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The Portrayal of Black Woman in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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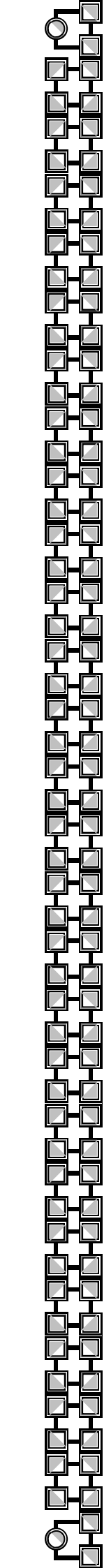
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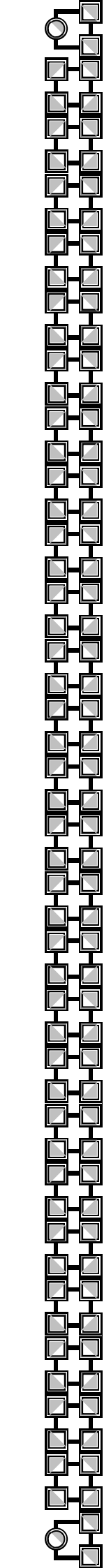


Dedication

I dedicate this work to the people I love most. To my mother, thank you for every prayer and every word of encouragement that kept me going; your support has truly been my strength. Special thanks to my sister and my aunt for always being there and helping me whenever things get difficult. To my grandparents, I am so grateful for your wisdom and the love you've always shown me. To my dear friend Manar For her patience and support. Finally, to my whole family and my close friends, thank you for the love and for sticking with me throughout this journey.

I couldn't have done it without you all.

Z. AMIRA



Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear mother, may Allah preserve her and grant her health and happiness, for her unconditional love and continuous support.

To my brothers and sisters, who supported me and stood by me throughout my academic journey.

To the memory of my beloved father, may Allah have mercy on his soul and grant him eternal peace.

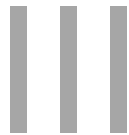
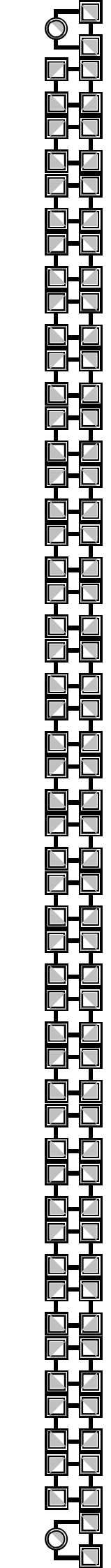
To my respected teachers, for their guidance, patience, and valuable knowledge.

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I also express my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed, directly or indirectly, to the completion of this work and to my academic success.

Finally, I thank Allah Almighty for giving me strength, patience, and determination to reach this stage.

B. MANAR



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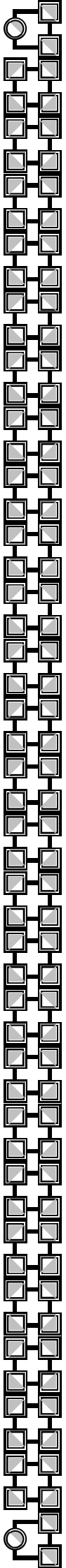
First and foremost, we are deeply grateful to Almighty Allah for granting us the strength, patience, and faith to complete this dissertation. His mercy has been our ultimate support throughout this entire academic journey.

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Abstract

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) examines the intersection of gender and racial identity among marginalized twentieth-century African American women. It illustrates how Eurocentric beauty standards distort their lives within a society ruled by systemic racism and patriarchy. This research analyzes the psychological breakdown of identity caused by these imposed aesthetic standards. It investigates how racial and gender stereotypes create fragmented identities and deep-seated internalized racism. This dissertation utilizes a qualitative analytical method grounded in Black feminist theory to examine intersecting oppressions. The text is analyzed through the conceptual lens of "Performativity" to trace how race and gender converge. The analysis reveals that white beauty ideals foster intense internalized racism, leading directly to self-loathing. The study exposes how the Black female is forced into a performance of oppression that shatters her sense of self. The findings prove that dismantling patriarchal structures and systemic racism is vital to reclaiming Black female identity. This study connects intersectional trauma to liberation, showing that disrupting dominant norms is essential for healing.

Keywords: Racial Identity, Racism, Black Female, Beauty Standards, Performativity.

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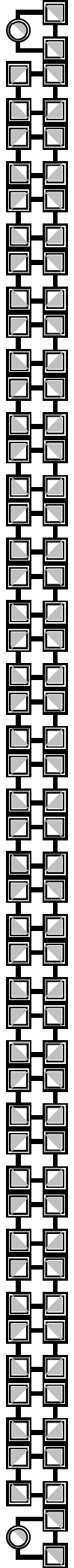
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General

Introduction



Looking closely at history, the African American experience has always been a painful journey marked by systemic exclusion and a fractured sense of identity. In the middle of this struggle, literature became much more than just a creative outlet; it was a necessary space for survival and intellectual resistance. For us, Toni Morrison stands as one of the most transformative voices in this tradition. Her very first novel, *The bluest eye* (1970), beautifully sets the foundation for her lifelong defense of Black identity. The novel is not just a simple story about losing childhood innocence. Instead, it feels like a deeply moving psychological exploration of how Eurocentric beauty standards inflict real colonial violence on young Black girls living in 1940s Lorain, Ohio. By placing these young, marginalized lives at the absolute center of her work, Morrison masterfully exposes the heartbreaking reality of a society that equates "whiteness" with human worth, while casting "blackness" into a painful state of ontological ugliness.

In this research, we want to move beyond surface-level themes to really explore the "inner world" of Black female characters who must navigate a world that constantly denies who they are. This harsh reality creates a heavy sense of self-alienation, where Black individuals feel forced to look at their own bodies through the cruel and distorting lens of the "white gaze"—a process that heartbreakingly forces them to hate themselves just to feel like they belong. When we look at the cultural backdrop of the 1940s, popular icons like Shirley Temple and the simple "Dick and Jane" school primers cease to be innocent; they act as tools for ideological colonization. These everyday symbols pushed a white, middle-class ideal that made Black lives feel completely "un-livable," pushing characters into a sad, destructive cycle of psychological trauma.

Ultimately, Morrison's narrative focuses on the intense struggle of the Black woman as she desperately searches for survival and self-love in a world full of rejection. By closely analyzing these layers, our study hopes to understand how systemic trauma is passed down through generations and deeply internalized within the Black female psyche.

1. Aims and Objectives

- To analyze the "White Aesthetic" as a mechanism of internalized racism and its destructive role in the psychological occupation of the Black female subject.
- To investigate how Morrison's narrative techniques, such as fractured syntax and shifting perspectives, mirror the internal disintegration of the female self.

2. Significance and Expected Contribution

This research offers a nuanced exploration of Black womanhood by focusing on the relational dynamics between Morrison's characters. By tracing the path from inherited trauma to total self-alienation, our project underscores the cost of absorbing a damaging external gaze. By integrating contemporary perspectives with foundational Black Feminist scholarship, our study hopes to provide a much-needed bridge between classical frameworks and modern socio-psychological critiques. Through this approach, we aim to offer a deeper, more empathetic understanding of how institutional oppression shapes the intimate emotional lives of Black women.

