**ABSTRACT**

This study proposes to analyse the quest for the archetypes in the major novels of Toni Morrison’s: *The Bluest Eye*, *Salo, The Song of Solomon*, *Tar Baby*, *Beloved* and *Jazz*. Toni Morrison has dealt with the subjects of violence, oppression, sacrifice, community, familial relationship, culture, slavery, self-destruction, self-defeat, equality and freedom, racial discrimination of the blacks and the whites, inheritance, spiritual devastation, self-alienation, equality and freedom, and human sacrifice are enumerated in an interesting and impressive way.

**Objectives:** This study presents the quest of African American subjects of Toni Morrison highlighting the archetypal concerns related to violence, oppression, culture, slavery, self-destruction, self-defeat, racial discrimination of the blacks and the whites, inheritance, spiritual devastation, self-alienation, equality and freedom, and human sacrifice are enumerated in an interesting and impressive way.

**Methods:** This subjective analysis of quest for the archetypes of Toni Morrison’s major fiction was examined related to the African American contemporary society in detail. This analysis takes into account Toni Morrison’s background as a writer, her special contribution to the genre, the works and her place in the history of ideas and her own time in assessing the permanent values of her fiction in the 20th Century.

**Findings:** The quest for the archetypes of violence, oppression, culture, equality and freedom, sacrifice, slavery, self-destruction, self-defeat, racial discrimination by the whites over the blacks, have been examined in *The Bluest Eye*, *Salo, The Song of Solomon*, *Tar Baby*, *Beloved* and *Jazz* in detail. It also illustrates Toni Morrison’s techniques of narration, style, characterization and the influences of Toni Morrison’s pre-occupation with the archetypal emotions and actions of society in the Twentieth Century African fiction.

**Toni Morrison**

The Noble Prize Winning Toni Morrison is an American scholar, author, editor and well-known Professor in English literature. And, to winning the Nobel Prize in 1993, she was also awarded the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *Beloved* in 1987. She is the best known for writing novels with characters, epic themes with brilliant dialogues. A lot of her novels dealt with black women, defining their roles and striving to survive in a male dominated society. Morrison’s novels are also often

**INTRODUCTION**

Toni Morrison has dealt with the important subjects of violence, oppression, culture, sacrifice, slavery, concept of freedom and equality, conflict between the blacks and whites, racial discrimination, self-destruction, self-defeat, familial relationship in all her major novels in a unique way. The conflict between the White and the Black communities, the victimization of the blacks by the dominant whites, the bloodshed and violence within the black communities have been examined effectively in the major African American fiction of Toni Morrison in detail.

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influenced by her inheritance of the African American culture related to the Afro-American society.

**Quest for violence and oppression in The Bluest Eye**

In Morrison’s novels violence takes its various forms. Her first novel *The Bluest Eye* examines the guilt, and the sense of hopelessness, fear, lust, love, and grief of Pecola Breedlove in an interesting and impressive way. The author says: “What is clear now is that of all that hope, fear, lust, love and grief, nothing remains but Pecola and the unyielding earth.” *(Beloved, p.9)*. The first chapter examines, the violent past of Pecola Breedlove’s mother and father and ends with the rape of a daughter by her own father, and the destruction of a wretched dog. The second chapter narrates only violence, madness and oppression of the blacks over the dominant Whites. This violence is motivated by self-disgust and self-hatred that expresses itself and seeks liberation in the sacrifice of a young girl, Pecola Breedlove. The violence is repeated time and again and Pecola is victimized not only by her mother and father but by other members of the black community in Lorain. All this events reveals how a young girl Pecola Breedlove becomes the victim of an entire community’s frustration, hatred and humiliation. Yet the real course of the agony, oppression and violence in the community remains unchanged.

**Quest for violence and oppression in Sula**

Violence and oppression in *Sula* is more dangerous and destructive than that of *The Bluest Eye*. Many critics enumerate that oppression is at the heart of the violence in *Sula*. The oppression is the source of violence within the community. Moreover, violence among the blacks leads not only to the form of direct economic oppression, but from the willingness to accept dominant culture values and join themselves with their oppressors.

**Quest for violence and sacrifice in Song of Solomon**

In *Song of Solomon* violence is portrayed less active than in her two previous novels. Violence develops from the White community places on the black to forsake their traditional values and to accept the White values of materialism. Violence within the society leads to sacrifice. Pilate, is unable to defend violence and becomes the victim and punished for the wrong doing of others in the society.

**Quest for violence and cultural discrimination in Tar Baby**

*Tar Baby* of Toni Morrison examines the physical violence, child abuse, depravity and racial discrimination in detail. This novel, *Tar Baby*, emphasizes the culture question, more effectively without giving any solution to cultural violence and racial discrimination of the whites and the blacks.

