned ourselves on her. We were so beautiful when we stood astride her ugliness. Her simplicity decorated us, her guilt sanctified us, her pain made us glow with health, her awkwardness made us think we had a sense of humor. Her inarticulateness made us believe we were eloquent. Her poverty kept us generous. Even her waking dreams we used—to silence our own nightmares. And she let us, and thereby deserved our contempt. We honed our egos on her,

padded our characters with her frailty, and yawned in the fantasy of our strength. (205)

Pecola's weak state and ugliness help the other black people to accept themselves and the rejection to herself. Pecola is the victim to the class segregation and the racist community who holds the idea of superiority and considering her and the other blacks inferior. This girl is a victim to her family neglect and violence. Her father is drunken crazy man, and her mother careless and violent. Sissman L.S (1971) states that: "Cholly Breedlove driven to alcoholism, brutality, and incest by a life of appalling oppression and dislocation; her mother, Pauline Williams, driven back into her bitter and hard-bitten self by Cholly's rage and by the unbearable misery of her life" (2). Also their family state which make her sharing a bedroom with her elder brother which indicate poverty since her family is living in store front. Although all blacks at that time were living in poverty these families are stable and secure unlike hers. She is also victim to Mr. Soaphead who boosted her idea of the blue eyes. Discion Melvin (1987) declares that: "Soaphead offers insanity" (08).

Furthermore considering her the ugliest thing walking because of her dark skin complexions. We conclude that these accumulations in her shaky identity caused Pecola's unstable psychology lost identity and the brutality of the world led to her tragic fate.

7. Conclusion

The Bluest Eye novel covers the reality of African Americans life. This reality involves the remnants of slavery, which was practiced indirectly and racism in all sorts in addition to the control of whites and the problems of blacks especially in families like poverty, the exploitation of women and the abuse of children. All these reasons affected black people identity formation in a severe manner and caused them in psychological and mental crises. The protagonist Pecola is presented as sample to the black community who

suffer from these crises which led to her tragic fate of losing her identity and state of mind. Toni Morrison set the blame on American society as a whole for the protagonist fate which reflects the black community journey as well. The ugliness of black poverty, weakness and self rejection as a result of the social pressures make their journey enervated. Thus, these social pressures affect the identity formation of black people in general and the children in particular because they are more likely to be traumatized. Pecola's madness is a synopsis to what she has been exposed to in her life. The American culture has been blemish against blacks, since it devastated their original history and left them with no identity. Not only this what cause the dispersion of the identity but also there are further reasons behind the negative outlook against black people among them the myths and the invisibility which led to black's self-loathing toward themselves.

Chapter Three

Blackness and Representation

Outline Chapter Three

1.Introduction.....	60
2.Myths.....	60
3.Invisibility.....	64
4.Self-loathing.....	59
5.Conclusion.....	78

1.Introduction

The following chapter is a further detailed analysis of the novel's identity dimensions. We attempt to clarify the impact of the bad representation of black female's sexuality and to what extent it may affect their public image as well as their identity formation. The bad representation of the black female is closely related to the racist and sexist practices. The bad reputation justifies black women's exploitation as well as the sexist oppression. Furthermore we try to report the significant myths ever told about blacks in general and black females precisely. And to extract some of these myths in the novel in order to display them and the reason behind Morrison's use of the prostitute myths in the novel. In the present chapter we also attempt to show the profound effect of invisibility on the identity of the black characters in *The Bluest Eye* specially the protagonist Pecola from the perspective of the white culture. Beauty is the significant thematic concern of the novel; therefore we attempt to present a detailed and well explained analysis of this crucial element. Having a dark complexion deprive women from being considered beautiful. All the pervious elements resulted in fashioning a feeling of unworthiness and self rejection to blacks. We attempt to show Pecola's long journey of self loathing which led to her destructive fate.

2.Myths

Black Female's representation in fiction has been all along associated with myths. Myths as Prostitute, Good in bed, sexually loose, hypersexual, strong as male and several other labels is an institution to uphold sexist arrangements. These arrangements are ensured by both white community and black males. Sheftall Beverly Guy (2002) insists that: "This association of Black womanhood with hyper sexuality her partial nudity underscores, was to persists in the Euro-American imagination long after slavery and colonialism had ended"(15-16). We think that Denying black women recognition because of such myths affects black

women's views about themselves. These labels may be the reason of harming black female's identity. Marshall Anneka (2005) mentions the impact of sexual exploitation on black women with myths. Addition to how it can affect her social status as well as her own image of herself. Justifications as black women are sex tools validate black women's exploitation : "The objectification of black women as a creature of sex not only influences our identity and relationships but ,I argue ,is also used by 'white' people and black men to legitimize our sexual and social exploitation "(5). Black women's identity is troubled not only by racist practices but also by sexist ideologies which emphasizes on sexual humiliating. Some myths date back to the very beginnings of the slavery phase and it impact was still practiced until these days. White color is associated with virtue ,superiority ,freedom and civilization .While blackness with immorality, hyper sexuality, barbarism and inferiority (Childs18). Myths regarding Africans exists even before they were enslaved. These myths are deeply instilled on the minds of whites as uncivilized ,savages and blacks are a line of apes. Connecting black people with animals suggests their mental capacities as limited (BSWM 18). Hence we affirm that linking the black race with animalistic features causes their sexuality to be put in comparison with the one of animals. Black women's sexuality has been associated with apse's therefore Europeans linked black females with the myths of being lewd, savage and lustful (Sheftall 21). White men's mission was to eradicated these myths and civilize the black race. We note that imperialism as well as colonialism was a means of exploiting Africa whether economically or for labor force.