3. Motivation of the Study

What inspired us to look closely at *The bluest eye* is its refusal to turn away from the quiet, internal tragedies that history books often ignore. While many studies focus on grand political events, Morrison's work feels deeply personal because it captures the precise moment a child's self-worth is shattered by a world she didn't choose. We chose Toni Morrison specifically for her haunting ability to give a voice to the 'invisible'—the Black girls who are taught to apologize for their very existence. For us, exploring how a young protagonist is systematically driven to madness is a necessary step toward exposing the devastating emotional cost of internalized racism.

4. Statement of the Problem (The Problematic)

The core problem we want to address is the catastrophic collapse of the Black female psyche under white aesthetic hegemony. In the novel, the most lethal form of violence is not physical, but the quiet internalization of racial inferiority. Pecola Breedlove lives in a society where "whiteness" is treated as divinity and "blackness" is viewed as an inherent mistake. Through our reading, we identify a painful paradox: the Black community itself often shifts from being a sanctuary to becoming a vehicle for the very same oppressive ideology. This tragic dynamic creates a deeply fractured, "invisible identity" for marginalized characters like Pecola, who are pushed into a social and psychological void by a master narrative that denies them any authentic space.

Hypothesis: In this study, we hypothesize that the double oppression of race and gender, when combined with the systemic imposition of white beauty standards, completely shatters the self-identity of the Black female, ultimately leading her inevitably toward madness.

5. Research Questions

By weaving together, the haunting desire for "blue eyes" and the painful ways a community can turn against its own, Morrison (1970) masterfully captures the heartbreaking collapse of Black identity. To explore these layers deeper in our study, we raise the following central questions:

- . How does The BlueEyes motif symbolize the tragic loss of an authentic Black identity?
- . To what extent does the Black community contribute to the psychological alienation of its own female members?

6. Methodology

In this study, we employ a qualitative analytical method grounded in Black Feminist Theory (Collins, 2000) and the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989). For our analysis, this framework is essential for decoding how race, gender, and class converge to create a unique "intersectional trap" for characters like Pecola, eventually driving them toward psychological fragmentation.

7. Literature Review & Theoretical Foundations

The critical reception of *The bluest eye* has firmly established it as a cornerstone of African American literary scholarship, offering a rich tapestry of psychological and cultural critiques. For instance, foundational insights provided by Bousoon (2000) and Schreiber (2010) view the novel as a profound study of racial trauma. They argue that Pecola's madness is the direct byproduct of an intergenerational "shame-culture," where the absence of a supportive and validating cultural "mirror" leads to a total fragmentation of the self. From a feminist and womanist perspective, scholars like hooks (1981) and Christian (1980) have effectively dismantled monolithic portrayals of Black womanhood, shifting our focus toward the "double marginalization" of Black women who are caught between white patriarchy and the internal racial hierarchies of their own communities.

Complementing these views, aesthetic critiques like those by Harris (1982) meticulously decode how cultural icons function as tools of psychological colonization that equate whiteness with divinity. Furthermore, narrative theorists such as Page (1995) suggest that Morrison's disruptive narrative structure reflects the very fragmentation of her characters' inner lives. Through our review of these diverse perspectives, we aim to build upon their findings to closely examine how these external aesthetic pressures specifically devastate Black female subjectivity.

Adding a contemporary dimension, we want to analyze how the syntax and use of the "Dick and Jane" primer reflect a fractured social reality. This dialogue allows us to explore the linguistic alienation embedded within institutionalized educational scripts, showing how a master narrative imposes an "invisible identity" on marginalized

subjects. Furthermore, our study builds on a more nuanced theoretical landscape by engaging with Fanon's (1952/2008) core concepts of "lactification" and the "white mask" to deconstruct the psychological yearning for racial disappearance. This framework is woven together with Patricia Hill Collins's (2000) concept of "controlling images" and Crenshaw's (1989) theory of intersectionality, which are essential to our exploration of race and gender oppression in Morrison's text. Furthermore, we utilize Crenshaw's (1989) "intersectionality" to map how Pecola's trauma is amplified at the crossroads of race and gender. While Jones (2000) provides a vital framework for understanding how internalized racism creates a self-sustaining cycle of violence within marginalized groups, our research also moves from theory to domestic reality. Specifically, we draw on Umeh (1987) to scrutinize the erosion of maternal identity, while Bloom (1990) and Saleem et al. (2020) provide a grim look at how familial violence and intergenerational trauma become normalized within the Black household.

Moreover, the community's complicity in this erasure is examined through Douglas's (2006) critique of cultural conformity and communal "scapegoating." This approach highlights Claudia MacTeer's resistance, offering a vital counter-narrative to the total collapse of the self. By synthesizing these diverse strands, our research seeks to bridge the gap between established theories and new critical perspectives, highlighting the urgent need for racial self-love as a prerequisite for survival.

8. Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter I: The Ideological Colonization and Symbols of Whiteness.

in this opening chapter, we analyze the societal "script" and the symbolic tools of trauma, specifically focusing on icons like Dick and Jane and Shirley Temple. Our aim is to closely examine how Morrison's syntax reflects a world where Black lives are systematically framed as "un-livable."

ChapterII: Domestic Trauma and the Fragmented Self.

in the second chapter, we explore family dynamics and the intergenerational transmission of self-hatred from mothers to daughters. Through this discussion, we investigate how constant rejection by a dominant white society ultimately leads to the tragic, final madness of the Black female subject.

Chapter I:

The Ideological Colonization and Symbols of Whiteness

1.0. Introduction

In *The bluest eye*, Toni Morrison does not merely construct a narrative; rather, she performs a profound psychological and cultural autopsy on the marginalized Black psyche collapsing under the oppressive weight of Eurocentric beauty standards. This phenomenon, which can be defined as “ideological colonization,” operates as a pervasive, invisible process through which the values of the dominant group are imposed on the consciousness of the oppressed. Consequently, individuals internalize these foreign standards until they mistakenly perceive them as their own natural ideals. This traumatic psychological condition is best understood through Frantz Fanon’s framework in *Black Skin, White Masks*, where he explains that the colonized subject is perpetually forced to choose between authentic cultural identity and a prescriptive white standard of humanity.

Morrison dramatizes this struggle through Pecola Breedlove, showing how cultural institutions—specifically the education system and mass media—function as ideological tools that instruct marginalized children that dignity, happiness, and social validation are privileges reserved

exclusively for those who conform to whiteness. By critically analyzing cultural symbols such as the pervasive white aesthetic and the institutionalized Dick and Jane primers, this study argues that systemic racism produces a destructive state of double consciousness. This psychological division, reinforced through internalized racial trauma, ultimately culminates in the fragmentation and collapse of the subaltern subject.

A central critical question emerges: Is Pecola's desire for blue eyes a passive surrender to the white gaze, or a distorted attempt at agency? Morrison's fragmented narrative style also becomes part of the analysis. Through discourse tools such as framing and textual silence, the absence of Pecola's voice in crucial moments dramatizes the ideological erasure of Black female subjectivity.

1.1 The Nexus of Racism and Identity

To understand the psychological trauma depicted in Toni Morrison's *The bluest eye*, it is essential to analyze what can be termed the "Nexus of Racism." This phenomenon functions as an institutionalized apparatus that systematically dismantles Black identity. Within the socio-cultural

context of Lorain, Ohio, identity is not an organic process of self-realization, but a socio-political status imposed by a Eurocentric society that predetermines the diminished worth of Black individuals. This systemic devaluation aligns with bell hooks's (1981) argument in *Ain't I a Woman?*, where she contends that the legacies of slavery and institutional racism created a cultural environment in which Black women were stripped of femininity, beauty, and the right to protection.

