



Illusion of Ideal Beauty as a Theme in

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eyes*

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Abstract

This paper thematically discusses the individual's response toward the illusion of social ideals -- in this study the ideal of beauty -- as something which should be accepted without discussion. In tackling this theme, the paper is limited to the African-American novelist, Toni Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970). The novel is about a black girl and her family. The paper traces the development of the impact of the ideal beauty illusion in one year of the life of the characters in the novel. The paper ends with a conclusion that sums up the results of the study as it is seen by Toni Morrison.

ملخص

هذا البحث هي دراسة نقدية لفكرة استجابة الفرد لوهم وجوب تقبل الأمثلة الاجتماعية الموضوعة — وفي هذه الحالة الوهم هو وهم الجمال المثالي اجتماعيا — بدون نقاش. من خلال البحث في هذه الفكرة فان البحث خصص لدراسة الرواية الأولى للكاتبة الأفريقية الأمريكية توني مورسن (١٩٣١) والمسماة، *العيون الأكثر زرقة* (١٩٧٠). هذه الرواية تروي قصة فتاة سوداء وعائلتها. إن البحث تتبع تطور تأثير وهم الجمال المثالي اجتماعيا في حياة الفتاة وعائلتها خلال سنة واحدة وكما تقدمها الرواية. ينتهي البحث بخاتمة تلخص ما وصل إليه البحث في هذا الموضوع وكما تقدمه توني مورسن.



This paper discusses the first novel of Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), which received mixed reviews, didn't sell well, and was out of print by 1974. Critical recognition and praise of Morrison grew gradually with each novel. She received the National Book Critics Circle Award for her third novel *Song of Solomon* (1977) and the Pulitzer prize for her novel, *Beloved* (1987). She received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993 for, in the words of the Swedish Academy, her "visionary force and poetic import" which give "life to an essential aspect of American reality."¹ The importance of Morrison as a black writer and her interest in the individual's life and her special vision towards the American reality and society are the causes of writing this paper.

This paper hypothesizes that beauty is a relative thing in life. But because sometimes people have certain criteria to judge beauty, consequently they may misjudge themselves. In this regard, Toni Morrison's theme of the ideal beauty is a worthy- studying subject that this paper is to tackle thematically in order to prove. The paper is to use the second pattern of analyzing theme which is tracing the attitudes that the characters of the novel have toward the subject of the study, the ideal beauty. The next step to a thematic analysis is to combine and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes². Themes are defined as units derived from patterns such as "conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverbs"³. Themes are identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone".⁴ Finally, the theme of the ideal beauty appears in more than one of Morrison's novels but this paper is limited to *The Bluest Eyes*.

The Bluest Eye is Morrison's first novel depicted by Harold Bloom in his book *Bloom's Guides: The Bluest Eye* (2010) as "anything but a novice work"⁵. Bloom's opinion comes as an agreement with Micheal Wood's suggestion that *The Bluest Eye* is "a lucid and eloquent narrative".⁶ Because:

*Each member of the family interprets and acts out of his or her ugliness, but none of them understand that the all-knowing master is not God but only history and habit the projection of their own numbed collusion with the mythology of beauty and ugliness that oppresses them beyond their already grim social oppression.*⁷

Beauty can be seen as a central theme in *The Bluest Eye* and the following quote may clarify this idea well:

*Adults, older girls, shops, magazines, newspapers, window sign - all the world had agreed that a blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned doll was what every girl child treasured. 'Here,' they said, 'this is beautiful, and if you are on this day "worthy" you may have it.'*⁸

It is clear out of this quotation that there are certain adjectives used by the society to describe someone as beautiful and that anyone who does not fit to these adjectives is on the other side, ugly. Thus, the whole novel is a lost battle with the restrictions of the ideal beauty and happiness that society imposes on the main characters. But these characters are losing the battle because they accept these restrictions without question. This acceptance appears to come from the constant dialogue on the movie screen, in books, and everything else around them that tell them that what whites have is good and that is what they should want too. Thus, a society that puts such conditions for the ideal of beauty is a society that leads its citizens-



who are out of this frame -- to underestimate themselves. The novel presents a year in the life of a family whose daughter is a victim of the illusion of ideal beauty.