In (TBE) Morrison shows some of the myths have been yet used to refer to black females. Morrison applies both modernist and postmodernist approaches to document her myth telling journey of black females (Walters 1). Black writers used to be influenced by classic story telling following Western criterion. *The Black Art Movement* changed the standards and encouraged black writers to use free black "Mythology" criterion different

from Westerns. Morrison thought she did not fully withdraw herself from classism standards yet she created her own myth telling orientation. Walters Tracey .L (2007) proposes that: "From Morrison's perspective ,it is only natural that classical myth would appeal to her in the same it would attract to any other writer...Morrison undermines the notions that classics are consigned to a specific group and she claims the literature is her own"(11). Black female's sexuality begins to be distorted in the 16th century and remained damaged till the present days (Marshall 11). We agree that among the major labels of black females is The Prostitute myth. This myths is used to justify black female's trading. Black females are regarded as sexually loose and hyper sexual so they are susceptible to prostitution. Morrison in her novel included this minority of society. The three prostitutes who befriend the protagonist Pecola . Marie ,China and Poland do not label Pecola or call her ugly they took as she is despite the fact that they are viewed by the society as the filthiest group Gillespie Carmen (2008) states Pecola's relationship with the three prostitutes: "Marie ,China and Poland ,who live in apartment above Breedlove's storefront home, acknowledge Pecola's humanity and treat the child decently .The women tell Pecola stories of their lives and her conversations with them feeds her curiosity to discover what love is and how one becomes lovable"(49). We explain that Toni Attempts to drive the attention to this minority in her work to reflect on the bad representation of black females. She challenges the distorted images in the eyes of white community Young Lola (2006) argues that: "I indicated that black feminists have consistently drawn attention to European history's construction of black women as hypersexual ,or as desexualized characters, there to serve the interests of white women and men"(TBE 131). In the Autumn chapter Morrison presents the three prostitutes as: "Three whores lived in the apartment above the Breedlove's storefront China Poland and Miss Marie .Pecola loved them ,and ran their errands .They ,in return ,did not despise her "(TBE 50-51). Activists of the second wave of the feminist movement tackled the Prostitutes issues basically because one

of the important demands was to end gender oppression. According to Outshoorn Joyce (2004) notes that: " Women's movement try to gender issues ,or try to change their gender content by inserting their own definition into the debate. The prostitution issue...has often been defined in gender neutral ways such as morality or a threat to public health " (3) .Prostitution is a large industry where money is paid in return for sexual utilities "Prostitution touches on sexuality. In everyday parlance it is defined as the exchange of sex or sexual services for money"(As cited in 3 Outshoorn). In the mid of 1970's prostitution was brought in the political field due to the spread of various and serious diseases (Outshoorn 8). During this battle Toni published (TBE). The Three prostitutes enjoy Pecola's company: "They were whores in whore's clothing ,whore's who had never been young and had no word for innocence .With Pecola they are free as they were with each other"(TBE 57). We understand that they used her in the same ways she used them. They were the kind of prostitutes who despises men just like that with no further explanation to how and why: "These women hated men ,all men, without shame ,apology ,or discrimination " (TBE 56). We insist that sexuality of black females have been associated with multiple images consequently to justify the sexist oppression. It is a form of dominance practiced by the higher race. Collins Patricia Hill (2000) argues that: "As a part of generalized ideology of domination ,stereotypical images of black womanhood take on special meaning .Because the authority to define societal values is a major instrument of power ,elite groups, in exercising power manipulate ideas about black womanhood" (69). Those invented images are made in order to make racism ,sexism and several other social injustice appears to be something natural (Collins 69). The dominant group always attempt to label the inferior group as the other who has no dependant identity. Hooks Bell affirms that: "As Subjects ,people have the right to define their own reality, establish their own identity and name their history". Black people have been always objectified and deprived from their rights to form a free identity. By

demanding to a subject blacks are free to express their being (As cited in Collins42). We notice that it is not the case for black females to have their own identity and a dependant existence from males. Females are always defined by others, their identities are even created by others (As cited Collins 42).Black Females are meant to be subordinate and followers with no essence.

