

Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye: A Cultural Materialistic Approach

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ملخص البحث:

يتناول البحث رواية توني موريسون العين لأشد زرقه من منظور مادي ثقافي. ان القصة يملؤها الحماس اذ تبنى على فهم للتناقض. يركز الماديون الثقافيون على الجوانب والعناصر الثقافية في النصوص الأدبية كالعرق والنوع والجنس البشري والتباين الاجتماعي والرق. وبعبارة اخرى يقومون ببحث الفئات المهمشة كالشعوب السوداء والأناث والعبيد. وفي هذا الجانب تمثل الكاتبة موضوع البحث علامة فارقة تزخر أعمالها بالأحداث العرقية. تجتهد موريسون في كشف النقاب عن علاقات القوة في الثقافة الأمريكية من خلال لمجتها الواعية وبشكل مذهل وبقصصها المكتوبة بإتقان. تحاول الكاتبة وبشدة معارضة القوة الأمريكية-الأوروبية وحديثها المضلل وتفكك بضع الخرافات الامريكية كرمزية الألوان فالأبيض رمز للطيبة والمظلم رمز للوحشية التي تبرز من خلال الحديث السائد. وهي كذلك تصور علاقات القوة فيما بين المجموعات الأفريقية الأمريكية التي لا تميل الى الظلام.

Abstract

This paper investigates Toni Morrison's novel, "The Bluest Eye", by a cultural materialistic approach. This story is of enthusiasm as it is founded on a comprehension of contrast. Cultural materialists emphasize the

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cultural aspects and components of literary texts. They examine topics such as race, gender, sexuality, societal division, and slavery. In other words, they put under investigation the marginalized masses of social club, like black people, females, and slaves.

In this regard, Toni Morrison is a great author whose compositions are replete with ethnic events. Morrison strives to uncover force relations in the American civilization through her exceptionally cognizant dialect and fastidiously shaped stories. She intensely opposes the overwhelming Euro American power and its pervasive talk, and overturns a few American myths, for instance, the kindheartedness of the blank and the savagery of the dark – exhibited by the prevailing talk. She likewise portrays force relations inside Afro American groups with no leanings toward the dark.

Introduction

Chloe Anthony Wofford, later known as Toni Morrison, was conceived in Lorain, Ohio, on February 18, 1931. She was the girl of a shipyard welder and a spiritual lady who sang in the congregational choir. Morrison had a sister Lois and two more youthful siblings, George and Raymond. Her guardians had moved to Ohio from the South, wanting to take their kids up in a domain friendlier to blacks. In malice of the movement to the North, the Wofford family unit was saturated with the unwritten conventions of Southern African American groups (Morrison, 101-24) [Li, 1-10]. The melodies and stories of Chloe Wofford's youth without a doubt affected her later work; undoubtedly, Toni Morrison's oeuvre draws intensely upon the oral works of artistic production of African Americans. Despite the fact that Toni Morrison's composition is not personal, she affectionately suggests her past, expressing, "I am from the Midwest so I possess a singular warmth of it (Morrison, 101-24). My beginnings are dependably there.... Irrespective of what I think about, I start there.... It's the lattice for me.... Ohio as well offers a departure from stereotyped dark settings. It is not ranch or ghetto."

Toni Morrison's written work was likewise extraordinarily impacted by her crew. Her grandparents had gone from Ohio amid the internal growth of blacks out of the South known as the Great Migration. Her mom's guardians, Aredelia and John Solomon Willis, in the wake of passing on their homestead in Alabama, moved to Kentucky, and afterward to Ohio. They set amazing esteem in the breeding of their children and themselves. John Willis taught himself to peruse and his stories got to be a motivation for Morrison's *Song of Solomon* (1977) [Li, 31-58].

She was greatly talented understudy, figuring out how to peruse at an early age and performing admirably as she learns at an integrated school. Morrison, who moved to Hawthorne Elementary School, was the main African American in her first grade classroom. She was additionally the main understudy who started school with the capacity to peruse. Since she was so talented, Morrison was regularly asked to help different understudies figure out how to peruse. She as often as possible worked with the offspring of new migrants to America [Li, 1-10].

Theorists and critics of African-American literature have identified revision particularly gender and race as an important trope in black fiction. One of the earliest and most important of such studies is *From Behind the Veil: A Study of Afro-American Narrative* (1979). In this work, Robert B. Stepto describes the history of African-American narrative as a chronicle of such revisions, according to Stepto, this chronicle begins with the revision of external authentication and documentation and ends with the "self-generating energy" of complete authorial control: from Fredrick Douglass to Ralph Ellison, African-American writers have used self-determination and elimination of outside intervention as the impetus for revision. (Stepto, *From Behind the Veil*, 1979, P.37). Barbara Christian limits her definition to within black community and sees it as a means of establishing connections among generations of black women writers. Her *Black Women Novelists: The Development of a Tradition, 1892-1976* (1980) and *Black Feminist Criticism: Perspectives on Black Women Writers* (1985) discuss revision as a form of acknowledgement and as a dialogue among generations of women writers. Her "trajectories of Self-Definition: Placing contemporary Afro-American Women's Fiction" (*Black Feminist* 171) is especially valuable in tracing the revisions made by contemporary black women writers. She maintains that the movement in black women's fiction could be tackled from "the refutation of negative images" on gender and race to self-definition and empowerment (173)

Genevieve Fabre holds that "Contemporary black women are calling for a revision (an inversion of concepts, myths, and images) and reexamination of important issues," and she cites Morrison as an evidence that the continuity that revision perpetuates is a form of power. (Fabre, *Genevieve*, 1988, P.105)

One salient difference in the Gender and Race is based along the issue of whether these ideas allude to any genuine organic contrast between individuals. Most eyewitnesses are more weighted to consider sexual orientation genuine, situated in the basic natural reality of a characteristic

contrast between two sexes. By difference, there is no fundamental organic reality, recognizing races from one another.

"What is my literary tradition?" asked Alice Walker, "who are the black women artists who preceded me?" (Robyn R. Warhol & Diane Price Herndl, 1979). By posing such a question, she is confronted by a long time of Afro-American women who lived under conditions antithetical to the creation of art as it was then categorized, how could she claim a creative heritage of foremothers, women who were illiterate? She argues that if American cultural history is precise, singing was the only art form in which black women participated. (Ibid)

Numerous examiners and laypersons demand that there is a fundamental science, recognizing women from men, notwithstanding the social and social builds that separate persons as indicated by sexual orientation. Guaranteeing that women and men are characteristically distinctive is, obviously, dubious, as Larry Summers, previous President of Harvard University, came across.

Recently, the notion of race has been declared "obsolete because post-Darwinian population genetics has proved that it has no scientifically quantifiable foundations" (Waugh, Patricia, 2006, p.362) on the one hand, social constructivists maintain that racial identification, like ethnic and national identifications, exists as an "imagined construct" (Ibid) on the other hand, there is the insistence that to be identified by a white racist society as black is highly significant in so far as one is treated as black, socially and institutionally. Since the eighteenth century, the concept of race has played a central role in the construction of the idea of national character. "black matters" for Toni Morrison, and the "people who invented the hierarchy of race when it was convenient for them ought to be the ones to explain it away, now that it does not suit their purposes for it to exist." (Morrison, *Unspeakable Things Unspoken*, 1990, P.203)

A conceptual inquiry into race or gender would seek an articulation of our concept of Race or Gender. The importance of Gender, Race or Class in determining individual outcomes may vary independently of the others, the variation depending on the specific topic studied, the reference group and the socio-historical context. Although there have been numerous genetic studies of sex and gender—and more recently race and ethnicity—over the past several decades, detailed information about the extent of our genetic similarities and differences did not reach the public's attention until the completion of the Human Genome Project.

An expedient outline of the written work uncovers that an extension of things has considered "Gender orientation". The overseeing believed is now and again corresponded with the trademark "Gender orientation is the social essentialness of Sex". Regardless of any trademark, this one considers unmistakable interpretations. A couple of researchers use the statement "Gender introduction" to imply the subjective experience of sexed epitome, or a wide mental prologue to the world, others to a game plan of characteristics or measures that limit as principles for gentlemen and females; others in a course of action of sexual symbolism and still adherer to the standard social parts of men and woman.

Gender classes are characterized regarding how one is socially situated, where this is the capacity of e.g., how well it is seen, how well it is dealt with, and how well one's life is organized socially, legitimately, and financially, sexual orientation is not characterized as far as an individual intrinsic, physical and mental highlights.

At that point you will ask what is race. The term race alludes to gatherings of individuals who have contrasts and similitudes in natural qualities considered by society to be socially huge, implying that individuals treat other individuals distinctively due to them. For example, while contrasting and likenesses in eye shading have not been dealt with as socially huge, contrasts and similitudes in skin shading have. The term race alludes to the idea of partitioning individuals into populaces or gatherings on the premise of different arrangements of physical attributes.

Everybody has heard the statement "There is one and only race – that is human race. Yet we have likewise heard and seen opposing articulations regarding race. There are surely detectable physical contrasts among individuals, including skin shading, eye shape, hair composition et cetera. Anthropologists have since quite a while ago contended that the old 19th Century racial ideal model of four or five races, i.e., Black, White, Asian, Malay, and Native American is not logically substantial. In an organic sense there is no such things as races. Contemporary humans are and have dependably been one animal types with roots in Africa. There is no subspecies of human. Race still matters, whether in Wealth amassing, instructive accomplishment, wellbeing, the legitimate framework, or in individual security. The thought that race, races, and prejudice are social creations – that ism, made truly to authorize social disparities between gatherings with diverse parentages, national sources promotion histories – aides clarify this disagreement. Race is all that much socially genuine and has had and keeps on having genuine results both socially and natural.

The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel, a book proclaimed for its fruitfulness of dialect and boldness of creative energy. African-American writing is created by the authors of African plummet living in the United States. It bargains chiefly with subjection, disparity, bigotry, sexism, classism, social conflict, and so forth. It takes after the old stories custom of narrating and incorporates oral structures like spirituals, sermons, gospel music, and so forth. Rigging up in the creator's girlhood main residence of Lorain, Ohio, it portrays the tale of dark, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove. Pecola appeals to God for her eyes to turn blue with the goal that she will be just as lovely and dearest as all the blondie, blue-peered toward children in America. In the harvest time of 1941, the year in which marigolds in the Breedloves' greenery enclosure don't blossom. Pecola's life does change in excruciating, decimating ways. The Bluest Eye stays one of Tony Morrison's' most intense, exceptional books and a critical work of American manufacture.

The Bluest Eye is a warning about the old consciousness of black folks attempting to emulate the slave master. Pecola's request for more money and better house or even for more sensible parents; her request for blue eyes something she never wins. Morrison does not have to recite the tale of three hundred years of black dominance by white culture for us to be mindful of this history of American Blacks, who have been victims in this calamity. The self-hatred that is at the core of Pecola's character affects, in one stage or another. Here we explore and analyze Toni Morison's novel, in terms of the way to show the variability of Black feminism as characterized by the novelist who responds to the common sexist and racist context.

Toni Morrison is a literary giant of the 1980s and 1990s and over all famous for being both a woman and an Afro-American. In her works, she has explored the experience and roles of black women in a racist male-dominated society. In the center of her complex and multilayered narratives, there is the unique cultural inheritance of Afro-Americans. Her works also express the influence of Afro-American folklore, songs and women's gossip. In her endeavors to map these oral art forms into literary modes of theatrical performance, Morrison has created a body of work informed by a distinctly black sensibility while drawing a reading audience from across racial boundaries. Morrison told Thomas LeClair in a 1981 interview: "I write what I suppose could be called the tragic mode in which there is some catharsis and revelation....maybe it's a consequence of my

being a classics minor" (Interview: T. Morrison: 1981). This observation applies in various ways to her earlier novels.

As regard American Racism, ethnic American writers show their shared concern in their composition; the first body of ethnic writing to emerge. African American literature presents some of the most revealing investigations of racial discrimination. Early in the 19th century, slave narratives recount the dehumanizing effect of slavery. In probability, the period wherein the most famous African American text was is *The Narratives of Fredrick Douglass, an American Slave*, written by himself (1845). Fredrick Douglass, born into slavery in Maryland details his own experience of slavery and articulates his dignity as a man. Refusing details about his own experiences in slavery and articulates his dignity as a human being. Refusing to submit himself to his master, he declares, "You have seen how a man, was made a slave, you shall see how a slave was made a man." Although by a century later slavery is no longer present, racial discrimination still intrudes upon every aspect of the lives of African Americans and positions them as "Invisible Men". Ralph Waldo Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952) portrays a quest for individuality within the organization of American racialism. Ellison's unnamed black narrator's search for self-definition begins with an indictment of racial favoritism. To be invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to look me."

Morrison also writes from a feminist perspective describes how racism defines standards of beauty that militate against blacks, women especially and leads to tragic outcomes. That black is not beautiful has been regulated by European standards of blond, blue eyed stunner. In Morrison's novel the child Pocola's obsession with Shirley Temple and a desire to deliver "the bluest eyes" cause her to fall into madness. In her tragic story, Morrison illustrates another kind of soul-killing impact of American racism on African Americans founded on the same instance, John Okada's *No No Boy* (1957) her neglect by the American dominant public and unwelcome in the Japanese American community for nearly two decades after publishing. The disfiguring effect of racial discrimination on the individual soul, the family, the Japanese American community, and other ethnic Americans prevails throughout the novel. This novel shows that blacks, Japanese, Chinese, Mexicans, Filipinos, and goes all strive for recognition as complete beings, namely as Americans, but so far few are able to cross the unseen walls constructed by racism. (Emanuel, 400-443)

The Black female body is the hottest thing. White men secretly revel in it, not only buying, trading, and wrapping it, but also assuaging the need

and desire or mother's milk with it. Historically relegated to the auction block instead of the plinth, the black female body has been built at the ugly end of wearisome western dialectic; not frightened, but profane, not angelic but demonic, not fair lady but ugly dark. Only with her male counterpart, the black woman has belonged to one of those races "perceived as more animal like, and less godlike". One of the most potent and successful appropriators of black representation is Toni Morrison,

In the *Bluest Eye*, this culturally mandated fracture is the impetus for what Pecola experiences as disintegration or self-erasure:

"Please God," she whispered it the palm of her hired man. "Please make me disappear." She pinched her eyes close. Little parts of her body faded away. Now slowly, now with a rush. Slowly begin again. Her fingers went, one by one; then her arms went out all the way to the elbow. Her feet now, Yes that was decent. Her legs were restless and tired all at formerly. It was the hardest above the second joints. She bore to be really still and pull. Her stomach would not exist. But finally it, likewise, died out. Then her chest, her neck. The facial expression was hard, too. Almost done, almost only her tight, tight eyes were set aside. They are always on the left.

- (Michiel, Vennessa, 195-200).

The pain tightened eyes remain witness to the horror – a company in which the white female body gives more prominence than a black woman. Already "a minority in both caste and class. Piccolo can't even take pride in, the main thing she can take her physical structure. For with few limited fonts, others affirm the undesirability of her life. Henceforth the reason Yacobowski did not see neither her body, nor the face, when Pecola had come to buy treats. At the point when Yacobowski had come to America, he adapted not to appear at the textual mode, nor the variety of dark masses.

Morrison herself remarked in the thereafter to the novel, by the "Disguise of suspicions of unchanging inadequacy beginning with an outer expression. (Michiel, Vennessa, 195-200)

In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola Breedlove is dealt with gravely both by the white people and dim cloned individuals. Indeed, her mom, Pauline Breedlove detests her for being dim, filthy, and dismaying. Her dad Cholly Breedlove is a drunkard. He misuses Pauline and Pecola physically, rationally, and inwardly. Pecola begrudges the white young ladies with blue eyes who are dealt with mercifully by the universe. She begs God to give her blue eyes. She believes that the itinerary in which the world sees her

will change on the off chance that she gets blue eyes like white young ladies.

Towards the end of the novel, she gets blue eyes, yet at the expense of losing her brain. Frieda MacTeer, Claudia MacTeer, and Pecola Breedlove are all closely knit friends and all go to the same school. Piccolo goes to Frieda's home, and Frieda issues her bread rolls and milk. Pecola is not inspired by the milk, however the 'blue-and-white Shirley Temple mug'.

She drinks three or some milk just to understand and grasp the Shirley Temple glass. Mrs. Master reprimands Pecola in a roundabout way for drinking an excessive quantity of milk. Pecola and Frieda talk about how "adorable" Shirley Temple is. Claudia doesn't care for the discussion in light of the fact that she loathes Shirley. She doesn't begrudge her white skin and blue eyes. Yet she had feelings for hitting the dance floor with Bo jangles, who is her most loved uncle.

The entire Breedlove clan has their troubles as Morrison tells us. Cholly Breedlove deserves attention for the special way he channels his double consciousness. Unlike his daughter Pecola. Cholly seems to be largely unaware of the forces shaping him. We see several instances where Pecola longs to be free of the white ideologies oppressing her, but Cholly and the rest of the clan "took the ugliness in their hands...and went about the world with it". Morrison tells us at the outset that Cholly's particular way of giving way "about the world" is in a state of inebriety, and we can read his drunkenness on both the literal level and the degree of his awareness.

Most interaction that Cholly has with other characters occurs when he is lifted up. The first time we meet Mr. Breedlove, he "had come home drunk". We quickly find out that Cholly's alcoholism "relieved the tiresomeness of poverty... gave them the stuff they need to get their lives tolerable". The numbing properties of Whiskey are metonymies drunkenness numbs Cholly's violent outburst as well as his awareness of his own dual-consciousness. Morrison arrives at his clear when she composes. "Nothing Nothing... interesting him mow. Not himself, not other people. Only in the drink was there some break, some floodlight, and when the closed, there was oblivion" (Michele, 25, 26)

Unlike the dark girls like Pecola, Claudia hates the black individuals' admiring and patronizing the white girls. Thus, she hates white young ladies and white dolls. At the point when black young girls appreciate and White Dolls with blue eyes and blonde hair, Claudia looks at the white doll's nose, blue eyeballs, and yellow hair to figure out 'what it is in them at all the world said is adorable'. Being unbiased and reasonable, she doesn't

discover anything other than 'a mere metal roundness' in the white dolls. Claudia destroys white girls and ill-uses white young ladies.

She needs to realize what makes individuals appreciate white young ladies and say "Awwwww" and overlook dark young ladies in the city. She unequivocally accepts that dim young ladies are as wonderful as white young ladies.

At the point when everyone had hatred against Pecola for her darkness, Frieda and Claudia adore her and give her great fellowship and enthusiastic backing. Their white neighbor Rosemary Villanucci spies the young ladies and make incessant grumbings about them to their mom. Frieda and Claudia figure out how to reprimand or beat the white lady to take revenge. Claudia has a ton of sensitivity for the Breedloves who experience the ill effects of self-loathing and twofold consciousness. She illuminates that they live in a storefront not in the perspective of their dejection, yet since they feel that they are revolting. "Their dejection is standard and stultifying; it is not intriguing. Yet their unpleasantness is surprising." She needs to find where their revolting lies however couldn't find the source. She further says, "It begins from conviction, their conviction. It is generally as an all knowing master who had given everybody a cover of abnormality to wear, and they had each recognized it without request."

Whiteness as the quantity of beauty had become so entrenched in American club that many African Americans were negatively influenced by these measures of physical attractiveness based on skin color, which they could never reach. The community in the novel values light skin over dark skin, as typified by the "dream child" Maureen Peal. Morrison depicts the self-hatred that had become deeply rooted in many of the community members and reveals the way African-American women have been taught to hate or devalue their own bodies or physical properties. The reference in the novel often takes this hatred out on their kids.

Geraldine, ashamed of her blackness, calls Pecola a "nasty little black bitch," and Pecola's mother exhibits more love for the white daughter of her employer than for her own children. (Amy, 36)

Pecola Breedlove has an inner urge for people to love her as they tend to love white girls. She goes to the candy shop, seeing Pecola the business person looks at her furiously and this makes her beautiful. She feels seeing her darkness the business person hates him. "It has an edge; some place in the base top is the abhorrence. She has seen it prowling according to all white individuals. So. The dislike must be for her, her

blackness. "She buys Mary Janes confectionery and appreciates the excellence of the white young lady imprinted on the wrapper. She eats the confectionery as though she is eating her eyes. She needs to be as delightful as Mary Jane. Her enthusiasm for blue eyes and white skin is depicted indecently by the storyteller: "Three pennies had purchased her nine dazzling climaxes with Mary Jane. Beautiful Mary Jane, for whom a treat is named."

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, many novels, especially those of Toni Morrison, are complicated and intricate texts which require more than literary interpretation. I believe this reading can be used as the basis for other interpretations.

In *The Bluest Eye* Morrison has shown the impact of white culture on Dark individuals. In this novel Pecola is a picture of absolute disintegration as she confronts prejudice what's more, intra-prejudice.

Besides she is denied her mom's friendship, is assailed by her papa, and holds out a homeless rootless presence. She is persuaded that there is a stand out way out of all these matters – that is to have bluish eyes. However, before the goal she is left simply with an irreversible feeling of a deprivation.

Toni Morrison's "*The Bluest Eye*" is an investigation of the causes why beauty is abused in the US; it's the beauty of the black. The abuse is conducted through a cultural machine which appears to have been produce precisely to homicide potentials; the novel connotes the blue eyes "of the blond American myth, by which standard the black-skinned and brown-eyed always measure up as inadequate." (John Leonard, *Books of the Time*).

"*The Bluest Eye*" is "history, sociology, folklore, nightmare and music"(Ibid). having established waste so that our progenies throttle under foothills of marketed lies is one thing while another is delineating that waste, to reproduce this progeny.

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