Patricia Hill Collins (2000) further illuminates this oppression through her sociological concept of "controlling images," which operate as ideological tools designed to naturalize social and economic disparities. In Morrison's narrative, this construct materializes in the internal degradation of the Breedlove family, who internalized their socially imposed "ugliness" as an immutable cosmic law (Morrison, 1970, p. 39). This internalization reflects the success of ideological colonization and parallels Fanon's (1952/2008) notion of psycho-existential self-alienation under the pervasive white gaze. Under constant surveillance, the oppressed cease to interrogate societal structures and instead turn their trauma inward, revolting against their own bodies rather than against hegemony.

For instance, Pauline Breedlove interprets her economic marginalization as a personal moral failing (Morrison, 1970, p. 111), a self-blame exacerbated by cinematic controlling images of idealized, affluent white families (Morrison, 1970, p. 122). Here Morrison's text raises a central question: Is Pauline's self-blame purely the result of external oppression, or does Morrison also critique the community's complicity in reproducing these standards?

Discourse analysis further reveals that Morrison's language mirrors this fragmentation. The repeated emphasis on "ugliness" functions as a discursive frame that normalizes exclusion, while the silence around alternative definitions of beauty—what CDA terms textual silence—dramatizes the erasure of Black subjectivity. As hooks (1981) suggests, Breedloves are subjugated by a socio-cultural script engineered by patriarchal power structures to ensure institutional failure. Thus, identity within this racialized nexus mutates into a psychological panopticon, forcing the Black woman to either assimilate into distorted caricatures or suffer complete psychic fragmentation.

1.1.1. The Sociological Map of Lorain, Ohio: A Prison of Perceptions

Morrison begins her narrative by mapping a space that is not merely physical but deeply hierarchical and psychological. In Lorain, Ohio, identity is defined by proximity to the standard of whiteness, transforming the “home” from a sanctuary into an instrument of subjugation. Morrison (1970) describes the Breedlove family’s condition: “they lived there because they were poor and black... they stayed there because they believed they were ugly” (p. 38). Here, “ugliness” functions as a punitive social verdict rather than a biological trait.

The split sofa is more than a marker of poverty; it symbolizes existential fragmentation. The family’s broken furniture mirrors their fractured identity, externalizing the institutional “ugliness” imposed by white supremacy.

A critical question emerges regarding the sofa: Is it merely a symbol of external oppression, or does Morrison also critique the family’s acceptance of this broken environment as inevitable?

This spatial entrapment aligns with critical spatial theory, which argues that geography is never neutral but ideological. In *The bluest eye*,

space functions as a distorted mirror that reproduces colonial binaries: white neighborhoods symbolize order, beauty, and legitimacy, while Black neighborhoods are cast as zones of chaos (Soja, 1996). Within this hierarchy, Black characters internalize the belief that marginal existence is a natural consequence of racial inferiority.

The silence around alternative visions of home—spaces of resistance or redefined beauty—underscores how the novel dramatizes erasure. Within this framework, Pecola’s tragic desire for blue eyes becomes a desperate attempt to secure a psychological and spatial “visa” into sanitized spaces of whiteness, where sofas are never split and social validation is guaranteed.

1.1.2 Beyond the Mirror: The "Ugliness" as a Social Construct

Morrison redefines physical appearance by stripping “ugliness” of its biological essence and reframing it as a violent psychological imposition. For the Breedloves, ugliness is not an anatomical fact but a social “gown” imposed by a dominant culture that requires their perceived inferiority to validate Eurocentric standards of beauty. Morrison (1970) writes: “It was as though some mysterious all-knowing

master had given each one a gown of ugliness to wear... and they had each put it on” (p. 39). This internalization exemplifies Collins’s (2000) argument that “controlling images” function to naturalize social injustice.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, this dynamic embodies a state of self-alienation induced by what Fanon (1952/2008) conceptualizes as the destructive power of the “white gaze.” When the marginalized subject looks into the mirror and perceives aesthetic failure, they do not see their authentic self but a distorted reflection mediated by white cultural hegemony. For Pauline Breedlove, the mirror becomes a site of perpetual psychic defeat, as her physical reality can never replicate the idealized white actresses she idolizes on the cinematic screen (Morrison, 1970, p. 122). Consequently, socially constructed “ugliness” mutates into a marker of socio-economic exclusion that rationalizes the family’s descent into poverty and despair.

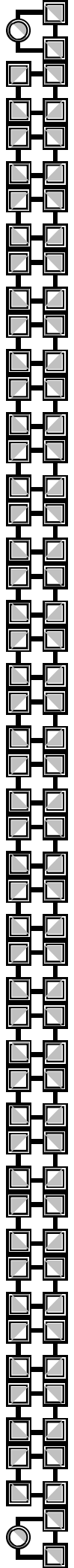
Morrison’s narrative also reveals that this “gown of ugliness” is not universally worn without resistance. Claudia’s rejection of white dolls demonstrates that ugliness is a contested construct rather than an inevitable destiny. This contrast destabilizes dominant ideology and

opens space for agency, showing that the imposed garment can be refused.

The silence surrounding affirmations of Black beauty underscores how the narrative dramatizes erasure. By omitting such affirmations, Morrison highlights how systemic racism not only imposes ugliness but also constrains the imagination of resistance, leaving characters like Pecola trapped in a discourse that denies alternative visions of selfhood. Within racialized hegemony, the human body itself becomes the primary territory colonized by dominant racial ideologies. Yet Morrison's inclusion of Claudia's resistance demonstrates that this colonization is neither total nor uncontested, allowing the text to gesture toward the possibility of reclaiming subjectivity.

1.2. The White Aesthetic and the Black Child

In the tragic universe of *The bluest eye*, beauty is stripped of its conventional capacity for joy and functions instead as a weapon of psychological exclusion and cultural occupation. The white aesthetic—ideologically reified through the triad of blue eyes, blonde hair, and fair



skin—operates as a psychological cage for Black youth. Through Pecola Breedlove's trajectory, Morrison (1970) demonstrates how a child's ontological security is systematically demolished when every cultural artifact in her environment reinforces the premise that beauty is an exclusively white commodity. This dynamic represents a violent form of aesthetic colonization that codes the natural features of Black children as markers of irredeemable failure.

To analyze the depth of this institutionalized trauma, Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) framework of intersectionality is essential. Pecola's psychological victimization is devastating precisely because it occurs at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities: Black, female, impoverished, and child. As Crenshaw (1989) asserts: "Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated" (p. 140).

This lens reveals that Pecola's suffering cannot be reduced to generic racial animus; it is synthesized by overlapping vulnerabilities. Within a cultural hegemony that equates womanhood with fragile

Eurocentric aesthetics, Pecola experiences dual erasure: invalidated as female due to her perceived lack of “loveliness,” and subjugated as a racialized subject whose humanity is denied. This systematic erasure mirrors Ellison’s (1952) notion of social invisibility, where the dominant gaze renders marginalized subjects unseen by looking through them rather than at them. Because Pecola fails to satisfy the aesthetic requirements of this gaze, she is relegated to a socio-existential void, dramatizing invisibility as a form of violence.