We argue that Black females are seen as animals incapable of feeling pain . Toni shows this myth related to black female strength in the scene where Pauline was giving birth to Pecola " One old one and some young ones .The old one was learning the young once about babies. Showing them how to do. When he got to me he said now these here women you don't have any trouble with. They deliver right away and with no pain .Just like horses." (TBE 124 -125). Therefore Pauline makes her delivery sounds painful to show them that they can feel pain just like white women do. The prostitutes love Pecola's ugliness because she reminds them of the ugliness of their worlds. Sheftall Beverly Guy (2002) notes that: "The black women's ugliness ,rather than her sexuality ,is emphasized in these references to her animal nature ." (26). The three merry harridans are the only people who treated Pecola as human being. They told her stories about men and love. They also answered all of her questions. Pecola is treated badly from the people around her . She thought nobody would ever love her. Whenever she visits them she always question if they really cherish her existence : "Pecola looked and looked at the women .were they real ? "(TBE 58). We mention that black women's identity is distorted mainly due to myths invented by white supremacy on female's sexuality. Since the image of black female is damaged consequently people will over look people with such bad reputation and consider them as an invisible race.

2.Invisibilty

Children thematic concern has been neglected by Afro-American writers .Morrison's (TBE) about the minorities of the society who are little black female children. Young black

females are a subject of neglect whether in literature or in all aspects of life. For instance young girl's conditions of education related to both sexist and racist practices .We agree that Pecola endures neglect and invisibility even at school: "The ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike .She is the only member of her class who sat alone at a double desk" (TBE 45). The letter of Pecola's last name forces her to sit in the front row of the class despite the fact that other students are able to sit next to her obviously they did not want to. The teacher also did not perceive Pecola only when necessary (TBE 45-46). Even her classmates who want to pick on their male classmates they use Pecola's name to provoke boys saying: "Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove" these words never failed to start a quarrel between the children (TBE 46). Even at school Pecola is stoned, hit and mocked for her black skin. She is basically harassed every day at school by boys and considers her their victim, they are themselves blacks also: "Black e mo .Black e mo. *Yadaddsleepsnekked*" (TBE 65).They are taking their frustration on her. Identity is linked with experience which is related to racism, sexism, and social pressures with the person's consciousness (Collins 24). Identity is formed from early ages and it is shaped by the white culture that does not value the diversity and the existence of the human beings (Gillispie 53). We add that in order to make blacks invisible this myth were made to secure white mastery over black race. Ellison Ralph (1952) explains, how whites refuses to conceive blacks : " I am an invisible man .I am a man of substance , of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible ; understand simply because people refuse to see me (*Invisible Man 3*)". The relationship between Toni Morrison's (TBE) and Ralph Ellison's *The invisible man* manifests in the desire of Pecola to be invisible or disappear completely .Duvall John (2000) argues that: " Self Loathing motivates Pecola's desire for blue eyes, since this wish is revealed in relation to an earlier desire to make herself literary invisible" (27). Duvall further adds that: " She is in Ellison's terms already the invisible girl ...Pecola's obsession with

invisibility first and then with literal blue eyes points directly to the ocular metaphor that Ellison introduces in the prologue of his novel" (27). Pecola in the eye of society is already invisible same as Ellison's protagonist .Despite the fact they are humans as the whites. People refuses to see them.

We state that rejection from community consequently leads the little heroine to hate herself and crystallized her wish to be invisible: "Dear, God, she whispered into the palm of her hand. Please make me disappear " (TBE 45). Pecola wishes her body parts to be invisible one by one, she wanted to understand the reason behind her ugliness and begin to imagine them to disappear. Bousoun J Brooks (2009) argues that Pecola: " Internalizes white contempt for her blackness that she comes to see her dark skin and African features as markers of stigmatized racial identity and this wishes to be invisible or desire to have blue eyes so that others will love and accept her" (56). We suggest that Pecola's eye are her weakness that is why she wants to change them into a blue eyes:

Slowly again .Her fingers went ,one by one ;then her arms disappeared all the way to the elbow .Her feet now. Yes ,that was good. The legs all at once .It was hardest above the thighs .She had to be real still and pull .Her stomach would not go. But finally it ,too, went away .Then her chest Her neck .The face was hard too ,almost done ,almost .Only her tight ,tight eyes were left. They always left. (45)

We argue that the weakness is displayed in Pecola's eye because they are not blue. If her eyes were blue she would not want disappear. Instead she will be loved. The eyes she has now are filled with unpleasant images. By making them disappear all the despair will vanish with them: " Try as she might, she could never get her eyes to disappear .So what was the point?.they were everything .Everything ,in them. All of those pictures ,all of those faces" (TBE45).We believe that one of the major thematic concern in the novel is related to the