The Bluest Eyes (1970) is a novel about American society, written while Morrison was teaching at Howard University.⁹ It is a novel that shows how black women, young and old, are having an illusion regarding ideal beauty. The illusion they have is that which will cause their annihilation at the end of the novel.

The Bluest Eye is told from the perspective of Claudia MacTeer as a child and adult, as well as from a third-person, omniscient viewpoint.¹⁰ In this novel the nine-year-old Claudia and the ten-year-old Frieda MacTeer live in Lorain, Ohio, with their parents. It is the end of the Great Depression, and the girls' parents are more concerned with making ends meet than with lavishing attention upon their daughters, but there is a suggestion of love and stability in their home. The MacTeers take in a boarder, Henry Washington, and also a young girl named Pecola about whom the novel has been written. Pecola's father has tried to burn down his family's house, and Claudia and Frieda feel sorry for her. Pecola loves Shirley Temple, believing that whiteness is beautiful and that she is ugly.

Pecola moves back in with her family, and her life is difficult. Her father drinks, her mother is distant, and the two of them often beat one another. Her brother, Sammy, frequently runs away. Pecola believes that if she had blue eyes, she would be loved and her life would be transformed. Meanwhile, she continually receives confirmation of her own sense of ugliness—the grocer looks right through her when she buys candy, boys make fun of her, and a light-skinned girl, Maureen, who temporarily befriends her makes fun of her too. She is wrongly blamed for killing a boy's cat and is called a "*nasty little black bitch*" by his mother.

Pecola's parents have both had difficult lives. Pauline, her mother, has a lame foot and has always felt isolated. She loses herself in movies, which reaffirm her belief that she is ugly and that romantic love is reserved for the beautiful. She encourages her husband's violent behavior in order to reinforce her own role as a martyr. She feels most alive when she is at work, cleaning a white woman's home. She loves this home and despises her own.

Cholly, Pecola's father, was abandoned by his parents and raised by his great aunt, who died when he was a young teenager. He was humiliated by two white men who found him having sex for the first time and made him continue while they watched. He ran away to find his father but was rebuffed by him. By the time he met Pauline, he was a wild and rootless man. He feels trapped in his marriage and has lost interest in life.

Cholly returns home one day and finds Pecola washing dishes. With mixed motives of tenderness and hatred that are fueled by guilt, he rapes her. When Pecola's mother finds her unconscious on the floor, she disbelieves Pecola's story and beats her. Pecola goes to Soaphead Church, a sham mystic, and asks him for blue eyes. Instead of helping her, he uses her to kill a dog he dislikes.

Claudia and Frieda find out that Pecola has been impregnated by her father, and unlike the rest of the neighborhood, they want the baby to live. They sacrifice the money they have been saving for a bicycle and plant marigold seeds. They believe that if the flowers live, so will Pecola's baby. The flowers refuse to bloom, and Pecola's baby dies when it is born prematurely. Cholly, who rapes Pecola a second time and then runs away, dies in a workhouse. Pecola goes mad, believing that her cherished wish has been fulfilled and that she has the bluest eyes.



It is obvious that the novel presents its protagonist, Pecola, as a poor, black girl who believes that she is ugly because she and her community base their ideals of beauty on whiteness. Morrison chooses an expressive title *The Bluest Eye* which is based on Pecola's eager wishes for beautiful blue eyes. The criteria of the social ideal of beauty are determined from the very beginning of the novel, and even from the title.

It is obvious that in order to emphasize the actions of the other characters, Pecola's character is deliberately, rarely developed during the story. At the end of the novel, She gets mad because madness is her only way to break away from the world where she cannot be beautiful and to get the blue eyes she desires from the beginning of the novel.

