

Shadism and Female Resistance in Toni Morrison's Novels

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Introduction.....	1
1. Theoretical Chapter	9
1.1 Shadism.....	9
1.3 The Intersectionality	14
1.4 Shadism and Intersectionality.....	17
1.4. Post-colonial Feminist Theory	18
1.5 Memory and Rememory	22
1.5 Trauma and Healing.....	25
1.6 Background of African American experiences and Literature in the USA	29
1.6.1 Slave Narratives.....	30
1.6.2 Early 20 th Century	32
1.6.3 The Civil Rights Movement and Post-modernity	34
1.7 Toni Morrison as a Contemporary African American Woman Writer	36
2.1 Intersectionality in <i>The Bluest Eye</i>	42
2.2 The Influence of Intersectionality on Shadism in <i>The Bluest Eye</i> 's Characters	48
2.3 Pecola: The damaged dark-skinned girl	49
2.4 Geraldine: arrogant Black light-skinned woman	54
2.5 Pauline: the disabled woman and mother	56
2.6 Maureen Peal: the reputable light-skinned Black girl.....	58
2.7 Conclusion.....	60
3. Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i>	62
3.1 The Concept of Memory and Re-memory	63
3.2 'Eighteen years of disapproval and solitary life': African Americans' relations in Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i>	66
3.3 "More it hurts more better it is": The Psychological Effect of Slavery on Dark-skinned community in Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i>	67
3.4 Slavery as a Collective Trauma in Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i> : Dark-skinned Suffering from Shadism and Trauma	68
3.5 Light-Skinned characters in <i>Beloved</i>	73
3.6 The Trauma of Dark-skinned Characters as Portrayed in <i>Beloved</i>	75
3.7 'Can't heal without pain': Recovering from the impact of slavery in <i>Beloved</i>	77
3.8 Sethe: the mother who seeks salvation.....	78
3.9 Paul D: the father who seeks manhood	81
3.10 Conclusion.....	83
4. Toni Morrison's <i>Paradise</i>	84
4.1 Black relations and Shadism in <i>Paradise</i>	86

4.2 Disallowing and Differentiation of the Same Race: Black Characters Dream of Indigenous Ethnicity	88
4.3 Previous Studies on <i>Paradise</i>	89
4.4 Black Sufferance from the White Community and the Prospects of Independence from Colorism and Inferiority	90
4.5 The Idea of Disallowing	93
4.6 The Effect of Shadism on the Black Community	96
4.7 Conclusion.....	101
5. Toni Morrison's <i>A Mercy</i>	103
5.1 Feminist Solidarity.....	104
5.2 The development of the term Sisterhood	106
5.3 Toni Morrison and Womanism.....	107
5.4 Sisterhood and Solidarity in <i>A Mercy</i> : Female Characters' Way of Preventing and Resisting Shadism, Oppression, and Racism to Gain Freedom and Self-recognition.	108
5.5 Different backgrounds of sisterhood in <i>A Mercy</i>	109
5.5.1 Family differentiations and religious repression	110
5.6 Confronting racial oppression through sisterhood.....	115
5.7 The symbolic story of sisterhood as an alternative to motherhood.....	116
5.8 Sisterhood as Female Solidarity among the marginalized girls: Dark-skinned and white-skinned	118
5.9 Motherhood: Sisterhood as a substitute for motherhood between a landlady and a Black woman	120
5.10 Schizophrenia as a substitute for Sisterhood	122
5.11 The disintegration of sisterhood and its impact on the heroines of the novel.....	122
5.12 Conclusion.....	124
6. Conclusion	126
List of References.....	131

Introduction

Since the 18th century, African Americans have experienced extreme challenges in the United States including racism, discrimination, and shadism, among many others. Generally, shadism can be defined as prejudice on the basis of skin color or pigmentation, which can also be referred to as colorism. In the context of this thesis, shadism is regarded as discrimination based on skin tone, typically with a marked preference for light-skinned people. However, it takes into consideration some aspects of individual and collective identity such as gender, ability, age, and economic status that can give privilege and differentiation among Blacks which can translate into traumatic acts in some cases. Racism bears similarities to shadism in that both have a significant effect on the African American community. However, shadism is prevalent among Black Americans because of the nature of their pigmentation. In Mahaffey's (5) analysis of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, the effect of gender, race and class on adults, especially Black females, was explored. Racism as a topic has been widely researched with a view to understanding the effects and possible solutions to the problem, but this does not address the problem of shadism due to the fact that it differs from racism. The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the manifestations and forms of resistance to shadism in selected examples of Toni Morrison's fiction. My inquiry rests on the following concepts: the manifestations of intersectionality, the role of trauma and cultural memory and their relation to shadism and how it leads healing, an exploration of intra-racial discrimination and disallowance, and the relevance of female bonding and womanism to eliminate shadism and patriarchy. Fooladi (2018) indicate that racism is influenced heavily by the idea that some races are innately superior than others. Another research that brings something bright is an article written by Philathia Bolton (2021) entitled " (En)gendering Complexities: A Look at Colorism in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*"; Bolton gave an intersectional study of colorism in both Morrison's *Beloved* and *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* by James Weldon Johnson where experiences are important in light of the gender. However, no light was shed on the points through which it is possible to change the course of dealings, whether with males or females in particular, which are economic and social status, educational level, and so on.

From the 16th century, slave narratives, mostly written by Black writers, started being published. These provided an insight into the topic from a Black person's perspective. Following the increase in the number of Black writers who were publishing their narratives

about slavery and racism, more writers from the Black community, both female and male including Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Natasha Trethewey and others, became bolder. This helped enhance the information available on the topic of shadism or colorism. In the late of 20th century, there was a rise in female writers of African Americans who tackle the problem of shadism. Toni Morrison (1931-2019) was a prominent figure among these writers. This thesis sheds lights on analyzing the concept of shadism through the intersection of gender, race, class, and ethnicity. Moreover, it discusses the psychological effects of slavery on Black community and the concept of indigenous ethnicity.

Morrison's works (*The Bluest Eye* 1970, *Beloved* 1987, *Paradise* 1997, and *A Mercy* 2008) form a significant part of the analysis in this research. In the majority of her works, Morrison uses history to develop narratives around slavery and racism and the impacts these have had on the Black community. This provides the reader with a holistic background to the specific issues that affected the Black community, which will be essential for explaining and exploring more in relation to the problem of shadism within this thesis. It is obvious that Morrison focused on subjects that the African American community experienced. Her first work was *The Bluest Eye* in 1970 and it provides an insight into how dark-skinned slaves were mistreated while light-skinned slaves received better treatment. In addition to the latter novel and her earlier ones, Morrison showed that Black writers had finally been able to break the barriers that had prevented the acknowledgment of the contribution of their works. Since she is one of the African American writers who brought attention to the problem of shadism, this research adopts her works as a case study.

Throughout her work, Morrison explores racism and how it intersects with issues such as age, gender, and race. A unique theme covered in most of her books and novels is discrimination from fellow Black people. This form of discrimination involved Black people against fellow Black people and was prevalent in communities which consisted of Black people only. For example, in *Paradise* (1997), the dark-skinned Blacks create a community of their own that runs parallel to their mistreatment during their migration from the south by communities made up of light-skinned Blacks. The themes of slavery and racism are also prevalent in Morrison's works and influence the studies that have been undertaken on the author. Morrison notes that the reason for writing novels that detailed the experienced of Black Americans is to provide more information on the experiences of the Black female character as it has been analyzed in *The Bluest Eye*, when Pecola wants to break the silence of the Black females even though she faces rejection from her society and family (Mahaffey 58). Shadism affected the progress of Black people because when slavery ended, they

resorted to discriminating against each other based on skin tone. There were views that Black slaves from the African areas were weaker hence needed to be liberated through slavery and colonialism (Lynch 155). Slavery enhanced the idea of white is good and Black is bad. This kind of attitude is prevalent today, and it can be observed in the contexts of police brutality and inequitable job opportunities. Due to interaction between race and color, intersectionality can be applied to discuss the challenges that are brought about by racism and shadism.

Various authors including Toni Morrison and those mentioned above have attempted to speak about the discrimination based on skin tone. In *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Morrison explores the effects of shadism where people of the same race discriminate against each other due to differentiations in color. It is notable that the protagonist Pecola Breedlove struggles with her self-image, feeling she is ugly because of her color with the only thing that she perceives could make her prettier is attaining blue eyes. She is subjected to discrimination based on her color as she attempts to change herself. Further, in *Beloved* (1987), the author presents the true story of a Black slave woman called Margaret Garner. The woman escaped with her husband and children in 1856 and traveled to Ohio to seek refuge. However, they were caught; Margaret killed her young daughter before being captured to prevent her returning to slavery. Discrimination encompasses many aspects, but the focus of this research will be on shadism and female resistance in Morrison's novels.

As a female writer, Morrison also covered issues that affected women during the slavery period and after the end of slavery. These issues include, rape, a patriarchal system, racism, gender-based discrimination, and mistreatment. In the novel *A Mercy* (2008), Morrison shows how slave owners mistreated women by raping them and, in other cases, killing them. Moreover, in *Paradise* (1997), women resist discrimination against their husbands and community by running away and hiding at the Convent. In relation to this, this thesis also discusses the issue of women's resistance in this context, which provides freedom and helps them heal from the trauma induced by slave owners and their family. Women's solidarity and sisterhood are seen as possible means by which the female characters might obtain freedom and self-recognition from their current miseries in *A Mercy* (2008). It can be seen in these novels that shadism, therefore, affects the development of hatred among African Americans and helps propagate further discrimination. In addition to shadism or colorism, intersectionality is an essential concept for discussing the complex nature of shadism as it refers to the intersection of two or more different identity categories such as race, gender, ability, social practices, among others.

The novels indicate how racism and shadism were prevalent even among the slaves. There are cases of light-skinned Blacks discriminating dark-skinned Blacks and Black men treating women as objects rather than as humans. Dark-skinned slaves were discriminated against because of their skin color, which made them view themselves as inferior (Suchit, 3). On the other hand, the light-skinned slaves were treated better, which created even deeper divisions within the Black community. A key objective of this study is to focus on the issue of shadism by addressing several important points that have been neglected in previous studies. Each of the individual chapters deals with the problem of shadism from different angles. For example, in relation to *The Bluest Eye* (1970), this thesis analyzes shadism from the point of view of intersectionality by clarifying that some identity aspects influence racism within the same race – i.e., 'shadism'. Second, *Beloved* (1987) shows that shadism can be related to trauma but then also contributes to healing. By studying the relationships within one race in which discrimination is practiced through blackmail, embarrassing expressions, mockery, and, most importantly, recollecting the history of suffering through memory and rememory, which cause shock and trauma to some characters. However, in this case, shadism can have a positive effect by healing from the trauma. Third, *Paradise* (1997), analyzes the impact of shadism on Black communities and individuals' relations within one race. Fourth, *A Mercy* (2008) addresses a key point that because it explains the effective methods and mechanisms that can be among the most important factors in eliminating shadism, racism, oppression and some elements of oppression that women suffer within such as patriarchal system. Through this study, it becomes clear that sisterhood and solidarity among members of society (especially from the same race) and women can reduce or eliminate shadism, racial discrimination and patriarchy by giving women the freedom they deserve through eliminating the effects of a patriarchal society. Thus, the solidity of this research lies in the fact that it covers and deals with the subject of shadism from several aspects, which enables us to understand and study the exact rationale, results and possible solutions to reduce these practices.

There is a need for a study that discusses the issue of shadism using the four selected novels by Morrison to expand available knowledge on this topic through adding some important elements that were not addressed in previous research. In addition, addressing this topic enables researchers to understand the causes of and anticipate possible solutions to shadism and racial discrimination. This study is critical because it provides new insights into the topic of shadism and female resistance in Toni Morrison's novels. The concept of shadism needs to be analyzed using the four Morrison novels as they contain information that can help

expand knowledge on the topic due to the insight they provide on the events that affected Black people during and after slavery. Some studies of relevance have been conducted such as Lobodziec's work on colorism and its relation to classism on Black in terms of middle-class and mainstream ones in Morrison's work (33). Also, Davis (193), focused on the issue of shadism in society and its effects on those impacted, but the scope is broadened to race and racism and covers skin-color and colorism in Western and Eastern society comparatively in basic manner and did not study the intersection point of race, gender, class, and ability and its relation colorism or shadism; in contrast, this dissertation discusses shadism from different perspectives and angles such as intersectionality.

Since this study discusses shadism and female resistance in the four novels, it relies on some theories which help to analyze and understand the shadism from more angles such as through intersectionality theory. This is a framework that takes into account the overlapping identities and experiences of a group of people with the view to understanding the prejudices they face. Trauma and healing are also an important component of this research, through which it is possible to understand whether trauma is related to the shadism which then often turns into healing. Furthermore, some concepts such as sisterhood, solidarity and motherhood can also be discussed in order to find some possible solutions to the studied problem.

The novels display the issue of shadism between Black people where light-skinned Blacks discriminate against dark-skinned Blacks. It is essential to identify this issue in modern society and understand how it affects the people involved. The four works by Morrison are essential in analyzing how the author has explored shadism and the resistance of women. The rationale for selecting Morrison's novels in chronological order in the 70s, 80s, 90s and the 21st century is to capture details which have previously not been tackled. They are applied in this dissertation to give a more detailed understanding of various issues and concepts related to shadism. For instance, *The Bluest Eye* (1970) was selected because it contains more details which cover the research's goals such as the main concern of this dissertation – shadism. It also discusses critical points that have never been discussed in previous research such as analyzing shadism from the perspective of intersectionality.

In relation to intersectionality, *The Bluest Eye* shows how race and gender or other identity aspects often collide to cause negative experiences among Blacks, but they have to be studied equally. Furthermore, in the 1980s, *Beloved* (1987) covered the topic of mother-daughter relationships which is a result of the split slavery causes. Morrison gives a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon as the novel shows the psychological and physical effects of slavery among Blacks which results in trauma and how to heal by

adopting a solution such as isolation, finding a partner, confrontations, among others. In the 1990s, it is clear that the novel of *Paradise* (1997) points out the problem of Black relations and examines the privilege of class in Black community in parallel with skin-color and racial identification. Also, it explores the idea of purity and authenticity of the Black identity to create indigenous ethnicity throughout the confrontations of dark-skinned and light-skinned Blacks. Finally, in the 21st century, the dissertation selects *A Mercy* (2008) because it is considered one of the novels that included the most important solutions, which are not included in the other novels, through which oppressed women find solutions and resistance to escape the patriarchal society and gain their freedom from excessive slavery.

Concerning the other novels that are not selected in this dissertation, the 1970s novels *Sula* (1973) and *Song of Solomon* (1977) were not chosen because they did not cover what *The Bluest Eye* does in terms of discrimination among Blacks and tackle the issues of gender, race, and class as a mean of confrontation. In the 1980s, *Tar Baby* (1981) covered the phenomenon of shadism which is already dealt with in the first individual chapter, but not as clearly as in *The Bluest Eye*. In the 1990s, *Jazz* (1992) deals with the Black relation as *Paradise* does except for the point of making racial purity among Blacks which is important part of this dissertation. In the 21st century, *God Help the Child* (2015) is not selected because it only discussed shadism in a broad, basic and direct manner. The research also utilizes articles from other authors who have discussed similar themes and topics, which is crucial for the development of a deeper analysis. It is essential to consider the existing knowledge on the issues before attempting to come up with new conclusions.

The selection of Toni Morrison's novels in chronological order is in line with the order of the individual chapters of the dissertation. Thus, it is divided into five chapters; the first chapter is an introductory and theoretical overview of race, gender, class, slavery and African American women writers. A background to African American experiences in the USA is given as it is noted that Morrison uses historical background in her works. Also addressed are contemporary African American women writers and their way of presenting Black minorities by mentioning the most renowned writers, especially Toni Morrison and her life, works, themes, styles, receptions, as well as criticism of her works. It discusses the theories and approaches to be adopted in the analysis such as intersectionality theory and feminist-postcolonial theory, details the context of the study, and introduces some key concepts that are related to the main problem to a broader understanding of the research such as trauma and healing, sisterhood and solidarity, the notion of shadism, and how it appears in real life and literature.

The second chapter is about the Shadism in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970). It shows the issues of shadism from the perspective of intersectionality, which differs from previous research which has focused mainly on understanding Black relations against their perception of the concept of beauty. However, this chapter aims to explore how Black people suffer discrimination from the same race through shadism practices and their interaction with class, gender, and race. This problem is substantially represented in Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye* as Pecola is considered ugly by her family and community due to her dark skin tone. Morrison uses Pecola to show shadism among Black people, how shadism can be influenced by other identity factors and how it impacted the current view of beauty.

The third chapter is about the psychological effect of slavery in *Beloved* (1987). In the novel, the characters depend on one another within a collective trauma to endure the traumatic effects of slavery. They have to confront their past so that they can be symbolically reborn. The novel *Beloved* addresses the issue of shadism that is related to the rewriting of African American history. First, it shows how shadism has affected the lives of African Americans, especially the character Sethe Suggs, since the time of slavery. Second, it shows how shadism can cause trauma but also contribute to healing through the actions of the characters. Morrison shows the trauma and suffering that Black people endured and the ways which they dealt with it, but she focused on women characters rather than men in terms of prioritizing their position as they are more victimized than men.

The fourth chapter discusses disallowing of the same race in *Paradise* (1997), where Black characters dream of indigenous ethnicity. Hence, this chapter aims to discuss shadism where the dark-skinned people were aristocrats (8-rock) with an unbroken bloodline. Most of the time, Ruby's citizens speak about the founding fathers who establish the town by telling the story of the disallowing, which means that those founders were rejected from joining other communities. For them, the first principle is the rejection of light-skinned people or whites. So, the marginalized people and light-skinned people suffer from the rejection of dark-skinned people. Rejection is a central aspect in the selected Morrison works and when it occurs, it leads to negative consequences instead of having an indigenous identity in terms of purity and racial differentiations among Blacks and especially women characters.

The fifth chapter explores sisterhood and solidarity in *A Mercy* (2008). The novel depicts female characters' way of preventing and resisting oppression, patriarchy, racism, and shadism to gain freedom and self-recognition. The novel reveals what lay beneath the surface of slavery in America during the 1600s. It is both the story of mothers and daughters and American history more broadly. More importantly, it shows the effect and outcomes of

solidarity and sisterhood to gain female characters' rights to gain freedom, stop racism, sexism, shadism, and patriarchy. There are numerous experiences and ideas that make the characters compelling. These are voices that have not been heard before because they were consistently looked down upon, silenced first by cruelty and then by history. Morrison helps in bringing these voices out which is essential for the Black community, especially women, and sheds a light on the chances and solutions to prevent and resist what women suffer from.

In order to make the research comprehensible it is important to label the following concepts; shadism, intersectionality, memory and rememory, cultural memory, trauma and healing, sisterhood and solidarity. These concepts fit the need of the objectives of the dissertation and help to understand and analyze the target study.

Since the selected novels discuss shadism, in this research they deal with the topic from different angles that other studies have not addressed in order to cover the whole topic by analyzing the causes, consequences and mechanisms of eliminating shadism and racism. These angles are addressed in different ways in the individual chapters. *The Bluest Eye* (1970) shows the intersection of gender, race, and class in advancing shadism in the Black community. In *Beloved* (1987), Morrison reveals the effects of shadism on African Americans through characters such as Sethe. The novel also explains how shadism induced trauma on the characters and how it contributes to their healing. In *Paradise* (1997), the idea of the disallowing provides an insight on the discrimination of dark-skinned Blacks at the hands of light-skinned Blacks who were considered superior before the end of slavery period. In *A Mercy* (2008) racism, sexism, shadism, and patriarchy help in advancing discrimination of women in a cruel way which leads women to solidarity and sisterhood to eliminate the oppression they are facing.

1. Theoretical Chapter

African American literature has a rich history and tells the story of African Americans since the introduction of slavery. African Americans have experienced extreme challenges in the United States including racism, discrimination and shadism, among others. In this section, African American literature is analyzed in relation to the issue of shadism. Similar to racism, shadism, also referred to as colorism, is a form of discrimination that is mainly based on skin color. Nonetheless, this issue is often experienced at the interracial level, and hence it is based on the degree of color tone. The theories that will be used to analyze Morrison's work are intersectionality theory and postcolonial feminist theory. The sections begin by giving a brief history of African American history and then analyze Toni Morrison's work, which is the key focus of the study. After that, it discusses the main theories and concepts of the research.

1.1 Shadism

Skin color matters as human beings are visual species and respond to one another based on physical presentation. People from different races often have different skin tones, and as a result of discrimination, humans have a tendency to be more attracted to a particular color. In the United States specifically, a very diverse population has further raised skin color differences.

Shadism, also known as colorism, is a less familiar form of discrimination, but it has existed for a long time as with another form of discrimination, such as racism. According to Hunter, it is defined as discriminating against another person who falls in the same racial group based on the color of their skin where the light-skinned person is privileged over the dark-skinned one (37). Intra-racial shadism occurs when the members of the same racial group discriminate each other based on their skin tone. In contrast, inter-racial shadism occurs when members of a particular racial group discriminate against individuals from another racial group based on skin color (Suchit 3). When it comes to shadism, the skin tone is of great importance as people vary from darker skin to lighter skin, which then introduces skin-tone discrimination (Landor 817).

Shadism is also often connected with society's beauty standards. In that case, in order for one to be considered attractive, their skin tone is required to be lighter. Horowitz (86) notes that similar to racism, shadism can also be traced to slavery and colonialism. During this period, a racial hierarchy was created, and this was used to justify why some were slaves

and others were not, which meant that people with lighter skin tones were viewed as being better than those who appeared darker. The hierarchy of skin color has become deeply ingrained in society, and its effects are worsening in the modern world.

Furthermore, it is notable that women are more affected by this form of discrimination than men. In this case, lighter women are considered more beautiful than darker ones (Hunter 27). As a result, many women have undergone different cosmetic procedures to change skin color despite the health complications associated with such procedures. Shadism is connected directly to issues of racism in the United States and is promoted significantly by the media, who often present beauty and being associated with lighter skin. This is common in films as well as advertisement programs. When representing attractiveness, those with lighter colors are viewed as being more beautiful.

As noted above, skin color has been used over the years to discriminate against people. Various authors have attempted to speak about the issues of discrimination based on skin tone, including Toni Morrison and Natasha Trethewey, among others. They showed how shadism negatively affects individuals in society and how they are denied higher social-economic status because of their color. In *The Bluest Eye*, Morrison explores the effects of colorism where people of the same race discriminate others because they appear darker. It is noted that the protagonist Pecola struggles with her own self-image, feeling that she is ugly because of her color, and the only thing that could make her prettier is attaining blue eyes. She is subjected to discrimination based on her color as she attempts to change herself. Furthermore, in her novel, *God Help the Child*, we are also introduced to a family where the mother disowns her child because she had darker skin. Despite the success, she is still seen as not being important. Even her father disowns her, and her fiancée rejects her.

Natasha Trethewey's *Native Guard* (2006) also shows some evidence of shadism and how it affects people. *Native Guard* is a collection of poems that allows individuals to see how shadism is present in the 21st century. The main character in the poetry collection is Natasha Trethewey, born to a Caucasian father and an African American mother (Birdsong 68). It allows people to see how children of mixed races are treated and how they struggle to survive in a community that views them differently. In this case, darker people are perceived as being ugly. Few studies focus on the issue of shadism in modern society and its effects on the people impacted by it. Furthermore, few studies explore the relationship between shadism and literature and how various authors have explored this concept in their novels. Such studies include Bodenhorn (2006), Breland-Noble (2013), Dixon and Maddox (2005).

Racism today has grown to be more complex, and there are many subcategories of the same that arise with intra-racism being one example of it. Intra-racism is where members of the same racial group discriminate against each other, mostly based on the color of their skin (Hama 983). This is mostly based on colorism and the phenotypical appearances of an individual. For instance, in the case of the African Americans, intra-racism occurs when a person with a people of color dominates those from the same race colors (Hama 983). In many African American communities, people who appear lighter are seen as beautiful and superior to those of darker color. A perfect example is elaborated on in Morrison's *God Help the Child*, where the protagonist is even rejected by her mother and father, who had enjoyed the privilege of being lighter.

In a society where people have been subjected to racial prejudice for a long time, racial minorities have adopted the racist messages frequently sent to them. Therefore, they adopt the white supremacist perspective, which then results in self-hatred and further discrimination within their race (Ramírez 173). Since the slavery period, whites were considered superior, while Blacks have been considered inferior and workers. They have been subjected to all forms of discrimination, including racism. Societal ideals of beauty are reflected in the way people judge light skinned and dark-skinned people. Being white is viewed as being beautiful while being dark is viewed as being ugly. This can be seen in the way advertisements of beauty products are created and presented, the way the whites refuse to marry with Blacks, hold high political positions and so on. The result is lower self-esteem for the dark-skinned women and increased exploitation. Slavery can be blamed for having advanced the idea that Black people are not beautiful. Years of being slaves may have made this notion of beauty stick. Black people adopted it and started discriminating against each other which made it challenging in their quest to heal from the trauma inflicted by slavery. Morrison provides insight into how bad the issue was in *The Bluest Eye* where Pecola is rejected because of her appearance. The effects of rejection by parents are profound because Pecola is haunted for the rest of her life. Pecola is a representation of Black people who were discriminated against by their own. Some Black people may have used discrimination against other Blacks as a way of avenging the hardships they underwent during the period of slavery.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, skin bleaching products became popular in African American communities. There were numerous advertisements of these products and procedures in newspapers that were predominantly being viewed by African Americans. The advertisements projected that whiteness and lightness was the preferred look for people in the country. African Americans were the ones who advanced these ideas and made them

popular. This indicates that Black people had stopped seeing themselves as beautiful and wanted to change their appearance to fit society. This re-creation of self was a way of refashioning themselves to create new models of Black aesthetic identity, which enhances the broader discussion about the interplay of race, class, gender, aesthetics/beauty, urbanity, and modernity. African American women who participated in the recreation of self did so as a way of recovering and restyling themselves as claimants of modernity (Lindsey 100). This shows that a new understanding of Black people culture was disseminated through the ideologies of whiteness. The reason for this is that Black people envisioned better opportunities if they appeared to be white since it was considered as the ideal beauty standard. Black people are complicit in the advancement of this standard because they accepted them and practiced them instead of maintaining their unique ideas of beauty. Racism permeates through different aspects of society and beauty was one aspect that enhanced the ideals on intra-racism. When slavery was abolished, those who were considered beautiful would be given better opportunities. Families would prefer to educate children who appeared lighter as a way of preventing the other children from being discriminated against. Advertisers preferred to use African Americans who were light-skinned for fear of offending the white people. It is worth noting that the beauty sector enhanced these ideals by using standards applied to whites to judge Black people. Some African Americans perceived the features of enslaved and free Black women as physically unattractive and as indicative of the inherent primal, animalistic, and lascivious tendencies of peoples of African descent (Lindsey 101).

It is important to note that white slave owners did not treat all Blacks equally, which may have created divisions among them. Slave owners enhanced the idea of intra-racism by viewing some Black people differently. Dark-skinned Blacks were given hard jobs while the light-skinned were assigned jobs that were easy and which had more privileges (Gomes 10). The slave-owners may have done this to have more control over the slaves as per the divide and rule tactic is effective when dealing with a group of people. This tactic involves the creation of divisions among a group to ensure they can be governed easily. This is crucial in understanding the genesis of divisions among Black people. Morrison is one of the few writers who profoundly explains how intra-racism was advanced and how it affected Black people. The need to enact revenge on other Black people created similar results to racism and slavery. Black people who discriminated against other Black people aggravated the same problems that were experienced during slavery. It is important to note at this point that this concept is still relevant in modern times. As Tharps explains, lighter-skinned people are

viewed in a positive way while dark-skinned people have to prove themselves (17). This indicates the challenge that exists for the Black community in ending the effects of slavery.

Intra-racism is an important concept that will help in providing more insight before a review of the chosen Morrison novels. The effects of this type of racism on the Black community are significant as it limits the ability of Black people succeeding in different sectors of the society as well as enhances racism from other communities. This is because other communities will adopt similar ideas because they see Black people doing it to other Black people. The concept of intra-racism can be analyzed through the idea of dark skin and light skin as discrimination between Black people occurs on the basis of color and not other factors such as economic status, gender or sex. The basis of discrimination is similar to the idea of whiteness. People who are light-skinned are viewed as close to whiteness hence are treated better while those who are dark-skinned are viewed as far from whiteness. This shows that intra-racism also advances the concept of white privilege by propagating the same ideals as those propagated by whiteness. Black people are forced to view themselves using the same ideals that made slavery possible. Thus, this concept is an essential part of this paper as it provides insight on the genesis of shadism among the Black people (Leonard and Robbins 144).

Another concept that will be important in this research is stereotype threat, which can be defined in terms of situations whereby an individual of a social group may find themselves beginning to become like that particular stereotype. Often, this can be a factor that affects academic performance stemming from racial and gender gaps. This is mainly due to the expected discrimination coming from negative identification stereotyping (Steele and Aronson 808). Stereotype threat is a factor that Black people have to deal with frequently. One of the issues is the stereotype that dark-skinned Blacks are more likely to commit a crime than their light-skinned counterparts. This is evident even in schools where a dark-skinned child is three times more likely to be suspended than a light skinned Black (Abdul-Alim 2014). This indicates the problems of intra-racism among the Black community. Racism is designed in a way that increases conformity with the dominant culture as a way of appealing for equal treatment. When Black people adopt the same racist ideals as those practiced by other groups it indicates a way of conforming. This enhances the stereotype threats and makes it easy for other groups to discriminate against Black people. Thus, it is important to shed light to these issues through this paper as a way of changing the dynamics of the Black community. Through the chosen Toni Morrison novels, this paper will expound on the concept of intra-racism and how it impacted the Black community. The paper will seek

to enhance understanding of the issue by providing examples of intra-racism occurrences and analyzing them critically. By doing that, this study will increase the body of knowledge on the issue, bringing to light issues that are rarely discussed. The concept of intra-racism has not received wide attention from other researchers, hence this dissertation seeks to change this.

1.3 The Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept that has become common and is frequently used in relation to feminism, but at the same time it remains challenging to understand and is easy to misuse. Furthermore, it is important in evaluating and changing the patterns of injustice and inequality. The concept is widely used in articles such as Kimberlé Crenshaw's work about Black feminism (Crenshaw, 1989) where she also gives a very simple definition of the concept. In another way, Davis (1992), in her book *Toward a Feminist Rhetoric*, claims that intersectionality “refers to the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference . . . social practices, institutional arrangements, cultural ideologies, and the outcomes of these interactions” (68). She shows that the experience of African American females is multi-dimensionally constructed, and it is not logical to separate the identity categories from each other to define or determine a person’s way of acting.

According to Collins, this concept is used as a framework that provides people with the mindset as well as language for analyzing interconnections and the interdependencies observed between various social groups systems (54). Furthermore, this concept has become more relevant for both practitioners and researchers as it offers a theoretical explanation of the means through which the heterogeneous members of certain groups, such as women, might have different experiences in work depending on sexual orientation, ethnicity, class, among other social considerations. Nonetheless, the high sensitivity of people to such differences provides an insight into the issues of social inequality and injustices in society, hence increasing the chances of achieving social change.