concept of invisibility and to what extent it is able to build a distorted identity .(TBE) is a manifestation of the impact of social apartheid as well as social invisibility on black female (Gillespie 46). Morrison's use of the symbol Dick and Jane shows the invisibility of blacks. The book refers to middle class white family in a suitable and healthy environment which is not the case for blacks. Prior the great depression where black poor families struggle for their lives. Hence this prologue is used from Toni's perspective to show the invisibility of these marginalized category of people. The Prologue is repeated three times the first followed the standard form of punctuation: "Here is the house .It is green and white .It has a red door. Very pretty .Here is the family Mother, Father, Dick ,and Jane live in the green-and-white house"(TBE 3). This first prologue is an illustration of the organized life of whites. The Second repeated prologue is less formal with no punctuation between the words: "Here is the house it is green and white it has a red door it is very pretty here is the family mother father Dick and Jane live in the green and white house " (TBE 4). Mbalia Doreatha Drummond (2004) explains that the reason behind Morrison's repetition of extract from the book which are a sign of the three main families of the novel: "The first family is symbolic of the ruling class; it is an economically stable family"(34). And the last repetition is unorganized with no punctuation or spacing between the line by which it reflects on the messy life of poor blacks of the story and provides a foreshadowing on how the story is ending and refereeing the Breedloves"*hereisthehouseitisgreenandwhiteithasareddooritisveryprettyhereisthefamillymotherfatherdickandjaneliveinthegreenandwhitehouse*"(4). According Bousoun J Brooks (2009) explains the reason behind Morrison's use of the disordered part of the dick and Jane: "Through this broken up and confused discourse which is found in the opening frame narrative ,and , as the narrative progresses, is used to head the chapters focusing on Pecola and those who traumatize her, Morrison signals the increasingly fragmented world of trauma victim "(56). We realise the discrimination of race that insists on the invisibility of the

inferior race can impact profoundly on the individual's views about themselves: " Our limitations were not known to us, not then. Our only handicap was our size; people gave us orders because they were bigger and stronger" (TBE 191).Franklin Anderson and Franklin Nancy Boyd (2000) notes that "This subjective sense of psychological invisibility takes the form of a struggle with inner feelings and beliefs that personal talents, abilities ,and character are not acknowledged or valued by others ,nor by larger society because of racial prejudice "(33).We also discuss the element of neglect and the deliberate empty gaze of the white society and the incapability to perceive blacks is reported by Morrison as follows : "He does not see her, because for him there is nothing to see"(48). Therefore we see that invisibility is a strong element which impacts black identity construction. Invisibility short comings happens to create an inner conflict within blacks . It make them assimilate higher class's standards in order to be seen . Franklin Anderson and Franklin Nancy Boyd (2000) explain that: "This experience of invisibility creates inner conflict for the individual because it requires choices about ways in which to make one self visible ,while striving for acceptance " (34). Striving for acceptance is what made Pecola yearn for Blue eyes :

Each night ,without fail ,She prayed for blue eyes. Fervently ,for a year she had prayed. Although somewhat discouraged ,she was not without hope .To have something as wonderful as that happened would take a long ,long time...she would never know her beauty. She would see only what there was to see : the eyes of other people. (46-47)

Acceptance is about having a blue eyes owning them means that is a part of the world (TBE 48). To be visible to the world is related to owing a blue eyes. We understand that when the constant efforts to make a place in the world is always faced with refusal , black people turn and blame themselves for their situation and form a sort of self rejection .

3. Self-loathing

We tell that self loathing as well as many other racial discrimination outcomes can influence the identity of black people. Racial self loathing is strongly manifested in (TBE). The Breedlove family was ugly and knew all along that they were ugly and society made sure that they remember that throughout their lives: "They lived there because they were poor and black. And they stayed there because they believed they were ugly. Although their poverty was tradition and stultifying, it was not unique. But their ugliness was unique" (TBE 38). We believe that since people's identity is closely related to the outcome of experience. Black people are always excluded from the normative culture; consequently the neglected minority feels that their existence is unworthy which leads to self-hatred and forms an inferiority complex. Constant racial disregard might generate within human beings a sense of unworthiness (Anderson and Nancy 33). When Pecola goes to buy candies the look in the seller's eyes transforms the white outlook which lacks individual's acknowledgment "The total absence of human recognition, the glazed separateness...But she has seen interest, disgust, even anger in grown male eyes. Yet his vacuum is not new to her"(TBE 48-49).

The empty disgusted look is not something new for Pecola all white people see her with the same despised eyes. Sheftall Beverly Guy(2000) emphasizes that: "According to Euro-American thinking, the black women's promiscuity and physical unattractiveness overt manifestations of her animal like traits cause her to be devalued because she is unable to reach standards of feminine beauty and behavior required of an 'ideal' women" (26). We argue that Morrison shows the significant consequences of self-hatred on the construction of the fragile identity of the main protagonist. Shirley Temple cup with her white skin and blue eyes captivates Pecola, she links the whiteness of Shirley with beauty. Frieda and Pecola share a loving conversation about how cute Shirley is. In contrast Claudia dislikes the beauty

icon "What I felt at that time was unsullied hatred .But before that I had felt a stranger more frightening thing than hatred for all the Shirley Temple of the world" (TBE 19).