**Quest for violence and oppression in Beloved**

Violence comes out of slavery which emerges oppression in *Beloved*, Toni Morrison presents a society bonded with love and respect, marked by violence and envy but violence enters long before Sethe murders her daughter. In *Beloved* the members of the oppressed communities realize that they could survive only through a revival of communal values. *Beloved* examines the physical, emotional, and spiritual devastation originated and developed by slavery, a devastation that continues to occur from those characters who are former slaves even to enjoy freedom.

**Quest for freedom and equality in Beloved**

The problems of freedom and equality which are denied to the black people in the United States are examined with particular reference to her novel, *Beloved*. The readers get an awareness of reconstructing the past, giving life and independence to the sufferers. The sufferers should be discovered and freed from the bondage and should be taken to a place to live freely. The characters are defined by racial discrimination formed by the surrounding White society. The dominant White society violates, denies and sets the rules for the black communities to suffer from confusion and anxiety. The blacks are identified as: “human characteristics on the left, animal ones on the right.” *(Beloved, p.193)*.

**Quest for the concept of racial discrimination in Beloved**

Toni Morrison tribute to black men and women of the past has made her novels to create interest among African American readers. G.Lakshmanarasaiah observes: “Her novels demonstrate the vicious genocide effects of racism.” *(IJAS, pp.7-15)*. *The concept of racism* on the mind of the African American is clearly portrayed arousing the research scholars into the recognition of various possibilities.

The author is not only conscious of the many ways of portraying the problems and issues of race but also how the concept of ‘blackness’ gets connected with the problems of class and gender. The portrayal of cultural values, behaviour patterns and beauty of Afro-Americans towards decolonization are also brought to light effectively by Toni Morrison in *Beloved*.

**The Quest for the concept of blackness, class and gender in Beloved**

Toni Morrison regards *blackness* as a quest that has often been neglected by the documented history. Morrison’s novels are emphatic on the interplay between, the black women’s oppression and the White’s domination. Peach says: “With each novel Morrison has retained the capacity to take us by surprise.” *(CCE, p.22)*.

**Quest for the study of slavery in Beloved**

The research scholars focuses on the various problems of slave women could undergo before the abolition of slavery during the postmodern America. By presenting the true reality of slavery the researchers and scholars seeks way to come out of the bondage. The tradition of *slave narratives* and it is confronted face to face in reality. Morrison ends the novel with the word *Beloved* suggesting: “the past is lasting presence, wanting to be resurrected.” *(K.Davis, Postmodern, p.251)*. *Beloved* is a literary masterpiece, partly, due to the plot’s structural organisation. Toni Morrison begins the narration by illustrating a little known historical event, which introduces the reader to the brutality of slavery and it shifts to the division of the black female and male characters: “Morrison provides the unspeakable thoughts to be left unspoken” *(Beloved, p.235)*.
Quest for the study of famine traits in Beloved

Toni Morrison focuses on three women characters in Beloved - Sethe, a mother, and Beloved and Denever, her two daughters. The author uses famine traits to examine events that occur in the novel: sisterhood and daughterhood (Denever and Beloved), pregnancy, the menstrual cycle, and childbirth (Sethe) are sections that would be symbolically identified.

The narrative of Beloved begins with an historical event, followed by a journey causing the main female character to realize that she could obtain an audible voice. In doing so, Toni Morrison writes: "the voiceless black subaltern back into the history." (K.S Kwang, p.154). K. Davis adds: “genre is fiction based, and calls it the finality of history…also this genre revises our sense of what history could mean and accomplish.” (K.Davis, Postmodern, p.242).

The novel, Tar Baby, gives us a microcosm of the black, white women relationship in American society with a rich white people, hardworking black people, a woman torn between both worlds. In Tar Baby, Toni Morrison gives us women in different classes, education levels, and colors who interact with each other according to their roles in society.

The Bluest Eye, Sula and Song of Solomon examines an interesting perspectives in the major novels of Toni Morrison with an excellent narrative techniques. Breedlove is discriminated from her own community, because she is poor; Sula’s family is neglected because they lack money and class; Deads is look down upon other who has less money. This class separation runs through all of Morrison’s novels.

The Bluest Eye gives us a girl possessed with the Western ideal beauty; Sula shows women incomplete with our each other; Song of Solomon incorporates both ideas into two disturbing women, Ruth and Hagar. Toni Morrison’s search for the black women young and old are capable of self-destruction and self-defeat. The self - destruction is apparent from the beginning of The Bluest Eye opens with Dick and Jane story. The passing down of self-destruction from mother to daughter is a continuous process and still happen, until the women realize they are destroying themselves and their community and met their consequences in society. Jazz is a self-destructive woman. Jazz is an extension of Beloved which deals with African American movements of slavery between the blacks and the white in a unique way.

CONCLUSION

African American literature focuses on themes, issues, equality and freedom, culture, racism, slavery, self-destruction, self-defeat, which examines the larger African American society and Toni Morrison has been acknowledged as one of the leading literary figures of modern times who is responsible for getting African American literature a place of pride in world literature.

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How to cite this article:

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