Carastathis notes that the concept of intersectional location was introduced to the world by a group of racial minority ethnic women in the US (2). This concept was even made more popular by Crenshaw, who argues that individuals who are both women and people of color are highly marginalized. Carastathis states that “The concept of intersectionality is fruitfully situated in a trajectory of Black feminist thought that begins in the nineteenth century, when African American women resisting the whips and stings of prejudice, whether

of color or sex” (2). This argument articulated what it means to be confronted, as Anna Julia Cooper put it in 1892, by both “a woman question” and a “race problem” but to be constructed “as yet an unknown or unacknowledged factor in both” (2). Society has established the role of women in society and they are seen as being inferior to men.

Intersectionality in modern times has become a central tenet of feminist thinking. This is one of the most important contributions to our present understanding of issues of race, gender, and class. The intersectionality perspective reveals that individuals’ social identities influence people’s beliefs and experiences of gender, class, and race (Shields 302). Therefore, individuals’ social identities must be at the forefront of any investigation of the three issues. Identity is the social category to which an individual claims membership along with all associated meanings. In psychology, identity is viewed as an awareness of self, self-image, self-reflection, and self-esteem (Shields 304). In contemporary American society, identity is viewed as an essential part of an individual that helps them express their authentic sense of self. Intersectionality can therefore be viewed as social identities which serve as the organizing features of social relations that mutually constitute, reinforce, and naturalize one another. The formation and maintenance of identities is a dynamic process which actively engages the individual (Shields 306). In the United States, racial categories are construed to consist of two genders. This indicates that the aspect of intersectionality is impacted by the history of Americans. Intersections of gender, class, and race create both oppression and opportunity for those involved. People who are on the advantage side of intersectionality benefit from access to rewards, status, and opportunities that are unavailable to individuals on the other side. For example, a white person who identifies as a lesbian may be disadvantaged because of diverging from the normal heterosexual standard but advantaged because she enjoys racial privilege. Identities reflect the operations of power relations among different groups.

The concept of intersectionality grew from the need to explain how race and gender relations shaped social and political life. Black female writers argue that their problems and experiences cannot be described as problems of Black men and white women (Weldon 194). This is because Black women face unique problems and theoretical perspectives, and identities and experiences cannot be described from the position of either Black men or white women. Crenshaw indicates that Black women face various structural barriers in trying to address the sexual violence that permeates their lives. Another aspect is that the housing problem in Black communities makes it hard for Black women to confront and escape from abusive relationships (26). This is clearly illustrated in *The Bluest Eye* where Pecola’s

mother, Breedlove, is unable to leave her abusive relationship with Cholly because of the children and a lack of resources to raise them alone. The experiences of African American women mean that they are at the nexus of race and gender. This experience is explained in Audre Lorde's book *Conversations with Audre Lorde* (2004), which posits that the oppression that minority women suffer from in terms of race, gender, and economic and political status can be viewed as Triple oppression. The structures of race and gender intersect to create an aspect of domination where there are defined positions in the race and gender hierarchy (Weldon 195). For all people, race shapes the experiences and meaning of femininity or masculinity. Analyzing gender and race without incorporating issues of class, disability, sexual orientation, and age creates inaccuracies and distortions. This means that experiences of marginalized people in different communities will not be accurately depicted. It is thus important to note that intersectionality is a concept that is not only applicable to minority groups. It is an aspect that shapes the lives of both men and women in different races/ethnicity. Additionally, it is possible for people to be intersectionally advantaged as well as intersectionally marginalized or oppressed (Weldon 196). There are ways in which factors of race, gender, and class combine to provide advantages to specific social groups.

Thus, intersectionality can be viewed as a theoretical framework for understanding how multiple social identities such as race, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, and disability intersect to reflect the interlocking systems of privilege and oppression (Harris and Leonardo 3). The term intersectionality was brought into light in the 1960s by female Black scholars, and the concept provides attention to the complex nature of power. Intersectionality seeks to change the view that one identity is more important than others, and scholars have been able to show the identities and social formations that have been invisible due to hegemonic formulations. Aspects of intersectionality have enabled researchers to dedicate attention to the interlocking of various forms of oppression. This has ensured that issues of sex, gender, race, and class are observed from a new perspective. This paper will benefit from this concept as it seeks to highlight shadism through the novels of Toni Morrison. Intersectionality indicates that Black people may experience discrimination in ways that are similar to experiences of white people. Double discrimination occurs to Black women in the sense that they undergo discrimination on the basis of race and sex (Harris and Leonardo 16). Therefore, various factors intersect in creating oppression, and the factors have to be examined together to understand how the oppressed people are impacted. It is worth noting that most of the factors that intersect such as gender and sex affect both white and Black

people. Thus, it is essential to understand the way the issues of race, gender, class, poverty, sexuality, and sex intersect to provide a better view on the concepts of racism and shadism.

Furthermore, intersectionality can be seen as a system used to find the relationships of different systems of oppression and discrimination (McCall 1991). It is worth noting that even though this concept was created as a means for Black females to quickly adapt and also relate to feminism, it offers a lens that can be useful in understanding a variety of social interactions as well as the complex social hierarchies. So, today's society has established different ranks in which women occupy the lowest ranks in the hierarchy.

Modern society in developed countries such as the United States has grown to be more culturally complex, making it vital for people to understand how to interact with and treat people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Today, people associate themselves with more than one cultural group; hence they are required to navigate through varying values and norms affiliated with different cultures. Kivisto notes that the diversity of countries such as the United States has greatly increased due to increased cases of immigration as well as globalization (56). In this case, as people migrate from another country to the United States, they carry their traditions and practices, which are then introduced into society. In the United States alone, many ethnic groups can be observed including, 'whites', 'African Americans', 'Caucasians', 'Asians', 'Arabs'; all these groups have different cultural beliefs and practices, which makes it hard for people to interact freely because of these introduced variances and complexities (Bean 136). One major issue today is the issue of colorism among members of the same race. This can be observed specifically among African American society. In the United States, whiteness creates a superiority complex which ends up demeaning other colors. As a result, within African American society, people who appear to be lighter than those with dark skin start to feel superior.

1.4 Shadism and Intersectionality

Intersectionality is an important framework for understanding the complex nature of shadism as it studies the connections that exist between multifaceted dimensions of social relationships. Intersectionality postulates that all forms of oppression within any given society are interrelated and hence do not act independently (Leslie 1993). This results in the creation of a system of societal discrimination. This can be applied with respect to shadism and can help one understand that there are different ways through which an individual can experience discrimination and domination and that this system is not completely new. Society

has created the white privilege ideology which enhances the position of white people and degrades the position of Black people in society. This kind of attitude is very common today and can be observed in many contexts. For instance, on most magazines covers, African American models are photoshopped – such as when Kerry Washington appeared in the magazine *InStyle*– in order to make their skin lighter.

The topic of shadism is not easily approached in conversations, especially for people outside a particular ethnic group, due to the issue's complexity and increased cases of this form of discrimination. Many members of ethnic groups try to minimize the features which are perceived to be negative such as dark skin. Today, beauty product companies are making billions from fairness creams as well as skin lightening treatments, such as L'Oreal Vaseline and Garnier, “certain advertisements had tried to project a notion that fair skin is sphere.... the natural anxiety of men and women regarding skin colour has been heightened”(Johnson et al. 29). These products are advertised in the media as the solutions to allow users to even out their complexion and achieve an acceptable look in society today.

1.4. Post-colonial Feminist Theory

Postcolonial feminist theory is concerned with how women were represented in the once colonized countries as well as in Western locations. It emphasizes the construction of gender differences in both colonial and anti-colonial discourse (Petersen and Anna 77) and therefore aims at understanding and undoing the legacies of colonials concerning feminism activism. Nash states:

Feminist theory has long imagined a Black woman as the quintessential location of complexity and marginality, a figure that disciplines the interdisciplinary project of feminist theory by demanding an account of gendered racism and racialized sexism, and by advocating feminism that transcends a preoccupation exclusively with gender. (118)

This theory resists the European-American feminists’ propensity to universalize the different forms of oppression they experienced in their own lives, which ignores the significant differences in the way the women from varying ethnic, religious, or national backgrounds perceive gender. Postcolonial feminist theory reminds people that equality varies between a middle-class woman in the United States and a Muslim woman in Arab countries and

completely denies the concept of universal oppression (Kerner 848). In this case, it can be argued that if the Euro-American feminist approach focuses on issues such as the gender pay gap or discrimination of women at the workplace, these varying forms of oppression and also the resistance does not necessarily mean they are important to the females outside this domain (Petersen and Anna 77). Hence, postcolonial feminist theory traverses beyond the ideals promoted by the Euro-American feminist approach in relation to what gender equality may look like depending on several factors including the social, historical, and political context of the nation in which this theory is being applied. This theory is a branch of intersectional feminist thought.

In postcolonial feminist theory, women are examined through the lens of colonial and postcolonial literature, and assumptions about women in society and literature are questioned. Historically, colonialism and patriarchy have been closely interrelated, but the end of formal empire did not end women's oppression in the former colonies. Women are rejected as a group by some critics of postcolonial feminism such as Chandra Mohanty and Gloria Anzaldúa, who believe that women have a common identity based on their experiences with expression. These scholars argue that the concerns of middle-class white women are not necessarily the concerns of all women, and that different social positions result in different problems and responses.

Postcolonial feminism and mainstream Western feminism are characterized by tension, often leading to lively debates. So, the discussion regarding the relative racism and colorism experienced by women of color in postcolonial feminist theory is equally stressful. As the categories "women of color" and "women of diasporic communities" are fractured by the politics of location, postcolonial feminist work reveals multiple differences between the third world and first world. Therefore, it becomes vital to discuss the relationship between post colonialism and the issue of skin color.

Some key points are given by Young in her book *Post colonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (2003):

Postcolonial feminism has never operated as a separate entity from post colonialism; rather it has directly inspired the forms and the force of postcolonial politics. Where its feminist focus is foregrounded, it comprises non-western feminisms which negotiate the political demands of nationalism, socialist feminism, liberalism, and ecofeminism, alongside the social challenge of everyday patriarchy, typically supported by its institutional and legal

discrimination: of domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, honour killings, dowry deaths, female foeticide, child abuse. Feminism in a postcolonial frame begins with the situation of the ordinary woman in a particular place, while also thinking her situation through in relation to broader issues to give her the more powerful basis of collectivity. It will highlight the degree to which women are still working against a colonial legacy that was itself powerfully patriarchal - institutional, economic, political, and ideological (116)

This quote by Young explains some points that will be discussed in this research such as violence, race, murder, abuse, and others. It depicts the dilemmas that women suffer from, especially women of color. In Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, the female foeticide is one of the turning points related to postcolonial feminism and is depicted when Sethe killed her child in order to save her from the slave life that she endured. Also, the patriarchy was a major problem that women, and particularly women of color, faced. Being a female in a patriarchal society and being Black in a white male dominated community represents the events that were experienced by the women in *A Mercy* by Morrison.

In postcolonial feminism, the issue of voice, i.e., who is speaking for whom and whose voices are being heard, also remains up for debate. This point has been discussed in Spivak's (1988) essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' In this work, she explores the possibility of recovering the subaltern voices that have been silenced for years. It is the responsibility of postcolonial feminists to do so.

Alejandro Lipschutz came up with the term 'pigmentocracy' to describe the ethnic and color-based hierarchies that exist in different parts of the world. Lipschutz described pigmentocracy as a hierarchy determined by color and sometimes ethnicity (11). He noted that in the hierarchy, white people are at the top while Black people are at the bottom (Lipschutz 25). Lipschutz opposes the idea of racial hypocrisy where certain groups are treated as racially inferior to their European counterparts. He focused on African Americans and Native American tribes because they were the most affected by racial and ethnic hierarchies. The placement of Black Americans at the bottom of the pyramid indicates how racism is a social problem (Popple 409) and it is theorized that racism should not be treated as a biological issue but rather a social one because of the way it was formed (Lipschutz 59). The author notes that the descendants of the Native American tribes and African slaves are a deprived class who were condemned by the social system that was in place at that time. This should be solved by instituting reforms that will enable minorities to exist with white people.

It should be noted that Lipschutz was optimistic that African Americans would be treated differently with time because 70 years ago, Native Americans Indians were treated as inferior, but that has changed in the present.

Another key point that can be discussed is notion of colorism in postcolonialism. The study of distortions of the original topic is very well known to Homi Bhabha, who questions the effectiveness of colonialism with his thoughts on mimicry and hybridism. Bhabha discusses mimicry in his book *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse* (1984) and describes it as an act of imitating the white people. Therefore, imitation is an ambivalent strategy that allows subalterns to express their submissive attitude to the stronger party while simultaneously subverting its power. Colonizers encouraged their subjects to 'imitate' the invaders by adopting colonizing institutions, customs, and values (88). He defined it as "Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power" (116). Various harmful negative effects have resulted from mimicry. Importantly, it is vital to understand that mimicry behavior doesn't just involve skin color, but also face shape, posture, height, dress style, and all aspects of culture in developing countries; thus, it helps to discuss the notion of beauty standards in *The Bluest Eye*.

Moreover, Franz Fanon addresses the issues of colonialism, Blackness, and racism in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). Fanon theorizes that when a Black person speaks perfect English, the white counterparts may be surprised at the perfect English (57). This surprise indicates a perception of inferiority and indicates how Black people will always be treated as inferior even when they strive to attain the same standards as the majority of society. Fanon notes that the idea of perfect diction is a way of the Black person escaping Blackness. However, performing such an escape will ultimately only lead the individual back to the same state of inferiority and non-being (Fanon 89). Fanon also criticizes the issue of interracial desire by asserting that a Black man who desires a white woman suffers under delusions of what her body offers. In his discussion and analysis, Fanon applies psychoanalysis to derive meaning from issues such as colonialism and Blackness, indicating that the concept of anti-Blackness reflects the contempt that people have over Black people's inferiority. Fanon theorizes that Black people are not bound by history, are not slaves to the past, and any future is possible (Moten 748). Franz rejects the idea of reparations because it seeks to link Blacks to the past. Fanon concluded by stating that it is essential for Blacks to question issues and be subjective when interrogating the issues.

Throughout Bhabha theory of mimicry, the person who imitates the colonizer in terms of beauty, social and economic status may pass to white and will be considered as different from the Black ones. McLendon defines it as “any form of pretense or disguise that results in a loss or surrender of, or a failure to satisfy a desire for, identity, whether racial, cultural, social, or sexual” (xxvi). Myrdal explains it as the:

Negro becomes a white man, that is, moves from the lower caste to the higher caste. In the American caste order, this can be accomplished only by the deception of the white people with whom the passer comes to associate and by a conspiracy of silence on the part of other Negroes who might know about it (683)

African Americans of mixed race have often passed for white and evaded the restrictions against them by using their racially ambiguous appearance. This highlights that the most effective means of undermining the system whereby Black people were relegated to a lower social status was to pass as white and use their whiteness to lift up other Black people.

1.5 Memory and Rememory

The major role of our memories in determining our character and actions lies in their role as active agents in our present conduct, not as mere vestiges of the past. Memory and rememory play a vital part in analyzing the literary works in the current study. They mainly deal with the psyche of the characters and show the effect of past on their present life. Ferguson stated (taken from the novel *Beloved*) that the African American can be considered as

A history of oppression, but one that must be remembered, accounted for, and while the language of the dominant culture and the written work itself have all too often been potent instruments in that oppression, not to have made of them, is to be rendered impotent in ways that matter greatly (109).

'Memory' refers to recollections of the past, and an individual's memory consists of the experiences they have, while 'Remembrance' refers to thinking about the present throughout revisiting it. This term 'rememory' has been used by Toni Morrison and Alice Walker as a tool to recall the present and remember the past. So, memories are pictures or places that serve as re-introductions of striking memories. Through Toni Morrison's

'rememory' narrative strategy, she reinvented memory in *Beloved* (Madhumita 2) and her enactment of memory tries to introduce bondage to readers for whom servitude is not a memory, but rather a distant, suppressed or forgotten historical fact.

Eckstein (34) further notes that literature must be remembered or viewed as a very special form of what he refers to as 'cultural memory', with its own strategies for making observations and writing based on older memories. According to Nora, memory is a lasting incident which relates us to the continuous present, whereas the past is represented through history. While he considers history to be fixed, it is suggested that memory is something constantly changing and that awakens recollections of the past. Nora also states that history plays a vital role in shaping the present trauma of humankind (Bowden and Ashley, 12).

These past memories show up almost through storytelling, old songs, idioms, blues, etc. in which they all exist within the unconsciousness of people, and these remembrances lead the characters in the literary works to live under traumatic situations which forever haunt them as ghosts, or let them feel bad about their existence even in their own environment and their society. Thus, the process of memory and rememory may happen independently or collectively as remembering events and actions of the past in different ways reflects in the characters' actions, ways of thinking and feelings. However, independent memory occurs to a person on his own. It is something affects his/her own life, regardless to other people. Further, it sometimes leads the person to live in isolation or let them live under anxiety and fear of others. On the other hand, when collective memory accurses to a group of people they are by no means all inclusive. They may live in the same society, belong to the same race, or even have the same view (Bowden, Ashley, 2009).

However, slaves experience an immense impact of rememory in their present situation because of their undesirable past in terms of the way they were treated, neglected from society, and were looked down upon by white race. Eckstein (62) notes that the Atlantic slave trade has continuously haunted the cultural memories of Europe, Africa, and America. In fact, most wish to forget about it. Many of the victims of African origin tried to run away from the sites that traumatized them, while those who were enlightened, especially the Westerners, preferred to remain unconscious to this upsetting complicity between slavery and enlightenment. In the last few years, many fiction writers have ventured into re-membering the Black Atlantic.

Literature helped Blacks show their predicaments through their past culture and its effect in the present time. In this case, a novelist may decide to write memories about images, texts or music. Caryl Phillips's *Cambridge*, for instance, collects several fragments of various

slave narratives, histories, and travelogues to try and shape a brilliant montage of some of the texts that were forgotten. Most of the materials were from the 18th and 19th centuries. Further, David Dabydeen's book *A Harlot's Progress* approaches Black Atlantic slavery through paintings by well-known artists such as William Hogarth, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and J. M. W. Turner. The last novel is *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, which focused on Black music, from the spiritual music and the blues to the art of John Coltrane. This novel is presented in a way that allows past and present to show memory and rememory. An example of this is the presence of Beloved as a ghost, who is Sethe's daughter in the present. Morrison makes the novel move between past and present, from the attitudes of the characters through remembering the past. So, Morrison here used such a type of writing which makes it hard for readers, including this researcher, to understand the novel at first as readers and characters try to understand the past memories.

So, Morrison here used a type of writing that makes it difficult for readers to understand the novel at first. A feature of this particular style is that the storytelling makes the readers and even characters understand the past memories that happened to Sethe, Baby Suggs, and Paul D as main characters. In using this type of storytelling, Morrison was able to present the story through multiple narrators in order to represent the novel in a sense of community, nation, and family. Even the novel is in a form of text, but her narrators are storytellers.

The storytelling plays a role in creating a communal memory; at this point the role of the storyteller is the same as a listener because they share the same memory and desire. These ways of recalling the past memories can be considered as tools that help break the silence of oppressed people. These stories are a sign of Blacks' interior life to show the effects of slavery. Furthermore, this storytelling is a form of narrative that has a relationship with memory as Janet stated in her book *Psychological Healing* that:

Memory, like belief, like all psychological phenomena, is an action; essentially, it is the action of telling a story. The teller must not only know how to narrate the event, but must also know how to associate the happening with the other events of his life, how to put it in its place in that life history which each one of us is perpetually building up and which for each of us is an essential element of his personality. (661-62)

Our sense of narrative memory provides us with new meanings by recounting memories. Thus, all this memory can be reflected mentally, where the character will be traumatized, or physically, where the memory is embodied in the present in the same way as the past. Edward Casey defined it as "An active immanence of the past in the body that informs present bodily actions in an efficacious, orienting, and regular manner" (148).

We can say that memories are one of the main motivators for the novelist to draw from and use to build on narrative material based on scenes engraved in memory, which become keys to the desired narrative world. The novelist's memories of places and the images they store about them retain other memories associated with them, so that the memory overlaps with the place, and is part of it, so the restoration of the place is through the memories associated with it, and the time itself.

Memories turn into an intersecting point for mixing places, times and events in the service of the narrative time that is not bound by the past or the present, rather it is the time based on memories, and the time that is supposed to be suitable for different times. On the other hand, the novel lives on with recovered memories, and here we do not mean only personal memories, but rather collective memories that date back to events that deeply affected the memory of people and became a popular heritage from which creators in art and literature could draw.

1.5 Trauma and Healing

Trauma is the effect of a terrible event such as slavery, natural disasters, and other types of accident. Black people have experienced various terrible events in the course of their history in America. Toni Morrison identifies these traumatic events in her novels and seeks to provide information on how the African American community was affected. In *Beloved*, Morrison identifies the effects of slavery by focusing on Black American characters affected by it. From the novel, it can be seen that African Americans suffered from racism and had to live with their identities suppressed. The experiences created trauma which is evident from the characters. In *Beloved*, the slaves are given names by their owners and are often beaten up. For example, Sethe had scars on his back which indicated what confronted Black people during that period (Gomes 12).

The idea of writing about the traumatic past of the Black community is essential in creating a pathway to healing. The goal of healing is to ensure that the Black community has control over their lives. Trauma from slavery inflicted significant damage on the Black community. The atrocities that were committed by slave owners may have damaged most of

the Black people who were involved. The effects are evident in Morrison's novels where characters commit heinous crimes such as killing their own children. The novels confront the dark episodes that are less talked about within mainstream media. Slaves encountered suffering from their slave owners as they were punished and denied food and other necessities, with some of them watching as their loved ones were killed by slave owners while others were forced by the slave owners to kill their loved ones. These accounts of slavery are essential in understanding the extent of trauma that was meted on Blacks. Morrison is one of the writers who brings these issues into light and provide an analysis on the effects they had on Black people. For that reason, this paper uses the books authored by Morrison to shed more light on the trauma that Black people experienced, which will enhance the development of intra-racism and shadism. Some of them may have wanted to exert revenge as a way of trying to heal from the effects. It is worth noting that the dynamics of slavery heavily impacted the experiences of Black people. Trauma cannot go away unless it is addressed. One way of addressing trauma is by writing about it and airing the full details of what happened (Gomes 8). Literature has helped in bringing these issues into light and confronting the dark times.

Healing is the main purpose of writing about the atrocities meted against Black people. It could be argued that the ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness simply because some of the violations may be too terrible to speak about. However, atrocities cannot be wished away and must be dealt with because of the power they possess over the victims (Fanon 30). Remembering the truth and even writing about it is essential in enhancing healing. Morrison provides insight on the issues that occurred for Black people and in doing so assists them to heal. When people read about these issues they understand and sympathize with the Black community which enhances the healing process. Healing can only occur when space is provided to survivors to detail the crimes that occurred. Through different characters in her novels, Morrison provides space for Black people to explicate the violations they endured. For healing to occur, focus must be placed on the victim with the goal of ensuring the victims have control over their lives. The chosen novels present the dynamics of trauma and healing and enhance the idea that healing can occur among the Black community. In the novels, the characters have to confront the challenges together and through their connection they are able to achieve healing.

The Bluest Eye is about a girl who seeks to have blue eyes, which is symbolic of Black people wanting to be light-skinned to avoid discrimination. This novel highlights the issue of shadism, which caused significant divisions between African Americans. Light-

skinned African Americans enjoyed privileges such as managing slaves. This discrimination was traumatic and further extended the hatred that Black people harbored against the whites and themselves. The trauma experienced by the Black people is well documented in the novels, and it can be seen that part of fighting for the growth of African American literature is to enhance healing.

Morrison uses imagery and language to illustrate the trauma experienced by her characters. By using these aspects of literature, Morrison directs the reader to experience the trauma that African Americans endured during slavery (Gomes9). Also, as Cathy Caruth said "not locatable in the simple violent or original event in the individual's past" however in can be located in "the way it is precisely not known in the first instance returns to haunt the survivor later on" (4). Morrison uses repetition of words and phrases to engage the reader with the process of trauma. For example, the phrase in *The Bluest Eye* "each night without fail she prayed for blue eyes" is repeated, which enhances the meaning the author intends to convey. By listening to what characters such as Sethe experienced, the reader is immersed in the violent and traumatic events that occurred. To be able to understand the experience of Sethe, a reader has to work backwards using the information provided by Morrison through stories and images. This enhances the way the reader understands and perceives the traumatic events.

Caruth's theory therefore indicates that trauma is an event that fragments the consciousness and prevents direct linguistic representation. The experience of a traumatic event has severe impact on the psyche; thus, fragmentation is a direct cause of trauma which enhances the view that there is trans-historical trauma, which is a kind of trauma that has been passed from generation to generation after experiencing a traumatic event. Slavery is an external source of trauma for the African American people who continue to experience the impacts of trauma during the slavery period. According to Caruth (25), the latency and dissociation brought about by traumatic experiences makes it hard for other people to fully understand and represent the experiences. Extreme historical events such as slavery are therefore only understood through reproduction of the past.

The concept that we can only understand trauma through reproduction of the past indicates the dissociative nature of trauma. According to Caruth's perspective, trauma is only understood through the way it comes back to haunt the survivor later. Trauma therefore implants itself in the human memory in a way that results in the development of abnormal memories (77). History provides an insight into the experiences of trauma. For example, the slave narratives provide an insight into traumatic experiences that slaves encountered during

the slavery era. Blacks encountered traumatic events that can never be forgotten, especially when it comes to a collective one, which can be understood as cultural trauma. Cultural trauma is defined by Alexander the situation “when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways” (1). The scenario constructed is one in which the entire civilization shares the sufferance of the human being. This type of trauma as a collective mostly happens in a community who feels or speaks about the trauma when they lose a leader or someone who is the central person of their memory of the previous generations and ancestors, or when there is a new regime of government, for instance (2). Collective trauma can be a solution of healing when it is presented to be challenged, confronted, and to be overcome. The chosen books by Morrison also provide an insight into trauma that African Americans meted on themselves because of shadism. Through explaining the traumatic experiences, people can start the process of healing.

In studies of trauma, the person who wants to heal will mostly go through the process of storytelling as it is part of memory. Brogan categorizes traumatic memory and narrative memory and explains that traumatic memory “can be defined as the re-experiencing of an event too overwhelming to be integrated into understanding” (73), and the narrative memory reshaping and giving a “meaning to past experience by adapting it to present circumstances” (79) as a way of recalling the past to confront it to engage with the healing process. In relation to this, Morrison's novel, *Beloved*, is a story of the presence of a ghost as the soul of the main character, Beloved, and Brogan intended to depict the dilemma of a ghost story which can be understood from another perspective that differs from the gothic one. Brogan states “Cultural ghost stories, which feature the haunting of a people by the ghosts of its own past, represent one way a group actively revises its relationship to the past” (38). This new genre shows that the writers of cultural ghost stories are demonstrating a way of recovering from the trauma through revisiting and connecting the past and the present. Recent African American literature uses the notion of ghost as a signal of recovering.

Healing is important because without it the impact of trauma will continue to haunt the individual. For Morrison to address healing, issues like patriarchy, inter-racial relationships, and racism had to be addressed. Morrison wanted to address the issues that made Black people hate themselves, and through addressing them, Morrison would succeed in promoting healing among the African American community (Gomes17). In *Beloved*, Pecola is focused on the white ideology of beauty. It was essential for Black people to

understand that Black is beautiful to ensure healing. Therefore, through her different works, Morrison succeeded in engaging the problems that prevented healing from happening.

1.6 Background of African American experiences and Literature in the USA

The history of African Americans in the United States is both interesting and filled with horror stories. It started with the introduction of slavery, where the European settlers wanted people to help them in their farms, which resulted in Africans to America to work as slaves (Roediger 4). The presence of African slaves in the US came to be the cause of great division during the Civil War. Even after the war, discrimination against African slaves persisted. As a result, various movements were introduced to end slavery and promote equality; some of the known movements include the Underground Railroad and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, among many others (Bloom 157). On this issue, Bruce stated that slavery in America was defended in part by its contrast to the conditions of Africa, where all citizens were subjected to tyrannizing power (60). As the resistance sprouts everywhere, Black leaders, writers, and artists emerged and helped in shaping the identity and character of the United States. One aspect that has been of great interest over many years is the introduction of African American literature and the stories told about their experiences through it slavery, discrimination, resistance, and their future in America.

The history of African Americans is long and freighted with violence, discrimination, and suffering, making it difficult to give a brief account of it. Nonetheless, the first and most recognizable work of the African American was published in the 18th century, which was a period when the United States had been created, and the citizens who had defined rights and freedom were allowed to own slaves. Bruce notes that the conditions of slavery at this time provided a ground for a specific type of writing genre, known as slave narratives (60). The story of African Americans continued even after the abolition of slavery and into the unstable period at the end of the 19th century when slavery had been abolished but still faced repugnant discrimination. Miller states that some of it was “legally sanctioned, through the practice of segregation and Jim Crow laws, some of it deeply felt through social ostracism, discrimination in the workplace, and hate speech” (4). Despite all these challenges, they continued to produce some of the best works in literature.

1.6.1 Slave Narratives

The slave narrative, either written or spoken, gives a comprehensive account of the life of a fugitive or former slave. There are several influential slave narratives in American literature that have influenced some of the most celebrated and controversial works of autobiography and fiction in American history. Most slave narratives in America were written by African Americans, with approximately 100 autobiographies of slaves and fugitive slaves appearing from 1760 till the end of the Civil War.

The first slave narrative was known as *The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African*, published in (1789) (Paul 849). However, this story was different from the other slave narratives that come after it and did not play a crucial role in the growth of the abolitionist movement in the United States. Nonetheless, it helped stir anti-slavery sentiments in Britain, where the author spent most of his life as a free man (Paul 849).

Moreover, as the abolitionist movements continued to grow and gain more support in America, numerous slavery narratives started to emerge, providing critical evidence for the advocates of the abolition of slavery. One notable narrative was Frederick Douglass's autobiography, titled *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), which sold thousands of copies and summarizes the key points of slave narrative literature (Bruce and Dickson 211). He takes readers on a journey full of abuse and violence, and when talking about some forms of torture and abuses practiced against Douglass, we can generalize because all slaves had common stories. First, he mentioned that he was not given his exact date of birth and was separated from his mother just like others when he was 12 months old. Moreover, he did not know his father except for the fact that he was a white man. As a result of this, masters believed that ignorance is a key of slavery, and they wanted to deprive slaves of any sense of individuality. As a result, they did not know that it was their right to have an identity. In addition to slave children growing up without the love of their families, they were forced to work at young ages under hard conditions such as working naked, having no beds and no shoes especially for kids who were not able to work. For the whole family, all slaves used to share one single bed no matter if they are kids, old ones, married, singles.

White overseers enjoyed torturing and whipping slaves), and Douglass mentioned that sometimes there were no reasons at all why slaves should be tortured. Emotional abuse forms part of the narratives that most of the writers dealt with as a part of the slave narrative genre to tell their stories of sufferance or ancestors. In other words, unlike white people who were called with their names, slaves were called 'niggers'. In a journal entitled *Modern Slavery Abuse of Domestic Workers* written by Joy Zarempka, there is a description of how Black

women were treated like slaves in the field of work in America and how they were called. She stated that a Ghanaian woman reported to the police that her owner did not call her by her name, instead she used the word 'Creature', and another woman was called 'the Slave'. The author quoted a woman's sad sentences which go like this:

Imagine you are locked in your own private prison. You do not speak the same language as your subjugator. On the rare occasion you are escorted off of the premise, you are forbidden to talk to anyone. You are often fed the leftover food of the children you are required to watch while completing your around the-clock household chores. You have never been paid for your labors and are sometimes physically abused by the woman of the house. (Zarempka 12)

These sentences evoke the hard life and difficulties that they were experiencing. Jonson (2013) mentioned another form of dehumanization and abuse through Douglass's description of how kids were called to be fed. White overseers used to call them as if they were animals. Moreover, he described how the wood was put in large wooden tray or sitting on the ground.

Before the Civil War, Americans were introduced to another important slave narrative by Harriet Jacobs, known as the *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Graham notes that the author was forced to live in public under a pseudonym to address the issue of gender-based violence she had experienced herself as a slave (Bruce and Dickson 293).

Former slaves continued to publish their autobiographies after the abolition of slavery in 1865, often illustrating how slavery had prepared them for full involvement of social and economic life in post-Civil War social and economic life. *Up from Slavery* (1901) by Booker T. Washington is one of the prominent works in the 20th century, since the end of slavery in 1865; this has been an African American success story and an example of interracial cooperation. In modern African American literature, many autobiographies have been published such as *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965) and *Beloved* (1987) by Toni Morrison, which, in essence, is a narrative of a fugitive slave. In almost every chapter of the novel, the main character is haunted by the memory of bondage and the need to escape it. It is obvious that Morrison uses some material of the slave narratives in her novels such as places and names (Dizard389).

The slave narratives have unique characteristics that differentiate them from other forms of literature. One of the defining features of these novels is the letter or testimonial of

authenticity predominantly written by a white editor or abolitionist friend of the African American narrator. During this period, for a Black author's works to be published, they had to be endorsed by a white who could testify about the authenticity and credibility of their stories. Another important characteristic of these stories is that they had to include a phrase like "Written by Himself" in the title of the narrative, as well as an opening statement that began with "I was born ...," and then followed by the place of birth. The body of the paragraphs consisted of vague references to the parents, cruel masters, brutal treatment, and the auctioning of slaves. Overall, it provides an account of the life of the slaves. Furthermore, this form of literature is distinguished by its simplicity, vivid characters, forthright style, and striking dramatic incidents. The most common is graphic violence and daring escape plans, for instance, by Henry "Box" Brown, who managed to escape by packing himself in a box and then being shipped to the abolitionist.

The development of slave narrative literary works from autobiographical accounts to modern works of fiction has led to the creation of slave novels as a literary genre. This generally includes any account of the life or substantial portion of the life of a fugitive or former slave, whether written or related orally by the slave himself or herself such as one of the most known slave narrative works of *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano; or, Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (1789). While the early novels told the stories of escaped slaves or freedmen in the time of racial prejudice, they developed into retrospective fantasy novels and extended their influence into the common days. Not only preserving memory and capturing the historical truth conveyed in these narratives, but slave narratives were essentially the tool used by fugitive or former slaves to declare their independence in the 19th century, and they served to continue to preserve authentic and true historical facts from a first-person perspective. They go beyond mere biographies and are, moreover, a "reconstruction of historical experience" (EDSITEment, np). So, the freed slaves who wrote the novels are considered historians because memory and history meet. These accounts link elements of a slave's personal life and fate with major historical phenomena, such as the American Civil War and the Underground Railroad.

1.6.2 Early 20th Century

After the Civil War ended, the reconstruction period provided a short break from the violence associated with racism that had increased during and after the war. Nonetheless, the hope for a better future for African Americans was short-lived after the rise of Jim Crow laws in southern America (Miller 84). Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois were important

writers during this period offering a new theoretical view on the future of the Black writers in America (Graham 13). Both wrote significant essays relating to social mobility as well as access to education and employment. The novels *Up from Slavery* (1901) by Washington (Graham 13) and *Souls of Black Folk* (1903) by Du Bois appeared in close proximity and became significant in tracing both literary as well as political histories of the African American writers and thinkers.

As the years progressed, Black writers continued to be more prominent in other genres such as poetry and fiction. Then, in the 1910s and 1920s, Black writers grew more prominent in genres of fiction and poetry. Miller notes that Black writers had achieved a new level of artistic freedom in the early 20th century, especially during the Harlem Renaissance, which marked an outburst of creative expression that had not been seen before (5). It is noted that the diversity and depth of the works by the African Americans revealed the achievements made and provided the groundwork for many other works to come in the future. Even during this period, there remained serious challenges relating to racial inequality such as common issues including voter disenfranchisement and legal segregation. During this period, some of the famous novels included Hurston's novel titled, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Jean Toomer's *Cane* (1923) (Miller 10).

During this period, African American literature continued to grow and become more advanced. Unlike the slave narratives, African American work during the Early 20th Century explored beyond the slave's stories. As mentioned above, during this time, issues of racism increased, and members of the Black community were heavily discriminated against. Most of the writers wrote significant essays relating to social mobility as well as access to education and employment. Furthermore, they did not require the endorsement of the whites in order to publish their works. Unlike the slave's narrators, the African American writers provided their accounts of slavery but explored the issues that faced them.

Furthermore, Black writers continued to be more protuberant in new genres such as poetry and fiction. During the slavery period, most of African Americans were illiterate and had relied on white editors as well as their white abolitionist friends to write their stories. However, during this period, most of them had become literate and could read and write. Writers such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois could read and write, and hence they wrote their own stories.

African American writers continued to explore the above issues of discontentment, contraction, and rage that they had buried down in their renaissance works. Even though some of the writers set their work in Harlem, others tried to describe to the readers the issues

faced in the south and helped trace the growth of institutionalized racism (Miller10). They challenged and talked about the issues they faced and highlighted what was happening in this period to the readers.

1.6.3 The Civil Rights Movement and Post-modernity

It is evident that the murmurs of the Civil Rights movement may have taken root back in the fictional stories written in the mid-20th century. Writers such as Richard Wright, in his book *Native Son* (1940) further addressed the issues that resulted from racial prejudice as well as segregation and further suggested that the legal violence against the Africans could eventually lead to murder (Graham 37). According to Milner, Richard Wright expressed his rage in the 1930s and 1940s. The above issues and together with other works by authors such as “Ralph Ellison, Ann Petry, James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Margaret Walker, and Lorraine Hansberry, made the 1940s and 1950s a time of intense literary examination of the psychology as well as the sociology of Black life in America.” (5)

Furthermore, in the late 20th century, significant female narrators emerged in the literary world, with some of the most recognizable being Alice Walker and Toni Morrison. Both authors continued to explore the challenges facing African Americans. For instance, in her epistolary novel published in the early 1980s, *The Color Purple* (1982), Morrison describes the existence of segregation in Georgia in the 1930s. Graham states that “*The Color Purple* unearths the voices of my students, many of whom have been buried under a mountain of oppression during their young lives” (85). This book even won a Pulitzer award for fiction and was adapted to a movie that was nominated for 11 academy awards. In the same decade, Toni Morrison published her book, *Beloved* (1987), which is a novel that retells the horrors of slavery during the Civil war. Graham describes it as a Gothic neo-slave narrative and postmodern romance that speaks in many compelling voices of the historical rape of Black women through the concord of sensibilities that African American people share (185). This novel is actually based on the true story of an African American slave woman known as Margaret Garner who escaped from slavery with her husband and children and then killed her lastborn daughter to prevent her from going back to slavery (Miller 138). The book is rich with personal, historical, and political resonances and is written in a unique way that melts with the heat of emotions presented in the story.

Morrison was also awarded a Pulitzer Prize in the fiction category in 1988 and went on to publish other notable novels including *The Bluest Eye* in 1970, *Sula* published in 1973, and *Song of Solomon* in 1977, and she was later awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in

1993. On her work *Song of Solomon*, Miller states “Milkman Dead, the protagonist of Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon*, takes a journey south to establish his identity and is not served well by his plans, his material comforts, or his preconceived notions of the way things are going to be”(16). Morrison and her colleagues showed that Black writers had finally been able to break the barriers that had prevented the acknowledgment of the contribution of their works. Most of these writers focused on revising and rewriting history, but they also explored varying subject matters and changed their writing style (Miller 6). It is argued that the radical experimentalism promoted by the Black Arts Movement, which emphasized mostly the Black vernacular traditions like blues, paved the way for a number of styles as well as a diversity of subjects discussed in the literature(Miller 6). Milner notes that Black writers are no longer limited to writing about racial themes and have gone to explore other subjects.

During this period, the works of African American writers got better and more sophisticated with an advanced style and language appearing. Even though most still explored the issues of racism and discrimination experienced in the slavery period years, they become even more creative. Furthermore, most of these novels explored the issues that come about due to slavery and discrimination of African Americans in the 20th century. For instance, crime rates and levels of poverty increased. Novels such as *Paradise* by Morrison explored such issues. Pal states,

Paradise provides an incisive critique of the town’s historiography steeped inescapably with the nationalist ethos. Accordingly, the text becomes an important discourse that reassesses the underpinnings of Black Nationalism and more particularly, investigates the possibilities of a unified postcolonial history built on the collective conscience. (44)

Like previous African American writers, Morrison provides a powerful criticism of the means through which Black subjectivity remains suppressed in what is known as a commodity culture.

During this period, issues of shadism and colorism were explored more by many writers such as Toni Morrison. As illustrated above, the history of African American literature is vast and varied. They vary from slave narratives, their role in abolition as well as the Harlem Renaissance on the 20th century literary forms. Many authors have identified the prevalence of this issue in society and how it has often been ignored in African American literature. The origins of colorism or shadism can be traced to slavery. For instance, in

Morrison's *A Mercy*, Sethe was lighter in comparison to the other slaves, and hence she was favored. In the plantations, there were two classifications of slaves – house slaves and field slaves. Colorism is revealed in the sense that those who were darker worked in the fields while those who were fairer or of mixed races would be assigned to the houses. Then, those who were lighter were actually perceived as being less aggressive and less rowdy than the darker ones, and hence they were trusted to work in the homes. As Morrison's writings advanced, she introduced the topic of shadism in families. As seen in her novels *The Bluest Eye* and *God Help the Child*, Morrison tries to represent how people with darker colors are represented by their families. In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola, the main character, sees herself as being ugly as she looks different from others. As a result, she wishes for blue eyes to make her also beautiful. Her family itself discriminates against her, and as highlighted, she is even raped by her father. This form of discrimination is seen in modern society, and many people feel they are not beautiful because of what their society describes and perceives as beautiful.

Furthermore, in *God Help the Child*, a similar situation is presented. This book is the most recent written by Morrison and further highlights that the issue of colorism persists in the 21st century. People of the same color are discriminating against each other and causing harm to those who feel like they do not meet the beauty criteria that have been set by the communities they exist in.

1.7 Toni Morrison as a Contemporary African American Woman Writer

Toni Morrison's early works focused on the racial divide in the country. The novels *The Bluest Eye*, *A Mercy*, *Beloved*, and *Paradise* are focused on the corrosive effects of the white hegemonic ideology and culture on Black people. Morrison articulates the need for people to consider their cultural memory as they try to understand their identity (Phiri 13). The author's work can be identified as focused only on Black identity and culture. Her intention to write about Blacks has been criticized by some scholars who note that most people tend to read the literature through a white lens. However, the author noted that her distinct style of literature is a clarifying statement meant to capture what Black people do. Therefore, the approach to writing about Black people is not racist and should only be considered a response to the pervasive idea of white hegemonic ideology.

Morrison was interested from the onset to explore Black literature and make it popular. During her time at Random Publishing house, Morrison collected fictional papers from Black authors that were of interest. Her focus on African American literature made it

possible for other Black writers to have a platform. Having grown up during the civil rights movement, Morrison was able to grasp the need to deal with the white hegemonic ideology through literature. In relation to the civil rights movement, Black people were affected both positively and negatively. The negatives came from the response of the governments. In her novels, the issue of shadism is highlighted, which offers a preview of how Black people related to each other. Morrison notes that Black women writers look at things in a loving and unforgiving way because they intend to repossess, rename, and re-own.

Morrison's novels explore the meaning of being Black in America. They strive to provide details of African American culture in a world that only embraces a Eurocentric culture. *The Bluest Eye* explores the effects of white cultural domination in the lives of African Americans. Morrison challenges the idea that Black people are not able to be in relationships with white people, which was pervasive when she was growing up. It was essential for Black people to produce literature that provided details on the rich African cultural traditions. Morrison argues that whiteness and the American identity are constructed to enable African Americans to be discriminated against (Phiri 11). Furthermore, Morrison examined American literary works and found out that the idea of white hegemony is pervasive in all the novels. She related to African Americans and was of the view that the American identity was based on ideals that could only apply to whites. The novel was different from her earlier works because it adopted the notion that Black is beautiful. Morrison also focuses on slavery in her novel *Beloved* where Black American characters play an important role.

Morrison had a unique and recognizable style in terms of how she used language. Gillespie even notes that her novels are easy to read and at the same time utilize various styles, such as changing the voice of the narrator to change view (42). The most common techniques used include descriptive dialogue, varied sentence structure, and significant historical references.

Ahmad and Wasaan note that Morrison applies an unusual comparison technique, which effectively provides a thorough description of the details she hoped to present (457). Furthermore, she made use of similes to help readers easily connect with the alternate experiences and images she created in her stories (Ahmad and Wasan 458). For instance, in *The Bluest Eye*, she utilizes a unique comparison where Pecola is seen lying awake at night and listening to the fight between her parents: "the unquarreled evening hug like the first note of a dirge in sullenly expectant air" (*The Bluest Eye* 41). The main aim of these styles is to

make the novels engaging and, at the same time, provide an overview of Morrison's writing style.

Another important trademark of Morrison's style is the reference to history. She used this technique to provide the readers with the background information about the particular time period where the novel takes place and add more depth to the story, which in turn makes it more realistic (Singh 37). Most of her novels were, in fact, references to the history of African Americans and their experiences during slavery and beyond (Singh 37). For instance, *Beloved* is based on the true story of a slave woman who killed her daughter just to prevent her from going through the life of a slave. Furthermore, in *The Bluest Eye*, it is noted that the parents of Pecola explain to her the nature of the outside world: "Outdoors, we knew, was the real terror of life. The threat of being outdoors frequently surfaced in those days" (*The Bluest Eye* 17). Here, Morrison attempts to show the fear that people of color experienced due to being outsiders during that period. Overall, she uses this style to successfully deliver her message to the readers and people in order to be able to associate with that history.

In addition, Morrison also uses a unique sentence structure and employs a variety of sentences, which helps makes the writing more fluid. In *The Bluest Eye*, she uses periodic and inverted sentences; for instance, when Junior's mother comes back home and her favorite cat is dead, and she sees Pecola: "Up over the hump of the cat's back she looked" (Morrison 92). Morrison included these types of sentences in order to break monotonous reading by creating sentences that are somehow different and unexpected. The quality of sentences used by Morrison reflects her ability and skill as a writer.

Morrison's style of writing was instrumental in helping her to gain ground as one of the most renowned authors of all time. One of her novels, *Beloved* (1987), won a Pulitzer Prize in the fiction category in 1988 (Graham 13). She was further given a Nobel Peace Prize, which shows how influential her novels have been in the world and the number of people she has touched with her stories.

As aforementioned, Toni Morrison is one rare American author and who experienced both critical and commercial success (Fox 2019). It is noted that her novels often appeared on the New York Times best-seller list. To further how people further appreciated her works, her novels also appeared on numerous occasions on Oprah Winfrey's book club and were also subject to countless critical studies (Fox 2019). Morrison told rich stories of African American women struggling against shadism, intra-racial shadism, and parental neglect. Her approach to this topic shows how the issue of intra-racial discrimination has often been ignored. For instance, in *The Bluest Eye*, which has greatly been appreciated and analyzed by

scholars, she tells the story of a very dark-skinned Black girl named Pecola, who is considered ugly by other people and is even raped by her father. Morrison's work has been met with both negative and positive criticism. Some of the critics of her novels include people such as Michiko Kakutani, Anita Sethi, and also fiction writers like Margaret Atwood, John Irving, Edna O'Brien, and Roxane Gay. Not all critiques are positive, but they all outline some interesting facts about the work of Morrison as an extraordinary author.

John Leonard analyzed Morrison's work in *The New York Times* in November, 1970. He states:

I have said 'poetry.' But *The Bluest Eye* is also history, sociology, folklore, nightmare, and music. It is one thing to state that we have institutionalized waste that children suffocate under mountains of merchandised lies. It is another thing to demonstrate that waste, re-create those children, and live and die by it. Miss Morrison's angry sadness overwhelms.

In this article, Leonard appreciates the uniqueness of Morrison's work and how it tells the story of the issue of shadism and colorism that has been hidden and assumed throughout history.

Through *The London Review of Books*, November 12, 1987, Jane Miller also analyzed Morrison's works. She states, "Toni Morrison's novels have been constructed, and are magically unsettled, by the unique character of historical memory for Black Americans". According to Miller, this novel provides a better story of the African American, who have been hidden by the American writers over the years. She states that "Toni Morrison has created a frightening, beautiful and intensely exciting novel about America and its past. I am not able to think of a better one. In this regard, it is only through Morrison's work that one can better understand the torture and sufferings of the African Americans since the slavery period".

Atwood, through *The New York Times* in 1987, analyzed Morrison's Novel, *Beloved*. She states, "Indeed, Ms. Morrison's versatility and technical and emotional range appear to know no bounds. If there were any doubts about her stature as a pre-eminent American novelist of her own or any other generation, *Beloved* would put them to rest. In three words or less, it's a hair-raiser". According to Atwood, *Beloved* is written a rich language and goes directly to the point and effectively outlines the sufferings of African Americans as a result of slavery and discrimination.

Other authors, such as Michiko Kakutani, have negatively criticized Morrison's works. In *The New York Times* in 1998, Kakutani states:

Unfortunately, *Paradise* is everything that *Beloved* was not: it's a heavy-handed, schematic piece of writing, thoroughly lacking in the novelistic magic Ms. Morrison has wielded so effortlessly in the past. It's a contrived, formulaic book that mechanically pits men against women, old against young, the past against the present. (22)

She argues that *Paradise* failed to reach the standards of Morrison's past novels. Another author, Hillary Mantel in *The Guardian* in 2008, argues that *A Mercy* was both a success and failure. She states that

The language of the book, always supple, graceful and inventive, is enough reason to read and value it. But there are no changes of tone or pace to sustain the narrative and a certain authorial weariness behind the whole enterprise. *A Mercy* is a shadow of the great novel it should be; its half-told tales leave cobweb trails in mind, like the fragments of a nightmare. Mantel argues that Morrison was successful in her effective utilization of language and style, but the story itself is not fully told.

There is no doubt that the African American community has experienced racial discrimination from white people. However, the discrimination between Blacks is covered largely in other works such as *Beloved*, *Paradise*, and *A Mercy*. This thesis analyzes these three works together with *The Bluest Eye* to understand the impact of the discrimination, shadism, and colorism on the Black community. Criticisms on the works of Toni Morrison focus on her quest to write about the Black experience and her position as a female Black American writer.

2. Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

In most of her literary works, Toni Morrison explores the issue of shadism and how it is obsessed with European features or white standards of stereotypical beauty and how people of the same race, particularly African American women, are forced to conform to this standard, which has a severe impact on them and others around them. As mentioned previously, shadism is a form of bias or prejudice in which individuals are treated differently based on the social meanings associated with skin tone or color. Shadism in the U.S. goes back hundreds of years ago to the age of slavery. The various shades of African American skin originate from the mix of genes resulting from the white slave masters raping the Black slaves. Their mixed-race children were still considered slaves based on the one-drop rule, yet they were granted more privileges than their dark-skinned kin (Kohler 3). The light-skinned slaves were characterized as smarter and more capable; therefore, they were often given some form of educational training and usually worked less difficult jobs inside the house, while dark-skinned slaves worked outside in the fields (Dixon & Amp: Telles 407). In Morrison's novels, some characters try to pass for white physically and mentally through mimicry. This chapter aims to discuss shadism from a perspective of intersectionality and how people with a darker skin tone suffered particular forms of discrimination due to shadism and its interaction with class, gender, age, ability, and race. This theory is substantially represented in Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye*, which describes how African American women and girls like Pecola are considered ugly by her family and the community due to her darker skin tone.

Shadism typically results in trauma on the part of the people experiencing the discrimination. This chapter studies Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye* and the stories of Black women and young girls relating to the beauty standards established by white America, as well as the role families and society play in their reactions to and perpetuation of these standards. This chapter also analyzes the intersectionality of race, gender, class, and other identity aspects and how they influence shadism. This work intends to analyze how the intersectionality categories like race, gender, and class are portrayed in the novel and how it relates to the problems of white beauty standards and self-loathing or self-hatred. I suggest that *The Bluest Eye* is an objection to the adoption of beauty as a universal and positive value. Morrison proposes the construction of healthy and wholesome identities through the association with the tradition and culture of a society (Dittmer 19). The aim is to begin by examining the ideas and objectives of the African American literary and Black feminist movements during the time. Then, an analysis will be conducted of the characters in the novel. Instead of supporting the idea that Blackness is beautiful, the novelist portrays that the

characters become obsessed with beauty standards and are acknowledged by the whites to the extent that they end up hurting others and themselves.

The Bluest Eye is about the character Pecola and is told through the eyes of multiple narrators. One of the main narrators is Claudia, a childhood friend of Pecola, and she uses two perspectives. In one of the perspectives, she tells the story as it is happening, while in the other one; she retells the story by reflecting on events that had already happened. The novel is divided into four sections. The first chapter is called 'Autumn' and tells the story of Pecola and why she lived with the MacAteer's. Claudia's mother told Claudia that Pecola is a girl who had no place to go, and that was the reason they took her in. Pecola's father burned their house, which rendered them homeless. The county intervened and had Pecola placed under the care of the MacAteers before a solution was found. Freida, Claudia's little sister, bonded with Pecola over their love of Shirley Temple, a famous American child star known for her blonde curls and babyish singing. This led to the development of a sense of hatred in Claudia, who receives a doll for a Christmas gift only to dismember it to see what it is made up of. The second chapter is titled 'Winter' and discusses Pecola's obsession with a light-skinned Black girl who ultimately humiliates her when she calls herself cute and Pecola ugly. Furthermore, she enters into an altercation with Junior, which results in her being chased away. The third section is called 'Spring' and provides the reader a glimpse of Pecola's parents. It also presents how men mistreated women as Freida is inappropriately touched by a guest living with them. This section finds that Pecola's father Cholly comes home drunk, stumbles into the kitchen, and finds Pecola washing dishes. He then proceeds to rape her and leaves her unconscious body on the floor. The chapter ends with Pecola descending into madness after being tricked by Soaphead. The last chapter is titled 'Summer', and we learn that Pecola is pregnant from the rape that happened. Freida and Claudia pray for the child to survive and even offer a bicycle as a sacrifice to God. As the novel ends, we learn that the child is born prematurely and does not survive.

2.1 Intersectionality in *The Bluest Eye*

Intersectional discrimination is a type of discrimination that occurs on the basis of multiple personal grounds, identities, or characteristics that function and associate with one another at the same time in such a way that they cannot be separated. It happens when a person is discriminated against because of the mixture of one or more bases. This term, coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, was created to show that an individual could suffer

discrimination because of a mix of interrelated attributes that make them disconnected (Berger, Michele and Kathleen 9). She and other critical feminists argue that Black people suffer a particular form of discrimination due to the interaction of class, gender, and race mostly. One not only suffers because of race but also gender and class. This theory is substantially represented in Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye*, which describes how African American women and girls like Pecola not only suffer because of their race but also because of their gender and class. Previous studies have demonstrated how intersectional discrimination is involved in *The Bluest Eye* to get a deeper understanding of how intersectional categories of race, gender, and class all play an integral role in the discrimination that takes place against African American people.

Shyama Bhardwa (2017) has discussed *The Bluest Eye* in an article titled "Race and gender in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*", which explores how race and gender are used to humiliate and discriminate against African American women and how this is portrayed in the novel. Gender and race indicate the agonizing situation under which African Americans stayed in white American society. Sexism, too, was even more discriminating and the cause of oppression to African American women who were sexually oppressed by white and Black men. They bore discrimination and humiliation with the white and other women of color that were also exploited on the basis of their gender. This study reveals how Black women, particularly Pecola, Claudia, and Pauline, were exploited by their families and society because of their color. Since the days of slavery, African Americans, regardless of their gender, experienced racism's harsh reality.

Meanwhile, there is a slight distinction between them. Here, the Black women, particularly dark-skinned, not only encounter gender humiliation but also class and race discrimination. This study reveals how Black women, particularly Pecola, Frieda, Claudia, and Pauline, are exploited by their families and society because of their different appearances and color socially, culturally, and physically. This research supports how the impact of race, class, and gender issues interrelate to cause discrimination against African American women. Certainly, this research is beneficial for my chapter despite the fact that it did not give attention to the dilemma of shadism that we are going to adopt through the lens of intersectionality.

In her article entitled, "Race and gender in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*" (2009), Kathrin Rosenbaum points out how Morrison faces the truth about the intersection of race and gender by discussing how sexism and racism operate and the unpleasant consequences which happen (68). Gender and race have adversely shaped many people throughout history.

Most notably, native African Americans and Americans have been victimized and discriminated against irrespective of their skin color. This study shows how Morrison expounds on the intersection of race and gender by placing race over gender in a form of hierarchy, which means concentrating more on race rather than on gender, and how she believes that racism influences gender discrimination even though they are interrelated. On the contrary, my study shows how the issues of race, gender, and other identity aspects are related to each other. This will be revealed starting with the race issue of 'shadism', which leads to highlight other identity aspects and affect a person.

An article by Cahyawatti and AdeRachman (2014) focused on how child abuse was portrayed in the novel. *The Bluest Eye* is a conflict between two races – the white people and the Black people. This circumstance causes Black people to suffer from repressive conditions like poverty, lack of education and position, and low salaries. To flee this situation, they turn to alcoholism and get involved in prostitution. Addiction could make someone lose consciousness and cause violent behavior such as disturbing those around them including family and children because they are more likely to be victims of sexual practices and harassment. Prostitution could make a person appear dirty, and little kids become easy targets of sexual assault and harassment. Poverty is also equal to the factors described above because it makes individuals stay under pressure because of a lack of money. Though research shows how racism causes poverty, violence, and prostitution, it tends to privilege race over class and gender. Again, this research focuses just on the issues of race and gender in *The Bluest Eye*. However, my research provides an in-depth detailed analysis of most of identity aspects such as age, ability, class, education, and how they intersect with other aspects as a lens of racism acts, making the research more fruitful from all angles.

Alessandro Geary (6) explores how the novel depicts Blacks' domination by the existing European beauty standards and how racism devastates African American women and female children's self-image. This research also shows how the novel, at its core, is about discrimination bolstered by sexism, racism, and classism influencing Black girls in the white supremacy manifested in America. It also shows how Morrison, at the stage of her literary work, views racism as the only main issue affecting African American people. This study helps to understand how Morrison separates race from gender in that it influences both of them to cause discrimination. Geary has a significant argument to start within this project because it discusses the issue of the intersectionality of many aspects that Black society suffers from, especially through the female characters. However, the additional and different

point of the present research is to discuss shadism from Geary's intersectionality perspective. This means that any form of racism indeed has a relation or effect from other aspects.

Discrimination based on skin color, or shadism, is a form of bias or prejudice in which individuals are treated differently based on the social meanings associated with skin tone or color. This issue has been present in African American societies for many centuries, becoming more prominent during slavery. The multiple shades of black skin originate from the combination of genes leading to slave white masters' sexual assault of African American slaves (Hunter 239). Their children of combined race were still regarded as slaves based on one rule, but they were given even more privileges than their dark-skinned counterparts. Light-skinned slaves were featured as more able and intelligent and were usually offered some form of educational training and performed easier jobs.

In contrast, dark-skinned slaves worked more difficult jobs in the plantation fields. This distinction of families was a deceitful means of dividing society, eliminating their collective identities, and prohibiting communication amongst slave groups so as to avoid escape or rebellion. Shadism plays a considerable role in how it affects intersectionality categories like race, gender, and class. Research has shown that light skin has been connected to European beauty standards, privileges and opportunity, while dark skin has been associated with poverty, inferiority, and ugliness (Kohler 2).

The phenomenon of shadism has influenced, and continues to affect, communities with complicated and profound histories of racism, colonialism, and what was historically marked as racial interbreeding and miscegenation. The word shadism is modeled on other oppressive beliefs such as racism and is notably used in the US racial context. Suchit in his research connects shadism to colonialism, and though many researchers separate shadism and racism, shadism is equal and is very well fused into the fractures of racism (Dixon and Telles 408). Like all forms of racism, shadism elucidates color discrimination with racist ideas by suggesting that the discrimination between light-skinned and dark-skinned people is not due to the oppression of dark-skinned people but the skin tone.

The Bluest Eye explores the issues of race, gender, and class. The novel demonstrates social division by displaying the differences between social and economic aspects. This causes a class division within and outside the Black community. Pecola grows up in a state of humiliation due to her dark skin color and being repeatedly called ugly by everyone she knows. For instance, she is picked on by younger boys because of her dark complexion. In a stark contrast, Maureen is treated differently from Pecola because of her light skin color and is presumed to be superior and of a higher class. Pecola's mother claims that her dark skin

color makes her ugly and is the reason for being in a lower-class family (Morrison 92). Shadism and racism are also prevalent throughout the novel. Morrison uses Pecola as the only complicated character that encounters many problems and finally loses a battle against herself, trying to live up to white society's perception of beauty. The issue of shadism is most obvious when Pecola links her troubles to her dark skin tone (Kohler 2). It is clear that for some Black people, skin color oppression or shadism is just as harsh, and perhaps even more hurtful than racism, sexism, or classism because it not only comes from other races but also from their racial group. Shadism influences and is substantially embedded in the issues of race, gender, and class, which intersect at a point where the person is considerably affected. The result is often that lighter-skinned men and women of color have a persistent benefit in terms of income, spousal status, beauty, residential segregation, and educational attainment (Hunter 181).

Quite often, when discussing *The Bluest Eye*, Morrison addresses the tale that served as a source of motivation for the novel. She remembers, as she said in an interview with Alan Yentob for the BBC, that she was at the beginning of elementary school when she was first made wittingly aware of the self-loathing feeling that beauty standards can cause. She and a friend had been debating God's existence and how she believed he was not real because after desperately praying for blue eyes for two years, her wish was not granted. Morrison claimed that her friend had an epiphany because she looked upon her friend and thought it would have been terrible if God had given her blue eyes. She realized that her friend was so beautiful, which made her question her look.

And I realized she was absolutely beautiful
and at ten, you don't think in those terms -
somebody's cute or, you know, whatever, but not beauty
and that was the first time I saw it.
She was very dark, she had these wonderful almond eyes,
high cheek bones, lovely, you could go on.
And she wanted something...other.

Many artists during the 1920s and 1930s highlighted that the means of attaining the art of white standard politics, which spoke of nationhood and self-determination, was through a common, though varied, Black Aesthetic. Ramsby II and Smethurst describe the concept as the establishment of a system of aesthetic value entrenched in Black traditions that the art of

the Black Nationalism and African American movement can be formed, evaluated, and studied (180). Part of the movement's idea was that 'Black is beautiful,' saying that urged African American poets to overturn accepted values and traditional forms and Black people to quit viewing themselves through white eyes (Trodd 645). In addition, Langston Hughes indicates this point in his essay "*The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain*" (1926) in stating "express individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame...on top of the mountain, free within [them] selves" (Paragraph 14). This means that we have to accept ourselves as we are and consider ourselves beautiful. The closing statement reads "Morrison has her concerns about this slogan because it shows the probability of people overlooking the facts that Black had not usually been pretty and nobody would remember how agonizing a specific type of internecine racism is" (15). Another concern is that it seems to be not whether Black was pretty or not, but with the design for it to be. According to Williams (2009), some contemporary African American writers began criticizing Black societies' perpetuation and acceptance of white values and notions. According to Morrison, when society adopted the physical beauty concept without adopting it to embrace Blackness, assimilation and Blackness become probable harmful outcomes, as is the case with *The Bluest Eye* (Williams 72). So, it seems that adopting beauty as an admirable virtue without critically analyzing it troubled Morrison. It is seen as a consequence of accumulating intermixing races, leading to the mystification of clearly defined racial categories as white and Black and the substitution of racism, which becomes the base for discrimination and subordination among people of color (Cormier-Hamilton 114). In her view, the slogan was necessary to demonstrate how the concept that people were most familiar with came from white western culture and how before mobilizations were formed to alter it to hold Blackness, it had the strength to evoke people's self-hatred and hurt them immensely.

Other than race-related problems, gender issues also contribute to her weariness. Morrison notes that the phrase 'Black is beautiful' was common at that time among African writers of both fiction and non-fiction. This idea by Morrison is indicative of the fact that she may have been showing the reader how the Black-Arts-Movement was dominated by men. For example, bell hooks states that BAM men supported the relegation of women and enforcing patriarchy. The men believed that women were not supposed to take high positions both at home and in politics. The author believes that no other group in America has had their identity socialized out of existence as Black women (hooks 316). From this, it is possible to infer that women were rarely recognized as a group during those times. Instead, they were viewed as unimportant, which shows how patriarchy was entrenched. In the case of sexism,

women did not get the same recognition as their white counterparts. Very few authors acknowledged the issue of sexism and how it affected Black women. This is because when Black people are talked about the focus tends to be on Black men (hooks, 316). In addition, the trauma that the Black woman underwent was presented in detail by Morrison through the life of Pecola and the other women characters.

Morrison's words are true in describing how BAM ignores the plight of women and instead the focus given to Black men. It is important to note that Black women's identity issues can only be discussed thoroughly and intuitively if the issues of gender, race, and class are analyzed simultaneously. Kimberlé Crenshaw reinforces this idea by describing how the concepts of race, gender, and class have been misused.

2.2 The Influence of Intersectionality on Shadism in *The Bluest Eye*'s Characters

The issue of shadism has been presented in African American societies for many centuries, becoming most clearly outlined during slavery. It has a significant impact on intersectionality categories like race, gender, and class. Research has shown that light skin has been connected to European beauty standards, privileges, and opportunity, while dark skin has been associated with poverty, inferiority, and ugliness. Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* explores the issues of shadism and examines intersectionality categories alongside their influence on dark-skinned Black women. This is carried out through the main character, Pecola Breedlove, and other characters. The influence of racism, gender, and class on female characters resulted in trauma which manifested itself in various ways and affected the way the women viewed themselves in the presence of their white counterparts.

Numerous quotes highlight that shadism is related to racism within the same race and influenced by other issues like gender and class.

A new girl in school named Maureen Peal. A high-yellow dream child with long brown hair braided into two lynch ropes that hung down her back. She was rich, at least by our standards, as rich as the richest of the white girls, swaddled in comfort and care. The quality of her clothes threatened to derange Frieda and me. (Morrison 62)

From this passage, we can see that Maureen's status is better than other Blacks because of her skin color as light skin girl (Black mulatto) and class status as a rich family which could be

discerned from her clothes and hair made. So, even dark-skinned people will treat her as white because she has some white features. Lipschutz illustrated this by calling it hierarchal based on color, especially on the basis of physical features (69). Here, we can say that racism and differentiation within the same race and between economic and social classes intersect in terms of shadism (all of that affects Black, not white people). As it is a type of oppression among people of the same race, which reflects shadism, Maureen considers herself different from Black people even though she is Black. Still, because of her class situation (higher than dark-skinned), she felt superior when she buys ice cream for Pecola. Afterwards, she asked her about seeing her father naked, but Claudia and Frieda started to stick up for Pecola's situation. At that moment, Maureen screamed, "I am cute! And you ugly! Black and ugly e mos" (Morrison 73).

This act of dehumanizing Pecola clarifies the hard situation of Pecola from the Black mulatto character Maureen who feels superior and uses the same names that other races used to call Pecola. Those issues of the intersectionality of race, class, and beauty standard because light-skinned women are perceived as more attractive and having a higher chance of getting married to higher class spouses, while dark-skinned women are regarded as ugly. This in turn lowered their self-esteem and also led them to prefer to marry light-skinned men. Society equated light skin with live ability, competency, intelligence, and attractiveness. This is supported by Fanon, who claims that whiteness means beauty, intelligence, and richness (51-52). Through his claim, the idea that whiteness is 'beautiful' and Blackness is 'ugly' becomes stereotypical among the Black community and creates social hierarchies that Lipschutz illustrated. All of these issues intertwined and make shadism rise up and affect the characters' existence within the same community.

2.3 Pecola: The damaged dark-skinned girl

Pecola is a young African American girl who lives in a difficult environment where she and her society work in seed planting owned by white supremacists. Pecola thought that this would make a difference in her life and therefore prayed to have blue eyes. Because of the problem of beauty standards, the novel describes the way Pecola wants to forget the concepts of 'ugliness' and how it describes Black people, especially females. As a protagonist, Pecola can be considered a victim according to her harsh family and the racist society she lives within.

Shadism can be observed when Pecola links her troubles to her dark skin tone. She is so concerned about her beauty that it ends up being a hindrance to her advancement in life. This was especially evident when a boy came to her, and she looked at his eyes saying:

See if they're bluer. You're being silly. I'm not going to look at everybody's eyes. You have to.

No, I don't.

Please. If there is somebody with bluer eyes than mine, then maybe there is somebody with the bluest eyes. The bluest eyes in the whole world.

That's just too bad, isn't it?

Please help me look

No.

But suppose my eyes aren't blue enough?

Blue enough for what?

Blue enough for...I don't know."

Blue enough for something. Blue enough...for you! (...) Will you come back then? Of course, I will. I'm just going away for a little while. You promise?

Sure. I'll be back. Right before you very eyes. (Morrison 128–129)

Pecola really searches for love and somebody that would live with her, but she is afraid of being alone again if she does not have blue eyes. This quote demonstrates how attempting to achieve white beauty standards will never satisfy Pecola. If the bluest eyes, which are a concept of beauty associated with whiteness, cannot work for her and attain affection, it seems not to be the right answer for Black identity healing. She was afraid of being a Black girl, and her family and society will not accept her, especially Black people. Pecola's plight and situation represents intersectionality in several ways, and these will now be elaborated upon.

First of all, Pecola is a female. This means her gender puts her in a disadvantaged position in the patriarchal Black male-dominated society, and this was evident when Mr. Yacobowski looked at Pecola's eye and said "The total absence of human recognition"(Morrison 48). Although less research has concentrated on exploring gender inequality when investigating skin tone effects, some researchers have pointed to the impact of skin tone based on gender and beauty. Among these researchers is Nurhayati in her article "Intersecting Oppression of Gender and Race in Toni Morrison's the Bluest Eye and God

Help the Child”, where she discussed the experiences of African American society and how it leads to oppression, which in turn is an effect of the hegemony of white beauty (378). Second, she is from a poor family which was evident when Maureen proposed to Pecola to buy ice cream – “Hey.” Maureen stopped short. “There’s an Isaleys. Want some ice cream?” she intended to say this in order to show class distinction between Pecola and her through the statement “I have money” (68). So, economically, her situation as a lower-class girl aggravates the situation. Another thing is that her Black society will not accept her rationale wanting to have blue eyes. Thus, it shows how shadism is a very sensitive issue in African Americans and its effect on people of color. In addition to this, shadism is influenced by the intersection of race, gender, and class together, and this can be seen where she became disappointed because of the oppression from different aspects as Kathy Davis claims, “[intersectionality] refers to the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference . . . social practices, institutional arrangements, cultural ideologies, and the outcomes of these interactions” (68). From the above, all the race issues cannot be separated from other categories because they influence it.

Pecola is blamed for the negative things that befall her each time they occur. The quote below illustrates this point further, in which she was talking about the seeds and how it will not matter whatever they bring, explaining that her generation will not change or get rid of the idea of being controlled

Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruit it will not bear, and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live. We are wrong, of course, but it doesn’t matter. It’s too late. At least on the edge of my town, among the garbage and the sunflowers of my town, it’s much, much, much too late. (Morrison 131)

We can notice from this quote that the entire town where Pecola lives blames her for the rape, saying that it cannot have come from nothing and that there must have been a reason for it. Another thing was the case of Cholly. When he was engaging in sexual intercourse with the young girl, two white men put the flashlight on him and forced him to continue. He felt humiliated by this action from white people at the same time as feeling hatred for the girl. So, from this situation, Pecola and Cholly suffered racism from the two white men. We can notice that the colored women suffered from the intersection of race and gender, which Crenshaw classified as ‘structural intersectionality’ which refers to “the ways in which the

location of women of color at the intersection of race and gender makes our actual experience of domestic violence, rape, and remedial reform qualitatively different than that of white women” (Crenshaw 171). The act of shadism is evident when it comes to the hate of a Black to the colored girl as they are considered 'ugly', but it is also influenced by the issue of gender such as in Pecola's situation with the white, which makes her hate being Black as well as Black men, then in turn hating her race (skin color) and her gender.

The society surrounding Pecola affects her and even the children in the school because she is dark-skinned. As shown below, light-skinned children surround Pecola and taunt her by shouting ‘Black e mo’. Pecola's situation resembles what Julia Kristeva mentions in her book *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, where the character separated from the norms of morality and society as Pecola's community do toward her (62). Furthermore, she is marginalized and neglected because of her race, gender, social and economic status.

Bay Boy, Woodrow Cain, Buddy Wilson, Junie Bug—like a necklace of semiprecious stones they surrounded her. Heady with the smell of their own musk, thrilled by the easy power of a majority, they gaily harassed her. “Black e mo. Black e mo. Yadaddsleepsnekked. Black e moBlack e moyadadd sleeps nekked. Black e mo...” (Morrison43).

From this quote, it can be inferred that Pecola is viewed as darker than the children who participate in that speech as they are a mixture of light and dark-skinned children. Here, we can notice that the racism and oppression come even from children of the same race and who prove that they do not have the same class, social, and racial roots. From this point, Suchit's definition of intra-racial shadism can be observed where the same racial group members discriminate against each other based on their skin tone (3). In this sense, shadism is a part of the oppression that comes from the same race in terms of class, race, gender, or social hierarchies. In this case, Pecola is being described as darker and being taunted by the light-skinned children who feel they are more privileged than her. Thus, she underwent discrimination from the people of her race, which illustrates shadism.

The quote below is a narration by Morrison of the event of Pecola being raped by her drunk father.

He wanted to fuck her—tenderly. But the tenderness would not hold. The tightness of her vagina was more than he could bear. His soul seemed to slip

down to his guts and fly out into her, and the gigantic thrust he made into her then provoked the only sound she made—a hollow suck of air in the back of her throat. Like the rapid loss of air from a circus balloon. (Morrison 100)

When Cholly came home in a drunken state, he could not recognize anything around him when Pecola was in the kitchen. She was shocked by his sexual desire and remained silent as he raped her. The rape that Cholly inflicted on his daughter as her father and obviously from the same family and race, but not from the same sex shows discrimination on his part as he is Black just like Pecola but doing it with her simply because she is a girl. Additionally, simply being Black means that no one will pay attention to her situation. Here, we believe that we can introduce the concept and the term “stereotype threat” (Steele and Aronson 797). In this situation, Pecola accepts the blame in the sense that she is willing to let it go and not pursue it. We can assume that Pecola feels degraded and embarrassed not only from being raped but mainly because of being raped by her father.

Shadism is apparent in this act because the discrimination and oppression come from the same race tone (Black), but it is influenced and intersects by other aspects like sexuality, gender, age, social and economic class. At first, the concept of sexuality is used verbally because the one who rapes her is her father. However, Pecola is the one who is oppressed, and her father is privileged because he is older, male, and has greater power in his role as father. Secondly, because she is a female and still young, it makes it easy for him to do that. Thirdly, it is important to consider her social status and economic class. Cholly is her father who is responsible for the family both economically and socially, so he controls everything as he pleases. All these issues intersect at one point of oppression which leads to shadism. It is not only about race or racism within the same race but also about other issues such as gender, age ability to make the act of racism appear. In this passage, we notice the existence of the intersection of sexuality, gender, the social and economic class, which leads to saying that shadism can be gendered because of the patriarchal system as well as class.

In the novel, Pecola tried to convince herself that she has the beauty standard of having blue eyes, but in reality, she physically does not. According to Randall Kennedy, the notion of racial passing is "a deception that enables a person to adopt a certain roles or identities from which he would be barred by prevailing social standards in the absence of his misleading conduct." (1146). This means that she did not pass physically for white as she had the features of dark-skinned children but she passes in terms of psyche and had blue eyes.

2.4 Geraldine: arrogant Black light-skinned woman

Geraldine is a Black light-skinned mulatto woman who is middle-class. Mulatto is defined in the literary dictionary as "a person who has both Black and white ancestors." She behaves as white people do by considering herself and her family superior to Black people in terms of house care, physical appearance, and family with her son Junior and her husband, Louis. Also, her affection for caring about her cat shows her white behavior. She is very eager to educate Junior as a white person and prevent him from interacting with Black children because she feels that they are ugly and dirty.

In winter his mother put Jergens Lotion on his face to keep the skin from becoming ashen. Even though he was light-skinned, it was possible to ash. The line between colored and nigger was not always clear; subtle and telltale signs threatened to erode it, and the watch had to be constant. (Morrison 58)

We can notice that Geraldine tried to show Junior the way he differentiates between Black people in terms of bad (nigger) or good (colored). This way of thinking or seeing Black people can inculcate shadism. Throughout the differentiation between 'nigger' and colored people, there is a social effect as they consider colored people better than nigger (dark skin), which is stereotypically applied to dark-skinned people. We can also indicate the situation of Pecola in the school; as a female, she suffered from racism from her colleagues when they mocked her and called her 'ugly' even though they were from the same race. Again, intra-racial racism can be observed. This resembles what happened to Pecola and shows how shadism is influenced not only by race but gender and economic class and can be related to stereotype. Though Geraldine's social status is good, she feels diminished and wants to appear that she belongs to the aristocratic class. Junior was eager to play with dark boys, but his mother objected, stating "Junior used too long to play with the Black boys. More than anything in the world, he wanted to play King of the Mountain and have them push him down the mound of dirt and roll over him" (Morrison 58).

The following quote from Geraldine occurred when she was explaining to her son which group of people he belonged to. According to Geraldine, people of color are different from the 'niggers'.

Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud. He belonged to the former group: he wore white shirts and blue trousers; his hair was cut as

close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool, the part was etched into his hair by the barber... (Morrison 77)

Here, Geraldine created an incorrect perception of social hierarchies in her son's mind. Hence, social status plays a vital role in Black community differentiations, and this differentiation and physical appearance privileged light-skinned people over dark. As a result, shadism cannot be only race-based but can also be influenced by social hierarchies.

Shadism also influences class status since the social and economic benefits of light skin are clear. In cultures where resources are divided by color and race, light-skinned people are offered disproportionate advantages. Dark-skinned people lack the economic and social capital that being light skinned provides and are disadvantaged and limited in employment, housing, marriage, and education. Light-skinned Blacks are more likely to complete more school years, have prominent jobs, and have higher wages. Even in terms of job selection, light-skinned Blacks are considered more competent, unlike dark-skinned Blacks with good credentials even though they have low qualifications. Therefore, light-skinned people have significant and unequivocal benefits in wealth and income relative to their dark-skinned counterparts (Telles and Murugua 10).

Geraldine is a typical mulatto who lives in similar conditions to white people and tries to act white. She is considered an example of mimicry which leads to profound disparities between dark-skinned Black and light-skinned Black, which creates intraracial discrimination. Homi Bhabha defines this as:

Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (126)

This can be seen in Geraldine's behavior when she wanted to get Pecola out of the house, shown through her saying "'Get out,' she said, her voice quiet. 'You nasty little Black bitch. Get out of my house.'" (Morrison 92). Here, she tried to pretend behave in a way that she is not.

2.5 Pauline: the disabled woman and mother

Pecola's mother, Polly, who is Black, is certain about her Blackness and ugliness, which make her very cold toward her position as a woman in her community. She sees herself as a martyr of an unsuccessful marriage because of her damaged and disabled foot and Cholly's habit of abusing her physically and verbally. She did not feel anything in her family and attempted to find some real meaning within her family, but she just found it in the house where she works in a white family and in the romantic movies.

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 the history of human thought. Both originated in envy, thrived in insecurity, and ended in disillusion. In equating physical beauty with virtue, she stripped her mind, bound it, and collected self-contempt by the heap. (Morrison 78)

Pauline's relation with the white beauty standard is different from that faced by Geraldine and Maureen. As the latter two gave, Pauline sought it all through their whole lives, only truly experiencing it after moving to Ohio. She spent her childhood in Alabama and her teenage life in Kentucky, where even though she did not have a good and perfect life, she had her family and listened to Black songs while happily dating. However, everything changed when they moved to Ohio. It was hard to get along with people, and she felt lonely and missed her society because there were more whites than Blacks. Her fellow Blacks made fun of her because of how she talked and other idiosyncrasies such as how she did not straighten her hair. She impressed them by buying new clothes and picking fights with Cholly over money until they started losing connection with each other. Finally, she began going to the films where white concepts disassociated her from Black roots. From that starting point of watching films, "She forgot lust and simple caring for" to appear like white female girls, "She regarded love as possessive mating and romance as the goal of the spirit" (Morrison 78) and as being willing to have a white partner.

Pauline felt inferior to the other Blacks who made fun of her when she came to Ohio. Because of this, she decided to change her approach and follow the idea of white beauty and escape her Black roots. She became obsessed with having blue eyes as she considered them to reflect true beauty. This in turn could be seen as an act of mimicry as she decided to follow the white roots and neglect the African roots. This act demonstrates shadism again and would

not happen if they kept themselves far from the social aspects of Blacks that were made with Pauline because she, in a way, was different from them. The intersection of the racial and social issues occurred at this point, and the act of shadism results from the social differences that influence the act of racism against Pauline. The narrator shows that Breedloves' lives there as ugly, poor, and Black is not just the oppression of society, but they believe that they are like that:

The Breedloves did not live in a storefront because they were having temporary difficulty adjusting to the cutbacks at the plant. They lived there because they were poor and Black, and they stayed there because they believed they were ugly. Although their poverty was traditional and stultifying, it was not unique. But their ugliness was unique. (Morrison 28)

Psychologically, they are oppressed internally and do not believe in their own capacities, beauty as Blacks, or how they can be productive. In other words, they lacked self-confidence.

We can say that there is a stereotype threat occurring here since they only think they are ugly because they have been told that and live that way. Over time, accepting these thoughts will affect almost every aspect of their lives. These thoughts are accepted because of many years of being told about them. Eventually, an individual will begin to accept these thoughts as being true (Steele and Jeffrey Aronson 797). The Breedloves themselves do not accept the idea of beauty because they are Black and seen as ugly as they believe. This shows that stereotype is related to shadism especially with the mulatto characters. Another quote that shows that they are the reason for that situation is “You looked at them and wondered why they were so ugly; you looked closely and could not find the source. Then you realized that it came from conviction, their own conviction” (Morrison 28). So, we can consider it an act of racism, and specifically shadism, because it is a racial issue. It cannot happen without intersecting with other aspects like the social situation and reaction of other Blacks as they did with Pecola when she wants to act as other ‘whites’ did.

These quotes introduced the idea that the stereotype of beauty and ugliness are the reasons behind racial discrimination from both sides. The whites will not accept them as being similar to them or mimic them, and the Blacks fear the reaction from the white people (they may not accept them). There is also the sense of doubt within the same race as they did not have the self-acceptance of the beauty identification for all humans, not just whites. This shows that Mrs. Breedlove would become aware of the idea of beauty as soon as they began to hate themselves and believe that they are deserving of misfortune.

Another situation can be seen with Pauline at the movies, when she began to aspire towards the life models she viewed on screen. This is evident in the extract that reads “Then the screen would light up, and I’d move right on in their pictures. White men taking such good care of the women, and they all dressed up in big clean houses with the bathtubs right in the same room with the toilet”(Morrison 78). She felt as though she had not really been living before because of the care that white men showed and started looking at Cholly hard: “Them pictures gave me a lot of pleasure, but it made coming home hard and looking at Cholly hard” (Morrison 78).

Her marriage at this point was not a happy one since they fought too much, and Cholly spent his money on alcohol without asking his wife or caring for his own. When Pauline compares her life of the women who received gifts from their spouses to Cholly, who was supposed to be capable of providing for his own family as white families did, she feels disappointed with her marriage to him. According to hooks, some Black women during that time have “equated manhood with the capability of men to be the only economic providers in the family and betrayed by Black men who deny presuming this function, and this is a symbol of acceptance and patriarchy support” (129). She argues that Black men who were not breadwinners were termed lazy, irresponsible, and hated male dominance. Still, they were really embracing patriarchy and abandoned the husbands if they did not carry out their role in its system (130). Here, Cholly was supposed to be the family provider just as white men provide everything to their women, but he spent his money on alcohol, causing her to regret herself. As hooks claimed, Cholly should be the provider and the responsible one in the family, but he failed in this regard. This is a type of discrimination against the woman and the family. Shadism appears here within the same family and the same race as the result of the patriarchal system and social class situation of the husband intersecting with each other.

2.6 Maureen Peal: the reputable light-skinned Black girl

Maureen is the new girl in school who was rich by her community standards. In a way, she is also like Pecola because her skin color permits her to pass her wishes to do so, and she is regarded as pretty by the community. As Claudia states, she comes from an upper-class family who “took a small snack as her school lunch and wore nice clothes” (Morrison 60). As hooks affirms, “The dominant culture achieves and keeps its prominence due to its wealth” (92). Thus, the generated values tend to be monetary ones. She also states that being

unable to afford the material society lifestyle meant that values are heartlessly pushed aside, which occurred to the Breedloves.

This difference in income is one of the features that separate Pecola and Maureen. The two are young girls, but the first can come closer to society's dominant beauty standards because of her socioeconomic conditions and skin color. Crenshaw's concept of multiple jeopardies is helpful in understanding this difference between them; more aspects contribute to Pecola's discrimination than Maureen's. Each of them seems to be influencing the former girl at once. She is Black, female, and poor. Added to this is the fact that the youngest Breedlove has not been given affection from her own family since she was a little child. All these aspects intersected by the others seem to permit Maureen to consider herself pretty, while Pecola is 'ugly' and dark-skinned. From this situation, we can notice that the shadism can be related to classism as neither character is from the same economic class and differ in terms of skin shade. Again, the dilemma of shadism is about the intersectionality of some issues like race, gender, class, not purely race issues.

The status of Maureen is better than other Blacks because of her skin color as shown by "This disrupter of seasons was a new girl in school named Maureen Peal. A high-yellow dream child with long brown hair (...) the quality of her clothes threatened to derange Frieda and me" (Morrison 42). This is due to being light and her class status being from a wealthy family – "She was rich, at least by our standards, as rich as the richest of the white girls" noticeably by her clothes and hair "A high-yellow dream child with long brown hair braided into two lynchies." So, even dark-skinned people would treat her as white because she has some white features. Here, racism and differentiation within the same race and between economic and social classes intersect in terms of shadism. This is a type of oppression between the same race so can be viewed as shadism. Maureen considers herself different from Black people even though she is Black, but because of her class situation "higher than dark-skinned" as proved above when she described the sisters as 'ugly' and described herself as 'cute.' Morrison claims in her book *Playing in the Dark* (1993) that whiteness is an "inhuman idea" and "savage" (44). In short, it means that Maureen acts like a white person described in the novel. Those issues of intersectionality of race and class all influence each other, and the problem of shadism also includes gender and economic class too. Morrison pushed against the homogeneity because of racism and sexism that are considered as stereotypical issues to the Black female characters; they are homogeneously forced to be oppressed in their society. Again, she did applied mimicry on her fellow Blacks to feel

superior. *The Bluest Eye* applied the mimicry to show the colonized mockery of the dominance of the colonizer.

2.7 Conclusion

The Bluest Eye presents shadism in a way previously encountered. Morrison, in this sense, tries to bring the reader's attention to the double sufferance of female characters, and this is particularly true for the young ones from light-skinned (mulatto) and male. Therefore, she depicts the patriarchal system within Black society and indicates the irresponsibility of men towards his family. The analysis shows that shadism is influenced by race and other identity aspects of intersectionality such as gender, race, age and ability. Different shades of African American skin resulted from the mixing of genes due to Black women being raped by their white settlers. White settlers used the one-drop rule to keep the mixed-race children enslaved. However, these children were stereotypically granted more privileges and were even characterized as smarter than the dark-skinned children. Also, the light-skinned Blacks were offered education opportunities and would often work in less strenuous jobs. In the novel, there are several characters that experience different situations in their lives that change them significantly.

For instance, Maureen is light-skinned and mimics the white behaviors; as a result, she is treated differently from other people due to her skin color. Pecola, on the other hand, has dark skin and is fascinated by Maureen, who believes that she is beautiful. Maureen discriminates against Pecola by calling her ugly, presumably due to her skin tone. She then proceeds to label herself cute as a way to pass for white. This event forces Pecola to consider having blue eyes, which she thinks will make her loved by everyone. These present an example of how racism within the same race had similar ideals to racism between whites and Blacks. Shadism influenced the way dark-skinned Blacks lived and the opportunities they were granted. It condemned them to low points in life as they were at their fellow light-skinned Blacks' mercy. This chapter has shown the impact of shadism on Black people, especially women of color, by analyzing the novel's main characters and events. Shadism influences other issues such as gender, race, age and ability, and other aspects of identity, where they intersect at one point. The intersectionality theory adopted helps a lot identify and deal with the problem of shadism from different angles to clarify the reasons of intra-racial discrimination (shadism in this case) to most components of characters' identity. Again, this

indicates the effects of sexism, ageism, classism, and racism on Black people, especially women.

3. Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Toni Morrison is among the most renowned contemporary African American novelists and is famous for presenting the real situation and sufferance of Black people, especially women. In her novel *Beloved*, Morrison used storytelling of the slavery to grab the reader's attention. The harsh treatment that Black slaves faced throughout time as transgenerational trauma by white race resulted in bad traumatic memories in their consciousness. This in turn leads to re-memorization of their past and confronting it. Blacks were subjugated by whites who represented their identity as the Self and from their perspective they represented the Blacks as the Other. After the slavery era, Black relations changed and their struggle took another direction that was shown through light-skinned Black against dark-skinned Black as well as women against men.

This chapter highlights how *Beloved* is a piece of memory and rememory in terms of the way Morrison handles national forgetfulness of slavery and its agonizing, painful remembrances. She forces her characters to remember their past because, even though it is excruciating, it is the only way that people can heal and come together (Bonnet 43). It reveals how *Beloved*'s actions, presence, and voice demonstrate the manner in which she returns to bring complex and collective trauma, pain, healing, and above all, a reminder of what cannot be forgotten. This chapter aims to discuss how shadism is demonstrated within *Beloved*'s African American community as a collective trauma and the psychological effects on the characters like Sethe, Paul D, and Lady Jones. First, though, it will explore how shadism affected the lives of African Americans and then how it can cause trauma but also contribute to healing in the novel through the characters.

Beloved is based on a true story of a Black slave woman named Margaret Garner who escaped in 1856 with her husband and children. The family seeks refuge in Ohio, but the law officers finally catch up with them. Just prior to their recapture, Margaret kills her young daughter to prevent her from returning back to slavery. In her view, death was better for the child than being forced to endure life as a slave. We also find Sethe, a Black woman, who is in the same predicament as Margaret. Sethe escapes with her children from an abusive owner who we come to know are called a schoolteacher. Just like Margaret, they are caught, and she too tries to kill her daughter in a similar act of love and sacrifice. However, only her two-year daughter dies, making the schoolteacher refuse to take her back because she thinks she was mad. On her daughter's tombstone, she paid for the words *Beloved* to be inscribed. She had

intended to pay for two words, “Dear Beloved,” but she did not have the energy to pay since the engraver sold one word for 10 minutes of sex.

The arrival of Paul D in Sethe’s life reduces the suffering she endures for a short period of time. Paul D was a former slave who worked on the same farm as Sethe. He is so affected by slavery and decides to hide his feelings within his heart. The appearance of a young woman called Beloved changes Sethe. She becomes obsessed with her dead child's guilt, which leads to her falling for Beloved's manipulation. After Paul D learns of what Sethe did to her daughter, he leaves. Sethe loses her job and becomes even more obsessed with Beloved. Her daughter, Denver, realizes that she needs to ask for help from outside. She ventures outside and gets a job and food to eat. An incident where Sethe tries to attack Denver’s employer results in the disappearance of Beloved. Sethe is left grieving, but Paul D comes back and promises to take care of her while Denver continues to get a better life in the outside world.

3.1 The Concept of Memory and Re-memory

Morrison’s *Beloved* is narrated in a flashback manner in line with how the human mind functions. She uses memory and rememory because she believes that their power derives from their ability to build experiences and, by doing so, shows concern for the distant African American past and cultural memory (Ferguson 37). The remembering process across generations can potentially be quite painful because the memories have been suppressed for a long time, but it empowers people to interact with their ancestors. Throughout her novel, the characters depend on one another to endure the traumatic effects of slavery as they have to confront their pasts so that they can be symbolically reborn (Blyn 128). Memories live through telling stories, and as such, the novel evaluates the value of storytelling. When stories are narrated, the characters establish some oral tradition that enables them to narrate their stories as former slaves. Slavery is represented as a collective trauma in *Beloved*.

These memories are essential since they present the racial memory that contains shared experiences. Many critics have agreed on how memory and rememory are involved in *Beloved* and how it gives a better understanding of how they are utilized by Morrison to address the inescapability of slavery along with the possible ways of healing its scars. Through her characters that used to be slaves, Morrison narrates the evils of slavery and the trauma brought about by slavery to society. Sethe, Baby Suggs, Paul D, and Stamp Paid go back to their unavoidable past, whether they like it or not. Beloved, the ghost of Sethe’s dead daughter, changes their lives when she gets involved in them. Throughout the novel, she is

reflected as all characters' past and the reincarnation of Sethe's young girl, forcing them to remember their unavoidable past and face it. The characters will have a better chance of survival through this reunion. Thus, we can see that society also has a considerable significance for these characters as they need one another because of their shared collective memories.

An essay by Valerie Smith titled "Circle the Subject: History and Narrative in *Beloved*" indicates that Morrison concentrates on the Black body as a site of disclosing the living death of slavery along with healing its scars. Morrison's remindful texts present the female body as a place where erotic and historical memories intertwine with one another, stressing the association between the expression of physical desire and a sense of individualism. The author examines scarred memories and enslaved Black codes triggered by the present's sensations which then disclose the physical nature of slavery-motivated trauma. She quotes, "To the extent that characters feel the suffering through their bodies, they are cured, psychologically and physically through as well" (Smith 348). In *Beloved*, healing is strengthened and attained under the defensive power of the maternal body of Baby Suggs, who encourages her people to love and redeem their scarred bodies. Smith's research made a valuable and useful contribution as it showed the Black female characters' suffering. However, it did not pay attention to the issue of shadism in the novel throughout the Black characters' relations, which will be the turning point or the departure of my argument.

Another essay by Orrin Kocabiyik, "The Concept of Memory, Forgetting and the Past in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*" (2016), explains how Morrison sheds light on the traumatic past of African American slavery. The author shows that Morrison uses her former slave characters to narrate the evils of slavery and the agony it brought to society. When Sethe, Baby Suggs, Paul D, and Stamp Paid went back to their unavoidable past memory as mentioned above, it can be said that the characters would have a better chance of survival through this reunion. All the pain would turn to joy, perhaps through memory and the resistance of the Black characters. Society also has a considerable significance for these characters since they need one another because of their shared collective memories. The characters need to remember their painful collective past and face it. Therefore, they can start to heal and place themselves more firmly in the world where they are staying.

Kocabiyik provides a good analysis of scenes from the novel but did not indicate that shadism is a crucial point that leads to the process of healing from pain. So, this essay will help to show the role that shadism plays in recreating the memory 'rememory', which will be transferred to pain in terms of racism within the same race rather than to healing.

Morrison's techniques of remembering the African American past suggests that there is a possibility of healing and the redemption of psychological and physical scars. Her main characters need to memorize and experience their past to transform their present by letting go of their collective and individual traumas and maturing. These points frame the central aspect that this chapter explores – shadism and racism and their contribution to healing. Morrison devotes herself to *Beloved*'s presence to constrain her characters and share their histories, traumas, and past experiences in a way that brings transformation and healing to their lives. According to Rosilene Aquino (198), the presence of *Beloved* indicates the past, which in turn haunts the present by not being justly told and evaluated throughout the centuries. Aquino suggests that it needs to be re-examined and remembered to be accommodated. If this does not occur, the healing process will be prolonged through disconnected and fragmented memories could not be forgotten or managed. By attempting to bury and forget a painful past that is still alive, Americans were facing ghosts that will always come to regenerate their histories and remind the American community that there is a past to restore and re-examine to bring healing and justice for the horrible scars. The remembering is an act of healing that works in a way started by the relations among Blacks through intra-racism (shadism) which is one of the objectives of this study.

The logical alienation and social death ingrained in the condition of slavery results in amnesia. Past events, anamnesis or voluntary recollections, and involuntary remembrances interconnected to them have to be enacted in a present moment to be conquered. The nature of memory and forgetting is central because it symbolizes the cancellation of traumatic memories in Sethe's case. The past is annihilated for slave children like Sethe, who do not have an association with their mother because the past and memory operate through storytelling. In the novel, the interactional and interpersonal memory character is used in constructing the relationship between *Beloved*, the ghost of the dead daughter, and Sethe, the mother, by retelling the past encounters. The storytelling pertaining to the past and the reclamation of the present by the past leads to the process of healing itself. The recovery of the past as a way of conquering traumatic events is attained through memories and memory as mechanisms of the assortment of the slave identity. The ghost embodiment makes Sethe revisit the past through memory and memory, where past and present actions come together, as Brogan suggests "through the agency of ghosts, group histories that have in some way been threatened, erased, or fragmented are recuperated and revised"(5-6). So, through storytelling among Blacks about their painful past caused by treating each other in cruel and mocking ways, the reader is shown superiorities among the people from the same race

throughout skin-color with the influence of social status, class, gender and some other aspects of the identity. Thus, a sort of racism was created, which we now understand as shadism.

3.2 'Eighteen years of disapproval and solitary life': African Americans' relations in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

African Americans are bound by not just culture and color but also by spiritual values, powerful memories, and shared experiences of the collective history of American slavery. *Beloved* depicts a Black culture born out of a demeaning period of slavery. Morrison believes that past horrors have constructed Black culture, and it is history that binds African Americans and that has shaped contemporary Black culture in the right way. She clarifies how African Americans are related to linguistic devices, the representation of Black women, and imagery and symbolic features.

First, as part of Black culture, African Americans, particularly women, represent the pillars of strength within the society as healers and protectors. In *Beloved*, many characters have been separated from their families and sold as slaves. They share a history of torture, and they develop an urge to heal cultural, collective and historical trauma. Following this, they become whole again through surviving and empowering one another to withstand the evils of slavery. There is a sense of sisterhood found in African American culture, as depicted in the novel, since women form a social bond together to exorcise *Beloved's* ghost in Sethe's house, which helps Sethe heal as an individual and empower Black society. Second, many African Americans have vicarious experiences of the evils of slavery and how it harmed their lives, and they typically try to erase or ignore these memories. However, the process of confronting and remembering the past is crucial for healing to occur and to prevent it from turning to obsession in the present or future, which Morrison coined 'rememory'. Sethe regularly fails to loosen the binds of the past in her present existence because she cannot forget the past (Morrison 302).

Third, African American slaves used songs as a form of communication to pass down stories and express their feelings of hope, joy, and inspiration. Morrison highlights songs to chronicle her character's perseverance and capacity to survive during and after the periods of psychological abuse and physical brutality they faced during slavery (Jeffrey 283). Songs were a necessary feature of the characters' lives besides shelter, food, and sleep (Morrison 41). As Fanon stated, "For it is implicit that to speak is to exist absolutely for the other... to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization. Since the situation is not one-way

only, the statement of it should reflect the fact” (17-18). Just as Morrison turns traumatic memories into a positive force, the songs represent a cleansing process used to take these memories that are so critical to re-visioning social and communal transformation and utilize them for healing (Baker-Fletcher 32). For instance, the women's singing helped exorcize the ghost of Beloved and re-enabled Sethe to be free as if she was baptized (Morrison 308).

African Americans are related because of their culture and shared experiences during the times of slavery. Morrison writes about Black culture during slavery to show that it is individuality and society that bind African Americans together. Her novel is not about the institution of slavery, but about African American slaves, how they make a living, what they are willing to risk or do to keep on and, however long it persists, to relate to each other. This idea will be essential in analyzing the prejudices that were applied to the slaves and how the issues affected African Americans. Throughout the remembering, *Beloved's* characters help each other heal from the pain they suffer from even if it hurts.

3.3 “More it hurts more better it is”: The Psychological Effect of Slavery on Dark-skinned community in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*

The issue of shadism, according to Lynch (156), served as the most efficient method by which slave masters could manipulate and control their Black slaves as it enabled them to differentiate their white slaves from Black slaves. This way, they managed to earn the trust, respect, and love of light-skinned Blacks, while they left them to become perpetually distrustful of their dark-skinned counterparts.

Shadism can be traumatic, and after the Civil War, slave masters separated light-skinned and dark-skinned slaves. Those with light skin were placed indoors to avoid any contact with the sun and did simple domestic work, while those with dark skin were placed on outdoor plantation fields where they performed hard labor and lived in shanties near their slave owner’s homes. Even today, light-skinned Blacks are considered more attractive, better educated, better paid, and of altogether higher socioeconomic status (Ryabov 1). This causes trauma for Black people, significantly impacting their perception of beauty, mate selection, self-esteem, and life opportunities.

However, shadism can also contribute to healing as it makes an individual cope with it and strengthens African American society, as a whole, to unite and fight against its challenges. This theory is seen in *Beloved*, where Denver experiences the ravages of shadism, but she revisits the past so that she can make peace with the present. This situation is apparent

when Denver's classmates did not want her or her friendship. Morrison writes that Denver “was being avoided by her classmates—that they made excuses and altered their pace not to walk with her” (Morrison 100). Here, the intra-racism that her fellow Blacks engage in is evident when they neglect her and avoid dealing with her even though they are from her race. This practice of racism causes her to go into a traumatic memory which after that converted to healing when she isolated herself in the wood.

3.4 Slavery as a Collective Trauma in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*: Dark-skinned Suffering from Shadism and Trauma

In America, shadism has its roots in slavery since slave masters typically offered preferential treatment to the slaves with fairer or lighter complexions. Still, the dark-skinned slaves were forced to work in the plantation fields while their light-skinned counterparts frequently stayed indoors away from the sun and worked far less strenuous domestic jobs (Glenn 286). Slave masters always favored light-skinned slaves because they considered them to be like family members. They often forced dark-skinned slave women into sexual intercourse; in other words, they raped the women. As a result, they bore light-skinned children whom the slave masters did not even identify as their mixed-race children but still offered them privileges that dark-skinned slaves never enjoyed. Consequently, light-skinned African Americans came to be recognized as an asset in the slave society, even though they shared the same counterparts with dark-skinned African Americans (Angelo 255).

Regardless of the darkness or lightness of the skin, instances of shadism influenced most members of this specific culture in various ways. Cunningham et al. (313) defines a sense of not belonging, which most group members felt because of both private and intra-group discrimination. Both dark-skinned and light-skinned people face bias or prejudice from the dominant white culture, but also from within their race. Research also demonstrates that African American women tend to suffer more significant psychological effects from shadism than their male counterparts. As Keith also notes, “Colorism affects both genders, but the complexion hierarchy is more central in the lives of women than men” (Keith 26).

Both light-skinned and dark-skinned women faced discrimination based on their skin tone, although this manifested in separate ways. For instance, there were negative associations with being too dark or too light, which results in tangible effects on African Americans' self-esteem, especially in the case of women (Hill 108). However, dark-skinned people are more vulnerable since stigma is associated with dark skin, thus having more

impact on their perceived self-worth, overall self-esteem, life opportunities, mate selection, and even attractiveness (Elmore 26).

The nature of trauma is to make an individual feel a connected array of experiences or to feel perpetually stuck in a moment, whether it be loss, violation, pain, or a combination of these. For a person who experiences trauma, the moment lives on, recurring over and over in their minds or generated to replay with specific experiences in the present. It becomes especially difficult for a person to see beyond these moments of trauma until they are healed. Victims of trauma frequently project it onto the present situation which could lead to shadism when it is among Blacks, making them incapable of incorporating the experiences into a fuller life context. Furthermore, they become incapable of making sense of the adventure as a part of the bigger world and other individuals. Here, we can see that shadism is related to trauma since it has negative impacts on both dark-skinned men and women and can lead to unhealthy behavior like suicide and infanticide. Cathy Caruth (94) explains the theory of trauma, which is a crucial aspect of apprehending the damage, harm, and wounds that Black people experience within society. Caruth defines trauma as the damage suffered after one experiences deeply disturbing and distressing instances.

More importantly, intra-racial discrimination is the suppression, distrust, dislike, hate, and oppression of another individual or group of the same race based on physical features like hair texture, differences in class or caste, cultural and tribal reasons, and skin color. In *Beloved*, one of the most significant issues in Toni Morrison's novels is the exploration of trauma and the way that it has influenced African American society. In *Beloved*, Morrison explores traumatizing experiences of many varieties; rape, the horrors of slavery, losing a child at the parent's hands, losing a loved one, to recognize a few, all playing a significant role in the narrative.

Morrison demonstrates the traumatic incidents that occurred to the Black slaves within the traditional slave system. She brings to light the traumatic past of African Americans and discloses the forgotten experiences to foster a better understanding. The slaves working on Sweet Home encounter brutality, violence and are frequently treated like animals. One of her main characters that is significantly influenced by the harsh conditions of slavery is Sethe. Being a dark-skinned woman, Sethe gets whipped, humiliated, mistreated, tortured, and even raped. As a result, she decides to escape from Sweet Home, but when she realizes that she is about to be brought back to slavery, she murders her child quickly, except for Denver who was minutes away from being killed if it were not for Stamp Paid and her mother-in-law. The act of murdering her child is not clear and justified and understood as

Paul D thinks. However, the situations in which she had to stay and the brutality she endured as a dark-skinned slave woman at Sweet Home drove her to commit infanticide. Caruth posits that this “inflects not upon the body but upon the mind” (3). She tries to show that the wounds of the mind are more affected than the wounds upon the body, which is mentioned in the novel when Sethe gets affected in her mind and then kills her daughter as a reflection of the trauma she suffered.

On the one hand, that act of selfishness and, on the other, the effect of slavery on her, is what causes Sethe to become a murderess. Yet, Sethe, when she killed her daughter, even if out of love, clearly acts like white slave masters would do. Levine and Hogg define racism as:

Racism represents an organized system of privilege and bias that disadvantages a set of people on the basis of their group membership. Racism is enforced by the intentional or unintentional actions of individuals and the operation of institutional or societal standards that, in concert, produce disparities, by race or by social categories such as national origin, ethnicity, religion, and cultural beliefs or ideologies, that are racialized and assumed to reflect biological differences. (677)

According to Funston-White (2002), we can assume that it was not Sethe who murdered her child; instead, the effect of slavery drove her to commit the crime (463). From the above quote, we can consider the act of Sethe as racism in terms of cultural beliefs or ideology because she just killed her daughter without thinking of her future that will be bright. Also, they claim that “Racism is related to concepts such as discrimination (an unfair attitude associated with group membership), and stereotypes (generalized beliefs about a group and its members)” (Levine and Hogg 677). The second quote confirms that Sethe committed an act of racism, but because her act involved killing a fellow Black, it can be referred to as intra-racism.

Sethe made Denver feel neglected, who thus grew up with self-loathing. Her community mocked her because they believed that her mother would kill her as she had tried before. The ghost's appearance brings back the damage and wound in the lives of Denver and Sethe's, making them re-examine their pasts and confront them. In addition, their rejection by society is apparent in this quote, “eighteen years of disapproval and solitary life” (Morrison 173). So, they were isolated in their community, and they wanted from Sethe a letter that

explains the sin of killing. Caruth claims that the harm or wound of mind can spread on society “time, self and the world” (4). Moreover, it is related to the notion of cultural trauma which occurs when members of a group feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks on their group consciousness, forever marking their memories and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.

Also, she pretended to love her mother because she was afraid of her in case she may be killed. Denver uttered “I [Denver] spent all of my outside self-loving Ma’am” (Morrison 207). So, at first, Denver had trust in her mother, but she became afraid of being killed by Sethe due to what Sethe had done to her other child. Her fear and nervousness were obvious to her society, who was aware of the incident; they did not appreciate her fear and started mocking her. In the novel, they mock her by calling her a witch and telling her to die “die-witch!” (Morrison 205), hoping that she may be killed by her mother, which is a traumatic feeling in Denver’s mind. Even though they are from the same community, race, and color, they did not appreciate her emotions. So, from this act of Sethe of murdering the child and Denver’s fear of her, shadism appeared when society started to mock Denver. She became traumatized, and the novel informs us that “Now she is crying because she has no self” (Morrison 123). She isolated herself and got depression from her mother's side, her murdered sister, and general societal oppression. In addition, Denver met Beloved, ‘the ghost’ who told her that her mother would kill her. Again, Denver got mad. The turning point in relation to her healing occurred when she was in isolation, she encouraged herself to adapt to her world through asking for help with her imaginary world in her secret place in the wood where she was thinking about her world as it is stated in the novel that she finds as the place of relief:

a narrow field that stopped itself at a wood., between the field and the stream, hidden by post oaks, five boxwood bushes, planted in a ring, had started stretching toward each other., empty room seven feet high, its walls fifty inches of murmuring leaves.

Bent low, Denver could crawl into this room, and once there she could stand all the way up in emerald light. (Morrison 28)

This was her haven to discuss her fate with her imagination in order to face the outside world. She strengthened herself psychologically in order to be able to reach out for the help of others. Her healing began to become evident when “...She was the first one wrestle her mother down. Before anybody knew what the devil was going on” (Morrison 266). These

examples and descriptions show that the act of shadism from the mother and Denver's community leads to traumatizing Denver rather than healing from that by adapting to the world she created. Here, Denver knew how to overcome the obstacle of the past and look towards the future with the help of herself and the other.

Paul D is another Black slave in the novel that internalized the mistreatment he had faced for years. Despite his inner motivation and strength to endure that dehumanization, he was transformed into a dispassionate man with a ruined identity. Many slaves were stripped of everything, which made their slave masters feel secure. In Paul D's case, the cruel Schoolteacher took away their guns and therefore the capability to protect themselves or hunt for food, and the ability to read while staying at Sweet Home. As depicted in the novel,

He grew up thinking that, of all the Blacks in Kentucky, only the five of them were men. Allowed, encouraged to correct Garner, even defy him. To invent ways of doing things; to see what was needed and attack it without permission. To buy a mother, choose a horse or a wife, handle guns, even learn reading if they wanted to—but they didn't want to since nothing important to them could be put down on paper. (Morrison 125)

Schoolteacher denied Paul D and other slaves' secondary masculine characteristics, which had the effect of making them weaker. When Schoolteacher proves to be an all-around horror who only took pleasure in mistreating and torturing slaves, Paul D decides to run away because he realizes that he will die as shown in "One, he [Paul D] knew, was dead for sure; one he hoped was because butter and clabber was no life or reason to live it" (Morrison 125). He was caught and sold to Brandywine, whom he tries to murder, and ultimately ends up in a chain gang. Paul was abused and raped, leaving him traumatized and this was portrayed in the novel when he uses the image of a rusted tobacco tin to represent his heart and the vile-smelling tobacco to demonstrate the humiliation he endured. It was also shown when he thought that telling more may drive to unexpected places, "Saying more might push them both to a place they couldn't get back from" (Morrison 72). Another way this is evident is when he thinks that this act will hurt her, "And it would hurt her to know that there was no red heart bright as Mister's comb beating in him (Morrison 73). These highlighted instances indicate that Paul D was in constant search of freedom since he encountered suffering and humiliation everywhere he went.

Paul D is an excellent example of how Black male slaves were mistreated and tortured, making them question their masculine characteristics to the extent that they believe they are unworthy of human attachment. Since light-skinned people were preferred and treated relatively better than dark-skinned people during and following the period of slavery, they developed pride and even denied Black people who were darker fundamental rights. As Glenn states,

After the civil war, light-skinned African Americans tried to distance themselves from their darker-skinned brothers and sisters, forming exclusive civic and cultural organizations, fraternities, sororities, schools, and universities (Russell, Wilson and Hall 24-40) (Glenn 287)

From Paul D's case, we can observe that strong negative impact that shadism has on dark-skinned people. Paul D is cruelly and harshly abused for being a dark-skinned slave to such a significant extent that he experiences psychological and emotional trauma when he finds out that his wife killed Beloved and left home because light-skinned people were not treated the same way as dark-skinned people as they were given a more straightforward mission. Besides this, he also questions his manhood because of the murder of Sethe, which emerged as a traumatic experience for him. After hearing that his wife killed the baby and left the house, even Sethe's main objective was to save her from slavery. The abuses and humiliation meted against Paul D show that African Americans experienced racism because of their skin tone. Consequently, the superior treatment that light-skinned Blacks received makes him lose his manhood as it also involved his wife fleeing. Sethe's apathy when she did not tell him about the murder of Beloved shows that shadism is related to psychological and emotional factors of the identity, because Paul D was in a weak position from his wife influenced by his society and his masters. Above all, Morrison depicts the bad state of motherhood within the Black community through presenting her character Sethe, the mother of Beloved and Denver. Hence, Sethe suffered from her husband, community, and Denver's blame, which resulted in traumatic injury.

3.5 Light-Skinned characters in *Beloved*

Light-skinned characters in *Beloved* are generally treated differently and could even access various areas that Blacks were banned from. Morrison shows how not all white women are proud of their light skin tone. She demonstrates how Lady Jones, a mixed-race

woman, hates her blonde hair and light skin complexion. Lady Jones understood that her Caucasian features or light skin complexion could only be achieved through rape by the whites. She hates her features because they are a constant reminder of what every person like her tries to run from in her society since they had been the product of rape by dark-skinned slaves and white masters most of the time. In the novel, Morrison portrays how she hated her complexion so much that she married a Black man and volunteered to go and teach Black girls in school, where the majority had a dark skin tone.

Lady Jones was mixed. Gray eyes and yellow woolly hair, every strand of which she hated--though whether it was the color or the texture even she didn't know. She had married the Blackest man she could find, had five rainbow-colored children and sent them all to Wilberforce, after teaching them all she knew right along with the others who sat in her parlor. Her light skin got her picked for a colored girls', regular school in Pennsylvania and she paid it back by teaching the unpicked. (Morrison 247)

Black women that the community saw as most beautiful had similar characteristics to Lady Jones; that is, they were closer to whiteness, which was considered true beauty while light-skinned African American women like Lady Jones felt accepted and were seen as more feminine and docile. Thus, they benefited in both Black and non-Black spaces, and dark-skinned ones were only seen as better slaves (Coard 2259).

The whites have preferred flaxen hair and fair skin for many centuries. They also considered light skin to be a symbol of wealth, while dark skin was seen as a symbol of poverty as slaves because they worked in the plantation fields had the darkest skin. As Fanon claims, "One is white, so one is rich, so one is beautiful, so one is intelligent"(51-52) which shows how racism is shaped depends on social, economic, and cultural factors. Also, Lipschutz coined the term pigmentocracy in his book "Indoamericanismo y elproblema racial en las Americas. Santiago" (1944), which refers to the hierarchies of color-based or ethnicity mostly based on the physical features (68). Both Sethe and Paul D experienced the horrors of slavery just because they were dark-skinned. Shadism also leads to self-hatred which affects the traumatic injury of the characters' psychology given that nobody has any control over their skin complexion. Morrison shows that Lady Jones hates her light complexion because she trusts that her appearance will get her out of a rape incident. From her behavior toward the fellow Black dark-skinned shows that she appreciates her Black counterparts, it could be

suggested that she wanted to help them through calling Denver "Oh, baby,"(257) and giving her food her family and turns her life into a world as woman.

3.6 The Trauma of Dark-skinned Characters as Portrayed in *Beloved*

Most of the novel's characters experience humiliation and hardships because they are dark-skinned. For example, Paul D is left with physical and psychic scars. They all try to isolate themselves and forget their past horrors, but they must confront their past experiences. In an interview with Angelo Bonnie, Morrison states that,

I thought this is got to be the least read of all the books I'd written because it is about something that the characters don't want to remember, Black people, don't want to remember, white people, don't want to remember. I mean its national amnesia. (Morrison interview)

The trace of trauma follows them, driving them to reunite with their pasts since this is the correct path to accept their agency in the American community and to confirm their existence. Many Black and dark-skinned slaves were mistreated and abused through mutilation, imprisonment, branding, shackling, sexual assault, beating, and whipping. The life of Black and dark-skinned African Americans, along with their working conditions, is indeed an epitome of their suffering under the horrors of slavery. In *Beloved*, their plantation is ironically called Sweet Home. Most characters are deceived and think that this is the perfect place for them, but they understand that it is the worst, like hell after some time. The situation got worse still when Mr. Garner died and he was left in the hands of the Schoolteacher, who proved to be an all-around horror and compelled the design of a plan to escape in search of freedom desperately. The Schoolteacher did not like it when they played and seemed to enjoy mistreating them. Paul D realized that their only chance was in an escape (Morrison 220).

Dark-skinned black slaves were mistreated and abused. Even pregnant mothers were not spared nor considered a barrier to punishment. Methods were formulated to conduct lashings without harming the baby in any way but they would dig a hole huge enough for the mother's stomach to lie and continue with the lashings (Grandy 1843). Morrison shows how the Schoolteacher mistreats and abuses the slaves through her main characters, Sethe and Paul D.

Sethe suffers a lot under the Schoolteacher's hand. She is a Black and dark-skinned mother who is abused, raped, and harassed by the Schoolteacher and his nephews. She gets whipped while pregnant and her milk is stolen, saying "After I left you, those boys came in there and took my milk" (Morrison 16). To her, this was a symbol of devotion and love for her children. This way of treating her shows the materialization of the institution's fundamental perversity and highlights the bonds between mother and child. It also displayed a difference in the way dark-skinned slaves were treated compared to their light-skinned counterparts. The differences show a preference in the light-skinned tones, which indicates shadism.

The pain and dehumanization of slavery did not significantly influence Sethe, but her stolen milk was essential to her. According to Bonnet, the milk that was robbed from Sethe was a violation of the bond between the child and the mother. Sethe manages to flee from Sweet Home, but when the Schoolteacher arrives to take her and her children, she quickly takes her children into a shed and tries to murder them, rather than letting them experience the horrors of slavery she had endured. The situation in which Sethe had to live and the brutality she had to undergo as a dark-skinned Black slave in Sweet Home drove her to commit infanticide to avoid her children facing the same hardships. As Funston-White (470) states, "it was not madness, but the reality of the horrors of slavery which drove Sethe to murder her daughter, completely aware of the action and its brutality, along with its compassion." Therefore, the impact that slavery had on Black and dark-skinned women is what made Sethe commit infanticide. The Black and dark-skinned women felt worthless due to the way they were treated. It was impossible for them to bring up children, yet some of them were still able to do it under harsh conditions. It must be conceded that the psychological torture endured by Sethe may have contributed to the actions she took.

When Beloved embodied Sethe, she went through traumatic experience. Her body reacted deeply and she felt similar to the water breaking before giving birth. This bodily reaction expresses the notion of embodied memory, which Casey defines as "an active immanence of the past in the body that informs present bodily actions in an efficacious, orienting, and regular manner" (149)

And, for some reason she could not immediately account for, the moment she got close enough to see the face, Sethe's bladder filled to capacity. She said, "Oh, excuse me," ...Right in front of its door she had to lift her skirts, and the water she voided was endless...she thought, but as it went on and on she

thought, No, more like flooding the boat when Denver was born.(Morrison 98-99)

This embodied memory is a sign of the return of Beloved, and it shows the effect of her murdered daughter on her as she is giving birth. It is pushed by the punishment of her community toward Beloved, which results in her being incapable of confronting the traumatic memory that she is enduring. These actions of repression could be one of the reasons behind Sethe's sufferance as a way of racism from her fellow Blacks.

Paul D is also another Black and dark-skinned slave who suffers a lot due to the horrors of slavery. He is abused by the guards while imprisoned. This was a traumatic experience for Paul D, which even made him question his manhood because of the difficulties he endured while in the chains after trying to kill his master Brandywine. Morrison highlights the need for Sethe and Paul D to heal as well as the whole African American community. Sethe and Paul D, being dark-skinned, both faced the trauma of being a slave, being raped, watching their best friend murdered, and the horrors of slavery. Both characters attempt to forget their trauma, but experiences can never be forgotten. Thus, they learn that the more they are try to suppress memories, the more they will resurface and return with maximum force. Their trauma appears in separate ways since, for Sethe, it detaches herself from society, providing Beloved her full attention. She does not care about anything else. For Paul D, trauma demonstrates itself in a way that meant he could not stick to one place for a long time, just as he could never wholly open his tin can of a heart. Mainly, Sethe believed that despite the horrible things that they had seen and the things that had been done to them, they were still worthy of being loved again. In the end, Sethe and Paul D understood that they could depend on one another for strength and that it is not them against the whole world anymore.

3.7 'Can't heal without pain': Recovering from the impact of slavery in *Beloved*

Toni Morrison uses memory, storytelling, and Beloved's ghost as crucial tools to help her characters recover from the traumatic and traumatic memory effects of shadism and slavery. In her view, the power of memory evolves from its ability to build experiences; it explains a concern for cultural memory and Black antiquity. This is because there are no possibilities to escape or resist since traumatic events produce profound and lasting

physiological arousal changes, emotion, cognition, and memory (Herman 129). Moreover, traumatic events can sever these normally integrated functions from each other.

Through the processes of remembering and storytelling, the African American experience of being Black and dark-skinned slaves can be retold again. *Beloved* is vital to the creation of a connection between supernatural and natural, past and the present, and between the real world that they are living in and the other of death or ancestors. *Beloved* represents the living memory of African American ancestors, and her presence operates as a healing force, which makes the characters retell their stories. *Beloved's* main characters try to remember their pasts to recover from trauma on both personal and collective levels when they remember their past minds. They could re-signify and reshape their broken identities and attain the probability of healing and redemption of their psychological and physical wounds. Thus, they show an element of shadism that makes Black characters treat each other in a way that they can live in peace even others will suffer. One case is when Seth says that she killed the baby to save her from slave life.

3.8 Sethe: the mother who seeks salvation

The return of *Beloved* brings back all of the losses that Sethe experienced being a Black slave. Dark-skinned slaves make Sethe lose her life, love, her family, and her society. By attempting to bury her past, she loses the link to her ancestors and with her collective identity as a cultural trauma, thus making her homeless and exiled in her neighborhood and house. Therefore, *Beloved* presents the probability of raising past experiences of shadism or intra-racism. Morrison makes a political and aesthetical engagement with the African American historical past through her voice. *Beloved's* broken discourse is a strong testimony of the history that reflects not just her personal experience but also regenerates a link to the world of her ancestors that is presented by the suffering of dark-skinned Black slaves during the Middle Passage. The features of her broken and disconnected discourse are demonstrated in the novel:

you sleep short and then return in the beginning we could vomit now we do not now we cannot his teeth are pretty white points someone is trembling I can feel it over here he is fighting hard to leave his body which is a small bird trembling there is no room to tremble so he is not able to die my own dead

man is pulled away from my face I miss his pretty white points. (Morrison 211)

Beloved represents all those unvoiced, de-bodied and unnamed dark-skinned Black slaves who perished during the Middle Passage. The role of Beloved as a healing instrument for Sethe is seen throughout the novel in the ways she makes Sethe retell her traumatic experiences from the past. Sethe's childhood as a dark-skinned slave was tough because she encountered the lynching of her mother, the hardships of Sweet Home, the dismembering of her own family, and numerous other horrific remembrances. Her memories are agonizing and hurt her, but at the same time, they are vital to her healing process. She realizes that it is impossible to avoid, forget, and hide from her past because it was waiting for her. Morrison (36) wrote "Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. Some things you forget. Other things you never do ... Places, places are still there ... Nothing ever dies ... it is still there, waiting for you".

After identifying the remarkable connection between her past and her present existence, Sethe is unwilling to engage in a series of healing actions. Her broken rememory unconsciously empowers her to restore and transform her present by questioning herself about what was worthy and what was not. By remembering her painful past, she realizes how slavery did not permit her to have a mother's presence, and she found out how she did not have her mother's presence. She found out how she lacked her mother's companionship and love since they hardly ever saw and spoke to one another. The purpose behind Morrison's use of telling a past story is clarified by Nutting (1997), claiming that: "redemption becomes impossible" (30) when the character's past life is not something embracing. Shadism appears when her mother could not come with her because she is Black and ashamed instead of going with her as a mother not staying home and being afraid because of the bad memories of slavery, which is revealed as trauma in Sethe's behavior. As has been elucidated previously, shadism causes trauma, but it can also contribute to healing. It makes an individual cope with it and strengthens African American society, as a whole, to unite and fight against its ravages. Both Sethe and Paul D revisit the past so that they can make peace with the present. Regardless, the coming of Paul D to the house, exorcising the ghost, and trying to disregard the past are acts of healing to finish the slave's fear of being enslaved. This is healing because the characters tried to remember their past stories and share them with each other. As a Black society, they tried to forget the harsh experience and trauma so that they would heal and improve their life individually and collectively. On a personal level, the ghost of Beloved is a

means to remind African American community members of their past, which appears in the novel when they exorcise the ghost and help Denver and her mother. All of the community remembered the past time:

When they caught up with each other, all thirty, and arrived at 124, the first thing they saw was not Denver sitting on the steps, but themselves. Younger, stronger, even as little girls lying in the grass asleep. Catfish was popping grease in the pan and they saw themselves scoop German potato salad onto the plate...The stump of the butternut had split like a fan. But there they were, young and happy, playing in Baby Suggs' yard, not feeling the envy that surfaced the next day. (Morrison 258)

As a community, the appearance of Beloved's ghost helped the African American community to revise their judgments on the deed Sethe committed because of her children. They did understand that Sethe cannot be separated from the historical context in which she was living as an African American woman. The community accepted Sethe and admitted that it was one of the challenges that should be codified by rewriting their past, as shown through the quote "That this daughter...It took them days to get the story properly blown up and themselves agitated and then to calm down and assess the situation. They fell into three groups: those that believed the worst...believed none of it... who thought it through" (Morrison 255).

In addition, Morrison related the issue of the ghost in *Beloved* in an interview the Book TV C-SPAN that:

all of these things are all part of the mythology, the culture that I grew up in, and apparently have real living life in other African cultures that have been redistributed among us, and I would just love to see the history of some of those things taken from my books (In Depth: Toni Morrison, 04 February 2004, 02:55:02).

By doing so (their defense on Sethe), they acknowledge their cultural trauma as a common and shared past and history that they were suffering from, and the ghost of Beloved as their history's embodiment. Along these lines, the exorcising was a form of healing for Sethe's community. As a result of the foregoing, the issues of shadism and how it leads to

exorcism appears explicitly throughout the Black community's ignorance of Sethe as they think that she is a criminal, the bad feeling from Denver when she felt fear of getting killed and expressing her words to her, and the appearance of the ghost. She felt inferior to her community even though she is from their race, which is shadism. After that, when the ghost came back to them as a result of the strained relation, they exorcised it and admitted her.

3.9 Paul D: the father who seeks manhood

Paul D, a dark-skinned Black man, suffers from the horrors of slavery emotionally and physically. When he was at Sweet Home, he lost his dignity and had an iron bit placed in his mouth and was lashed by the Schoolteacher. He also bears the pain of losing his friends and brother. He narrated to Sethe about a Schoolteacher and the brutality he experienced in his hands:

Yeah, he was hateful all right. Bloody, too, and evil.... He sat right there on the tub looking at me. I swear he smiled. My head was full of what I'd seen of Halle a while back. I wasn't even thinking about the bit. Just Halle and before him Sixo, but when I saw Mister, I knew it was me too. Not just them, me too. One crazy, one sold, one missing, one burnt and me licking iron with my hands crossed behind me. (Morrison 72)

This harsh treatment makes him question his manhood, which heavily depended on Garner's naming him and his fellow slaves as men. He complains about his discriminated identity and status. Like Sethe, Paul D also suppresses the past by burying it in a tobacco tin in his chest. Softly, and then so loud, it woke Denver, then Paul D himself "Red heart. Red heart. Red heart" (Morrison 117). Even though he finds refuge with Sethe, it is only with Beloved that he gets to open his tobacco tin again. Beloved manages to open him to his suppressed memories,

"Call me my name."

"No."

"Please call it. I'll go if you call it."

"Beloved." He said it, but she did not go. She moved closer with a footfall he didn't hear and he didn't hear the whisper that the flakes of rust made either as

they fell away from the seams of his tobacco tin. So when the lid gave he didn't know it. (Morrison 117)

Morrison discloses a handy image of the sexual act between Paul D and Beloved. Engaging in a sexual act with Beloved, Paul D fulfills his desire and thirst for sex with a young woman, which was something he had dreamt of but never had the chance to do during the slavery era. Beloved acts as an agent of his change, as bell hooks asserts

It is my deep belief that in talking about the past, in understanding the things that have happened to us we can heal and go forward. Some people believe that it is best to put the past behind you, to never speak about the events that have happened that have hurt or wounded us, and this is their way of coping—but coping is not healing. By confronting the past without shame, we are free of its hold on us (TCPH, 119)

As a reminder of the terrible past that possesses Sethe and Paul D, Beloved represents a threat to their lives, but still, they must confront it and accept its pain since it is part of their self-definition. The characters go through a process of difference by diverting or delaying the fulfillment of a desire or need (Moran, & Mooney, 2002). The characters go through the process of psychic recovery, making them discover new ways to read themselves, others, and the world. Morrison makes a female figure that signifies the dark-skinned pain mothers, men, and children faced during the times of slavery.

After these healing processes, society started to accept her, and this included even Paul D, who told her, “You your best thing, Sethe. You are” (Morrison, 273). From the discussion above, it can be seen that healing came after the suffering of trauma, which was a reason behind Sethe and her society's recovery. Without the traumatic action that appeared as a reason of racism, shadism and ignoring of character themselves within the same society and race. So, racism causes trauma, and it can also contribute to healing in that it makes an individual cope with it and strengthen African American society. Another example that explains the relationship between trauma and healing is when the white women help Sethe while she was delivering Denver, at which point she said: “more it hurt better it is. Can't nothing heal without pain” (Morrison 78). Here, we can see how healing does not come without pain, which is trauma's result, and the reason for trauma came from white or/and Black people's differentiation (as colorism).

3.10 Conclusion

Toni Morrison uses memory and rememory because she believes that each has power derived from their ability to build experiences and, in doing so, show concern for the distant African-American past and cultural trauma and memory. The analysis indicates that shadism positively affects the characters as it contributes to their healing through memory, rememory, and embodied memory even though it is painful for them. The remembering process could be painful because the memories have been suppressed for a long time, especially when it comes to cultural trauma. Still, it empowers people to interact with their ancestors to understand and stop the pain they are suffering from. Throughout her novel, the characters depend on one another or fight each other (more often than not intentionally) to help them endure the traumatic effects of slavery as they have to confront their pasts so that they could be symbolically reborn. Evidently, the above analysis shows characters confronting each other throughout the memory or rememory, which is challenging for a character as they feel loneliness and rejection as a Black person in their community. In fact, this pain had a role in eliminating the suffering caused by racism and shadism in the past.

The tiring tasks that dark-skinned people are assigned to and the easier tasks that are given to light-skinned people was the start of the deep hatred between light-skinned Blacks and dark-skinned Blacks which embodied in discrimination within the same race, or shadism. We can also note that the intention of separating light-skinned Blacks and dark-skinned Blacks was to divide them and make sure that there would be no unity. Morrison applies the power of memories to help her characters heal their painful past via some acts of shadism. The power of memory is inferred from its ability to build experiences; it explains a concern for cultural memory and Black antiquity. There are no possibilities to escape or resist since traumatic memory and events produce profound and lasting physiological arousal changes, emotion, cognition, and memory, moreover, traumatic events can sever these normally integrated functions from each other. Thus, the memory of their experiences becomes a more significant part of their healing process as they accept the events of their past, and shadism links that complicated dilemma.

4. Toni Morrison's *Paradise*

Morrison's novel *Paradise* is structured into nine sections. The first section is called 'Ruby' and is named after the town where the book is set. The other sections are named after the women who include 'Mavis', 'Grace', 'Divine', and 'Consolata'. The novel involves a parallel history of two places. One of these places is the town of Ruby, while the other one is the Convent which houses women who seek safety and freedom. Ruby was formed by descendants of former slaves who wanted to forget the racial and economic suppression they underwent during the slavery and Reconstruction era. The citizens of Ruby guard themselves against further oppression through the establishment of an isolationist code of behavior that hinders the introduction of new ideas, beliefs, or ethnicities. There is a convent where a group of women who have been marginalized by the strict code of behavior in Ruby stay. The founding fathers feel threatened by the Convent's presence, which results in it being invaded.

The idea of disallowing is central to the way the people of Ruby differentiate themselves from other people in *Paradise*. The town was vibrant and well taken care of by the people, but at the same time there was simmering discontent. This discontent may be attributed to the disallowing, which resulted in the town's founding fathers disliking people who are not similar to them in skin color. The founding families were rejected by a town made up of light-skinned Blacks, which forced them to think of reasons which would have contributed to their rejection. They named that event the disallowing, which reminds them of the events that happened during that time.

This chapter addresses the issue of disallowing and differentiation of the same race (shadism) in a bid to create a pure race throughout their experience and the remembrance of their previous generation's history. The remaining founding families established a new town in Ruby, which had a strict racial code that had to be followed by everyone in the town. Failure to do this resulted in punishment. Menus's house is foreclosed after he comes back with a light-skinned lady from Virginia while the Convent is attacked after the founding families decide that it is harboring evil activities. The attack on the Convent changes the way people in the town think as they come to terms with the massacre. Some of the characters enjoy favorable treatment because of the family they come from. For example, K.D. is able to get away with slapping and impregnating Arnette since he was the heir to Morgan's property.

This chapter uses the characters in *Paradise* to show how their dream of an indigenous ethnicity fails due to the same issues they had experienced at the hands of the whites in their history of resistance. Discrimination between light-skinned Blacks and dark-skinned Blacks is evident. The disallowing event proves that even the Black community

despised each other on the basis of skin color. All these racial segregations are based on the problems that their ancestors faced during their history, where mistakes committed by them were taken into account as lessons that remain for history in order to avoid ethnic mixing.

Paradise was the book that Morrison wrote immediately after receiving her Nobel Prize in literature. The first chapter is titled Ruby and is named after the town, which has its own rules that intend to limit outside influence. The people in the town believe that outside influence will result in chaos; hence they limit the number of new people who can come to the town. The first chapter starts with the famous line, 'They shoot the white girl first' (Morrison 1). The Convent is a place located south of the city where victims of domestic abuse shelter themselves. However, due to disagreements and issues within the town, the Convent is blamed for the problems of the city. The leaders of the town decide to invade the Convent so as to save their town. Thus, the first chapter begins with an explanation to the reader of the invasion of the Convent by a group of nine armed men. Judging by the conversations among the nine men, we can affirm that they are searching for a person called Detritus. The Convent displays the opulence of the previous owner, who was an embezzler. Inside the Convent, the group of armed men finds evidence that supports their assertion that women from the Convent were engaging in sinful behavior.

Ruby is a purposively Black town made up of around 300 occupants. The town's ethnicity was important because it gave the people an illusion of peace and harmony. There is a sense of fear of the Convent, which is born from the troubled past of the town and the presence of violence and racial bigotry. The ruling families maintain a system of racial purity that strives to prevent outside influence. The next chapters are named after the women in the Convent, each of whom faced domestic abuse issues and used the Convent as a Safe Haven. The chapters that follow present each woman's life up to the point she comes to the Convent. At home, the women face discrimination from their husbands and families, which forces them to look for alternatives. The Convent is presented as the place where women go to search for solace. In the Convent, the women are able to interact with each other and live a relatively happy life until the Convent is broken into, and some of the women are killed. As the novel ends, the spirits of the Convent women appear to people from their pasts. Therefore, we see characters looking for a *paradise* in the town and the Convent, each with varying degrees of success.

4.1 Black relations and Shadism in *Paradise*

Race within the town is defined by the founding fathers. The majority of the residents in the town are 8-rock Blacks, meaning it is a place formed by the dark-skinned. The term '8-Rock' is introduced in the "Patricia" section of the novel and is described as coming from mining terminology, where 8-rock represents the deepest level of a coal mine. With regard to Ruby, Patricia uses "8-rock" to refer to the extremely dark skin of the founding families, which has been kept that way because they refuse to mix with outside populations. Due to this, there are discrimination cases due to race, with much of it being based on skin complexion. On the one hand, light-skinned Blacks feel entitled to be superior and hence discriminate against dark-skinned Blacks. On the other hand, dark-skinned Blacks construct their town that is excluded from the outside world in a bid to achieve a society with no discrimination. The result is a society that effectively disproves others and believes their race is purer. This results in the prevention of biracial people from accessing Ruby as the founding fathers feel that they may interfere with the composition of the town. Due to rising cases of violence and other vices, the founding families decide to vent their anger on the Convent. The reason for the anger is that the Convent, located south of the city, and harbored all kinds of people. This is why the town is so chaotic. The decision to attack the Convent is ultimately a costly one as the women living there perish. Morrison may have used this allegory to show the reader how costly decisions can be if they are not based on facts.

Ruby is a town that is discriminatory through Black-on-Black racism. The town was formed by dark-skinned Blacks who had been expelled from public office in Haven and could not find decent employment opportunities. The town's founding fathers believed that their dark-skin color signified racial purity, hence they fought to alienate themselves and prevent outside interference. This resulted in other Blacks with light-skinned complexion being discriminated against. The disallowing also reveals the inherent racism that plagued the town. The disallowing is an event that involved the dark-skinned Blacks being disallowed from accessing the town of Fairly by the light-skinned Blacks. In turn, they form their own town, Ruby, founded by nine families who were dark-skinned Blacks. They believed that they had a duty to maintain the purity of the town by disallowing biracial people from accessing it. This shows that racism experienced by the founding fathers later became their tool for dominating others. The founding fathers built their town with the aim of having a peaceful society with no outside interference. However, they achieved the opposite as the town is full of violence, especially women who must escape from their homes to the Convent to find peace and solace.

In *Paradise*, we find the town Ruby where the founding fathers have established a system that discourages biracial people from accessing the town. They believe that by doing that, they are preserving the racial purity of the town. Additionally, the founding fathers ensure that colorism is used to define hierarchy. Before this, the original nine families were dark-skinned and believed that racism resulted from the gap in wealth and slavery. However, after the Civil War, they realize that they face new discrimination from light-skinned Blacks. The dark-skinned Blacks are denied jobs and are shunned socially:

...that colored men would be embarrassed to be seen socially with their sisters. The sign of racial purity they had taken for granted had become a stain.
(Morrison 194)

This quote illustrates the self-realization that what the original founding fathers thought to be racial purity had changed to something problematic for them. They were surprised that fellow Blacks would enforce a similar system of hierarchy according to skin color. In the town of Ruby, that realization forces some of the new founding fathers to change and start marrying light-skinned Blacks.

She wrote: “Daddy, they don’t hate us because Mama was your first customer. They hate us because she looked like a cracker (good looking, fairly light-skinned) and was bound to have cracker-looking children like me, and although I married Billy Cato, who was an 8-rock like you, like them, I passed the skin on to my daughter, as you and everybody knew I would. Notice how a lot of those Sands who married Seawrights are careful to make sure that their children marry into other 8-rock families. (Morrison 196)

This creates division within the town where characters such as Patricia and her family are hated because her mother is light-skinned and her father dark-skinned. The townspeople believed that they had a duty to maintain the system of racial purity where dark-skinned Blacks were the dominant group. This injustice results in Delia being unfairly treated because she is in-between. Therefore, shadism can be said to have led to the slow demise of the town.

4.2 Disallowing and Differentiation of the Same Race: Black Characters Dream of Indigenous Ethnicity

Toni Morrison indicated that the novel *Paradise* completed a trilogy that was started by *Beloved* (1987) and continued by *Jazz* (1992) and rearticulates the African American concept of nation-building by showing the violent history of Ruby. The reason for this is to prevent interference with their sense of racial pride and community. The isolationist code is rigid and, most of the time, it results in conflicts within the town as people try to introduce new ideas. The novel also includes the issue of religion and how it impacts the way they think. The use of the Convent by Morrison was a way of showing the plight of women in America during the period of slavery and the post-Civil War era.

Morrison broadens our understanding of life in America for Blacks and how women suffered at home silently. Also, it broadens our understanding of the concept of isolationism, exclusion and how the two concepts were essential in the development of slavery. The connection between Ruby and the United States can be seen explicitly when the author links the history of the citizens of Ruby to that of America. The text offers a better and alternative view of the official American history that includes the Black's experience.

In 1949...Before first light in the middle of August, fifteen families moved out of Haven—headed not for Muskogee or California as some had, or Saint Louis, Houston, Langston or Chicago, but deeper into Oklahoma, as far as they could climb from the grovel contaminating the town their grandfathers had made. (Morrison 16)

Morrison locates the introduction of the principles of exclusion for the Black community in the Exoduster movement. During that movement, many Blacks migrated to Kansas and Oklahoma due to the Reconstruction period's failures to attain African Americans equality, rights, and security (Finkelman 489). The Exodusters movement hoped that by establishing over 60 all-Black towns, they would be safe and would have access to voting rights, land, and education. The novel suggests that it is impossible for a community to create a new beginning until it comes to terms with the traumatic past. As shown in the novel, the town repeats the same exclusions, similar to those experienced before moving into the new town. The mass movement from the south towards new areas shows that African Americans desired a better life and wanted to change their conditions. However, they were not adequately prepared for the new changes. When the first founding fathers move to a town known as Fairly, they are

dismissed and told that being poor is the reason that they won't be accepted in the town. They come to a realization that it is not their wealth status that is the problem; it is the fact that they are dark-skinned Blacks. They come to believe that in the town of Fairly, light-skinned Blacks had adopted a system similar to that of white dominance. This influences the decisions they make for their new town called Ruby.

4.3 Previous Studies on *Paradise*

Farid Parvaneh's study has focused on the issues of women characters and how they faced discrimination masked as protection. In Ruby, women were given freedom to the extent that they could walk around at any time in the day and night without being bothered. However, that freedom was, in a way, a restriction, for they had to conform to stringent ideas on how they should behave. These rules were set by men, and the intention was to control them, so they would behave in a particular way (Parvaneh 19). Parvaneh gave a good explanation of women's issues and how they got their freedom but did not focus on race, racism, and shadism at all. It may help in some cases of the analysis to show the effect of male characters on females in terms of priority of the same race on the other.

Additionally, Morrison uses the novel to explain the nature of freedom and what it meant to African Americans. The differentiation of Blacks from whites based on wealth and social standing influenced the development of slavery and racism. The plan to assign a low social standing to Blacks so that they could then be used as cheap labor influenced and continues to influence the broad perception of African Americans (Armengol 480). The Blacks in the town of Ruby create a society where Blacks are free and can carry out any economic activity they want. However, they enact restrictions that are designed to help the town remain pure, which create divisions. Some of the families are favored due to their place in history, and this favoritism brings disunity to the town, which ultimately contributes to its decline. This study shows the unity of the Black community and how they created their own places, but it does not show intra-racism among Blacks (whether they are dark-skinned or light-skinned).

The author intended to use the information about the Black migration in the 1930s when they were freed from being slaves, with the migration meant to find new areas to settle where they would live peacefully without disturbance. History is used by the founding fathers to explain to their grandchildren what the experience of being a Black man was like. The stories are used to instill into them a fear specifically for the white man. The use of history to

change people's perception of things has been widely used within the book. Pat reconstructs her lineage and learns that there is a part of the history of the town that is hidden from the official version (Rico 64). We learn that there is an alternate history that most people in the town are not aware of. The founding families use history to manipulate the people into doing what serves their interests. Thus, the townspeople experience shadism in the hands of the people who had sworn to protect and respect them. In *Paradise*, Morrison shows a different kind of racism— that of Blacks against Blacks (Xu and Liu 68). In *Ruby*, it was forbidden for people to marry a white or light-skinned person because they believed in racial purity as a way for the members of the 8-rock families to discriminate against other people (Xu and Liu70). This study helps connect the incidents that happened in the novel and US history, yet it does not address the issues of shadism.

4.4 Black Sufferance from the White Community and the Prospects of Independence from Colorism and Inferiority

Paradise expounds on the plight of the freed slaves who had to find somewhere to call home after they were given freedom. Most of the freed slaves went south to cities such as Kansas and Oklahoma. The Black community had long endured suffering during the slavery era and eventually the post-Civil War era. The discrimination was initially on the basis of wealth, but overtime it changed to skin color. To make matters worse, fellow Blacks would be discriminatory to Blacks who came to settle in towns that had already been established. The freed slaves were required to trek for inordinate amounts of time in their caravan as they moved from place to place until they settled on a place they named Fairly. However, in this instance, they were chased away, for they did not have the economic power to be able to start life in some of the towns. During that time, access to electricity was for predominantly white towns. New towns made up of Blacks lacked enough facilities for the community to use, but they were content with what they had as long as there was prevailing peace (Read 530). The freed slaves were searching for a better place and were escaping the ordeals of suffering as slaves at the hands of the white man. This shows the nature of freedom to Blacks and how even after being freed, they found no support even from fellow Blacks.

Another problem that the Black community encountered was the refusal to settle in the already established Black-dominated towns by the Black inhabitants. Morrison explains how freed slaves went on to form new towns after attaining freedom.

Denied and guarded against, they altered their route and made their way west of the unassigned lands, south of Logan County, across the Canadian River into Arapaho territory. Becoming stiffer, prouder with each misfortune, the details of which were engraved into the twins' powerful memories. (Morrison 14)

This shows the hardships that the Black community has had to endure. Forming the towns presented a sizeable challenge as most of them did not have enough money. In Haven, for example, there was only a school, one shop, and a bank that could be referred to as facilities. Morrison expounds on the plight of Black women under the hands of both white and Black men. Women in the novel have been discussed at great length, and typically it is in relation to their suffering. Mavis, the first woman to join the Convent, runs away from her husband after realizing that there were plans to kill her. She meets Connie, who leads her to the Convent, where she stays until the day of the attack. The head of the Convent strives to make the lives of fellow women better and help them find themselves again. Most of them had drug abuse problems, which made it even harder for Sister Consolata to help them. Therefore, it can be said that the Black community in *Paradise* strives to end their suffering at the hands of the whites by moving away to areas where they feel safe. However, moving to new towns does not guarantee that the sufferance will end. Instead, they establish a hierarchical system that mirrors that from where they had just run from.

The prospects of the Black community obtaining freedom and independence from Colorism and inferiority are well presented in *Paradise*. For instance, the act of trekking long distances to find a more suitable place to settle is the first act by the Black community to move away from suffering and discrimination (Jenkins 272). In the white-dominated towns, Blacks cannot have access to some of the facilities as the whites did not want to engage in commerce with them. We find that the Black community in Haven and Ruby used to trade farm items for things they needed. This does not mean that they did not have access to banks or money; instead, it shows how low the economic position of the new Black town is. Connie illustrates this when Mavis comes to ask for help.

“Did you think up anything about how I can get me some gasoline?”

“Wait awhile. Today maybe, tomorrow maybe. People be out to buy.”

“Buy? Buy what?”

“Garden things. Things I cook up. Things they don’t want to grow themselves.”

“And one of them can take me to get some gas?”

“Sure.”

“Suppose nobody comes?”

“Always come. Somebody always comes. Every day. This morning already I sold forty-eight ears of corn and a whole pound of peppers.” (Morrison 40)

Building new towns meant that they had to come up with facilities for the community such as a school, bank, and shops. Overall, the main economic activity was farming, as there were ample lands available to till. This situation may have led the Blacks to feel inferior since, in other white-dominated towns, the difference in economic status was substantial. The Black community had to unite and create similar facilities without assistance from the government. Ultimately, the creation of the towns can be viewed as a way of showing defiance to the system that was in place and that enhanced their chances of being viewed differently. Freedom is important as without it, the freed slaves would not have been able to move to new places and settle down.

As the Black community succeeds in setting up new towns, it encounters several problems that hinder their prospects of achieving independence while being seen as an inferior race: "From the beginning when the town was founded, they knew isolation did not guarantee safety" (Morrison 12). However, the first town, Haven, was not successful for very long. When the war started, most young men left to fight, which made it difficult for the town to continue doing well. Then, most of the men who returned decided to abandon the town and search for a new place to settle down. The townspeople do not forget to leave with the Oven, which symbolizes unity. The development of Ruby takes time since most of the new founding fathers are not wealthy. However, the town is deemed safe enough for women to walk around at any time without being disturbed by anyone, and Morrison writes "Sometimes, if they were young and drunk or old and sober, the strangers might spot three or four colored girls walk-dawdling along the side of the road"(12). This was important as it showed that in the confines of the town, people valued women and worked to ensure their safety. However, this all changes when the Convent is started, and new people start coming. The town showed a particular dislike for new people as they felt that their town would be sucked into the troubles that exist out there. Thus, the Black community adopts a similar approach to that of the white people, which is ironic because this resulted in them being

disenfranchised (Hilfrich 330). It became real racism from the same race when they treat the other part of the race (light-skinned people) as inferiors from their town.

4.5 The Idea of Disallowing

The Black community in Ruby attempted to maintain law and order within the community through the idea of disallowing. The founding fathers installed a set of guidelines that were to be used to maintain and preserve the bloodline, and they were guided by the belief that by disallowing women from having children with outsiders, they would preserve the bloodline and thus maintain racial purity (Jessee 82). This idea of disallowing first arose when the initial founding fathers of Haven reached a town called Fairly and were disallowed from accessing the town by the town members who were fairly light-skinned, which resulted in them feeling discriminated against because of their skin color. This made them more determined to create a community that was devoid of outside influence. The disallowing resulted in a more authoritarian system. In Ruby, women are disallowed from various things by the founding fathers, who consider them as their subordinates. An example of this can be found in Mavis, who was controlled by her husband Frank even though she was not consciously aware of it – Morrison writes "she realized she had no idea of what to do next" (27). The leadership of the town is predominantly male and the leaders exert control over everything that is happening in the town. They adopt a policy of negotiation when something happens instead of negation. What this means is that they decide what is wrong and right depending on the situation. This living system was not different from that applied to them by the white man during the years of slavery. The system shows how racism between fellow Blacks divides the Black community. The people of Ruby thought they were creating a pure town, but it was a type of racism where people from the same race treat each other differently, unlike the situation in the town of Fairly. They create a kind of racism equal to the one that they suffered before; white and light-skinned people are treated in a discriminated way, unlike 8-rock (dark-skinned) who as though they are prioritized. They treat them as "outsiders" with the idea that light-skinned people are enemies too, which will break the hardness and unity of Blackness. Moreover, the racism of white people on Black seems stereotypical to look at them as inferiors, adding to that; the racism among Blacks will make their life worse as they will face double sufferance.

The town's strict racial code was an instrument used to offer guidelines on what to do and what not to do. Marriage was closely monitored by the founding fathers so as to prevent damaging the bloodline.

The generations had to be not only racially untampered with but free of adultery too. “God bless the pure and holy” indeed. That was their purity. That was their holiness. That was the deal Zechariah had made during his humming prayer. It wasn’t God’s brow to be feared. (Morrison217)

Through their created law, they thought that Ruby would be pure and free from ethnos, which represented a form of shadism. The town founding fathers believed that women should not engage in relations with any person from the outside as this would only bring trouble to the town (Fuqua 50). This shows that the townspeople had been programmed to believe that people from the outside were different and could offer no good. Thus, when people discover the Convent, they grow suspicious and blame it for the evils befalling the town. The Convent accepted women who ran away from their homes in search of a better place and peace; these women were not doing anything that would harm the community, which makes the attack on the Convent surprising. The people feel that the Convent runs counter to their idea of exclusivity. The agreement to go and attack the Convent is made at the Oven, which had changed from a symbol of unity to a symbol of what was wrong with the town – perhaps even disunity. The strict racial code helped convince the people that invading the Convent was the right thing to do. The town's use of the racial code was meant to construct new meaning and identity the people of the town. The exclusivity practiced by the townspeople became their undoing as the new identity would have resulted in a race with a pure bloodline.

The towns of Haven and Ruby were different in many ways. People who first settled in Haven believed in the sense of community where people did things together and helped and supported each other where necessary. Also, the Oven was more important in Haven as it served as a meeting place where people would come together and roast full animals for the community to eat but also to interact. The people of Haven only needed a small common stove for their cooking needs; the Oven served the community at large. It was at the Oven where the founding fathers told stories of how they trekked for long distances and how they were disallowed from accessing various Black towns that they found on the way. The disallowing events remained at the front of the minds of their grandchildren. These events serve as a reminder of what the outside world holds for the Black person (Fuqua 54). Thus,

when they move to a new place, they enact strict guidelines limiting what the townspeople would do.

In Ruby, the new founding fathers had more power over what happened and often would be the ones to solve issues that arose. The inhabitants of Ruby prefer to stay indoors most of the time, which is a significant change to what happened in Haven; they concentrated on the idea of being far from the 'other' or as it is mentioned in the novel or "out there" as Morrison (16) put it. The Oven changes meaning in Ruby as it is now seen as a shrine for the town. Few people visited the Oven which contrasts markedly with the situation in Haven. The effect of losing their town forced them to be more cautious in the new time. This shows the level of fear and trust that the people had over the white people.

The community of Ruby also practiced internal disallowing, which occurs when the community excludes inhabitants of the town for failing to follow the unspoken blood rule. Patricia's father, Roger Best, was the first to break the unspoken color rule. This made the community hate his family and distrust them.

They hate us because she looked like a cracker and was bound to have cracker-looking children like me, and although I married Billy Cato, who was an 8-rock like you, like them, I passed the skin on to my daughter, as you and everybody knew I would. (Morrison 196)

Patricia thinks that the reason they were hated was because of Delia, who is light-skinned and would have produced attractive children. They had established a strict racial code that everyone was supposed to follow. In order to construct a racial identity that suited their needs, the people in the town of Ruby practiced avoidance when it came to issues that affected the whole community. The community practiced both racial purity and moral superiority and were of the view that within the town, morality could not be questioned due to the strict code established. Racial purity was a way of trying to revenge against the discrimination they encountered during the disallowing at the town of Fairly (Jessee 84). The people sought to have a town where the bloodline would be strictly Black. Their attempt to rename the town Ruby is ironic as they name it after a woman who died due to lack of access to better health services. Also, the Ruby community considers their place as "Unique and isolated"(Morrison 8). This was another indicator of the community's rejection, exclusion, and endangerment of the white and light-skinned people. The uniqueness that they are

looking for results in hatred between dark-skinned and light-skinned Blacks is a form of shadism.

4.6 The Effect of Shadism on the Black Community

Female characters are given prominence in the novel. During the era in which the novel is set, the women do not have many rights and they depend on men, as shown in the quote "Nobody, I mean nobody, is going to change the Oven or call it something strange. Nobody is going to mess with a thing our grandfathers built"(Morrison 85). In addition to that, Morrison uses every female character to highlight a type of discrimination that was meted on them. Mavis is one of the women in the novel who experiences discrimination based on race from her fellow community members. Mavis was married to Frank, who was the laughing stock of the town for buying a Cadillac while their family was living in poverty. Mavis is seen as uneducated and not worthy of bringing up children. When being interviewed by a journalist on the accidental death of her children, Mavis senses that the journalist does not believe her story. She also realizes that even though neighbors offered their condolences, they were actually pleased when they heard of the twins' death (Jessee 93). It is not clear why she thinks this, but we can infer that she did not completely trust the people around her. She even thinks that her children intend to kill her, which is why she runs away and finds herself at the Convent as Morrison (21) writes that "The neighbors seemed pleased when the babies smothered. Probably because of the mint green Cadillac in which they died had annoyed them for some time".

This quote indicates that the neighbors were not pleased with Mavis and her family. Although she is one member of the community and the family itself, this feeling from the neighbors shows that racial discrimination or shadism still applies there between Black people. The death of the twins compounded the hate as even her own child Sal looked at her differently as she also thought her mother was responsible for the twins' death. Morrison may have used this moment to show the reader the family dynamics in most Black families. Mavis had been left with the sole responsibility of taking care of her three grown-up children and newborn twins. Losing the twins while grocery shopping indicates how she had to juggle different tasks independently. Women had little control over their lives yet had so much to do during their lifetime. It is precisely this treatment of women that shows the patriarchal system had taken root even in the new Black communities.

The Morgan family enjoyed control over the town due to their ownership of the bank. K.D. was the last surviving Morgan, thus he was treated with care and was left to do anything he wanted. The Morgans run the only successful bank in the town, which allows them to maintain a grip on the town and they are involved in all the major decisions. They act selfishly by setting interest rates as high as they want to gain more money and increase their own wealth (Romero 422). These acts of selfishness and greed ensured that they continued to be rich. These acts may be a reaction because they suffer from white people to gain justice: "No colored people were allowed in the wards. No regular doctor would attend them" (Morrison 113). This quote shows the way dark-skinned Blacks were treated. They were even described as animals when they said the girl needs a veterinarian, as in the following excerpt "his veterinary practice; his butcher business; and of course the ambulance/mortuary business" (186-187). As mentioned, they own the bank (their economic situation is better than other citizens), so they accept the superiority of the 8-rock.

The situation with K.D worried the family members as they felt he could make a mistake at any time. K.D impregnates a lady by the name of Arnette and forces her to keep it a secret. On one occasion, he slaps Arnette for saying that he is interested in Gigi (Grace). This situation forced the Morgans to negotiate with the Arnette family, for K.D had brought dishonor to Arnette by slapping and impregnating her. K.D's family presents a united front and makes sure that the issue is sorted out without other people knowing of the details as highlighted in this passage – "However, disgusted both were, K.D. knew they would not negotiate a solution that would endanger him or the future of Morgan money" (55).

This quote shows the arrogance that K.D possessed, which made him do anything without care. He was sure that nothing bad would happen to him even if he committed a crime in the town, which makes clear that preferential treatment was accorded to some people in the town based on their family name (Romero 420). Arnette's family is forced to make a deal which includes Arnette being sent to college by the Morgan's. This shows the power the rich people have over the poor people as well as highlighting that the same principles of racism were being applied by the Morgans against their fellow Black counterpart. Additionally, the Morgans abused their position as the owners of the banking institution to enrich themselves at the behest of the community.

This was a common theme in America before banking regulations were passed. The townspeople may not have been aware of the intentions of the Morgans since they had perfected the art of manipulating the people to do what they wanted. This case of racism within the same race can be found in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Geraldine, who is a light-

skinned, middle-class woman, tries to teach her son that she is different from her colleague Pecola simply because she is from a poor family. However, the important point is that they are from the same race; thus, shadism can be observed from the perspective of the intersectionality of some of the identity's aspects such as gender, class, education, age, ability, and reputation. In *Paradise*, Morgan's economic situation led them to make preferential treatment against their fellow Blacks.

In the novel, Ruby experienced consistent discrimination when accessing segregated hospitals. Ruby was a woman who belonged to the Morgan family and was K. D's mother. Ruby fell ill and was taken to several segregated hospitals where they refused to treat her. As a result, she dies while waiting for a veterinary doctor to arrive to treat her "When the brothers learned the nurse had been trying to reach a veterinarian"(Morrison 113). This shows the prejudice that the Black community experienced and confronted at this time. Lack of medical access is detrimental to every society as it means that people will die of things that can be cured. It seems that the white-dominated community of America did not want African Americans to live for long. Research shows that the African American people were denied health access as they were not considered citizens of the country (Gauthier 79). This level of hate forces the people of Haven to create a society that is different from the one they had known. What they created was a town that is prejudiced against outsiders in a bid to avenge what happened to them in Fairly. The whole point of creating a town that has a specific code of conduct was to affect some of the characters who suffer discrimination due to the rules of the town; they tried to create a town where they could reverse what they had themselves suffered. The girls at the Convent are among the people to be caught between the town's fight for morality and racial purity. They consider the Convent a haven of evil and are prepared to kill the occupants. We noticed that there was a man who had an interest in the land occupied by the Convent in the midst of the attackers. This was a hidden agenda that he does not share with the rest of the group (Rico 102).

The word 8-rock is used by Patricia to denote the eight families that were the founders of the town. The name 8-rock represents the deepest level of a coal mine, "An abbreviation for eight-rock, a deep deep level in the coal mines"(Morrison 193). This word was used to show how extremely dark-skinned the founders of the town were. The founding families strive to maintain that racial purity system by disallowing anyone from marrying outsiders based on their ethnicity. In one case, Menus is forced out of his house after he arrives with a light-skinned lady whom he intended to marry. His house was foreclosed as a punishment.

The house is then given to Dovey, which becomes his second house. He even wonders why they never allowed Menus to keep the house.

Additionally, Billie Delia has to live in fear as the founding families despise her since she was born to a light-skinned mother. The issue of racial purity was especially important for the town. It makes them forget what brought them together, which in turn leads to the decline of the town. The need to be different was the ultimate cause of the decline of Ruby. The more the founding families insist on racial purity, the more there are disagreements in the town. Morrison uses irony to show how racial purity and morality are the foundations of the town, but in the end, the two issues end up being what divides the town (Xu and Liu 6). It was impossible to enforce the guidelines even though the town is isolated as new people still come in. However, the founding families still maintain their standards by enforcing the rules selectively to others.

Deacon and Steward were twin brothers who corroborated to maintain a firm grip on the town. However, the two have disagreements based on some decisions that were made regarding the Convent. Also, Deacon is angry due to losing Connie, with whom they had an affair. Deacon goes to Reverend Misner for a confession; he even walks barefoot to the house of the reverend "rather than dance" (Morrison 301). The conversation between them reveals that Zechariah Morgan's grandfather had a twin he disowned after an incident with a white man. The incident involved Zechariah and his twin and a white man. The white man told them to dance or else he would shoot them. Zechariah refused to dance and was shot in the foot, whereas his twin obliged and was not touched. This represented a significant change in the way Zechariah views his twin brother, where he even abandons him.

This story shows that standing up to the white was seen as an important aspect of a Black person's life. However, this decision by Zechariah is intriguing as he chooses losing a brother over reconciliation. Morrison intended to show the dilemma that was faced by most male Black youths as they had to decide whether to fight back or be humble and accept the discrimination that came their way (Armengol 475). Zechariah discriminated against his twin brother for showing fear to the white man, which he felt should not have happened. The pressure to stand up to the white man may have led to many innocent deaths for the Black community. Zechariah may have been right to abandon his brother, but his actions were in fact no different from what the white man wanted. The whites were happy to breakdown Black communities as they gave them a sense of togetherness. The idea was to make them fragmented so they would not be able to come together again (Jessee 81). This worked well in some places, but not so well in others. Moreover, Mavis had two children before meeting

Frank, an indicator of the family issues plaguing Black women. Also, a look at the family status of most of the people in Ruby shows that women don't have a say in what is happening around them. The men think that because of the safety provided for them in the town, the women are moral. They link women's good behavior to the strict code they had established, noting that there would be immorality in the town if not for such a code. This shows how men viewed women as people who cannot make their own decisions.

The disallowing continued in Ruby as long as the twin brother did not forget about the light-skinned people's refusal: "Between them they remember the details of everything that ever happened—things they witnessed and things they have not." (Morrison 13). This shows the social injustice and discrimination among Blacks, whether they are light-skinned or dark-skinned. After a long period of suffering, fighting, and disharmony, hope started to appear where they started to think about the real Haven where no injustice and racial purity exist. They started to think about the reason behind their isolation from the society.

So Lone shut up and kept what she felt certain of folded in her brain: God had given Ruby a second chance. Had made Himself so visible and unarguable a presence that even the outrageously prideful (like Steward) and the uncorrectably stupid (like his lying nephew) ought to be able to see it. (Morrison 297-98)

They gave themselves another chance to reconcile and gave the town the pure meaning of the dream that they had gathered for. So, ethnic segregation will no longer appear in the town. Life does not depend on race or any differential norms such as class, education, abilities, age, among others. To reinforce the idea, the beginning of the novel shows the insignificance of the race, whatever it is, especially for women: "They shoot the white girl first. With the rest they can take their time. No need to hurry out here" (Morrison 3). The indication of the word 'white' shows that people of color are an important part of society. Still, for girls, it is significant and meaningful if it is located in a patriarchal society where the men controlled women regardless of their race. Morrison intentionally said to Paul Gray that where he wrote:

"I did that on purpose," Morrison says. "I wanted the readers to wonder about the race of those girls until those readers understood that their race didn't matter. I want to dissuade people from reading literature in that way." And she

adds: "Race is the least reliable information you can have about someone. It's real information, but it tells you next to nothing." (86)

This is what she confirms in her book *The Origin of Others*, when she clarified that race doesn't matter because the focus is on the behavior, not race (50).

4.7 Conclusion

The differentiation that occurred between light-skinned and dark-skinned Blacks resulted in their community being disallowed from some towns due to their skin color. Shadism resulted in the creation of the two towns, Haven and Ruby. The founding fathers had aimed to create a community where their dark skin color was considered pure. This is a replication of how racism was created. The white people considered themselves superior to the Blacks. The replication of the ideals of racism in Ruby may be an attempt by the writer to show us that discrimination within the same race was similar to racism meted against Blacks. The Black women of Ruby suffer the consequences of shadism by living a highly controlled life by their men which resulted in the double suffering of women with male domination being seen as the reason women of Ruby are well behaved as compared to other places.

For this reason, women are prohibited from being in relationships with people from the outside (whites and light-skinned Blacks). Thus, the Convent is seen as a place where evil things happen, and the council decides to invade it. The invasion was pre-planned with some of those involved having ulterior motives. Pearson is able to get the lands that the Convent leased him for free, which helps him expand his farming enterprise. The Morgans participate in the disenfranchisement of the Black community by setting high-interest rates so as to increase their earnings, which serves to make them powerful individuals so that on every decision made they had to be consulted. The reason for the isolation that Ruby's citizens create is to live in peace, justice. Without differentiation, at first, they did not understand each other through creating racial purity. Still, they end up seeing that they did not create the Haven that they dreamed of and started to reconcile and forget about race. In *Paradise*, Morrison shows that racial purity is not her main priority and that race does not matter. Furthermore, the acts of shadism cannot build a solid, united, and justice-based society. Women suffered from the patriarchal society and from people of the same race. In addition to that, the conflict between dark-skinned and light-skinned Blacks when they tried to create a

community with pure bloodline, leads them to discriminate against each other which is a sort of shadism. This implies fulfillment of the dream of creating an indigenous community.

5. Toni Morrison's *A Mercy*

A Mercy is Toni Morrison's ninth novel, and it aimed to rewrite the history of African Americans from a feminist perspective focusing on such issues as gender roles, and the development of an independent self-capable of speaking with her voice, reconciling women with their identity. The most trustworthy things that bind women in life are a mother's relationship with her daughter, friendship, and sisterhood. These relationships may reduce many sufferings facing feminist components of society, which typically include racism, discrimination, and shadism.

The topic of 'sisterhood' was engaged with by Morrison, as it was by many feminists in general and Black feminists in particular. Morrison justified herself in an interview with Sani Russell in an essay in Neill McKay's book *Critical essays on Toni Morrison*. She stated that the term 'sister' in African American culture "has a very ancient meaning" (45). In most of Morrison's works, the sisterly relationship does not refer to sisters of the same family, but rather the spiritual and emotional relationships that the sisters instill over time through shared concerns and goals. Most African American feminists such as bell hooks also claim that true sisterhood has a potent meaning in that it is one whose bonds are not based on a common oppression or shared victimization, but rather a bond formed on the basis of shared strengths, beliefs, goals, and interests to combat sexism, racism, colorism, and classism that discriminate many women around the world (128). Morrison portrays this kind of true feminist solidarity in *A Mercy*, where all the women characters have suffered some form of discrimination from either their race or another. Still, in the midst of the hardships they have endured, they encounter and form a sisterly bond that helps the characters stand in feminist solidarity to combat sexism, racism, classism, and shadism that was once prevalent during the 17th century among white and Black people.

The sisterhood theme has several aspects in most of Morrison's works, and it is a relationship that mainly exists between women who trust each other and share feelings of emotion such as fear and confront the problems they experience such as racism, sexism, classism, and shadism imposed on the Black and white people. Henry Louis Gates also described the novel as one that should not be considered a mere repetition of some of the models that the writer had previously dealt with such as the relationship between brotherhood and race, nor between a fictional character and a friend, or between a Black girl and a white one. There is "repetition, with a signal difference, is fundamental to the nature of signifying" (51). This sister can heal wounds caused by class, racial injustice, and male restrictions, thus reducing racism from the same race or other races. This is what Black feminists and women

with narratives called for that women must build true sisterhood and friendship if they want to free themselves from sexual oppression, racial and class discrimination.

This chapter aims to analyze the solidarity and sisterhood relations that the heroines of *A Mercy* tried to create across races to reduce racial discrimination, shadism, and female oppression. Furthermore, it seeks to clarify the relationship between the white English-born Rebekka and Lina from the country's indigenous people, between Lina and Florence the Black slave, between Florence and Jin, and between Sorrow and her imagined twin. Despite their different races, they managed to eliminate most of the racial discrimination and oppression of women that occurred in that society.

5.1 Feminist Solidarity

To know the exact meaning of the feminist solidarity term 'sisterhood,' it is necessary to scrutinize why Morrison attributes it that importance and why it takes such a central place in African American literature. Unsurprisingly, the term sisterhood comes from 'sister,' which has an in-depth interpretation. Commonly, it refers to the intimacy and compassion between the sisters or those who have a strong, unconditional relationship, such as that of sisters from the same family. It is a relationship based on taking, sharing, and exchanging experiences as well as on mutual care. There are also many definitions for sisterhood emergent from the domain of feminism. Storey and Bryant (77) define it as "a strong feeling of friendship and support among women who are involved in the action to improve women's rights." In further support of this, Vivienne (3) aligns sisterhood with a feeling of affinity or closeness among a group of women based on and affiliated around shared interests, spiritual beliefs, race, sexuality, or class. Likewise, a bell hook (43) identified it as "The vision of Sisterhood evoked by women's liberation was based on the idea of common oppression" and adds that sisterhood should be egalitarian.

Furthermore, sisterhood agrees with the idea that a friendship requires both parties to commit to a reciprocal relationship based on affection, love, and appreciation. It is based on a deep understanding of mutual experiences and confidence in the sister/girlfriend's motives towards her sister or her friendship. Anna Rogers affirmed that sisterhood occupied a large part of the emergence of the feminist movement and viewed her family as a "political act." At the same time, the friendship remained in the "personal" spheres (30). The political action is meant to instigate bringing about a positive change that will benefit all women. In the novel, sisterhood is marked through a complicated interaction among female characters, which

could be determined neither through essentialism nor preconceived stereotypes. The sister friendship between a dark-skinned African American woman and women from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and races establishes a shared interest and strength for the characters to fight and thrive discrimination and find empowerment.

From this point, the argument for this chapter begins, through which it clarifies the role of sisterhood and feminist solidarity in reducing racism, shadism, and women's oppression. Women suffer from common oppression that affects their identity, personality, and ethnicity, and in relation to this bell hook argues that "the vision of sisterhood evoked by women's liberationists was based on the idea of common oppression" (43), which is represented in racism, classism, etc.

Black Feminist Criticism and Womanism assigned a distinct position to the notion of sisterhood due to the specificity of the relationship among African American women. Numerous critics such as bell hooks, Patricia Hill Collins, Carol Boyce, and numerous others have studied the strategies utilized by women to confront societal and male injustice in all its forms. These writers and scholars have also analyzed women's relationships with each other. They examined the challenges facing them because they believed that the African American women's common experience in combating injustice and marginalization forced them to find bonds that support them in confronting the impact of race, social class, and gender. Lugones and Rosezelle also point to an important historical dimension, which is that in the slave system that tore African American families apart, the use of a brother and sister was in itself an act of resistance and respect (138-9). Moreover, they include the consolidation of group spirit and the rejection of self-esteem. All of this would reduce racism in all its forms, whether from the same race or the other race.

The emergence of Black Feminist Criticism Theory was a response to the vacuum created by the second wave of the feminist movement, based in turn on the generality and universality of women's experiences. As Audre Lorde (116-7) explains, white feminists focus only on the factors that lead to their sense of oppression, completely ignoring the difference in race, gender, social class, and age. There are allegations among white women of similarity in the experiences covered by the word sisterhood, which can be said to run counter to logic. It also refers to the idea of women's oppression: racism, sexism, ageism, and so on. Unfortunately, the term "Black Feminist Criticism" was not accepted by all spectrums, with others preferring the term "Womanism," a term from Alice Walker's book *In Search of Our Mothers Gardens*. It has subsequently been modified by critics many times.

Alice Walker, the founder of Womanism, defined it as the set of positive cultural attributes in which a Black woman identifies her ethnicity and identity. Also, she defines it as "Black feminist" and can name it "feminist of color" based on a relationship of love between women with each other or men, and can include or exclude a sexual relationship and is typically based on cultural and emotional respect for women (Walker xv). It shows the close relationship between sisterhood and solidarity (in terms of loving other women), meaning that women respect and help each other. As a consequence of Walker's definition, the issue of racism and especially shadism can be minimized through the strong relationship of Black women. Based on that, Walker prefers the term 'womanist' over 'feminist' because she feels it is calling for a man not to separate from a woman (xi). According to this definition, the distinction between women and feminism becomes clear, namely the relationship of women to men, the relationship of sisterhood, and concern for society as a whole, unlike feminism, which sees men as the enemy "loving individual men, sexually and/or non sexually" (Walker xi).

There was a traced division between colored and white women at the beginning of the 20th century because the goal of feminism was to gain equality for women, but after a while, this shifted and changed. Womanism's concentration was not about gender inequality but about race and class, too, which made it a reference point for women in the world despite their origin. This term has come to some developments on the part of the critic Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, in which Womanism is known as some of the philosophies that has Black roots, and their main goal is the unity of Blacks (240). Also, in her book "The Tripartite," Hudson-Weems, added Africana to become Africana Womanism, which focuses on race and society (91) and is intended for race, class, and gender.

5.2 The development of the term Sisterhood

The meaning and content of sisterhood differed as professed by the second and third waves of feminism. In the second wave, the term was necessary to spread awareness of common issues, as Kroløkke and Sørensen (10) stated, such as male domination, procreation, and gender and gender roles. The women of the white bourgeois class agreed that "common oppression" is the main element that unites women and thus reduces the racism existing in that era. Hence, the term 'sister' began being used in the third wave of the feminist movement, as it is subject to re-examination and reconsideration on all levels, personal, political, local, and global. bell hooks confirms this in her book *Feminist Theory*. The idea of

"common oppression" is a false platform that conceals the ecclesiastical nature of women's diverse and social reality (44). She also added, "I am often asked whether being Black is more important than being a woman; whether feminist struggle to end existing oppression is more important than the struggle to end racism or vice versa" (31).

The difference in the nature of oppression is among the reasons for widening the chasm between white and Black women. Therefore, the third feminist wave rejected the emotional support system in defining sisterhood but instead gave a model to the sisterhood that begins with women who acknowledge their difference from each other. By doing so, they use these differences to support their positions (67). In the third wave of feminism, the term must take into account the differences resulting from power relations, the relationship of the center to marginalization, and the colonizer relationship with the owners of the landlords.

5.3 Toni Morrison and Womanism

Morrison supported the proposition of Womanism and embraced its theses in her fictional works. This was founded on its preference for feminism for her compelling belief in the experience, richness, and complexity of African American women. She also preferred womanism to build relationships based on partnership, friendship, and sisterhood between different races rather than the previous situation of dispersed relationships and individual resistance. She also found herself aligned agreed with womanism on several issues that have emerged in all her fictional works, such as the imperative of rewriting the history of slavery from a feminist perspective, seeing African Americans and hearing their voices, and acknowledging their existence and identity. In all of her work, Morrison has shown an inclination to create characters that differ from the stereotypes that white writers drew from African American women and the strengths and features of the vision that white society denied. Morrison was in agreement with Walker and Ogunyemi that the early departure of African American women from work since the days of slavery did not lead them to view men as the enemy, but rather enabled them to form a union with them to fight racism. She also confirmed this in an interview with Anne Koenen (Morrison and Taylor-Guthrie 73) that states "contemporary hostility to men is bothersome to me. Not that they are not deserving of criticism and contempt. But I don't want a freedom that depends largely on somebody else being on his knees".

In the same context, she stressed the possibility of consolidating the relationship between women and achieving sisterhood, provided that this relationship is not seen as a

lesbian relationship (73). This motivation was among the most critical motives behind her rejection of the feminist movement because of its focus on gender issues and its complete neglect of African American women's issues and concerns. In addition to all that it offers, Morrison – like others –gave special attention to the bonds and importance of sisterhood among diverse racial and ethnic minorities that the feminist movement has neglected in its second wave. Hence, it can be said that in *A Mercy*, Morrison is keen to focus on correcting the mistakes that were imposed and experienced by not African American women alone but also those of other races. She further emphasizes that in order to end these forms of oppression and racial discrimination, whether of the same or different race, a relationship of sisterhood and solidarity within the same or diverse backgrounds is an effective tool in reducing or limiting racism and oppression against women.

5.4 Sisterhood and Solidarity in *A Mercy*: Female Characters' Way of Preventing and Resisting Shadism, Oppression, and Racism to Gain Freedom and Self-recognition.

As for the technical classification of the novel, it can be included under what Bernard W. Bell (289) called "Neo-slave narrative" in his study *The Afro-American Novel and its Tradition*. It can be defined as a "residually oral, modern narrative of escape from bondage to freedom" (289) which depends on the folks as a material. This is what Morrison followed in her novel *A Mercy*. First, she was not satisfied with one heroine so created several. It also does not adhere to the hierarchy or linear progression of events but instead works to overlap between the past and the present and frequently uses flashback as a technique.

The sisterhood is at the mercy of the relationship between the woman and her servants, and the servants to each other, and the slave with an imagined friend, and then between temporary relationships and relationships that lasted for years and her visions accumulated in a narration that challenges the logical and temporal sequence. Morrison gives an effective view of life back in Virginia during the 16th century in *A Mercy*, where racism, sexism, and classism were so prevalent and affected not just the African American people but also the white people of the story. She gives an account of when slavery was an equal opportunity, color-blind state of misery that was not yet the peculiar institution that it would become in the 19th century.

Morrison depicts how some forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and shadism were encouraged and imposed by people of the same race and ethnicity as well as others. Through her characters, Morrison is able to portray the effect of racial discrimination

and shadism as well as the influence of religion, which brings forth tension and mistrust, leaving people, broken, helpless, and lonely – and this is particularly true for her female characters. Morrison emphasizes that for the characters to gain freedom and break free from discrimination, they will need to establish a strong sister friendship for survival. She explores and examines the sisterhood and solidarity established among four different female characters – Rebekka, Lina, Jane, and Florens – who come from different races and ethnicities but are still able to form a strong sisterhood bond based on love and care for one another. However, even though these characters are diverse, they have a shared and common victimization and oppression they have faced with their own race or another and are left broken, lonely, and helpless.

These female characters come from different racial backgrounds. One is a native American, one a white European, and one a Black dark-skinned young girl, and they have experienced racial discrimination from their own race, and through these shared experiences, they cling together and are able to establish a sisterhood bond which replicates a mother-daughter relationship and one based on a shared interest and goal in which is to survive in a racist society where the rights and freedom for women were very limited.

5.5 Different backgrounds of sisterhood in *A Mercy*

Vaark's family lives on a farm adjacent to the outskirts of a village founded by a group of Baptist religious sects who built for themselves an independent community on the subject of Christ, so they separated from the large sect " They had removed themselves from a larger sect in order to practice a purer form of their Separatist religion, one truer and more acceptable to God." (Morrison 78). Religion in that period was sectarian and bitter, it was a tool for division, not coalescence. Under bloody religious practices, Rebekka grew up in London in a situation similar to what Douglas criticized. She grew up in a harsh and puritan family that believed that religion "a flame fueled by a wondrous hatred." (Morrison 75). Therefore, at the beginning of her emigration to America, Rebecca tried to free herself from the bloody religious image instilled in her by society and her parents. The effect of religion was also evident in Lina's relationship with a Presbyterian family with all kinds of oppression and psychological abuse, and in the end she sold her to Vaark without a word of farewell. In addition to religious oppression as a component of the common background, the heroines of *A Mercy* were subjected to various forms of persecution due to sexual and ethnic racism, which caused an imbalance in the balance of power and a low social role. With all this

persecution and complete dependence on the man, and the belittling of her status, and the consequent sense of inferiority, the heroines were exposed to another common factor, which is psychological trauma as a result of all of the above, in addition to being sold in one way or another.

5.5.1 Family differentiations and religious repression

Slavery appears to be among the major themes in the novel as the majority of the characters are slaves from different races and ethnicities who were bought and sold in the New World. The narrative occurs in 1690 in Virginia, where most characters are natives, a term that is not explicitly explained but refers at times to Native Americans, inter-racial people, or African Americans.

One of the major themes in *A Mercy* is how the white characters mostly used religion to define the people occupying North America, separating and stereotyping individuals via their religious groups including a mix of Christians, Catholics, Protestant sects, and native religions. When a character comes across people who are theologically different from them, there is a tendency to respond with a lot of mistrust and skepticism. Take, for instance, when Protestant characters like Jacob refer to Catholics as Papists to emphasize their moral bankruptcy as well as show disdain towards their extravagant life choices and styles. Jacob Vaark is a Protestant and his family lives on a farm adjacent to the outskirts of a village founded by a group of Baptists who built a separate community for themselves when they went "apart from the brothers " (39), as explained by their neighbor. They disagreed on the topic of Christ and the general nature of the topic of salvation. Jacob also judges D'Ortega, a Catholic, as he observes him in hatred and disgust and associates his bad taste and moral depravity with his Catholicism. Jacob's roots as a Protestant made him object to and refute the way D'Ortega earned money through the slave trade even though he himself is implicated in such a system as well.

Likewise, religion was used to fairly and explicitly enforce racism and discrimination of white, Black and native people. During the 17th century, religion and scriptures were normally cited and used as a justification for encouraging discrimination and inequality. This is also seen in the novel, where it is a source of sectarianism and discrimination rather than solidarity. Morrison adopts the critique of the legalization of slavery by the Church. She critiques the traditional American model of nation-building since religion was bitter sectarianism, it was a tool for separation, not fusion and union, which corresponds to what

Frederick Douglass stated on the realization of justice and freedom, as the Church "the fortress of slavery" (17) as she did in her novel *Paradise*.

Under bloody religious practices, Rebekka grew up in London in a position close to what Frederick Douglass described. She was brought up in a cruel family who believed that religion was nothing but "a flame fueled by a wondrous hatred." (74). Her mother also tried to indoctrinate her, who saw the execution scenes as "a festivity as exciting as a king's parade." (75). Her mother's lack of interest planted Rebekka's horror, not love for her mother and God too.

All this shows that motherhood has had a negative effect on the children of their origin and is considered a racist practice that affects children's psyche and is rooted in the domination over them with their differences, whether it is from the principle of age, gender, or material status or despotism. The parents neither paid attention to her nor cared about the consequences, because they "treated each other and their children with glazed indifference and saved their fire for religious matters" (74), which means that they saved up all their enthusiasm for worldly matters. This weakened the mother's relationship with the daughter (Rebekka and her mother) and became religious oppression for her. All these factors made Rebekka look for alternative relationships because she found contempt in her relationship with her mother, which was evident in the girls, companions for the trip, and her husband's farm. It could be a temporary alternative; as Barden and Izzard argued, friendship and sisterhood are parodies of a mother-daughter relationship (94). The shared victimization and experiences that Rebekka and other women faced in the novel formed the basis of their sisterhood, whose bond allows them to care for one another and establish trust among themselves, just like a mother does for her daughter. This sisterhood bond is also essential to promoting political and spiritual solidarity beyond the identification as victims to end sexism, classism, racism, and shadism. Despite all this, Rebekka tried to break free from this bloody sound that she received from her mother, and she did not hesitate to go to the church when she emigrated to America. She admitted that her parents' explanation was less closed than the interpretation of the church. However, she was not alienated from them until they refused to "place her among her brothers with the Anabaptists attending" (79) on the pretext that her children were not yet old.

The effect of persecution related to religion appeared in Rebekka's case. She had been engaged in a relationship with the Presbyterian family who sold her to Vaark without any farewell. Following this, Rebekka was expelled even though she suffered from all kinds of oppression and psychological abuse. She insists that the family's relationship, and particularly

with the mother, is unfair because they did not give her any family tenderness or solidarity. In contrast, she found a white-colored consolation, namely Florence, despite the differences in color, race, and social class. This served as confirmation that the practice of racism was on the part of her family, so could also be considered shadism, which typically affects women and their social standing. Also, it is related to what was explored in the previous chapter of shadism from the perspective of intersectionality, meaning that shadism is a type of prejudice that is related to the skin tone and other aspects of identity such as gender, age, or ability (which is apparent when they put her in a subordinate position due to their conservative religious mind).

A community with a religious belief punished Florence and Jane because they believed that someone born differently should be considered a demon, not a human. Her community rejects Jane because of the shape of her eye and her malformed face that led the townspeople to term her as a 'demon' (104). They go as far as to perform physical tests on her for accuracy. Even after they obtain proof that she is indeed a human, she is still alienated from the village because of her appearance even though they are from the same race.

The same case applies to Florence when Jane's townspeople, upon a glance, judge that she is the devil himself and a Black man's minion due to her dark-colored skin. The townspeople force Jane and Florence to believe that they are outcasts because of their difference in skin color and facial appearance, and this shared experience prompted them to establish a sisterhood that transcends the restrictions of color and beauty and challenges societal racism, whether of the same race, color, or social class.

The girls had a common successor, which was persecution in *A Mercy* due to religious and sexual racism. What made them cling to their relationship was their lady's incurable illness when she stated the weakness of their position - Lina, Florence, and Sorrow,

Three unmastered women and an infant out here, alone, belonging to no one, became wild game for anyone. None of them could inherit; none was attached to a church or recorded in its books. Female and illegal, they would be interlopers, squatters, if they stayed on after Mistress died, subject to purchase, hire, assault, abduction, exile. (58)

The heroines of the novel are subjected to another common factor, which is the psychological trauma they suffered, whether from society or family, in addition to being "sold as slaves." All this illustrates the familial and cultural rupture.

Rebekka agrees to marry Vaark, a prosperous merchant who had previously suffered from poverty, a factor that made him pity her and made Rebekka accept him to escape poverty. This was one of the reasons for her sale, as her mother stated. However, in fact, her mother wanted to reduce the number of mouths that she fed by charging them on the first boat to get rid of her expenses (86). The issue of gender preference is evident here even though they are from the same race and the same family. This, again, can be seen as shadism because of the distinction between people of the same race, color, social or psychological status because she chose to sell her daughter, not her son. To demonstrate that, Allport deals with the issue of sexism and racism and he claims, "Negative religious, ethnic, or racial prejudice is an antipathy based on faulty and inflexible generalization or stereotyping. It may be felt or expressed, and it is directed toward a group as a whole or toward an individual, because he or she is a member of that group." (Preface). In addition to this, Reid confirms that 'negative ethnic prejudice' looks functional in both racism and sexism, and she writes that "The definition indicates the process involved in racism (faulty generalization), a process identical to the stereotyping that occurs in sexism." (204). This therefore proves that both racism and sexism are forms of discrimination based on negative stereotyping. As she is from the same family and race, shadism is evident. Likewise, Florence, whose mother sold her only to pay off a debt, or as she explained that she saw a flash of mercy in the eye of Vaark, which is almost the same case that Rebekka experienced and Lina saw the same thing but was actually sold to Vaark.

The heroines of the novel also suffer from campaigns to erase their ethnic identity and personality traits by replacing other names with their original names chosen by their white masters, and this strategy implies domination. During the 17th century, slave naming was of practical and crucial importance to a slave owner since it showed and proved the ownership of slaves. A slave name proved that you were no longer a human, but a commodity meant to be mortgaged, sold, adjudicated, and bought. According to Burnard (30), if a slave uses a different name than assigned by the master or tries to change their slave name back to their original names, it proves resistance and domination. For example, the family that adopted Lina replaced her original name with another name meaning "sliver of hope" (57). This act itself indicates the power and influence exercised by white people against them. Losing a name is a loss of identity, history, and everything that links a person to the embrace of the mother/country in which they grew up. Therefore, the change of names was powerful and is considered a strategy of domination because they dehumanized her when they decided to call her whatever they want as she is not free, which means that the girl has no value comparing

to them. Sorrow shares the same problem as Lina on this matter; as the carpenter who saved her told Vaark when he decided to buy her,

"Don't mind her name," said the sawyer.

"You can name her anything you want. My wife calls her Sorrow because she was abandoned." (120)

It should be noted that the name Florence is derived from a currency that was used in Europe. This is an admission that it has little value in terms of a human being; it is just a commodity. This is what her mother confirmed in her last narration, justifying what she committed against her daughter when she sold her, saying, "I saw the tall man see you as a human child, not pieces of eight" (172). Florence's mother did not merely give her daughter up as a means to pay off her debt, but she also understood how the ruthless integration into the slave system that was prevalent at the time brought spalling horrors, particularly among dark-skinned women who were continuously experiencing abuse and rape. Considering that her daughter was a young, Black-skinned girl, she knew that she would not have any privileges in a racist world, a major fact that made her mother eagerly give her up since she knew she could not protect Florence against men and a cruel system. Florence, however, does not view this as an act of motherly love and assumes that her mother preferred her small baby brother over her. It was until Florence got exposed to the cruel racist world surrounding her at the very hands of various fanatic religious people who believed and analyzed her as if she was an animal, a demon, a monster, and a Black man's minion. This made her understand how racism can have a massive effect on people, especially dark-skinned women, and she began to rethink the cause of her mother's abandonment as an intra-racial act.

Against all this common background of religious domination, marginalization, humiliation, actual and metaphorical orphanhood, and the erasure of identity, the heroines of this literary work try to create a family through which the sisterhood relationship is fulfilled. Not only to resist and survive but also to help them break the silence imposed on women in the wildlife, and give them strength, and qualify them for empowerment. Tyson (118) also agrees in her statement that a bond of friendship, sisterhood, and solidarity between women helps shape miserable conditions and rediscover themselves as well.

Solidarity between the women helped them through some of the things they encountered during the slavery years. Despite the suffering, the women still dreamt of starting families and seeing their grandchildren. Persecution based on religion was common

as the white man allocated the people coming from the north into different religious groups. The effect of religious persecution appeared when Rebekka was expelled even though she suffered from all kinds of oppression and psychological abuse. Therefore, suffering and discrimination do not stop women from maintaining sisterhood and creating solidarity that enables them to rediscover themselves.

5.6 Confronting racial oppression through sisterhood

Morrison covers the constant nebulous and wide origin of human servitude and slavery. She explores the diabolical effect of racism and shadism on both the Black and white populations and is able to demonstrate how racialized slavery was a universal concept that was present in a single form or another in about every country worldwide, where both white and Black people were equally subjected to human slavery.

Taking Rebekka's case as an example, it can be seen she was sold and sent to the New World to marry a Dutch trader and farmer, Vaark, because her father had no love for her and even saw her as a financial burden. On her way to Vaark's home, Rebekka boards a ship, where she and several others "prison or exile(s)" (82) were the last to board the ship due to their low social status. Rebekka's case explains the role that class, ethnicity, and gender differentiation play in a person's status. Even though some were from the same race, they were classified or seated in the ship according to their social, economic, gender classes and origin.

Soon they were "separated from males and the better-classed women and led to a dark space below next to the animal stalls" (81). Despite being a white European, Rebekka suffered discrimination due to her poverty and low social level. This can be seen when she is separated and put in an inappropriate place among dark-skinned slaves and other low-class women from different backgrounds. This was justified in *The Bluest Eye* analysis by clarifying the vision of shadism from the perspective of intersectionality. Also, it explains that shadism is not only related to race but even to social, educational, and economic status. This is unlike other scholars who only connected discrimination to the issues of race and color. However, this did not prevent her and her traveling companions from treating them racially "The women scooted toward Rebekka and suddenly, without urging, began to imitate what they thought were the manners of queens" (84-5), in an apparent reference to class oppression that was among the reasons for their immigration to the New World, but this oppression was among the remnants of the world that they carried.

Their sisterhood soon arose between them and had a voice in adding joy to the journey. Rebecca thought that their presence together as a kind of good atmosphere, their gathering made it less ugly than it would have been if they hadn't been. Despite their low assets, they helped Rebekka gain confidence in herself. She was attracted to her companions because of "Their alehouse wit, their know-how laced with their low expectations of others and high levels of self-approval, their quick laughter, amused and encouraged Rebekka" (82). These women shared one thing in common, and that is that they were neglected, rejected, and exiled by being sold overseas because they were different from the people of their own race and others as well. Their sisterhood and solidarity, besides being inclusive of different mixed races, was a refuge and the actual sharing of fears and hopes were real support and strength for female travelers to help each other, and it worked. Gradually, Rebekka began to accept her fate and feel confident in the future. This solidarity that grew made her more confident because the other heroin believed in her. This point is related to the fact that the behaviors of the sisters to save Rebbeka are a good example of how solidarity and sisterhood give the self-confidence to face racism, shadism, and oppression.

This temporary sisterhood succeeded and lasted throughout the journey due to the common background, confidence, and finally, the power balance. Rebekka remembered her for years. Even in the moments of her illness, the spectrum of the "sisters" of the journey visited her:

Sometimes they circled her bed, these strangers who were not, who had become the kind of family sea journeys create. Delirium or Lina's medicine, she supposed. But they came and offered her advice, gossiped, laughed or simply stared at her with pity. (81)

In a time of distress, the spectrum of these women appeared to provide her with the support she needed, just as they did on the sea voyage when they taught her how to behave with sophistication in different life situations. All this solidarity among girls shows the importance of sisterhood and working together to fight, resist, and confront racism and shadism.

5.7 The symbolic story of sisterhood as an alternative to motherhood

Morrison crosses us over race, religion, and social class boundaries and takes us to the complex relationships between different colors and cultural backgrounds. By this, she is

trying to prove that the sisterhood should not be subjected to or limited to a specific race or the same skin color. Women from different cultures, races, and ethnicities experienced different forms of oppression and discrimination. Through creating a sisterhood, they learn to survive and even thrive in the midst of discrimination. Thus, Morrison creates a solid sister friendship among four characters from different backgrounds; Lina, a native American slave, Florence, a dark-skinned African American, Rebekka, a white European, and Jane, a white American. In doing so, Morrison displays how sisterhood can help overcome shadism, discrimination, abandonment, loneliness, and help the characters deal with their status as outsiders due to their shared otherness, love and care for one another. This sisterhood will create an atmosphere of social solidarity between the girls by helping each other to get rid of the ethnic and cultural oppression imposed on them by their family members. This is why disadvantaged and marginalized women take care of each other and help each other. Bell hooks confirms this in stating "Sisterhood was not viewed as a revolutionary accomplishment woman would work and struggle to obtain. The vision of sisterhood evoked by women's liberationists was based on the idea of common oppression" (43).

A reference can be made to the story narrated by Lina to Florence, which is considered an embodiment of the individual sisterhood that arose between the heroines of the novel. This story revolves around an eagle laying its eggs on the top of a tall mountain to keep it away from dangers. However, suddenly an adventurous traveler appears, expressing his amazement at the fantastic beauty around him, and as soon as he looks at the eggs of the eagle, he cries out loud: "This is perfect. This is mine..... Mine. Mine. Mine" (62). At the time when the eagle comes to the ruins of what could be the rubble of eggs, the adventurous traveler conserves his energy and beats the eagle's wings, causing it to fall and die. All this shows the situation in which each of the heroines of the journey falls. Then Florence asked about the fate of the youngsters,

Florens barely breathes. "And the eggs?" she asks.

"They hatch alone," says Lina.

"Do they live?" Florens' whispering is urgent.

"We have," says Lina (62-3)

This is an indication of what happened to the heroines of the novel (Lina, Florence, and Sorrow, in addition to Rebekka) as they were orphaned and deprived of their mother and homeland by racist abusive practices by their families and society, which sometimes connects

to the notion of shadism whether from their family or community. Likewise, Lina's use of the plural pronoun "we" denotes the fraternal solidarity that takes place to resist racism and oppression, as well as to help each other eliminate suffering.

Lina is a Native American who seizes upon Florence, a dark-skinned African American woman, to satisfy her mother's hunger. Because they both yearn for the same thing – a mother's love – Lina immediately takes in Florence and vows to care for her as a mother would do for her daughter. The possibility that a native American would even try to adopt and protect a dark-skinned African American as if she were her own rather than do this for a person from her own race proves just how female solidarity based on shared concerns (desperation for a mother's love and care) can challenge and change shadism and racism.

5.8 Sisterhood as Female Solidarity among the marginalized girls: Dark-skinned and white-skinned

Florence's relationship with Jane is an extension of Amy Denver's relationship with Sethe in *Beloved*, on her journey to search for Blacksmith, to whom her lady had sent to cure her illness that is about to lead to her husband's life. After her exhaustion from walking, Florence found herself on the outskirts of a village, so she chose a house with a huge gate. When she knocked on the door, Widow Ealing answered it and was disturbed by her shape and color and poured many questions upon her, such as, "Are you from this land or another place?" and "Christian or heathen?" (126). Although Ealing knew that the presence of this strange creature might upset her religiously rigid society, this is what shadism considers because she is of the same race even though her fear of her community bothered her. Hence, she allowed her to enter and feed her. Florence notices the presence of a girl lying on a pile of straw with her body torn with whips. When she lifts her robe, she notices the blood on her legs. Widow Ealing introduces the girl to her, saying: "This is my daughter Jane, the Widow says. Those lashes may save her life" (108).

The reason behind this is that their conservative religious community believed that Jane was a demon because of the shape of her perverse eyes, and this proves the internal racism in her community based on her malformed face. Rather than accepting her physical nature, the community alienates Jane to forever become an outcast. Then, to prove to her mother that she is not a devil, she resorted to cutting her skin so that she bleeds "because how many times do you have to hear it demons do not bleed" (109), and this is what Widow Ealing said the next day in defense of her daughter before the villagers who came to check if

Jane was a man or a demon. He stated "her daughter's eye is askew as God made it and it has no special powers. And look, she says, look at her wounds. God's son bleeds. We bleed. Demons never" (110). From these quotes, we see that the theme of shadism is manifested by the heinous behavior of her racist community.

However, they were shocked when they saw Florence, with her dark-colored skin and African features, and their reactions reflected the rejection of the idea of the difference. One of the peasant women covered her face, saying, "May the Lord help us," just as a "girl child" who they accompanied sobbed, and another screamed: "I have never seen a person as Black in my life," and another shouted: "The Black man is among us." (111). In Jane's community, a Black man was indeed the "devil," which was a strong reference to the thought that most 17th century Christians trusted that the devil had dark skin, which made them believe that Florence was Satan. Christianity during this period was entwined with ideas of racism and shadism. To save her life, Florence was forced to show them the letter that Rebekka wrote in order to prove she was her master. Again, this is strong proof of how sisterhood and solidarity can help women save each other from an oppressive community.

They point me to a door that opens onto a storeroom...they tell me to take off my clothes...They circle me, lean down to inspect my feet. Naked under their examination I watch for what is in their eyes. No hate is there or scare or disgust but they are looking at me my body across distances without recognition. (113)

After all these insults, they did not admit that, but rather promised to "relay this to the others he says. We will study on it, consult and pray and return with our answer" (113). The quote lays out the discrimination Jane faced at the hands of her own people. Even after she had bled, which had confirmed that she was a human being and not a demon, the townspeople still rejected her. Jane's mother also failed to give any consideration to the torture that was instilled and practiced on her daughter in front of the whole community and made no effort to try and speak for her or defend her as a mother should have for her daughter.

This heinous act stripped Jane of her humanity and left her physically, psychologically, and spiritually destructive. When everyone left, leaving the two girls alone, there was enough time for them to realize that despite their differences, they were similar to being "other" to society as shown through society's rejection of them. Both girls identify and relate to each other's suffering and neglect at the hands of their community, which establishes

a temporary but crucial sisterhood that stemmed from their status as outcasts. Their situation proves that it is possible for a white woman and a dark-skinned Black lady to create a firm sister friendship that resembles a mother-daughter relationship and use this bond to gain freedom in a harsh society organized along gender, shadism, race, and class lines.

Like the sisterhood relationship between Rebekka and Lina, Florence's relationship with Jane crossed barriers of color, class, and race because it was based on the realization that all their differences compelled them to feel that they are equal in marginalization and oppression. Jane, the white European, is not in a better position than Florence, the Black slave, and that is why they joined forces in solidarity to resist the injustice inflicted upon them by racism and shadism. This is what made the sisterhood a form of action rather than just negative sympathy. Jane, who is distinguished by her "daring," hastened to prepare some food and led Florence through uninhabited paths and guided her in how to escape from that village. Then, when Florence called to kiss Jane's hand in recognition of her beauty, she said to her: "I say thank you and lift her hand to kiss it. She says no, I thank you. They look at you and forget about me" (114).

The support they provided to each other during the days of oppression, racism, and injustice is a true example of the sisterhood, which transcends the differences of color, race, and religion. Florence gave Jane a lesson in self-sacrifice to present the 'true synergy' as the former stated, "Her bloody legs do not stop her. She risks. Risks all to save the slave you throw out" (160). All this tangible evidence confirms the validity of the present argument – that sisterhood and solidarity have a significant role in fighting and resisting injustice, oppression, racism, shadism, and even the possibility of eliminating them. This successful model of the sisterhood depended on the unification of their problems and differences and their shared stubbornness, as Chilla Bulbeck shows in positing that the sisterhood relationship between a Black woman and a white woman can be achieved if her foundation is solid and that she can achieve amazing results (99-100).

5.9 Motherhood: Sisterhood as a substitute for motherhood between a landlady and a Black woman

Morrison focused on the principles of color and race to prove that sisterhood is possible and capable of performing "miracles," which is represented by the setting up of the 'other' to reduce racism, shadism, and religious and male oppression. In the relationship between Lena and Florence, a completely different relationship is shown in which sisterhood

and motherhood overlap. It was Lena, whose nature focuses on the commonalities that bring people together and does not focus on the differences. Here, she is here an embodiment of the concept of womanism because she played the role of the mother of Florence. Both have tragic pasts resulting from the mother's deprivation.

Lina fell in love with Florence from the first moment she walked onto the farm shivering from the cold. She was seen as "a frightened, long-necked child who did not speak for weeks but when she did her light, singsong voice was lovely to hear" (60) who did not speak for weeks, but when she spoke her voice was sweet, and she decided to adopt her. As Rebekka noticed, "So she barely glanced at her when she came and had no need to later because Lina took the child so completely under her wing" (96) and was dominated by a feeling of the need to "to protect her, keep her away from the corruption" (60). From this point of view, it can be said that sisterhood and motherhood, because each completes the other according to their needs, had a significant role in reducing the racist and compulsive problems on the part of the male and racial society, as well as moving away from so-called shadism. It is considered a relationship of compassion, tenderness, and fear.

Lina made many attempts to save her from the corruption of the outside world, especially the world of men, and she became like "the wall between Florence and the Blacksmith"(60), who her master hired out of fear for her. Despite all the attempts, Florence fell in love with him and considered him her savior, but his abandonment of her at the end of the novel destroyed what remained of the hope for salvation, and she experienced a trauma which she did not recover from, a shock that her mother abandoned her and sold her.

The aforementioned point also illustrates the importance of sisterhood and motherhood or 'sismotherhood,' which would have been a point of healing for her from the previous trauma because Blacksmith treated her in a racist way only to exploit her and is considered racist. Unfortunately, she received her from a person of the same race, as her mother did before, which may be related to other aspects that lead them to practice racism upon her, such as skin tone (dark/ light-skin), economical (as her mother's situation when she decided to sell her to reduce the mouths that eat in her house), social, education status, gender issues (as for Blacksmith who is a male and wants her for sexual relations), and other issues. Again, the relationship between racism and shadism is viewed from the perspective of intersectionality.

Through all these events, we conclude that 'sismotherhood' has a significant role in reducing racism, ethnic-religiosity, as well as the modernity of the same race. This is what was proven when Florence abandoned Lina and returned to the same previous trauma, as she

abandoned Blacks over her even though Lina was white, but she did not commit herself to the factor of race and color.

5.10 Schizophrenia as a substitute for Sisterhood

The farm women's relationship with Sorrow hovered between hatred and friendliness due to the strangeness and madness of her personality. Rebekka suspected that there was a relationship between her and her husband. Lina also felt averse to her because she "was bad luck in the flesh" (53) and was the source of bad luck in most of the events. Despite this, they did not hesitate to help her during her illness, and they would take turns helping her. The shocks and tragedies haunted her and affected her and her psychological balance, which led to her schizophrenia and separation from reality and a degree of distancing from the rest of the sisters. Judith Lewis Herman also stated, "The psychological and spiritual trauma that a person is exposed to is capable of separating him from others" (133).

Unlike the rest of the novel's heroines, Sorrow did not resort to the sisterhood's relationship with Rebekka, Lena, or Florence, because she was content with her relationship with her spiritual twin, who had created her to make her forget. This is almost identical to the Pecola story in *The Bluest Eye* where she became her twin who accompanies her and gives her a feeling of security and tranquility. This is what deprived her of the creation of sisterhood with Florence, with whom she is close in life.

Just as sisterhood played a pivotal role in resisting oppressive conditions and providing real support for eliminating racism and escaping problems, so the sisterhood of Sorrow with an imagined friend has a positive impact on her life and gives her hope for the future. This is because her predictions and intuition enabled her to anticipate some things, such as the arrival of mourning, which would be a bad omen and evil for the Vaark family.

5.11 The disintegration of sisterhood and its impact on the heroines of the novel

The sisterhood relationship began to fall apart, and the reasons for the breakup varied from one pair to another, with the results sometimes positive and often negative. So, Sorrow's sisterhood collapsed with her twin by giving birth to her daughter, so the 'twin' went irreversibly "traceless and unmissed by the only person who knew her" (134). So, the twins fused with Sorrow and became one person. She called herself 'Complete' to express not only that the motherhood had completed all the deficiencies within her, but also to express the merging of the two personalities and also indicates her success in forming a new identity.

This was evident in her discipline, attention to her duties in the home, and her moral commitment.

Besides, the sisterhood of Lena and Florence fell apart, too; this is also due to Florence's re-discovery of it on her return journey after the mourning abandoned her, describing her, "You are nothing but wilderness. No constraint. No mind"(141). This situation is similar to what Sorrow suffered, shown when she began to turn away from everyone, even Lina, who was interested in her because she wanted independence on her own.

Rebekka was kept captive by her self-image only as 'Vaark's wife'. This resulted in an imbalance of power that shook the common background standard of the sisters and ended Rebekka's sisterhood relationship with the rest of the characters despite temporary success in equal give-and-take. As a lone widow in a male world, she had to fully surrender to the religious group that she joined and have faith in her beliefs that she had previously rejected. This baffled Lina when she saw her praying as she expressed her bewilderment in stating that she was always indifferent and sometimes hostile to him (77). She also disagreed with Sorrow over the reason for her relief and recovery, as one stated that it was the coming of mourning, but the other stated that the Lord is the one who heals. This was the beginning of the breakup of sisterhood.

Rebekka's adherence to the Baptist doctrine necessitated her establishing dividing boundaries between herself and others. It made its apparent religiosity a means of social control and class oppression. Thus, Rebekka betrayed her 'sisters' and became a tool for their subjugation and humiliation, which led to the collapse of her relationship with Lina, whom she called her "the only friend" (61). Despite her previous enjoyment in the river, Rebecca not only prevented Lina from doing so but accused her of being barbaric and backward. The verdict against Lina was issued from a Western religious perspective, rejecting the other, refusing to agree with it, and only accepting its cancellation. The patriarchal values of the society that Rebekka joined forced her not only to abandon the sisterhood relationship but also engage in somewhat blind obedience to superstitious teachings of clear boundaries that no one should cross. Hence, cruelty became Rebekka's main feature in her dealings with her 'slaves.' This appears when she was accompanied by Sorrow and one of the villagers' ladies, "where a village woman slaps her face many times and screams at her"(68). Yet, Rebekka discussed the White Lady, thinking that she was defending her, but the opposite was in fact the case. When they moved away from the village, Rebekka slapped Sorrow and described her as a "fool" (68). She did not hesitate "When she beat Sorrow, had Lina's hammock taken

down, advertised the sale of Florens" (155). Thus, she became a tool of enslavement and humiliation of those who were like her sisters.

Thus, the sisterhood was torn apart among the marginalized girls who succeeded in weaving it as the arrogance of power, puritanical religious practices, and the oppressive male practices of Rebekka toppled this noble relationship that had united the efforts of the protagonists. It helped them resist and achieve their goals. At the end of the novel, Florence's mother condemned all forms of 'domination' when she said, "to be given dominion over another is a hard thing; to wrest dominion over another is a wrong thing; to give dominion of yourself to another is a wicked thing"(167). This is an explicit condemnation of the religion and the patriarchal and racist ideology that Morrison seeks to expose in her cultural project. It can be said that one of the reasons for the schizophrenia of sisterhood is also to fall into the trap of personal desires because sisterhood is a relationship based on equality in giving and receiving. But when one side dominates the other, as Rebecca did, the relationship fails.

Sisterhood's failure in Morrison's *A Mercy* indicates confessions of a harsh reality under which a woman is plagued. She did not falsify reality to satisfy the readers, as in any other novel, but rather tried to portray the violations and suffering that the Black and colored African woman was subjected to.

5.12 Conclusion

Throughout the novel, Morrison manages to demonstrate how the sisterhood bond between the female characters provided them ways to survive. However, this depended on their capacity to persevere, limit, and combat the hardships of racism, sexism, classism, and shadism that were imposed on them.

This sisterhood is presented among various female characters in the novel. For instance, it is presented between Lina and Rebekka, who are from the differing races of white Native American and white European, and who help each other to survive alone in the wilderness. Furthermore, through the sisterhood bond, Florence and Jane, a white girl and a Black dark-skinned young lady, are able to overcome their differences through recognizing each other's sufferings and experiences imposed by their own race and another. Sisterhood can also be seen between Lina and Florence, a white Native and a young Black dark-skinned lady, who both hunger for a mother's love. The fact that Lina and Jane shared a common concern of craving for a mother's love and care, helped form a natural sisterhood bond similar to a mother-daughter relationship where they both purely care and love each other.

This, in turn, helped them break the barriers of both racism and shadism. These female characters had shared victimization and common oppression, whether faced by the people of their own race or another, which form the basis of their shared strength, belief, and goals to unite in combating the shadism, racial and sexual discrimination they faced.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, shadism and female resistance are concepts that can be studied extensively in Toni Morrison's works, specifically, *The Bluest Eye*, *Beloved*, *A Mercy*, and *Paradise*. Morrison's works explored the meaning of being Black in America, which is why their analysis was crucial for this research. This dissertation highlights how Morrison as an author brought more, and significant, focus to African American literature. This research aimed to address four main points, with each of them focusing on the issues of shadism from different angles.

First, *The Bluest Eye* aims at showing shadism from a different perspective that has not been considered extensively before. Specifically, this is the intersectionality of aspects of personality and identity. It also shows how Black female characters are trying to be whiter in terms of beauty standards such as the eye color (blue), while the Black community in their relations is not stable and cannot admit it.

The second chapter focusing on *Beloved* aimed to show the negative and positive sides of shadism. In particular, the chapter shows how the relations of Black people through memory and Rememory of the past lead to a collective trauma that turns into a healing process through self-realization, isolations, and solidarity.

Third, in the chapter that focuses on *A Mercy*, the aim was to show the importance of female character solidarity and sisterhood in eliminating or reducing patriarchy, racism, and shadism and ending their collective problems confronting their society, such as religious repressions and family differentiations.

The fourth chapter targeted the novel *Paradise*, with the objective of showing the negative side of shadism by revealing differentiations within the same race and community and keeping the bloodline as pure as Black to create their indigenous place called Ruby. The female character in this part was oppressed as they do not have to have a relation with a light-skinned or white person.

This study has drawn attention to the various slave narratives that have been written by various writers over the years. They had distinct features, which enhanced their authenticity. Some of these characteristics include endorsement by a white person, a phrase "written by himself," and an opening statement that began with "I was born..." This indicates that in the early 19th century, not many African American writers emerged due to the excessive discrimination that was enforced by the whites. The slave narratives described the life of the slaves and in most cases contained dramatic incidents such as escape plans. For

example, in one of the narratives by Henry Brown, the writer narrates an escape where he packed himself in a box.

In *A Mercy*, Rebekka received favoritism from the masters because she was lighter in complexion. An analysis of the novels indicates that slaves were grouped into two categories, field slaves and house slaves. Thus, colorism manifests itself in the way the responsibilities are distributed. Also, this study reveals that there was a perception that the Black people of lighter complexion were less aggressive and less rowdy, which made them appropriate for house duties. The novels *The Bluest Eye* and *God help the Child* reveal the introduction of shadism in the family context. Morrison explores how people of darker complexion were treated in the family. This can be seen in the character Pecola from *The Bluest Eye*, who wishes she had blue eyes because it would make her beautiful. Pecola encounters prejudice from her family and her society and is even raped by her father. Also, in the *God Help the Child*, the issue of prejudice against a family member is again presented. This indicates how Black writers helped in understanding how the issue of shadism and racism influenced different aspects of the lives of Blacks in America. This study shows how Morrison's perspectives on African American concerns can be important in understanding more about shadism and women resistance.

In analyzing Morrison's works, this study adopts her own argument that whiteness and the American identity are tools used to enhance the discrimination of African Americans. Morrison explored other American literary works and concluded that white hegemony is a major concept or theme in all the works in an interview with Charlie Rose "And my feeling is that white people have a very, very serious problem and they should start thinking about what they can do about it" (1993). This influenced most of the works of Morrison and ensured that the themes were unique to the plight experienced by the Black community. The study highlights the reception of most of Morrison's works. One of the issues highlighted in this study is how African women struggle against shadism and how this issue is addressed in the works of Morrison. It is important to consider what critics say about the four novels used in the study because it provides a better understanding of the issues.

Various theories are applied in this study to highlight how issues of shadism and women resistance can be discussed. One of the theories is postcolonial feminist theory that seeks to understand how women were represented in the colonial era. The theory is essential in understanding women's resistance to various issues such as gendered racism and racialized sexism. Another theory applied is that of Franz Fanon which indicates that Black people are still viewed as inferior. Fanon provides an example of perfect diction and how even when

Black people attain it, they are still viewed as inferior. Fanon concluded that Black people will still be viewed as inferior even after they attain the same standards. These theories were useful in understanding the concepts of shadism and racism and their impact on Black people. This brings to light the issue of intersectionality, which provides more analysis on the questions of gender and race. Intersectionality is a term that refers to the way gender, race, culture, and ethnicity interact and the results of the interactions. This concept has been applied in this study to understand and analyze the works under investigation. This is because Morrison's novels reveal that racism and gender interact to cause more harm to the Black community. Based on those ideas, this research has adopted the argument that all kinds of prejudice/discrimination within any community are interrelated and do not occur independently.

Through the novel *A Mercy*, Morrison can discuss the issue of female solidarity and sisterhood. It shows that the sisterhood bond and solidarity were essential in enabling the female characters to persevere and fight the prejudices of racism, shadism, and sexism imposed on them. This part of the study highlights the story of Lina and Rebbeka, who are from different races. The two assist each other to survive in the wilderness, which indicates the essence of female solidarity. Morrison also used Florence and Jane to illustrate the importance of solidarity among Black women. This shows that even though the Black and white women experienced prejudice, they still found a way of helping each other. It also indicates that they were aware of their sufferings. The analysis of *A Mercy* in this study indicates the importance of Morrison's literary works in providing a different perspective of the experiences of Black women. Morrison uses sisterhood bonds between different characters to illustrate how the characters broke down the barriers of racism and shadism. This can be seen in the way different characters from different racial backgrounds form a bond and in so doing share a common concern. This bond unites the characters to combat the issues of shadism, sexism, racism, and classism.

In the novel *Beloved*, Morrison applies the concept of memory and Rememory to highlight the experiences of the Black community. The concept is applied by making the characters remember things that happened to them in the past. In doing that, the author creates a way for the character to learn from the past. This indicates that in some cases, shadism had a positive effect on the characters because it helped them heal from their past trauma as it is indicated in the chapter's title: "more it hurts more it better". This is a sentence from the novel itself. Also, during the analysis of this literary work, the present study finds that the experience of remembering was a painful one based on the way Morrison depicts the

characters. However, Morrison uses this idea to highlight how it is essential to interact with the past to try and stop the pain. This concept contradicts the one raised by Fanon on disregarding the past.

Additionally, *Beloved* highlights the issue of shadism in the way light-skinned Blacks and dark-skinned Blacks are treated. The idea of remembering is a way of accepting the past and dealing with its effects. After many years of victimization and discrimination, the Black community needed to come to terms with the past. Shadism provided a link to the complexities that exist in the quest for Black people to accept their past and move on. Thus, in *Beloved*, the concept of remembering is seen as a powerful tool in helping fight against the prejudices brought about by racism, sexism, and shadism.

The present study also analyzes the issue of differentiation and disallowing based on the narrative of *Paradise*. Differentiation can be described as wanting to be unique from others. In *Paradise*, a group of African Americans creates a town that can only settle dark-skinned people. The community established rules which prohibit women from marrying people from the outside among other rules. Morrison uses the idea of differentiation to show the impossibility of creating a united community using acts of shadism. This is evidenced by the failures of the town of Ruby, even after disallowing light-skinned Blacks. It has been revealed how shadism is similar to the way slavery was enforced. Morrison may have wanted to show that Black people also used similar tactics to enforce their hierarchies. In *The Bluest Eye*, the issue of shadism is presented using different characters. From the analysis of the characters, this study shows the effects of shadism among the African American community. The novel uses a different perspective by presenting shadism from the viewpoint of whites, which is different from *Paradise*. It indicates that racism among Blacks was similar to the racism between whites and Blacks as women encountered prejudices because of the patriarchal nature of society at this period. Through the novel, this chapter analyzes how shadism influences other aspects such as gender, race, age, and identity and how they intersect.

Therefore, this research has addressed different concepts of shadism and women resistance based on the four novels highlighted above. The analysis is crucial in providing more knowledge on this critical topic in relation to Morrison's work. This is because few studies have analyzed the four novels based on the ideas of shadism and women resistance, especially when it comes to seeing the issues of shadism or colorism from different angles to those adopted by other researchers such as seeing the issues of shadism from an intersectional point of view, the rationale behind it, and its effects and outcomes. Women's experiences are

an important topic because of the nature of the way society has treated women in the past. It is vital that society attempts to deal with the issue of shadism because it enforces the same ideals as racism. This study attempts to start the conversation and other studies can proceed to identify how to counter the effects.

To better understand the implications of these results, future studies can address this study from a different angle, which is the historical aspect of the Black community in America in conjunction with the history and events of the visions that have been touched on in this study by linking historical events with the facts of the novel. All of this can give a more comprehensive view and knowledge of the history of racism and, specifically, shadism, as well as knowledge of the changes and developments of these issues on the chronological order of novels and how historical events and movements affected racism among them.

All in all, racial discrimination does not stem from the skin but from the human mind, and therefore the solution to racial discrimination, xenophobia, and other manifestations of inequality must, first and foremost, address the mental illusions that, over thousands of years, have given rise to false notions of the superiority of one race over another or one person of the same race to another in terms of ability, age, gender, and economic status. At the root of this racial intolerance lies the misconception that the human race is essentially composed of separate races and multiple classes and that these different human groups have varying mental, moral and physical competencies that require different types of interaction. Also, surrendering to stereotypes of other social groups is a critical factor in promoting racial and intra-racial (colorism) discrimination.

In fact, it cannot be denied that there is only one human race. We are one people inhabiting one planet. We are a human family bound together by a common destiny and bound, as Morrison illustrates in her book *The Origin of Other*. A correct understanding of this fact would move humanity to a stage where it transcends centrist ideas of tolerance based on multiculturalism. Such concepts represent effective steps towards a just and peaceful world, but they are not sufficient on their own to eradicate the inherent pain of racism, shadism, and other forms of intolerance.

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