We state that capitalism is closely related to beauty therefore whites are in the highest rank of the social hierarchy. Hence the highest class owns the beauty standards and excludes the lowest. Samuels Robert (2001) says that "One of the central ways that this connection between beauty, capitalism ,and racism is constituted in the novel is through the portrayal of children's toys" (106). Claudia expresses her anger about the ideal images of beauty with both Shirley and the Christmas baby doll ,she gets mad and displaces the doll's limbs:

To see of what is made, to discover the dearness ,to find the beauty ,the desirability that has escaped me ,but apparently only me ,Adults other girls ,shops , magazines, newspapers, window signs all the world has agreed that a blue eyed, yellow-haired ,pink-skinned doll was what every girl child treasured. (TBE 20)

Samuels Robert (2001) argues that : "Morrison shows that all modes of representation (Books, toys, movies ,billboards ,stores, magazines , news paper, ect.) in our current culture tend to idealize whiteness and devalue blackness" (105). American culture links beauty with whiteness and exclude blackness. Claudia later wonders what a white girl do to deserves all this love and appreciation and not black girls: "what made people look at them and say "awwwww" ,but not for me ? "(TBE 22). We suggest that white beauty standards is deduced in the white complexion , the blond hair and the blue eyes. Pecola adores a candy which is wrapped with a picture of a blond and blue eyed girl named Mary Jane for Pecola, Jane's eyes are her desire: "The eyes looking at he out of a world of clean comfort. The eyes are petulant ,mischievous .To Pecola they are simply pretty ...To eat the candy is somehow to eat

the eyes „eat Mary Jane . Love marry Jane. Be Marry Jane" (TBE 50). Evanson Ulla (2016) explains that Pecola's bottling of her feelings that will soon turn into self hatred:

Pecola's fascination with the candy is preceded by her encounter with shop keeper Mr Yakobski, who ignores her completely when she enters his store. Instead of letting her anger and frustration spit out of control she turns it in on herself and becomes introverted ,concentrating on the candy ,thus enhancing her feelings of self loathing. (12)

We remark that Pecola fails to recognize her own beauty and hates herself for the fact that she is dark black girl. Evanson Ulla (2016) explains that: " TBE reveals the struggles women face in their community ,and how many of them despise themselves for both being black and a female"(9). American culture compels Black Females to hate themselves and consider themselves lesser.

Ugliness is always associated with the color black and everything it is bad whereas whiteness is linked to beauty ,purity and everything that is good. Sheftall Beverly Guy (2000) argues that: "The superiority in intellect and physical beauty of white, especially their women. By contrast the Negro, especially women ,is ugly because of her dark complexion ,hair texture ,and disfigured lips and nose "(26). We note that the Breedlove's family is the illustration of the black ugly feature: "The eyes, the small eyes set closely together under narrow foreheads . The low, irregular hairlines, which seemed even more irregular in contrast to the straight , heavy eyebrows which nearly met. Keen but crooked noses ,with nostrils . They had high cheekbones , and their ears turned forward .Shapely lips" (TBE 39). Pecola's family is considered ugly due to their dark skin. People see them ugly and they could not see otherwise, they took their ugliness in and believed it: "You are ugly people. They had looked about themselves and saw nothing to contradict the statement" (TBE 39).

White's superficial outlook towards the other race brings about a sort of self-loathing and a feeling of overlooking on some individual's existence ;therefore Pecola starts to believe that she is ugly merely because her skin was dark (Evanson 11) .We assume that she connects love with being beautiful ,beauty is about having shapely eyes: "It had occurred to Pecola sometimes ago that if her eyes ,those eyes that held the pictures ,and knew the sights if those eyes of hers were different ,that is to say, beautiful ,she herself would be different" (TBE 46). As Morrison explains in her interview that some people "*felt apologetic about their skin being very dark*". We believe Pecola is relatively one of them, she blames herself and hates her blackness: "The distaste must be for her, her blackness. All things in her are flux and anticipation .But her blackness is static and dread .And it is the blackness that accounts for ,that creates ,the vacuum edge with distaste in white eyes" (TBE 49). White traits are the sole sense of beauty meaning that being white is seemingly amounting to beauty than blackness is surely linked to ugliness (Evanson 11). Morgan Jenifer (2002) notes the fact that: " Europe had long tradition of identifying others through monstrous physiognomy or sexual behaviour of women " (39). We suppose that if you are white you are beautiful ; if you are something else than you are ugly.