The end is expected from the beginning of *The Bluest Eye* as Morrison forewords the text with a prologue that usually stands for the American ideal. *The Bluest Eye* opens with the Dick and Jane story "Here is the house. It is green and white. It has a red door. It is very pretty. Here is the family. Mother, Father, Dick, and Jane" (Morrison 6). The Dick and Jane image is important to be mentioned to recognize that the ideas it includes play a part in Pauline and Pecola's lack of self-worth and satisfaction in their look and status, also to show that the whole success in the individual's life begins from his or her home and family.

The prologue with the description of the house clarifies the role home and family play in enhancing the individual's confidence and independence. The lack of family's support is an indicator that there is something wrong about to happen. Some psychologists theorize that the process of identity-building begins when the infant sees itself reflected in the mother's eyes; this gives the child what is sometimes called a sense of presence.¹¹ This experience enables the infant to see others and to give presence to them. This shared exchange--seeing oneself and being given a presence through the eyes of others and in turn giving them presence--continues through childhood and adulthood.

In Timothy Powell's article "*Toni Morrison: The Struggle to Depict the Black Figure on the White Page*", the writer shows the prologue's ability to bring about this bad fate for these women:

*The Dick-and-Jane primer comes to symbolize the institutionalized ethnocentrism of the white logos, of how white values and standards are woven into the very texture of the fabric of American life. And for the protagonist of Toni Morrison's first novel, Pecola Breedlove, it is precisely these standards which will lead to her tragic decline.*¹²

In this regard, Powell's comments are essential to the novel; they recognize the central dilemma of Morrison's text: someone else's standards determining one's self-worth, and the annihilation that causes. For Pecola and Pauline Breedlove, these outside forces cause them to underestimate their own value and encourage their annihilation.

Critics frequently comment on the supremacy of the influence of Western ideals because of its importance to the text. In fact, Pecola and Pauline's annihilation in the text is of two sides. First, their annihilation is built from the standards imposed on them from a group that they are not even allowed to be part of. Their conviction in their own ugliness, strengthened by what they are told, what they see, and what they read, cannot be changed, because others will not let them forget it, as they are.



thrown, in this way, into the binding conviction that only a miracle could relieve her, she would never know her beauty. She would see only what there was to see: the eyes of other people. (Morrison 46-7).

This quotation is very important because it implicitly tells the reader that there is beauty in Pecola but it is an internal beauty which need one's belief to be highlighted. Both mother and daughter live in a world that recognizes them as less than secondary citizens. And secondly, besides being taunted with an ideal that they are not allowed to accomplish, they themselves don't attempt to shape an attainable goal. Instead they believe others, and are reluctant and, in some sense, unable to love themselves.

Because of outside influence and personal weakness, both, Pauline and Pecola, can accomplish annihilation. Pauline ignores her own reality and living for a world that exists only in her fantasies. Her story is not the focus of the novel but is important to be discussed first because it explains the background of both characters' behavior. The spoiling of her foot is the means that causes Pauline to notice physical differences between people. Although there are other obstacles facing her, she blames any problems and her lack of fulfillment on her foot because:

The easiest thing to do would be to build a case out of her foot. That is what she herself did. But to find out the truth about how dreams die, one should never take the word of the dreamer. (Morrison 110).

Pauline's voice is easily dismissed in this case because she is not speaking from objectivity, but as Barbara Christian successfully argues, "*it is important that we hear her story in her own sound patterns and images, for her manner of perceiving the world primarily in rural tones and images of color is a key to her wasted life*" (66). This is apparent in the text when Pauline gives such vivid detail of color in her own experiences, but longs for the movies where "*the black-and-white images came together, making a magnificent whole*" (Morrison 122). The wording of this passage suggests that Pauline sees these movies as an opportunity for equality between whites and blacks, and this idea appeals to her because of the material objects whites possess. In the dark her fantasies of a Western ideal life are fulfilled, and she chooses to ignore that beautiful color imagery is part of her own experiences:

I could feel that purple deep inside me. And that lemonade Mama used to make when Pap came in out the fields. It be cool and yellowish . . . And that streak of green their June bugs made on the trees . . . All of their colors was in me. Just sitting there. (Morrison 115)

Pauline denies these rich images for a fantasy world that is empty of the real feelings and beauty that this imagery provides. Pauline is not willing to accept the flaws that real life might hold and instead buries herself in the movies and in her work for the family she wishes she had. In this job she can become the head of a house that does fit into her and society's ideal life. In her employers' household, "*Mrs. Breedlove's skin glowed like taffeta in the reflection of white porcelain, white woodwork, polished cabinets, and brilliant copperware*" (Morrison 107). She is surrounded by beauty and feels as if she is part of it. She wants this order rather than the chaos and uncontrolled environment her home life provides, even as she wanted order and perfection in her childhood. Pauline's need for order is evident because "*whatever portable plurality she found, she organized into neat lines, according to their size, shape, or gradations of color*" (Morrison 111). She seems in denial about the fact that the Western tradition of beauty and perfection leaves her at almost the lowest level of this



ordering. She takes orders from them and is honored by what she sees as their validation of her existence, even though it is not validation of her person, but her role as their servant.

Pauline's denial of her own importance is understandable partly because she is ignored by most people her entire life. Again she blames her problems on her foot: *"Her general feeling of separateness and unworthiness she blamed on her foot"* (Morrison 111). But what she fails to understand at first is that because of her color she is considered disfigured with or without an injured foot. She uses the foot to ignore the fault that others are seeing in her, which is the color of her skin. She is not noticed and is not important to others because she does not fit into the Western standard of beauty.

Cholly is the first to recognize Pauline and her foot as beautiful: *"Instead of ignoring her infirmity, pretending it was not there, he made it seem like something special and endearing"* (Morrison 116). In the beginning of the relationship, Cholly finds neither the foot nor Pauline disgusting, and she begins to feel the way she dreamed of feeling and living. This lasts for only a short while until she goes to the movies and realizes the standards society has regarding beauty and love, and longs to fit into those standards, even though she is relatively happy up to this point:

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 . . . She was never able, after her education in the movies, to look at a face and not assign it some category in the scale of absolute beauty. (Morrison 122)

Pauline becomes one of the critics that isolated her in the first place. She judges by appearance, and because she does not sit high on the Western scale of beauty, and because her tooth falls out, she completely revises her identity and her happiness. The tooth falling out is equated with the festering of the traditional ideal of beauty and how it can help destroy a person;

But there must have been a speck, a brown speck easily mistaken for food but which did not leave, which sat on the enamel for months, and grew, until it cut into the surface and then to the brown putty underneath, finally eating away to the root. (Morrison 116).

The spreading and rotting of the tooth is the spreading of the disease that judges appearance, which eventually eats up her self-esteem. Pauline could fight this seemingly losing battle with the ideal of beauty and happiness that others impose on her, but she accepts it without question. Although she does have a good husband and family, the image of something better makes her see the corruption and imperfection in what she has, rather than the beauty in the imperfection. The fantasies projected on the screen might appear to her as something she's always wanted, but as Tindier Harris notes, *"Pauline does not turn from being lost to being saved; the movement pushes her into another set of stagnant values, another perversion"* (35). Her inability or acceptability of her situation in one hand, destroys any semblance of a self-governed and happy life, and on the other hand, helps cause Pecola's annihilation. Pauline is a role model for Pecola's acceptance of the Western ideals, rather than a black woman happy with her life trying to help her daughter break out of this tradition of servitude.

Before her birth, Pauline would talk to Pecola in the womb and treat her as a mother should. She begins to form bonds expected of mother and daughter, but these disappear when



Pecola is born. She dismisses Pecola as soon as she sees her; *"But I know she was ugly. Head full of pretty hair, but Lord she was ugly"* (Morrison 126). Pauline cannot give her daughter unconditional love because she judges Pecola by her physical beauty, and Pecola does not pass the test. This is a problem that Pecola can never overcome because she cannot change the color of her skin. It is paradoxical that Pauline dismisses her, because the "ugly" child came from her and Cholly. The looks of the child only confirm her own insecurities about her looks, and this distances her from Pecola even more. Pecola takes the most important role of the text as the center of discussion and action surrounding her. Some critics dismiss the complications of Pecola's annihilation:

*Pecola is the passive center of the novel, the one to whom things happen and whose only action, her prayer for and receipt of blue eyes, renders her tragic. Her tragic flaw is her particular vulnerability and her generic ill-luck to be born black and female.*¹³

Needless to say that Barbara Christian fails to recognize that Pecola's status is not her only or most important "ill-luck." Pecola cannot achieve any growth beyond her tragic position because her family does not value her original personality, but other people's perceptions of what makes a good personality. Pauline is the first evaluator of her daughter, and because she does not deem her a part of the ideal, she does not take on her role as a nurturer of self-confidence and self-love, but instead *"into her daughter she beat a fear of growing up, fear of other people, fear of life"* (Morrison 128). Pecola has no inner strength and would rather not exist than accept who she is. Morrison presents this wish to disappear rather than to continue as she says in a fascinating passage:

'Please, God,' she whispered into the pan of her hand. 'Please make me disappear.' She squeezed her eyes shut. Little parts of her body faded away. Now slowly, now with a wish. Slowly again. Her fingers went, one by one; then her arms disappeared all the way to the elbow. Her feet now. Yes, that was good. The legs all at once. It was hardest above the thighs. She had to be real still and pull. Her stomach would not go. But finally it, too, went away. Then her chest, her neck. The face was hard, too. Almost done, almost. Only her tight, tight eyes were left. They were always left. (Morrison 45)

Rather than face the pain of this particular situation, and her own life, she wants to dissolve into nothingness. She could ignore every part of her being, except for her eyes, which she cannot get rid of—probably because she is forced to see herself[^] and because she believes that it is her eyes that make her ugly. Her eyes are those eyes which witnesses the negligence and carelessness of her mother from her first moment in life. These eyes are her reception tools of the evaluation of others.

Pecola's self-image is created by exterior forces, rather than inner strength, because her mother did not provide her with any. Pauline cannot give her that strength because she herself lacks it. There is no room for self confidence when living in a fantasy, and Pauline cannot give her child the tools to move beyond denial of the self. The only beauty that she can pass on she will not share with her family. Pauline herself admits that she *"kept this order, this beauty, for herself a private world, and never introduced it into the storefront, or to her children"* (Morrison 128). Her disgust for what she does not have only leads to this kind of disgust festering in her children. In this respect, Pecola's suffering is much more than Poline's because while Pauline suffers only from the society inequality, Pecola suffers from her mother as well as the society antipathy.



Morrison is successful in conveying the idea that Pecola does not have a personality or perspective to speak from, which is partly why Claudia voices her story. Claudia serves as interpreter of others' actions against Pecola, but she cannot penetrate Pecola's feelings because Pecola does not have any developed sense of self. With Claudia and her family, Pecola has a chance to recognize herself, but again *"since she has received only harsh treatment at home, she expects only harsh treatment from the world outside"* (30). There are no expectations of outside acceptance, and Pecola does not try to claim any. But Pecola does obtain positive attention from Mrs. MacTeer when she begins her period. Mrs. MacTeer fills the role of mother and takes care of Pecola when she is in trouble, and not only in a superficial sense, *"the water gushed, and over its gushing we could hear the music of my mother's laughter"* (Morrison 32). There is a feeling of being in the right place and happiness to this scene which does not appear anywhere else for Pecola. Mrs. MacTeer's concern and support is the polar opposite of Pauline's indifference. While Mrs. MacTeer relieves and nurtures Pecola when she needs it, Pauline ignores her daughter's needs in favor of her own selfishness. When Pecola accidentally spills the pie in the white people's house, Pauline does not try to comfort her daughter, but instead she *"yanked her up by the arm, slapped her again, and in a voice thin with anger abused Pecola directly and Frieda and me by implication"* (Morrison 109). This rejection of Pecola's pain is only emphasized as Pauline soothes the white child's fears, *"Hush, baby, hush. Come here. Oh, Lord, look at your dress. Don't cry no more. Polly will change it"* (Morrison 109). The intimacy of this scene only repeats Pauline's role in Pecola's annihilation. She sees her mother giving the love and attention that should be hers to a girl that fits the picture of ideal beauty, something she can never achieve. Whereas this girl and her family call Pauline "Polly" affectionately, Pecola calls her Mrs. Breedlove because there is no personal relation between mother and child. Pauline nurtures the white family but does not care for Pecola or her brother, and the lack of love contributes to her self-defeat.

The negative response of self does not only stem from Pauline's lack of love, but from the outside world that helped annihilate her mother. Pecola does question the importance of other's beliefs in beauty while looking at dandelions in the sidewalk, *"Why, she wonders, do people call them weeds? She thought they were pretty, but grown-ups say, 'Miss Dunion keeps her yard so nice. Not a dandelion anywhere'"* (Morrison 47). Pecola herself is like a wild flower that no one cultivates, and this causes her to ask for others judgments of her beauty and importance. She briefly recognizes the beauty in something deemed ugly, an outsider like herself. But again she gives into the stress to accept other's opinions of look after she is judged by the candy man:

Dandelions. A dart of affection leaps out from her to them. But they do not look at her and do not send love back. She thinks, 'They are ugly. They are weeds.' (Morrison 50).

The denial of her beauty causes her to become a judge and believe others' ideals. Just as her mother did, Pecola rejects herself and does not try to increase confidence because she herself does not fit into that ideal of beauty.

Pecola is partially at responsibility for her response of these ideals, but she is again and again referred to as a victim, as in this essential passage: *"They danced a macabre ballet around the victim, whom, for their own sake, they were prepared to sacrifice to the flaming pit"* (Morrison 65). But Pecola acknowledges this position and does not challenge to enhance herself and instead takes part in her own destruction:

Pecola stood a little apart from us, her eyes hinged in the direction in which Maureen had fled. She seemed to fold into herself like a pleated



wing. Her pain antagonized me. I wanted to open her up, crisp her edges, ram a stick down that hunched and curving spine, force her to stand erect and spit the misery out on the streets. But she held it in where it could lap up into her eyes. (Morrison 73-4).

She is powerless to make good of herself and accepts the pain and its consequences because it is all that is offered to her. Instead of trying to realize and identify with whom she is, she wants to change into what others think a girl must look like. Her fixation with the blue-eyed Shirley Temple ideal takes over her life. Pecola cannot move beyond the ideal that is continually put in front of her. She wants to absorb this image of the perfect little girl by drinking milk out of the Shirley Temple cup and eating Mary Janes. She thinks that these characteristics can be obtained by spending more time improving these ideas than she does personality.

Pecola's literal annihilation is not unexpected because it is the only obvious progression, or rather failure, that she is skilled of in the end. The array she receives from popular ideals as well as her mother's physical penalty for not reaching those ideals finally destroy Pecola's self. She obviously breaks off into two pieces, one who believes that she has attained the ideal standard of beauty, and the other that keeps her in a state of questioning:

Are they really nice?

Yes. Very nice.

Just "very nice"?

Really, truly, very nice.

Really, truly bluey nice? (Morrison 195).

Pecola will never be pleased because no matter how hard she tries her eyes will never be adequately blue; she will never be ideal enough. Her annihilation is total. She can never take back a whole self because she cannot be as perfect as others would have her to be. Her mother cannot be absolutely at responsibility because she is given the same life judgment. There is no success in this story, only annihilation. Both Pauline and Pecola are products of society's unachievable standards and are finally destroyed by their helplessness to move beyond these unattainable ideals. Pecola powerfully and completely annihilate herself in that she prefers to believe in others' judgment rather than hers. Her collapse is the final defeat because of her illusion of the ideal beauty,

The novel ends with a good judgment that Claudia has moved on while Pecola remains unmoving in time--a child, fascinated in the tragic first verse of her own sadness, with her imagined blue eyes and the lack and self-loathing they suggest, "*frozen in the glare of the lover's inward eye*" (206). The loving eye is Claudia's, and The Bluest Eye is her testifying to Pecola's soreness and the community's shame.

The "Eye" of the title may refer to Pecola's unfortunate longing for blue eyes, but it may also refer to the eye that takes Pecola as its subject, and to the girl who narrates her story as well. The Bluest Eye is Claudia's sadness for Pecola and her community. In this sense, the novel's central drought is the community's lack of self-love.. Claudia is the voice for the community's sadness, and Pecola is the site of the inscription of the community's sadness.¹⁴

Morrison describes Pecola's eagerness to have blue eyes in a way that resembles that of writing the epitaph for the dead person:

Each night Pecola prayed for blue eyes. In her eleven years, no one had ever noticed Pecola. But with blue eyes, she thought, everything would be different. She would be so pretty that her parents would stop fighting. Her



father would stop drinking. Her brother would stop running away. If only she could be beautiful. If only people would look at her.(back cover).

The Conclusion

These words of course are indicators of Pecola's suffering in her life and they conclude that the individual is the result of his/her society and in a way or another is influenced by the community's ideals regarding anything. Hence, Pecola is the victim of her community's criterions of ideal of beauty. Not having the demanded criterions of the ideal of beauty makes Pecola feel as if she were dead in an alive surroundings. She does not endure her life facing her failure to get love and respect for not accomplishing the ideal beauty features. Pecola, in her giving up, shows her weak personality and her inability to face her problem of being a black person in a world of white people. She gets shelter in madness. Her madness can be regarded as a psychological suicide by which she achieves her dream of having blue eyes and white skin.

Notes

¹ - "The Nobel Prize in Literature 1993- Toni Morrison" in October 7, 1993. In http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=ar&sl=ar&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fnobelprize.org%2Fnobel_prizes%2Fliterature%2Flaureates%2F1993%2Fpress.html

² - J Aronson, (1992). *The Interface of Family Therapy and a Juvenile Arbitration and Mediation Program*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

³ - S. J. Taylor, & R. Bogdan, (1984). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: The Search for Meanings*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

⁴ - M. M. Leininger, (1985). "Ethnography and Ethnonursing: Models and Modes of Qualitative Data Analysis". In M. M. Leininger (Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Nursing* (pp. 33-72). Orlando, FL: Grune & Stratton.

⁵ - Harold Bloom, (2010) *Bloom's Guides: The Bluest Eye*. New York: InfoBase publishing. P.7

⁶ - quoted in Ibid.

⁷ - quoted in Ibid.

⁸ - Toni Morrison,. *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Plume, 1994, pp. 20- 21, (Further references are to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the paper).

⁹ - Claudia Dreifus, (September 11, 1994). "Chloe Wofford Talks about Toni Morrison". *The New York Times*. In, <http://www.en.utexas.edu/amlit/amlitprivate/texts/morrison1.html>. Retrieved 2007-06-11

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bluest_Eye¹⁰ - "The Bluest Eyes", in

¹¹ - <http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/cs6/morrison.html#eye>

¹² - Timothy Poweu,. "Toni Morrison: The Struggle to Depict the Black Figure on The White Page" in *Black American Literature Forum* 24.4 (1990): 747-760



¹³ - Barbara Christian, "Community and Nature: The Novels of Toni Morrison" in *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, 7:4(1980) p.72

¹⁴ - Cat Moses, "The Blues Aesthetic in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*"
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2838/is_4_33/ai_59024884/pg_12/?tag=mantle_skin;content

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