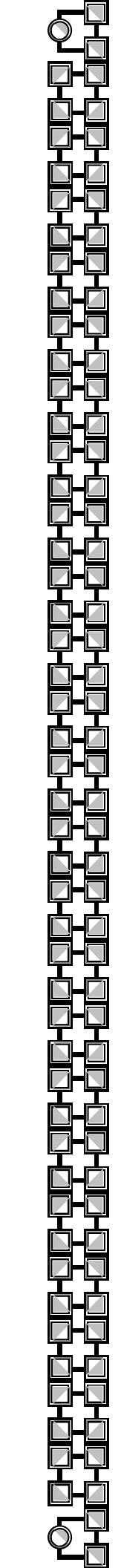
This intersectional trap renders her desire for blue eyes profoundly pathological. For Pecola, ocular transformation represents a symbolic “passport” to visibility, affection, and protection within a hegemony that deliberately ignores her presence. The community’s complicity is illustrated by their collective adoration of Maureen Peal, the light-skinned “dream child” (Morrison, 1970, p. 62). By internalizing Eurocentric standards, the marginalized community participates in Pecola’s subjugation, confirming that the white gaze co-opts the oppressed to police themselves. Pecola’s ritualistic consumption of “Mary Jane” candies serves as a metaphor for self-erasure; by ingesting the image of the white girl on the wrapper, she seeks an internal

transformation (Morrison, 1970, p. 50). As Fanon (1952/2008) posits, this desire epitomizes the crisis of the white mask, the tragic conviction that basic human dignity requires absolute assimilation.

1.2.1 The Commodification of Innocence: Shirley Temple and the Mary Jane Candies

The analytical focus shifts from spatial entrapment to the pervasive prison of the commercialized image. Cultural icons of idealized white childhood function as powerful instruments of psychological colonization. As Harris (1982) argues, these mass-produced images equate whiteness with pristine divinity while casting Black identity as aesthetically deviant. Morrison (1970) critiques commercial symbols that appear superficially innocent but operate as ideological tools for erasing Black adolescent identity, a phenomenon theorized as Aesthetic Trauma.

Morrison describes Pecola's pathological ritual with candy: "To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane" (p. 50). Her consumption becomes a distorted sacrament, dramatizing how commodities enforce racial hierarchies by promising purification through whiteness. This pattern is reinforced by her excessive drinking of milk from a "Shirley Temple" mug. Pecola is



not merely consuming nutrients; she symbolically drinks from the fountain of exclusion, convinced that the substance can erase the stigma of blackness. This ritual aligns with Fanon's (1952/2008) psychoanalytic theory of lactification, the internalized desire to whiten oneself, wherein the subjugated subject believes salvation depends on dissolving Blackness into dominant culture.

This phenomenon can be contextualized through critiques of capitalist commodity fetishism (Jameson, 1991). In consumerist society, capitalism and white hegemony converge to commodify aesthetic standards. Pecola, estranged from her cultural heritage, suffers from fragmented double consciousness; she worships and consumes the very symbols that negate her existence, embodying the paradox of desiring what destroys her. This socio-aesthetic commodification reduces Black girlhood to existential absence. Because capitalist innocence is predicated on possessing "blue eyes," Pecola is excluded from the ideological category of protected childhood.

The divergence between Pecola and Claudia is crucial: Claudia resists by dismantling white dolls, refusing to consume the symbol, while Pecola internalizes and ingests it until her psyche collapses.

1.2.2. The Fragile Ego: Intersectionality and the Erasure of Black Girlhood

To truly grasp the profound shattering of Pecola's psyche, one must view her trauma through the lens of Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) framework of intersectionality. Pecola does not experience racism as an isolated phenomenon; rather, her suffering is bred at the violent crossroads where race, gender, and class collide. As Crenshaw (1989) masterfully observes, "Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated" Crenshaw (1989, p. 140).

In this light, Pecola embodies the ultimate "fragile ego," stripped of any psychological armor to shield her from this tripartite oppression. Unlike Claudia, who fiercely rebels against the tyrannical white aesthetic, Pecola is utterly consumed and erased by it. This erasure mirrors the formation of an "Invisible Identity" within post-colonial landscapes. In a society that gatekeeps "womanhood" as the exclusive domain of white, middle-class fragility, a young, impoverished Black girl like Pecola is

relegated to non-existence. She is trapped in a cruel existential limbo: condemned as a girl who lacks beauty and dismissed as a Black individual who lacks humanity. This suffocating intersectional trap leaves her with no sanctuary but a desperate, haunting obsession with "Blue Eyes"—a final, tragic attempt to claim the very humanity the world so ruthlessly denied her.

1.3. Symbols of Trauma: The "Dick and Jane" Primer

Morrison's (1970) strategic deployment of the "Dick and Jane" foundational reading primer functions as a violent ideological manifesto that frames the novel's structural critique. The primer projects a sterilized, affluent, Eurocentric middle-class lifestyle as the universal, mandatory blueprint for human happiness and familial stability. This textbook, historically utilized as the institutional standard for American elementary literacy, operates as a primary vehicle for ideological colonization. It transcends the benign pedagogical function of teaching literacy; instead, it prescribes normative modes of being by establishing a flawless world of green houses, red doors, and laughing mothers as the sole legitimate reality. For the impressionable Black child, this institutional discourse does not constitute education, but rather a profound psychological assault

that immediately codes their own marginalized domestic realities as an inherent, shameful deviation from the socio-cultural norm.

When an impoverished child is structurally mandated to consume the sanitized imagery of the "Dick and Jane" narrative while concurrently witnessing her own mother exhausted by racialized domestic labor, a profound psychic schism is engineered. This traumatic dissonance forces the subverted child to perceive their own somatic blackness as an existential abnormality that requires radical correction. The literal, progressive disintegration of the primer's text at the novel's conclusion—where punctuation is obliterated and letters violently coalesce without structural spaces—perfectly mirrors the ultimate cognitive and psychological breakdown of the Black child collapsing under the weight of an unfulfillable assimilationist ideology.

To analyze this structural assault from a standpoint of critical discourse analysis, the primer does not merely ignore the material reality of the marginalized student; it actively deconstructs it, forcing the subject to navigate a linguistic framework where their very existence is treated as a silent, textual error. This systemic manipulation of knowledge production aligns directly with Patricia Hill Collins's (2000) sociological

assertion that "elite white men control the dominant ideology and the institutions that produce it—the schools, the media, the church" (p. 251). Within this institutional paradigm, the academic space ceases to operate as a neutral site of learning; instead, it mutates into an ideological laboratory designed for the distortion of subaltern consciousness, proving that hegemony is maintained not merely through economic domination, but through the absolute control over the production of cultural literacy.

1.3.1. Linguistic Violence: The Deconstruction of the Educational Script

Morrison (1970) utilizes the "Dick and Jane" reading primer not as a benign pedagogical instrument for childhood literacy, but as a coercive weapon of linguistic violence. This textbook represents the localized "Master Narrative" that authoritatively dictates the structural boundaries of a validated, middle-class existence. At the novel's inception and subsequent chapter headings, this institutional text progressively collapses, loses its structural spacing, and fragments into an unreadable visual monolith: "HEREISTHEHOUSEITISGREENANDWHITE..." (Morrison, 1970, p. 1).

This deliberate linguistic fragmentation, as Page (1995) profoundly argues, directly mirrors a fractured socio-political reality where the formal, typographic structure of the dominant language itself mutates into a site of violent ideological conflict for the racialized Black child. Morrison's radical formal experimentation serves as an externalization of Pecola Breedlove's psychological disintegration. The standardized language of the dominant hegemony functions as a rigid, assimilationist cage that cannot accommodate the subaltern child's trauma, ultimately causing the narrative apparatus itself to shatter under ideological pressure.

When the marginalized subject is structurally compelled to define their existence through a linguistic and textual framework engineered by the dominant "Other," the result is a profound socio-existential alienation. For Pecola, the prescriptive, "perfect English" of the institutional primer operates as a psychological death sentence because its Eurocentric vocabulary possesses no semiotic space for Black trauma or marginalization. Consequently, when the structural spaces between words are completely obliterated in the text, it signifies that the process of ideological colonization has achieved its goal: the complete

deconstruction of the subaltern subject's capacity to articulate or perceive a coherent, stable reality. This typographical collapse demonstrates that language within a racialized hegemony is never neutral; it is an active, gatekeeping mechanism that either authenticates subjectivity or induces complete mental fragmentation.

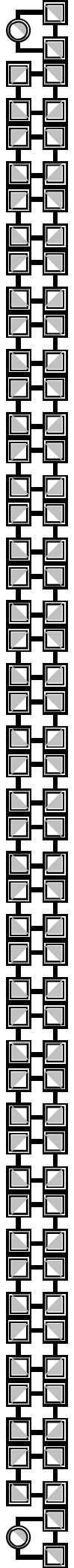
1.3.2. The Domestic Ideal vs. Breedlove's Reality

The violent contrast between the sanitized "Domestic Ideal" promulgated by the institutional primer and the grim, fragmented reality of the Breedlove's realityhousehold serves as definitive textual evidence of systemic racial and economic exclusion. While the primer explicitly promises a normative world of "laughing mothers" and "strong, protective fathers," Pecola's domestic reality is defined by Pauline's chronic emotional exhaustion and Cholly's destructive, traumatic presence (Morrison, 1970). This psychological juxtaposition creates what Collins (2000) conceptualizes as the institutionalized distortion of reality orchestrated by dominant power structures. Within this framework, the educational curriculum does not aim to empower or validate the marginalized subject; rather, its latent function is to continuously remind

the Black child that her domestic life constitutes an inherent, shameful deviation from the Eurocentric norm.

From a critical literary perspective, this enforced comparison compels the marginalized child to perceive her own domestic sphere as a site of intrinsic cultural failure. The idealized "Green and White House" featured in the school textbook mutates into a haunting, omnipresent symbol of an unreachable socio-economic heaven. Consequently, this juxtaposition causes Pecola's actual material surroundings to be internalized not merely because of poverty, but as a form of geographical and social refuse that reflects her family's perceived racial inferiority. This profound domestic dissonance establishes the reading primer as a primary vehicle for internalizing the destructive belief that domestic stability, happiness, and safety are exclusive white privileges. By continuously exposing the fragile ego of the Black child to an unattainable cultural standard, the institutional script systematically erodes her ontological security, ultimately accelerating her final descent into psychic fragmentation and madness (Schreiber, 2010).

1.4. Conclusion



The psychological tragedy of Pecola Breedlove is not a mere anomaly of fate but the calculated, systemic consequence of an “ideological colonization” that leaves the Black child defenseless. Textual analysis throughout this chapter has demonstrated that the sociopolitical conflict in Morrison’s Lorain, Ohio, operates as a structural battle over discursive power to predetermine the boundaries of beauty, truth, and human dignity. The contribution of this chapter lies not only in tracing the presence of white cultural symbols but in showing how these symbols fracture identity, producing subjectivity marked by absence and disintegration. Pecola’s collapse is not simply the result of external oppression; it is the outcome of a cultural logic that denies Black children the right to innocence and visibility.

The structural contrast between the novel’s adolescent characters remains haunting. Claudia McTeer survives by dismantling symbols of oppression, while Pecola internalizes them until her psychic interiority collapses. This juxtaposition dramatizes the dual possibilities of resistance and surrender, revealing how commodification can either be contested or tragically absorbed.

By foregrounding fractured identity as the product of aesthetic colonization, the chapter paves the way for examining how this external domination converges with domestic violence, allowing Chapter Two to explore the intimate reproduction of oppression within the family.”

CHAPTER 2:

Domestic Trauma and the Fragmented Self

2.0. Introduction

This chapter moves from the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter One to a practical analysis of *The bluest eye* by Toni Morrison. It focuses on how Black women are portrayed through the experiences of key female characters, particularly Pauline Breedlove and Pecola Breedlove. The aim is to examine how racial oppression, internalized racism, and domestic trauma shape their identities and influence their roles within the family and society.

More specifically, this chapter explores how racism operates not only as an external force imposed by white society but also as an internalized system that affects self-perception, relationships, and emotional stability. Through Pauline's character, the analysis highlights how racial trauma contributes to the fragmentation of maternal identity and leads to emotional detachment within the domestic space.

In parallel, Pecola's experience represents the extreme consequence of this environment, illustrating how continuous exposure to violence, rejection, and racialized beauty standards can result in the complete collapse of identity.

In addition, this chapter examines the role of the family and the Black community in reproducing internalized racism and psychological suffering. It also considers the contrasting figure of Claudia MacTeer, whose perspective offers a form of resistance to dominant racial ideologies and suggests the possibility of constructing an alternative sense of identity.

Overall, this chapter aims to provide a deeper understanding of how Morrison portrays Black women not as passive victims, but as complex figures shaped by intersecting forces of race, gender, and social environment. Through this analysis, the chapter demonstrates that the novel presents a critical reflection on the impact of racial trauma on identity formation and the lived experiences of Black women.

2.1 The Impact of Racial Trauma on Maternal Identity: Pauline Breedlove

In *The bluest eye*, Toni Morrison shows how racism can shape both identity and motherhood. Through Pauline Breedlove, the novel reveals that internalized racism creates a distance between her and her own

identity, which affects her relationship with her children. As a result, her maternal role becomes marked by emotional detachment, reflecting a fragmented sense of self within the home.

2.1.1. Internalized Racism and the Construction of Pauline's Identity

Pauline Breedlove internalizes dominant white cultural values, especially those related to beauty and morality. This is clearly shown in her belief that “whiteness is goodness” (Morrison, 57). Over time, she does not only accept these ideas, but also starts to judge herself based on them. This shows how racism can affect a person's thinking from the inside.

According to Jones (2000), internalized racism happens when negative ideas about one's own culture become normal through media, language, and society. In Pauline's case, this leads her to see her Black identity as less valuable. As a result, she builds her self-image on standards that do not represent her reality as a Black woman living in a racially unequal society. This makes her identity unstable and fragmented.

2.1.2. Psychological Alienation and Self-Rejection

As a result of internalized racism, Pauline starts to feel emotionally distant from her own life and family. She feels more comfortable in the white household where she works than in her own home. This shows a deeper problem of identity displacement rather than just a preference for space.

In this situation, her comfort in white domestic spaces reflects the values she has internalized, which exclude her lived experience as a Black woman. Because of this, she becomes emotionally disconnected not only from her environment but also from herself. This leads to a gradual process of self-rejection shaped by racial ideas about value and belonging.

2.1.3. Preference for White Domestic Space

Pauline's attachment to white domestic spaces shows her admiration for white ideas of beauty, order, and cleanliness. She feels more in control and valued in the house where she works. There, she

maintains order and cleanliness, while her own home receives less emotional and material attention.

This difference is not only physical but also psychological, as it shows how she assigns value to different spaces. As Morrison writes, “Pauline kept this order, this beauty, for herself... and never introduced it into her storefront, or to her children” (Morrison, 100). This shows that she unconsciously connects worth and beauty with white domestic standards, which makes her devalue her own home and family.

2.1.4. Distorted Maternal Identity and Emotional Neglect

Pauline Breedlove’s internalized racism also affects her role as a mother. Instead of giving care, emotional support, and stability to her family, her idea of motherhood becomes fragmented. This is influenced by the racial hierarchy that shapes her daily life in *The bluest eye*.

She invests most of her emotional energy in the white household where she works, which she sees as clean, ordered, and beautiful. At the same time, her own home becomes a space of emotional distance and neglect. This shows a clear psychological separation between her “ideal space” and her real family life.

As Schreiber (2010) explains, this can be understood as “homebuilding anxiety” in Black communities shaped by racism and the historical weakening of Black family structures. From this perspective, Pauline’s behavior is not a personal failure, but part of a larger social system that affects Black motherhood. In the same way, Umeh (1987) argues that motherhood in Black women’s writing must be understood within social and economic oppression, not as an isolated personal issue.

Therefore, Pauline’s emotional neglect should not be seen as a moral failure. Instead, it is the result of a system that devalues Black motherhood and imposes white-centered standards of family and domestic life. This leads to a broken maternal identity that contributes to intergenerational trauma within the Breedlove family.

2.2. Family Dynamics and the Transmission of Internalized Racism

Family dynamics in *The bluest eye* reveal how racism is not only imposed externally by white society but also reproduced internally within the Black household. The Breedlove home becomes a space where psychological wounds, violence, and internalized oppression are transmitted across generations. Instead of nurturing a stable sense of self, the domestic environment contributes to its gradual disintegration,

particularly in the case of Pecola. This dynamic also reflects the broader portrayal of Black women in the novel, where both mothers and daughters are shaped by the same system of racial oppression, leading to a continuous cycle of suffering and identity fragmentation.

The Breedlove family is depicted as a site of emotional damage rather than a space of protection and security. Instead of providing care and stability, the household is characterized by poverty, neglect, and a persistent sense of worthlessness. Within this context, the home becomes a space where dysfunction and psychological instability are normalized, leading to the slow breakdown of identity among its members. This interpretation is reinforced by literary criticism which highlights the disturbing nature of familial representation in Morrison's fiction, describing how her narratives expose "murder, incest, child abuse, insanity, terrifying family secrets, and a general sense of life teetering on the edge of dissolution" (Bloom, 1990). Such a depiction emphasizes that the domestic sphere in *The bluest eye* is not a refuge, but rather a site where violence and trauma are embedded in everyday life. Consequently, the family structure itself contributes to the internalization of suffering and the weakening of psychological stability.

The Breedlove household illustrates how racial suffering is transmitted within the domestic space, transforming it into a mechanism for the reproduction of oppression. Rather than serving as a protective unit, it becomes a site where internalized oppression and unresolved emotional wounds are unconsciously passed from parents to child. This trauma occurs through everyday practices such as physical violence, emotion neglect, harsh language, and the absence of parental care and affection. Pauline Breedlove's internalized sense of inferiority and emotional detachment, combined with Cholly's history of humiliation and violence, creates a dysfunctional environment that directly shapes Pecola's psychological development. Cholly's experience of humiliation and rejection do not remain isolated, but are expressed through violence within the family, which directly contributes to Pecola's emotional and psychological damage. This intergenerational transmission of trauma can be understood through critical perspectives that emphasize how racial stress operates within kinship systems and influences subject formation over time (Saleem, Anderson, & Williams, 2020). As a result, Pecola does not only experience racism from society but also absorbs its effects

within her own home, which intensifies her feelings of self-loathing and psychological breakdown.

As a result, Pecola becomes the most vulnerable figure within this environment, absorbing the accumulated effects of both parental trauma and internalized racism. Pecola Breedlove represents the ultimate consequence of internalized racism and psychological fragmentation in *The bluest eye*. Growing up in an environment marked by neglect, rejection, and racialized standards of beauty, she gradually comes to believe that transformation is the only path to acceptance. Her longing for blue eyes reflects not merely a desire for physical change, but a deeper need to be loved, recognized, and valued by those around her. This belief is clearly expressed when she imagines that “If she looked different, beautiful, maybe Cholly would be different, and Mrs. Breedlove too” (Morrison, p. 44). This statement reveals how Pecola associates physical appearance with emotional stability and familial affection, believing that a change in her appearance would alter the behavior of those around her. Such reasoning demonstrates a distorted perception of reality, where identity becomes entirely dependent on external validation. As a result, Pecola gradually retreats into an imagined world in which beauty

promises acceptance, ultimately leading to her psychological collapse and fragmentation of self.

This ultimately demonstrates that the family, rather than functioning as a space of protection, becomes a central mechanism through which racial trauma is reproduced, leading to the disintegration of identity and the collapse of the self.

2.3. Pecola Breedlove: The Total Collapse of Identity and the Descent into Madness

Pecola Breedlove embodies the total collapse of identity resulting from the intersection of racial oppression and domestic trauma. Throughout the narrative, she is subjected to continuous abuse, not only from the dominant white society but also from her immediate family and community. This accumulation of violence and rejection gradually erodes her sense of self and leads to her complete mental collapse.

From an early age, Pecola is exposed to a violent domestic environment shaped by constant physical and verbal conflicts between her parents. These recurring episodes of brutality create a pervasive atmosphere of fear and instability, which deeply affects her psychological

development. Morrison illustrates the intensity of this violence through graphic descriptions of the fights between Pauline and Cholly, where physical aggression becomes normalized within the household (Morrison 41–42). As a result, Pecola develops a profound sense of anxiety and helplessness, often seeking escape through withdrawal and self-erasure. Her desperate, plea- “please, God... Please make me disappear” (Morrison 43)—reveals an early stage of identity fragmentation, where existence itself becomes unbearable.

Moreover, Pecola’s relationship with her mother reinforces her emotional suffering and sense of worthlessness. Instead of providing protection and affection, Pauline responds with rejection and hostility, particularly when Pecola fails to meet imposed standards of beauty and behavior. The incident of the spilled pie clearly demonstrates this dynamic, as Pauline reacts with anger and verbal abuse, prioritizing material order over her daughter’s well-being: “Crazy fool... my floor... my floor” (Morrison 107). This moment reflects not only maternal neglect but also the internalization of dominant values that distort Pauline’s perception of her own child. Consequently, Pecola internalizes this rejection, associating herself with ugliness and unworthiness.

The most devastating rupture in Pecola's life, however, occurs through her father's sexual violence. Cholly's act of rape represents a critical turning point in her psychological collapse, as it destroys any remaining sense of safety or trust. When Pecola attempts to seek support, her mother's disbelief further deepens her isolation: "She didn't even believe me when I told her" (Morrison 198). This betrayal reinforces her silence and powerlessness, positioning her as a victim not only of individual violence but also of a broader social structure that fails to protect Black girls. Morrison's depiction of the aftermath—"she appeared to have fainted" (Morrison 161)—emphasizes Pecola's vulnerability and the dissociation that accompanies extreme trauma.

Ultimately, the cumulative effect of racial discrimination, familial abuse, and emotional neglect leads to Pecola's complete psychological breakdown. Unable to reconcile her lived reality with her desire for acceptance, she retreats into madness as a form of escape. Her belief that she has finally obtained blue eyes reflects the internalization of white beauty standards and symbolizes her final detachment from reality. In this sense, madness functions not merely as a loss of reason but as a coping mechanism in response to unbearable suffering. Pecola's tragic

trajectory illustrates how sustained exposure to trauma and internalized racism can result in the total disintegration of the self. Through her character, Morrison presents a powerful critique of the social and familial forces that contribute to the erasure of Black female identity.

2.4. The Community's Racism: Scapegoating and the Erasure of the self

In, *the bluest eye* racism is not only imposed by white society but is also reproduced within the Black community itself. Rather than functioning as a space of solidarity, the community often internalizes dominant racist ideologies and redirects its frustrations toward the most vulnerable individuals. In this context, Pecola Breedlove becomes a scapegoat onto whom collective anxieties, failures, and self-hatred are projected.

According to Page (1995), the Breedlove family suffers from a severe form of psychological fragmentation and social alienation that is reproduced internally within Lorain, Ohio, rather than solely imposed externally. This process demonstrates how oppression operates within segregated spaces, where individuals who are already marginalized become further excluded and symbolically blamed for the community's

unresolved suffering. As a result, Pecola is not only socially rejected but also psychologically isolated, reinforcing her gradual erasure from communal recognition.

This internal division is further explained by Bouson (2000), who argues that the novel presents a community in which racist ideology is deeply internalized, creating a cycle where victims of racial oppression both endure and unconsciously reproduce the same structures of violence. From this perspective, Pecola's marginalization is not accidental but part of a broader psychosocial framework in which oppression becomes normalized within the community itself. This normalization contributes significantly to the fragmentation of identity and the weakening of self-perception among its members. Moreover, Douglas (2006) highlights how certain members of the community adopt standards of cultural conformity that seek to eliminate what is perceived as "funkiness," or authentic Black identity. This pressure to conform results in the rejection of individuals who do not fit into socially constructed ideals of respectability. In Pecola's case, this cultural rejection intensifies her invisibility and accelerates the erasure of her identity, as she is denied both recognition and belonging within her own community.

Ultimately, the community's racism plays a crucial role in completing Pecola's psychological destruction. Instead of offering protection, it reinforces systems of exclusion and scapegoating that contribute to her loss of identity. Through this collective dynamic, Morrison exposes how oppression is not only external but also internalized and reproduced within marginalized communities themselves, leading to the gradual erasure of the self.

2.5. Countering Racism: Claudia Mac Teer and the Search for an Authentic Identity

This section explores how Claudia Mac Teer represents a form of resistance against dominant racial ideologies by rejecting imposed standards of beauty and affirming her own sense of identity.

In *The bluest eye*, resistance to racism is not expressed through large collective movements only, but also through subtle individual acts of awareness and rejection of dominant cultural norms. Within this framework, Claudia MacTeer represents an early form of resistance

against white beauty standards and the internalized ideologies that define Black identity through a racist lens.

According to Christian (1980), beauty in the novel is socially constructed through Western cultural dominance, where whiteness is presented as the ideal standard while Blackness is marginalized and devalued. This cultural hierarchy is reinforced through institutions such as media, education, and community beliefs, which shape how individuals perceive themselves. In this context, Claudia's rejection of white dolls symbolizes her refusal to accept these imposed standards, marking an initial step toward the construction of an independent and authentic identity.

Similarly, hooks (1981) argues that the text exposes multiple forms of oppression, including racism, colorism, and lookism, while also highlighting the possibility of resistance through characters such as Claudia MacTeer. From a Black feminist perspective, Claudia's behavior reflects an emerging consciousness that challenges stereotypical representations of Black girls and seeks to redefine self-worth outside dominant racial frameworks. Her resistance contrasts sharply with

Pecola's internalization of white beauty ideals, emphasizing two opposite responses to the same oppressive system.

Furthermore, Douglas (2006) explains that certain members of the Black community conform to dominant cultural expectations in order to gain social acceptance, often at the cost of erasing authentic Black identity. Against this tendency, Claudia's perspective represents a refusal to participate in this cultural conformity. Her questioning of white beauty norms and her discomfort with symbolic representations of whiteness reflect a deeper search for an identity rooted in self-awareness rather than external validation.

Ultimately, Claudia Mac Teer embodies the possibility of resisting racial ideology through critical awareness and personal rejection of imposed standards. Through her character, Morrison suggests that although racism deeply affects identity formation, it is still possible to preserve elements of authenticity and self-definition within an oppressive social environment.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how domestic trauma and racism affect the identity of Black women in *The bluest eye*. Through Pauline Breedlove, internalized racism changes how she sees herself and her role as a mother. Instead of giving love and care to her children, she becomes emotionally distant and feels more comfortable in white spaces than in her own home.

The chapter also shows that trauma is passed from parents to children inside the family. The Breedlove household is not a safe place, but a space full of violence, neglect, and suffering. Because of this, Pecola grows up feeling unloved and worthless, which leads to her complete psychological breakdown. Her desire for blue eyes shows how deeply she is affected by white beauty standards.

In addition, the Black community also plays a role in her suffering by rejecting and blaming her, instead of supporting her. However,

through Claudia MacTeer, the novel shows that it is still possible to resist these ideas and think differently.

To conclude, this chapter proves that the portrayal of Black women in the novel is strongly connected to racism, family problems, and social pressure. These factors together lead to the loss of identity, but the novel also suggests that awareness and resistance are possible.

GENERAL

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this research has examined the portrayal of Black women in *The bluest eye* by focusing on how their identities are shaped under the pressure of racism, gender expectations, and social conditions. Throughout the study, the main emphasis was placed on the experiences of Pauline Breedlove and Pecola Breedlove, as two central figures who reflect different but connected aspects of Black womanhood within an oppressive environment.

The analysis has shown that racism in the novel works on two levels. On one hand, it is an external system imposed by white society that defines beauty, value, and humanity according to white standards. On the other hand, it becomes internalized within the Black community and even within the family itself. This internalization leads to emotional suffering, self-rejection, and the gradual destruction of identity. Pauline Breedlove, for example, represents how internalized racism can affect motherhood, as she becomes emotionally distant from her children and

disconnected from her own identity, preferring white domestic spaces where she feels more valued.

Moreover, the study has demonstrated that the family in the novel is not a safe or protective space. Instead, it becomes a place where trauma, violence, and neglect are transmitted from parents to children. This continuous cycle of suffering directly affects Pecola Breedlove, who grows up in an environment filled with rejection and instability. As a result, she develops a deep sense of inferiority and begins to believe that changing her appearance is the only way to gain acceptance. Her desire for blue eyes reflects the impact of white beauty standards and symbolizes the complete loss of self-worth. Eventually, this leads to her psychological breakdown and the collapse of her identity.

In addition, the research has highlighted the role of the Black community in reinforcing this suffering through exclusion and scapegoating. Instead of supporting vulnerable individuals like Pecola, the community often participates in her marginalization. This shows that oppression in the novel is not only external but also internal and collective, which makes it even more destructive.

However, the study also found that Morrison does not present Black women only as victims. Through the character of Claudia MacTeer, the novel introduces a form of resistance based on awareness and rejection of dominant beauty standards. Claudia's refusal to accept white dolls and her questioning of these ideals show that it is possible to resist internalized racism and develop a more authentic sense of identity.

Overall, this dissertation concludes that *The bluest eye* offers a deep and complex portrayal of Black women, showing how their identities are shaped by systems of oppression but also how they respond to them in different ways. The novel reveals the devastating effects of racism on selfhood and family life, while also emphasizing the importance of resistance, awareness, and self-definition in challenging these destructive forces.

Recommendations and suggestions for further studies

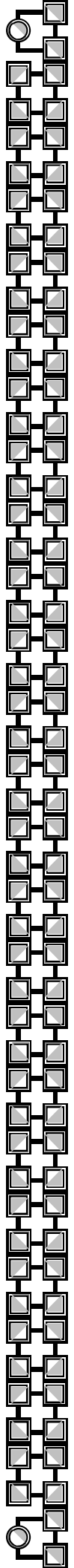
Based on the results of this study, some recommendations can be suggested.

First, it is important to improve educational programs by including different cultures and beauty standards. This can help avoid what is called “linguistic violence,” where some groups feel excluded, as shown in texts like *The bluest eye*. When students see themselves in what they study, they feel more accepted and confident.

Second, schools should help students think critically about beauty standards. Teachers can encourage them to understand that these ideas are created by society and are not always fair or realistic.

Third, more awareness should be raised about internalized racism in both families and communities. This can be done through discussions or simple educational activities that help people understand these issues.

Finally, future studies should continue to explore themes like racism, identity, and gender in literary works, especially those written by Toni Morrison, to better understand their Impact.



Glossary

1. The Intersectional Matrix of Oppression

- **Intersectionality:** This concept, created by Kimberlé Crenshaw, shows how race, gender, and class come together to oppress Black women. In *The bluest eye*, it explains why Pecola suffers not just because of white people, but also because of her own poor community.
- **Black Female:** This is not just a biological label, but a real human experience shaped by fighting racism and sexism at the same time. The novel uses the Black female experience to show how society looks down on young Black girls.

- **Racism:** In this study, racism is not just about personal hate, but a whole system that controls power. In the story, it creates an environment where Black characters are treated like outsiders in their own towns.

2. Aesthetic Hegemony & The White Gaze

- **Beauty Standards:** These are white ideas of beauty, like blue eyes and light skin, used to decide who is worthy of love. In the novel, they act as a heavy tool that makes Black girls feel completely invisible.
- **The White Aesthetic:** This means setting whiteness as the only standard for what is beautiful and good. Morrison shows how movies and dolls force this standard on dark-skinned girls, turning it into a mental prison.
- **The White Gaze:** This is the invisible lens through which white society judges and values Black people. It forces Black characters to see themselves through a hateful standard, destroying their freedom.
- **Ideological Colonization:** This happens when white values take over the minds of Black people. In the novel, it shows when Black children love white icons like Shirley Temple more than themselves.

3. Psychological Fragmentation & Internalized Trauma (Psycho-somatic).

- **Internalized Racism:** This is when Black people start believing the ugly stereotypes society throws at them. The Breedlove family shows this clearly when they accept that they are naturally "ugly."
- **Double Consciousness:** This is the painful feeling of always looking at oneself through the eyes of a racist world. It shows the mental split in Black characters trying to balance who they really are with what society sees.
- **Psychological Fragmentation:** This is when a person's mind breaks down under too much trauma and oppression. Pecola's madness at the end of the novel is the ultimate example of this mental breakdown.
- **Psychological Alienation:** This means feeling completely disconnected from your own body, family, or culture. It describes characters who feel alone because society constantly rejects them.
- **Self-Rejection:** This happens when a person hates their own look and identity because of racist ideas. Pecola's desperate wish for blue eyes is the clearest example of self-rejection in the book.
- **Racial Identity:** This is how a person feels about belonging to Black history and culture. Claudia represents a healthy racial identity because she resists white ideals and protects her self-worth.
- **Eurocentric Beauty:** the form of structural and psychological hegemony that equates human worth, moral purity, and lovability exclusively with white Physical traits.

4. Violence, Domesticity, and Community Dynamics

- **Linguistic Violence:** This is the use of language or schoolbooks to ignore and erase Black experiences. The "Dick and Jane" primer at the start of the book is a perfect example of this erasure.
- **Performativity:** This is when characters hide their true selves and play a specific "role" to survive in a white world. It is a tragic act of wearing a mask to fit into society's expectations.
- **Maternal Identity:** This is how a Black woman acts as a mother while dealing with poverty and racism. Pauline's maternal identity is ruined because she loves the white children, she cleans for more than her own daughter.
- **Domestic Trauma:** This is the abuse and pain that happens inside the family due to the stress of racism and poverty. Cholly's attack on Pecola shows how a cruel society can ruin a home.
- **Intergenerational Trauma:** This is the emotional pain passed down from parents to their kids. The novel shows how the historical wounds of Cholly and Pauline are inherited by Pecola.
- **Scapegoating:** This is when a community blames a weak person for all their own problems and shame. The Black community uses Pecola as a scapegoat to make themselves look clean and superior.

5. Agency and Subversion

- **Resistance:** This means the actions or voices in a story that fight back against unfair systems. Claudia shows clear resistance when she destroys white baby dolls and rejects white beauty rules.

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تتناول رواية توني موريسون *The Bluest Eye* (1970) تقاطع الهوية الجندرية والهوية العرقية لدى النساء الأمريكيات من أصل أفريقي المهمشات في القرن العشرين، وتوضح كيف تشوه معايير الجمال الأوروبية حياتهن في ظل مجتمع يحكمه النظام العنصري المؤسسي والنظام الأبوي. وفي هذا السياق، يحلل البحث الانهيار النفسي للهوية الناتج عن معايير الجمال المفروضة، ويبحث في كيفية تسبب الصور النمطية العرقية والجندرية (النوع الاجتماعي) في خلق هويات ممزقة وعنصرية داخلية عميقة الجذور. ولتحقيق ذلك، تعتمد هذه الأطروحة على المنهج التحليلي النوعي المستند إلى نظرية النسوية السوداء لفحص الاضطهادات المتقاطعة، حيث يتم تحليل النص من خلال العدسة المفاهيمية لـ "الأدائية" لتتبع كيفية التقاء العرق والجندر. ويكشف التحليل أن معايير الجمال البيضاء تعزز عنصرية داخلية مكثفة، مما يؤدي مباشرة إلى كراهية الذات، كما تكشف الدراسة كيف تُجبر المرأة السوداء على أداء دور الاضطهاد الذي يحطم شعورها بذاتها. وتثبت هذه النتائج في النهاية أن تفكيك البنى الأبوية والعنصرية المؤسسية أمر حيوي لاستعادة هوية المرأة السوداء، حيث تربط الدراسة بين الصدمة التقاطعية والتحرر، مما يوضح أن زعزعة المعايير السائدة أمر أساسي للشفاء.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية العرقية، العنصرية، المرأة السوداء، معايير الجمال، الأدائية.

Le roman de Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), examine l'intersection de l'identité de genre et de l'identité raciale chez les femmes afro-américaines marginalisées du XXe siècle, illustrant comment les normes de beauté eurocentriques dénaturent leurs vies au sein d'une société régie par le racisme systémique et le patriarcat. Dans ce contexte, cette recherche analyse la rupture psychologique de l'identité causée par ces normes esthétiques imposées, tout en étudiant comment les stéréotypes raciaux et de genre créent des identités fragmentées et un racisme intériorisé profondément ancré. Pour ce faire, cette thèse utilise une méthode analytique qualitative basée sur la théorie féministe noire afin d'examiner les oppressions croisées, analysant le texte à travers le prisme conceptuel de la « performativité » pour retracer la convergence de la race et du genre. L'analyse révèle ainsi que les idéaux de beauté blancs favorisent un racisme intériorisé intense, menant directement à la haine de soi, et montre comment la femme noire est contrainte à une performance de l'oppression qui brise son sens de soi. Enfin, les résultats prouvent que le démantèlement des structures patriarcales et du racisme systémique est vital pour réhabiliter l'identité de la femme noire, reliant le traumatisme intersectionnel à la libération pour démontrer que la perturbation des normes dominantes est essentielle à la guérison.

Mots-clés : Identité raciale, Racisme, Femme noire, Normes de beauté, Performativité.