We confirm the main character's identity begins to wither the moment she hated herself for being black. A girl approaches Pecola named Maureen. Claudia and Frieda dislike the girl or rather felt jealous of her. Soon the girl flipped on her because all she cares about is to know about Pecola's father. She wants to confirm the rumours she found out from a boy named Bay Boy . "I was not even talking to you .I was talking to Pecola .Yeah about seeing her father naked. Pecola shouted "I never saw my daddy naked. Never" (TBE 72). Soon Maureen shames Pecola's black father as well as the girls and called them "Black e moes" and run away when she reached a safe side she shouted "I am cute! And you ugly! Black and ugly" (TBE 73). We see that such cruel words often affect Pecola enormously and

contributes in her Torne identity Claudia reports "Pecola stood a little part from us ,her eyes hinged in the direction which Maureen had fled .She seemed to fold into herself ,like a pleated wing .Her pain antagonized me" (TBE 73). Bousoun J Brooks (2009) explains that: "The' Thing' that Claudia learns to fear is the white, racist beauty standards of beauty that remembers o the African American community that internalized , a standard that favours the 'high yellow' Maureen Peal and denigrates the' black and ugly' Pecola Breedlove"(58). This preference is shown through Claudia's character when she said: "A desire to have what somebody else had; but envy was a strange ,new feeling for us .And all the time we knew that Maureen Peal was not the enemy and not worthy of such intense hatred. The thing to fear is was the thing that made her beautiful, and not us"(TBE 74) . We see that Claudia feared of the white society who neglects black's existence and praises white's existence .

Maureen's words keeps rolling in Claudia and Frieda's minds ,they eventually believe her words "If she was cute and if anything could be believed, she was then but we were not . And what did that mean? We were lesser" (TBE 74).We note that despite the fact that the two sisters love and accept themselves ,yet the world is insisting on their ugliness and unworthiness. They ask themselves what they lack and why "We felt comfortable in our skin, enjoyed the news that our senses released to us ,admired our dirt ,cultivated our scars ,and could not comprehend this unworthiness"(TBE 74). Bousoun J Brooks (2009) notes that: "*The Bluest Eye* explores the chronic shame of being poor and black in white America and reveal the damaging impact of race and class hierarchy on the lives of 'Black and Poor' "(TBE54). The impact is rather reflected in self loathing and the fail of someone to recognize own worth.

We consider that Mulattos own extra rights and they are welcome in society in contrast to their darker skin counterpart. This category of blacks treat darker skin black with a superior look. They hate darker skin blacks: "Where this mulatto girl hates her mother cause

she is black and ugly "(TBE 67).The brown girls lives in the black neighbourhood where they are comfortable in their lives with no worries: "These particular brown girls from Mobile and Aiken are not like some of their sisters .They are not fretful, nervous or shrill...These sugar-brown Mobile girls move through the streets without a stir. They are as sweet and plain as better-cake" (TBE 82).We remark that people look at them from different angle, not with cruelty as pure blacks but with less cruel eyes .As matter fact even brown skin blacks have an identification complex .They seem always in rush to deny their true identity and origin: "The careful development of thrift, patience, high morals, and good manners .In short how to get rid of the funkiness"(TBE 83). We think that the fair of which they might be mistaken for pure blacks they try hard to demolish anything that links them to blackness: "They hold their behind in for fear of a sway too free; when they wear lipstick, they never cover the entire mouth for fear of lips too thick .And they worry ,worry ,worry ,worry about the edges of their hair" (TBE 83). Geraldine who's a light brown women who shows her affection only to her cat: "The cat will always know that he is in her first affection .Even after she bears a child .For she does bear a child easy, painlessly .But only one .A son named Junior" (TBE 86). The boy Junior understands his mother's lack of affection and turns his frustration towards the cat by torturing it. Geraldine makes sure to explain to her son the difference between blacks and extremely brown people and warned him not to get involve with them. The boy shows enormous hatred towards black nigger girls and enjoyed bullying them (TBE 87). Yet Pecola is rejected by her own people and they treat her badly ,another devastating element to Pecola's personality. Junior sees Pecola as an easy ugly target and invites her to play with him: "He saw a very black girl taking a shortcut through the background .She kept her head down as she walked. He had seen her many times before, standing alone ,always alone .At recess. Nobody ever played with her. Probably ,He thought ,because she was ugly"(TBE88). He invites her to his house ,she is fascinated by the

beautiful house, then he threw his mom's cat right into her face. Pecola gets scared and ends up with scratches all over her face, she begins to cry. Later Something attracts Pecola's attention to the black cat's blue eyes: "He was black all over deep silky black ,and his eyes pointing down toward his nose ,were bluish green, the light made them shine like a blue eyes. Pecola rubbed the cat's head; he whined, his tongue flicking with pleasure. The Blue eyes and the black face held her"(TBE 90). We see that the sight of the black face with a blue eyes is crystallized and legitimized Pecola's capability that her wish is possible , it is able to come true. The cat dies in the middle of a fight Junior blames Pecola for the death of the cat as his mom enters to the house., she saw Pecola's miserable look. For Junior's mother blackness is associated with dirtiness: "Get out ,she said, her voice quite .You nasty little black bitch. Get out of my house" (TBE 92). She believes that she is the reason behind the cat's death ,she hates herself even more.

We insist that the whole Breedlove family is ugly. Pecola's mother passes her feelings of unworthiness and self loathing to her daughter when she said: "But I knew she was ugly. Head full of pretty hair, but Lord she was ugly" (TBE 126). Bousoun J Brooks (2009) adds the impact of self loathing on the Breedlove's family's own image about themselves:

"The Bluest Eye dramatizes an extreme form of the shame vulnerability and shame anxiety suffered by African Americans in white America", she also argues that Toni Morrison's Focal point in the novel is about self -hatred of the Breedlove's family in the shade of the deeply rooted racism in the American community (55).

We state that physical beauty is reinforced with social media involving movie theatres and also TVs that only displays what suits the white physical criteria which is distractive. Morrison displays the destructive element of physical beauty as an essential unit which develops a self hatred ideology, When the character Pauline runs from her life to the cinema

where American movies crystallizes her ideas about love and beauty: "There in the dark her memory was refreshed, and she succumbed to her earlier dreams . Along with the idea of romantic love, she was introduced to another physical beauty. Probably the most destructive ideas in history of human thought" (TBE 122) .We view that this ideology contributed in Pauline's self- hatred, then she transmits this hatred to her own daughter.

We suggest that the idealized beauty images leaves black females in a constant comparison with what they think is beauty and who they really are: "After her education in the movies ,to look at a face and not assign it some category in the scale of absolute beauty ,and the scale was one she absorbed in full from the silver screen" (TBE 122) .Pauline there she learns about both beauty and love. She also has learned an additional lesson which is how to hate herself: "It was really a simple pleasure ,she learned all there was to love and all there was to hate" (TBE 122). Black females try to imitate white women's looks in terms of hair style, ways of walking, voice tone. This what Pauline tried to do in order to feel pretty and worthy: "I remember one time I went to see Clark Gable and Jean Harlow . I fixed my hair up like I'd seen hers on a magazine . Apart on the side, with one little curl on the forehead. It looked just like her. Well, almost like her" (TBE 123). Her efforts are being rejected due to pregnancy, one of her tooth fell down. Pauline feels dread and stop trying to look like the white beautiful actress, Harlow Jean : "I let my hair go back, plaited it up, and settled down to just being ugly" (TBE 123). Pauline's effort are being wasted due to circumstances stronger than her.

We see another element which contributes to the protagonist's self rejection. This time is her own mother. Evenson Ulla (2002) argues that: "By rejecting, her daughter ,she distances herself from her own feelings of not belonging to the pretty white family and thus passes on a feeling of worthlessness to her daughter" (13). The mother's rejection of herself transmits to her own daughter: " When I had the second one ,a girl ,I remember I said ,I'd

love it no matter what it looked like She looked like a black ball of hair" (TBE 124). Even her mother considers her ugly. The mother is does not see the beauty in her daughter Pecola.

The Fact that Pecola calls her mother Mrs. Breedlove is sign that indicates the distance drawn between mother and daughter relationship: "The minority children exhibit self-hatred because of their color ,and the majority learn to associate dark skin with undesirability and ugliness" (As cited in Evanson 14). We understand that even when Pecola's destiny is devastated .She has been raped by her father as well as she lost her healthy well being. People are yet blaming her for what happened to her and considers her once more ugly: "She carry some of the blame , Oh, come on. She ain't but twelve or so. Yeah but you never know .How come she didn't fight him ? "(TBE 189). We feel that people were quick to judge. they have missed the fact that how can a twelve years old little girl can fight a strong built man. Community finds another opportunity to lash Pecola for nothing she has no hands on: "She lucky if it don't live .Bound to be the ugliest thing walking" (TBE 189).People are justifying what happens to Pecola by her ugliness .She is ugly than she deserves what happens to her.

Trauma not only by society but also Pecola's Family which is key element in Pecola's ruined identity. Bousoun J Brooks (2009) claims that: "*The Bluest Eye* depicts the progressive traumatisation of Pecola ,who is rejected and physically abused by her mother, sexually abused by her alcoholic and unpredictably violent father, and scapegoated by members of black community" (TBE 55).The protagonist's ugliness and the fragility of her identity makes everyone around her look prettier and stronger (Samuels 108). Claudia, the prime narrator of (TBE) explains how Pecola's destiny made them feel :“ We were so beautiful when we stood astride her ugliness .Her simplicity decorated us, her guilt sanctified us, her pain made us glow with health" (TBE 205) .We affirm that Pecola's damaged self isolates her from the real world and locks her in an imaginative world where all she ever wants including the blue

eyes is finally fulfilled.. She progressively loses herself- respect ,as well as her identity and finally loses her grip of mind.

5.conclusion

Morrison wants the reader to consider who's to blame for Pecola's devastating fate. The radical cooperation of the white American culture that emphasises on denying the other race recognition. And the use of all sorts of means to exclude other People's existence, by inventing myths as well as using force to legitimize the other race's exploitation. This can profoundly affect the healthy identity development of young children as well as adults .When people are not seen for their efforts to prove their existence or more precisely people do not want to perceive these efforts .This denial can develop of sense of unworthiness .The desire to assimilate the superior race's standards leading to a troubled identity formation and a inferiority complex. Pocola's identity and the loss of innocence is caused by several reasons. Mainly racism ,sexism as well as rape. And the inability of her own people to accept her.

General Conclusion

The Bluest Eye is the first African American novel which deals with issues of identity within the African American community. The theories used to answer the research questions are mainly *New Historicism* and *Feminist theory*. *New Historicism* helped us understand the author's life and mindset in order to better analyse the novel from different angles. The historical context in the times when the novel was written contributed to the clarity of the major thematic concerns of *The Bluest Eye*. *Feminism* was used to explore the nature of patriarchal communities. Males dominate females and consider them as an additional object, and attempt to ignore women's contributions whether economically or politically. As a secondary theory Post-colonial theory describes the relationship between binary oppositions: colonizer/colonized, white /black, superior /inferior. Moreover, It shows how the writer's use of literature could be a means of subversion and reconstruction.

The identity of blacks appears to be exposed to several reasons that obtrude upon. The prime impulses of the distorted identity of the main character revert to the racist perspectives. It considers blacks as invisible creatures unworthy of recognition. The invisibility encompasses plenty of forms including the inability to perceive the other gender. Morrison major works tackles black female journey with both racist and sexist oppression under the circumstances of the American culture. Black female's identity is questioned due to objectification and constant re-definitions. She is always defined by her relationship to men, denying her any subjectivity. The black women identity endured all sorts of traumas. White masters sought to eliminate black's being to ensure their submission. Although black women contributed to building the economic basics of the New World, yet her image or representation in society was deformed by inventing myths such as black females are sexually loose, they are the result of ape's revolution and finally prostitutes.

The racialized labels about black females de-humanized and made women form a sort of a self-loathing. This ideology affects the development of black female's identity. It was inherited from their parents. Pecola's self rejection was inherited from her mother who suffered social neglect. White's rank in the highest level of society hierarchy. It allowed them to practise their rules that emphasise black's submission .

Appearance is a focal point in *The Bluest Eye* basically because it is directly related to self acceptance which is not the case for Pecola Breedlove .Since white skin ,blue eyes and a blond hair are universal standards of national beauty. The national standards of beauty are set by the dominant class of society. Black females in return lacks such standards .Therefore, they were excluded from community.

The Political arena places blacks in the lowest economic hierarchy. Hence, poverty and blackness reinforce the racial practises in the outlook of the white culture .The identity of black women in this case is in danger of collapsing because she wants to be accepted and perceived. The blue eyes in this case are Pecola's salvation and long journey in search for assurance .This acceptance is sought in the assimilation of whites .Assimilation can result in an identity development conflicts. Pecola's lost identity ,therefore, was damaged due to the profound impact of racism as well as sexist injustice. Morrison honest and fluent report of the harsh journey of black female Pecola and her devastated fate ,consequently ,resulted in the loss of an additional component of Pecola's entity her mental wholesome. . People usually seek safety in homes. Pecola is raped by her parent's house where she supposed to be the safest. Poverty and racism hinder the stability of black's homes. Black men are in constant comparison with white males in terms of employment .Blacks are most of the time unemployed , always exposed to racist practises hence they form a type of inferiority complex. Home is the only place where they feel like they are in charge. They mistreat their wives, abuse their children and consume alcohol

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الملخص:

تحقق هاته الأطروحة في قضية الهوية في رواية طوني موريسون العين الأكثر زرقة (1970). الغرض الأساسي من هذه الدراسة هو فحص مدى تأثير الهوية السوداء على الأعراف الاجتماعية المفروضة على السود من خلال التفوق الأبيض. كما تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تسليط الضوء على تجربة المرأة الطويلة مع القمع الجنسي والعنصري. تمثل المرأة السوداء الأفريقية والأطفال موضوع رواية موريسون. ويهدف البحث القائم على نظرية التاريخانية الجديدة و الحركة النسوية في ترسيخ السياق التاريخي في المجتمع الأمريكي ، وبذلك إظهار إلى أي مدى تقدم العين الأكثر زرقة رؤى تاريخية للتأمل في معاناة السود ككل والإناث السود بشكل خاص. إضافة لذلك ، تم تطبيق نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار لتوضيح تأثير الثقافة المستعمر في تطوير هوية الشعوب المستعمرة . وقد توصل البحث إلى استنتاج أن بناء هوية الأمريكيين الأفارقة في العين الأكثر زرقة مرتبط بالمجتمع المحيط به اقتصادياً وسياسياً. بالإضافة إلى تأثير العنصرية على الذكور السود في تطوير شخصية مسيئة. وفي الأخير إن الكراهية الذاتية مبنية من قبل الأساطير التي تم اختراعها في الحياة الجنسية للأنثى السوداء.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحركة النسوية، الهوية، العين الأكثر الزرقة ، نظرية التاريخانية الجديدة، نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار.