

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Deployment of Narrator- Focalizer in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye***

**A Thesis**

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in  
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**By**

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### **Abstract**

The present research attempts to analyze the implication of the narrator-focalizer in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1969) which uses the first person narrator Claudia Mac Teer as the center of consciousness through whose perspective most of the narrative of the novel has been filtered. Besides that, an omniscient, anonymous and detached narrator-focalizer is also exploited. The first person narrator- focalizer Claudia narrates sometimes as a nine-year-old child and sometimes as an adult. The research contends that she makes the use of the narrator focalizer having double stance to make criticism of Africa-American culture or for the purpose of self criticism and the criticism of White-American society or culture. While she narrates as child narrator she empathizes Pecola, her friend and the central character of the novel. As an adult, she looks back at the manner in which she and her community cast Pecola as a scapegoat and is able to see that they did not love as they should have. Similarly, as an anonymous omniscient narrator – focalizer, the life history of the characters is presented. But whatever the kind of the narrator, the criticism of the bad practices of both African- American and the White – American culture is at the center.

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## Chapter I: General Introduction

### Criticism of African- American culture and White- American culture

Most of the story of Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1969) is narrated and focalized by Claudia MacTeer in first person ("I"/"we") who is part of a poor but loving black family in Lorain, Ohio, in the 1940s. However, a third person, omniscient, anonymous narrator and focalizer also exists in the novel and this narrator presents to us the childhood and early adulthood of Cholly and Pauline, the parents of Pecola, the locus of the novel and the information and activities about Geraldine's family as well as about Soapheaded Church. The narrator uses the double stance in course of narrating the story—that of child and of an adult. The primary focus of the novel is on Pecola Breedlove, another black girl who lives in very different circumstances from Claudia and her sister, Frieda. Pecola's mother, Pauline is cruel to her family because its members are a constant reminder that her life can never measure up to the ideal world of the white family for which she works as a maid. Not only is her mother distant and aloof, but Pecola's father is also unreliable for any comfort or support. Cholly Breedlove, Pauline's husband drinks excessively and later rapes Pecola, his own daughter. She bears his child, who dies shortly after birth. Because Pecola, like Pauline yearns to be seen as beautiful, she longs for the blue eyes of the most admired child in the 1940s: Shirley Temple. After visiting Soaphead Church, a "spiritualist" who claims he can make Pecola's eyes blue, Pecola believes that she has the bluest eyes in the world and now everyone will love her. Clearly, Pecola is the truest kind of victim. Unlike Claudia, who possesses the love of her family, Pecola is powerless to reject the unachievable values esteemed by those around her and finally descends into insanity.

The novel is set in a steel mill town in the 1940s. During the Great Depression, many people migrated in search of jobs, and the characters of the novel, much like Toni Morrison's family, come to Lorrain in search of better lives and better jobs. However, economic recovery did not come to America until the start of the World War II, and life in these towns was wracked with poverty and squalor.

The idea of beauty and its standards is one of the prominent themes of the novel. One of the most famous child actresses at the time was Shirley Temple, whose movies in the 1930s and 1940s were immensely popular. Most of her films were family pictures, slight in plot and optimistic in tone, made with the intention of uplifting the spirits of those who were suffering through the depression (one of the films was entitled *The Little Princess*). Other real actresses besides Shirley Temple mentioned in the novel are Greta Garbo, Ginger Rogers, and Hedy Lamarr, all white women who epitomized the standards of beauty at the time. Black actors and actresses in the movies of this era usually portrayed as waiters or maids and were chiefly employed as comic relief.

The exploitation of the 'narrator-focalizer' for self criticism or the criticism of African- American culture and the criticism of White- American culture is the central issue the research tries to excavate in *The Bluest Eye*. The narrator-focalizer takes two stances- the stance of a child and that of an adult. And it is through the stance of adult that she critiques the African- American culture because it is responsible for the dilapidation of the central figure, Pecola constantly encouraging her assimilate the white ideals and depriving her of family love. Toni Morrison, the author is prominent black American writer; her writings are replete with the black subject matters- history of slavery, black myth, black experiences and so on. Similarly, as a female writer she raises the issue of double marginalization of African- American female- both by the

patriarchal white American society and by the African- American society. Likewise, she advocates for the adherence to own African- American culture but there lies novelty in her repudiating the bad practices of herself, her family, her kith and kin, her neighbor and that of the whole black race. While doing so she never eulogizes the white- American culture and the behavior as well as the tendency of the white people. She rather criticizes bad practices of white- American society too. This is what is the locus of the present research which assumes that by riding the vehicle of narrator- focalizer, the author reaches to her destination.

Narration and focalization are two seminal concepts of Narratology.

Narratology, is the theory of narratives, narrative texts, images, spectacles, events; cultural artifacts that ‘tell a story.’ Such theory helps to understand, analyze, and evaluate narratives. A theory is a systematic set of generalized statements about a particular segment of reality. That segment of reality, the corpus, about which narratology attempts to make its pronouncements consists of ‘narrative texts’ of all kinds, made for a variety of purposes and serving many different functions. Through the use of the story teller (narrator) who is herself the perceiver of the events (focalizer), the author criticizes the behavior of the black people and the ill practices in black culture.

The novel has been discussed in manifold ways by multiple scholars. Carolyn P Henly regards reader response theory as an antidote to the controversy involved in the interpretation of *The Bluest Eye*. He says “It was my student’s response to *The Bluest Eye* that showed me the importance of this book turning a potentially negative and stressful experience into one of the most rewarding experience of this year- both for them and for me” (15).

In this reading the reader response theory is highlighted. It says it is the only theory applicable for a clear analysis and understanding of Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*.

Similarly Allen Alexander analyzes the novel *The Bluest Eye* from religious point of view and says that Morrison presents the fourth face/image of God:

In Morrison's fictional world, God's characteristics are not limited to those represented by the traditional western notion of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Instead, God possesses a fourth face, one that is an explanation for all those things-the existence of evil, the suffering of the innocent and just- that seems so inexplicable in the face of a religious tradition that preaches the omnipotence of a benevolent God.(293)

This interpretation says that it is the African American culture where God is represented as having both virtues and vices. This reading talks about one of the cultural ingredient of black culture i.e. religion but it does not show its significance or the motive of the novelist behind such representation.

Likewise Cat Moses sees the structure of Blues lyric as the binding structure of the novel-

The narrative's structure follows a pattern common to traditional blues lyric: a movement from an initial emphasis on loss to a concluding suggestion of resolution of grief through motion. In between its initial statement of loss and its final emphasis on moving on, *The Bluest Eye* contains an abundance of cultural wisdom. The Blues lyric that punctuate the narrative at critical points suggest a system of folk knowledge and values that is crucial to young black woman's survival

in the 1930s and 1940s and which supports Claudia's cathartic role as a storyteller. The lyrics also illustrate the folk knowledge and values that are not transmitted to Pecola-information without which she cannot survive as a whole and healthy human being. (623)

This reading demonstrates the affinity between blues lyric and the structure of the novel, both containing a movement from the initial emphasis on loss to a concluding suggestion of resolution of grief through motion. However it also lacks the clarification on Morrison's politics behind so doing.

Patrece Cormier-Hamilton, another scholar reads the novel from naturalistic perspective, especially black naturalism. He says:

Morrison incorporates the naturalistic theme of the "waste of individual potential" due to environmental circumstances in many of her novels and most emphatically in the character of Pecola Breedlove in *The Bluest Eye*. As many critics have noted, Pecola is victimized by a society that conditions her to believe that she is ugly and therefore worthless, because she doesn't epitomize white western culture's idea of beauty. (115)

Formal aspect of the novel is excluded from discussion in this reading and only the story in terms of naturalism, a way of presenting reality of the characters who suffer from heredity and environment is talked about.

Besides, Ruth Rosenberg borrowing the words of Bamara praises Morrison for her ground breaking act of assigning central role to a black female and her experiences:

The initiation or rites of passage of the young girl is not one of the darlings of American literature. The coming of age for the young boy

is certainly much more the classic case. I wonder if it all means that we don't put a value on our process of womanhood... Morrison renders not only the terror and the mystery of that initial bleeding, but also the older sister's competence in handling it . . . (436)

Similarly, in this reading too the formal aspect of the novel gets no room.

Though it eulogizes Morrison for her endeavor to provide space for black female experiences, the significance and motive of such experiences is not brought into light.

The above mentioned reviews and criticism indicate that the novel can be studied from manifold perspectives like reader response criticism, naturalism, feminism and so on. However these critics do not analyze the role of narrator, the agent who narrates and focalizer, the person who perceives the people, things, events and situations in the novel. Therefore, the present work contends the role of narrator-focalizer as the crucial factor for the self-criticism i.e. the criticism of the ill practices of African- American culture which the writer herself belongs, and the criticism of White- American culture. This perspective is also one of the important aspects of narratology, the study of the narrative technique or the theory of narrative.

The dissertation has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction. In it, the central issue is elaborated along with the hypothesis, and from the analysis of the literature review the point of departure of this work is clarified in terms of the methodology. The exploitation of the 'narrator- focalizer' in the *The Bluest Eye* is the central idea and it has been hypothesized that she uses that to achieve the goal of self criticism.

The second chapter discusses the theoretical modality of the research-narratology, the study of the narrative technique or the theory of narrative along with its introduction, development and the ideas of some prominent thinkers of this

modality. As per the proposition of this research 'Mood' and 'Voice' of Narratology which encompass the concepts of 'narration' and 'focalization' respectively are discussed in detail.

Similarly, third chapter contains the analysis of the text *The Bluest Eye*. Through the spectacle of Narratology, mainly in terms of the concept of narration and focalization the text is looked and it has been shown how Morrison has succeeded in making self criticism by exploiting these concepts as her vehicle. And the final chapter comprises the conclusion of the dissertation.

## **Chapter II: Focalization and Narration**

Narratology, is the theory of narratives, narrative texts, images, spectacles, events; cultural artifacts that 'tell a story.' Such a theory helps to understand, analyze, and evaluate narratives. A theory is a systematic set of generalized statements about a particular segment of reality. That segment of reality, the corpus, about which narratology attempts to make its pronouncements consists of 'narrative texts' of all kinds, made for a variety of purposes and serving many different functions.

A narrative text is a text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof. A story is a fabula that is presented in a certain manner. A fabula is a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors. An event is the transition from one state to another. Actors are agents that perform actions. They are not necessarily human. To act is to cause or to experience an event. The assertion that a narrative text is one in which a story is related implies that the text is not identical to the story.

Narratology is the study of narrative structures. It is a branch of structuralism, but it has achieved a certain independence from it. Also because it takes much of its character and some of its terminology from linguistic theory, it is akin to stylistics too. Narratology can be defined more closely as the study of how narratives make meaning, and what the basic mechanisms and procedures are which are common to all acts of story-telling. Narratology then is not the reading and interpretation of individual stories, but the attempt to study the nature of 'story' itself, as a concept and as a cultural practice. (Peter Barry 128)

The distinction between 'story' and 'plot' is fundamental to narratology, a crucial distinction. However there are many competing groups, each tending to prefer

its own terminology. Hence we find the same distinction made with different terms. The story, being the events as they happen, has to begin at the beginning, of course and then move chronologically, with nothing left out. The 'plot' on the other hand, may well begin somewhere in the middle of a chain of events, and may then backtrack providing us with a 'flash back' which fills us in one thing that happened earlier. The plot may also have elements which flash forward, hinting at events which should not be taken literally. So story is the narration of the events as they happen chronologically, whereas plot comprises the art from the side of the writer in relating the story.

In the field of narrative point of view, there are two separate questions: who speaks/tells a story? and whose vision is presented? when narratologists, theorists of narrative speak of point of view, it very often confuses these two separate questions. There are different types of point of view theories. They are pre-Genettean or traditional point of view theory, Genettean point of view theory and post-Genettean point of view theory.

The problems of point of view were not taken seriously in literary criticism before the time of Henry James, who was an 'appreciator of visual art'. As a result, there was contrast between pure narration and direct representation at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. With the novelist Henry James and his disciples like Percy Lubbock, Joseph Warren Beach, Norman Friedman, Wayne C. Booth and others in terms of 'showing vs. telling' or in other word 'scene vs summary'. It is clearly depicted in Henry James's novels.

As Henry James stressed on vision, he uses the visual metaphors like 'reflector', 'window', 'eye', and so on for his protagonists like Stretcher in *The Ambassador* and Maisie in *What Maisie Knew* through whose perspective the

narratives are told. Most important twentieth century writers on narrative technique like Percy Lubbock, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren, Norman Friedman and Wayne C. Booth were influenced by James's artistic techniques used in his novels. As James prefers vision, he exploits visual metaphors like "reflector", "focus", "mirror", "observer" and others, therefore, it becomes too much visual.

Percy Lubbock, being influenced by the ideas of the narrative technique of Henry James, put forward the distinction between showing and telling. Similarly, Joseph Warren, another theorist of 'Jamesian School' also commits the same "mimetic fallacy" because of his obsession of vision-centered poetics. To describe the autonomy of the novel, he uses the phrase 'exit author' or the disappearance of the narrator. He further says that this is a great outstanding feature of techniques since the time of Henry James that the story shall tell itself, being conducted through the impression of the characters.

However, Wayne Booth talks about the difficulties with the premise of showing vs telling. His confusion on the difference between speaking and showing is ardent when he writes that Stretcher in large part narrates his own story even though he is always referred to in the third person.

Focalization theory addresses the option and ranges of orientation restrictions of narrative presentation. Gerald Genette first associated focalization with a 'focal character' and the question: Who sees? And who perceives? However, following Mieke Bal, many narratologists now believe that focalization covers a much wider scope than either vision or perception and that the narrator is a potential 'focalizer' too.

Gerald Genette, one of the most influential French narratologists, introduces the concept of focalization in his *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method*: "[F]or the

narrator focalization through the hero is a restriction of field just as artificial in the first person as in the third” (194). So, for Genette focalization refers to the view point or perspective. In the first person narrative ‘he who sees or perceives’ can be ‘he who speaks’ and in the third person narrative, ‘he who speaks’ can express the vision of ‘he who sees’. Mieke Bal, one of the most influential post- Genettian Dutch narratologists, clarifies Genettean focalization concept in her *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. She defines focalization as the relationship between the focalizer and the focalized, the ‘subject’ and the ‘object’ of focalization:

Focalization is the relationship between the vision, the agent that sees, and that which is seen[...] The definition of focalization refers to a relationship, each pole of the relationship, the subject and the object of focalization, must be studied separately. The subject of focalization, the focalizer is the point from which the elements are viewed. That point lies with a character [...] or [with narrator]. If the focalizer coincides with a character, [s/he] will have an advantage over the other characters. The reader watches with [his/her] eyes. (146)

We come to know, from this extract that the way in which the vision is presented tells not only about the thing seen but also about the person seeing the thing. In this way, we come to know that the focalizer, s/he who perceives and the focalized, s/he or it who/which is perceived by the focalizer should be studied separately. As the focalizer is the center or origin through whom the focalized is focalized or perceived, s/he is responsible for the fictional world. Therefore, quality and quantity of information the text can provide is determined by the focalizer. Readers see through the focalizer’s eyes. We get the image of the focalizeds as well as that of him/her self through the focalizer’s perspective as Bal further writes: “The

image we receive of the object is determined by the focalizer” (50). Thus, focalizer is the agent through whose perspective the narrative is told. So, the story may be focalized through the perception of the narrator or character or narrator cum character.

Thus, from the above facts it is clear that narrating and focalizing are two different aspects whether they are in the first person narrative or in the third person narrative. But traditional point of view theory confuses two separate questions: ‘who sees or whose vision is presented?’ And ‘who speaks or who tell the story?’ these two questions were taken as the similar processes in the traditional narrative theories.

On the other hand, the term focalization is that it avoids the visual connotations of the terms like point of view, window, reflector, observer, and others in pre-Genettean vision-centered point of view of theory. Therefore, significant evidence for deciding who is focalizing is the presence or absence of verbs of experiencing such as ‘look’, ‘see’, ‘touch’, ‘smell’, ‘think’, ‘dream’ and others which are taken as perception in a broad sense. It is clear that focalization is not limited to physical seeing in a narrow sense, but rather it has a very broad area. So, James’s ‘vision of narrators’, ‘reflectors’, windows’ and ‘observers’ are neglected for being metaphorical.

Bal clarifies Genettean concept of perception as she opines: “Any act of perception -- brief or extended, real, hypothetical or fantasized - - presented in whatever form - - narrated, reported, quoted or scenically represented - - counts as a case of focalization:” (qud. in Jahn 251-252). In other words every verb of perception indicates an activity of focalization.

Another Post-Genettean narratologist, Rimmon-Kenon develops Genettean concept of focalization differently in her *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (1983): “It seems to me, however, that the term ‘focalization’ is not free of optical-

photographic connotation, and – like ‘point of view’ – its purely visual sense has to be broadened to include cognitive, emotive, and ideological orientation” (72). For Kenon, Genette’s treatment has the great advantage of dispelling the confusion between perspective and narration which often occurs when ‘point of view’ or similar terms are used. She talks about the subject of narration and reflection: “ obviously, a person (and by analogy, a narrative agent) is capable of both speaking and seeing, and even of doing both things at the same time- a state of affairs which facilitates the confusion between the two activities” (72).

According to her, in first person narrative the narrator can be the center of both narration and focalization. By saying this we can easily identify that there is obviously very little ground for assigning to these agents categorically to different mental process. In this way, she subtly subverts Genette’s distinction between who sees and who speaks. As she further clarifies that as far as focalization is concerned , there is no difference between third-person center of consciousness and the first person retrospective narration. She further writes, “In both, the focalizer is a character within the represented world. The only difference between the two is the identity of the narrator” (73). So, narratives, however, are not only focalized by someone but also on someone or something. In other words, focalization has both a subject and an object. The subject, the focalizer, is the agent whose perception orients the presentation, whereas the object, the focalized, is what the focalizer perceives. in this regard she says, “ the overall language of a text is that of the narrator, but focalization can ‘colour’ it in a way which makes it appeal as a transposition of the perceptions of a separate agent (82). Thus, both the presence of a focalizer, other than the narrator is and the shift from one focalizer to another may be signaled by language. So, the narrator’s language is sometimes ‘colored’ by his/her perceptions at the time of

narration that is external as well as internal focalization and sometimes remains ambiguous between the two.

The narrative level to which the narrator belongs, the extent of his participation in the story, the degree of perceptibility of his/her role, and finally his/her reliability are crucial factors in the reader's understanding of and attitude to the story. It is therefore according to these criteria, the type of narrators will be presented.

According to Gerald Genette's elaborated and widely accepted theory, "an authorial narrator, who is not a character at the same time and remains outside" the story is called a heterodiegetic narrator, while a narrator who has the status of character in the story is homodiegetic narrator (qtd, in Nieragden 687). So, there is not the compulsion that the thing which focalizer perceives must be perceived by the heterodiegetic narrator but in homodiegetic narratives, in which narrator and character can in a sense, be the same person.

Homodiegetic narrator also has an identity on the story level (the experiencing I), besides the one on the discourse level (narrating I), where s/he can function as focalization as well as the narrator appears as principle agent (qtd. In Nieragden 691). Thus, it is only in homodiegetic texts, the narrator has character status on the story level. Homodiegetic narratorial focalization presupposes personal identity of character and focalizer and is quite typically used in autodiegetic texts, such as autobiography. So, in fiction, the represented discourse of a homodiegetic narrator is therefore represented action. In this regard Richard Walsh says, "The idea of an intermittent narrating character on the other hand, would fit such a novel very well, and I think it entirely consonant with the rhetoric of fictional representation" ("Who is the Narrator" 500). Seymour Chatman clearly differentiates between homodiegetic and

heterodiegetic . As he writes, in heterodiegetic narrative: "The narrator can only report events; he does not literally 'see' them at the moment of speaking them. The heterodiegetic narrator never sees the events because s/he never occupied the story world. The homodiegetic or first person narrative did see the events and objects at an earlier moment in the story" (234). So, from the above facts it is obvious that narrating and focalizing are two different instances and there is not the compulsion that the thing which focalizer perceives must be perceived by the heterodiegetic narrator but it is possible for homodiegetic narrator because s/he has the status of a character in the story. For instance, Magda and the Magistrate in Coetzee's *In the Heart of the country and Waiting for the Barbarians* respectively and Saleem in Rusdie's *The Midnight's Children* being the character as well each of the homodiegetic narrator is responsible for the center of narration and focalization both.

The above facts show that s/he who sees or perceives 'can be he who speaks' as in first person narrative. In this way, in first person narrative or in homodiegetic narrative, the narrator himself /herself can either be a character or just a narrator. In such mode of narrative there is the possibility for the narrator to be both the center of narration and perception.

There are two sub types of homodiegetic narrator's status as follow: 1) Extradiegetic-homodiegetic and 2) Intradiegetic- homodiegetic narrator. Before describing them, it would be better to define the term 'intradiegetic ' and 'extradiegetic' narrators. According to Genette, "Intradiegetic narrators are those who are characters within the narrative who relate a story in which they are and are not themselves involved" (*Narrative Discourse* 248). On the other hand, the extradiegetic categories are more difficult. Genette maintains that extradiegetic narrators, being outside any diegesis cannot be characters, "for that would be meaningless" (85). Now

it is better to link extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrator with homodiegetic narrator. According to Genette, extradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator means, “a narrator in the first degree who tells his own story” (248). An extradiegetic- homodiegetic narrator like Huck Finn is, of course, identified with a character in the story. So the extradiegetic- homodiegetic case seems to establish a clear distinction even within the fictional frame between characters and narrators. So, extradiegetic-homodiegetic narrators are indeed characters. On the other hand, intradiegetic- homodiegetic refers to “ a narrator in the second degree who tells his own story”(248). Marlowe in *Heart of Darkness*, sitting aboard the ‘Neilie’ on the sea reach of the Thames and narrating his journey to the farthest point of navigation, is intradiegetic-homodiegetic. To sum up, in homodiegetic narrative there is the possibility to be character-focalizer as well as narrator-focalizer. Personal identity of narrator-focalizer is impossible in the case of heterodiegetic narrative situation. Thus focalizer is the agent through whose perspective the narrative is told.

Focalization has been classified into three major types by Gerald Genette on the basis of narrator’s restriction of field or choice of perspective, position relative to the story, and degree of persistence: “Zero/non focalization”, “external focalization” and “internal focalization” (*Narrative Discourse* 189-90)

Zero/non focalization is also said to be ‘non focalized’ or ‘narrative with zero focalization’. This type of narrative is represented by the classic or traditional narrative because in it events are presented wholly unrestricted or omniscient point of view. Rimmon Kenan links it to “floating observer” which is the focus of omniscience (112). In this narrative a focal position is not always identified with a person. For this reason William Nells has given the alternative term of it as “free focalization” (qud. in Jahn 246). For instance, Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones*, which employs omniscient

narrator, can be regarded as a text with non-focalized narrative or narrative with zero-focalization.

In external focalization the view point is outside the character so that we are told only things which are external or observable. So, external focalization is related to heterodiegetic narrative. Genette says, “[I]n external focalization the focus is situated at a point in the diegetic universe chosen by the narrator, outside every character” (qtd. in Walsh 497). So, it prohibits any access to character’s thought and the narrative in this mode can be objective because the events are not presented from the point of view of the characters as Genette further writes, “External focalization would be as the work of the narrator’s imagination.[...] The narrator’s rational, as the one who knows, is undermined” (qtd. in Walsh 497). So, external focalization is always heterodiegetic.

Genette further opines, “In text with external focalization, the protagonist performs in front of us without our ever being allowed to know his thoughts or feeling” (*Narrative Discourse* 190). In this way, in the external focalization, the external focalizer tells us what the characters do but not what they think or perceive. In Bal’s view, the narrative in this mode can be objective because “in it an anonymous agent, situated outside the fabula, is functioning as focalizer” (*Narratology* 148). So, the events are not presented from the point of view of the characters. In this regard Rimmon Kenan says:

The ideology of the narrator focalizer is usually taken as authoritative, and all other ideologies in the text are evaluated from this ‘higher’ position. In more complex cases, the single authoritative external focalizer gives way to plurality of ideological position whose validity is doubtful in principle. (76)

Rimmon- Kenan says that in internal focalization there is the question on validity of focalization. Internal focalization means presentation of event restricted to the point of view of one or more focal characters. In other words, such focalization is considered to be internal focalization when focalization lies with the character(s) who participate in the story. Internal focalization includes the character's thoughts or perceptions. So, it concerns with what the character(s) know(s). Genette classifies internal focalization into three sub-types: "variable" "multiple" and "fixed" internal focalization (*Narrative Discourse* 189). In Bal's words, internal focalization can be termed as "character bound focalization" or "CF" in short (Bal 148).

Presentation of the same event is seen through several focal characters when the author exploits multiple internal focalization. For instance, Robert Browning's narrative poem "*The Ring and the Book*" is the canonical example of this type of narrative. It relates a criminal case as perceived successively by the murderer, the victims, the defense and the prosecution.

Fixed focalization or fixed-character-bound focalization can be termed as "monofocalization" as well as it sticks to one of the characters as the only focalizer whose perspective determines the highly individualized orientation of the complete story. So, it is restricted to a single focal character. When internal focalization is 'confined to a single character like Maisie's inner thoughts and feelings in Henry James's *What Maisie Knew*, it becomes very close to "interior monologue", the written representation of the character's inner thoughts, and memories or immediate speech" as if directly over-heard without the apparent intervention of summarizing and selecting narrator as in *What Maisie Knew* (Genette, 173). For instance, in James's *The Ambassadors* "everything passes through Stretcher", the only focalizer of the novel ( Genette, 189). Readers are exported to use Stretcher's eyes to understand

the events, feelings and thoughts in the novel but not James's perspective. In this regard Rimmon Kenon says, "The internal focalizer can only perceive the interior if s/he accompanies the intruders" (*Narrative Fiction* 78). So, the locus of internal focalization is inside the represented events. In internal focalization an internal focalizer is limited to the present. For example, in William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily* the narrator and the focalizer is the same 'person', an inhabitant of Emily's town. So, modern narratological studies since Genette makes use of the term and concept of focalization in order to differentiate the agent who narrates the events (narrator) from the agent who perceives the events (focalizer) especially in the third person and to show the affinity between focalizer and narrator especially in the first person narrative.

We have analyzed focalization in terms of perspective of character(s) and narration of the narrator so far (which is the main issue of this research). Apart from the aforementioned major types of focalization, there are other types of focalization as well - spatio-temporal focalization, focalization in terms of distance and speed, focalization in terms of frequency which will be analyzed in textual analysis section to show their relation with focalization in terms of perspective of the focalizer.

Mieke Bal the post-Genettean narratologist, defines internal focalization as the relationship between the focalizer and the focalized. So, the focalizer's perception may be colored by his/her ideology and psychology as well. So, fixed internal focalization is confined to a single character and it includes character's thought, feelings and perceptions. So, it is concerned with what the characters knows. Thus, the narrative in this mode can be subjective because the events are presented from the point of view of the narrator character and these events can be subjective and the character can give the subjective impression of the subject because s/he has internal

impression on it and there is no intervention of the author and the focal position is always identified with the same person.

In this respect, Bal says, “In the case of an internal focalizer the ‘reality’ status of the different objects represented is variable and contingent upon their relation to the focalizer which is strongly self-reflexive or meta-narrative in this sense” (Bal 163). When internal focalization is confined to a single character, it becomes very close to interior monologue. Here, if the narrator-focalizer is egoistic or self-centered or ignorant about different issues, the narrative may turn to be unreliable because of absence of authorial judgement. We can easily observe the focalizer’s inner thoughts impressions which are subjective. So, in Bal’s view internal focalization recovers the psychological function of the focalizer as well as the character. So, in internal focalization the homodiegetic narrator’s varying degree of involvement in the perception of the events related by the narrator will be correlated with the existing format of subjective impression. In internal focalization the character or the focalizer’s perspective determines the highly individualized orientation of the events.

Rimmon Kennan also provides the similar view on fixed internal focalization: internal focalizer may perceive the object from within and it is synchronous with the information regulated by the focalizer and s/he is limited to the present of the characters. According to her, external focalization is objective ( neutral, uninvolved,) whereas internal focalization is ‘subjective’(colored, involved. The subjectivity of an internal focalizer can be seen by comparing two occasions on which Emma Bovary looks at her garden at Tostes. The first occurs before the period of great ennui is therefore neutral in character. The same garden is seen by Emma as a place of disease, ruin, and death, a correlative of her desperate mood at that time. Since the garden itself is inanimate, the psychological facet of focalization is relevant only to

the human focalizer perceiving it. When the focalized is also human, his/her own subjectivity is no less irrelevant than that of the focalizer. Thus, a character or focalizer may represent an ideological position through his/her way of seeing the world or his/her behavior in it.

So, if the focalizer is a character, his /her art of perception is part of the story. If he is the narrator focalizer, focalization is just one of many rhetorical strategies at his disposal.

### **Chapter III: Deployment of Narrator- Focalizer in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye***

The novel begins with the first person narration (“we”) which contains Claudia Mac Teer, the chief narrator and her sister Frieda. In the opening paragraphs, the narrator assumes the position of an adult narrator. It becomes clear that she is talking about the things that happened some years back and in those happenings she was present as an observer. These paragraphs also summarize the whole story briefly- Pecola's pregnancy from her own father, the birth of the child and its premature death:

It was a long time before my sister and I admitted to ourselves that no green was going to spring from our seeds. Once we knew, our guilt was relieved only by fights and mutual accusations about who was to blame. For years I thought my sister was right: it was my fault. I had planted them too far down in the earth. It never occurred to either of us that the earth itself might have been unyielding. We had dropped our seeds in our own little plot of black dirt just as Pecola's father had dropped his seeds in his own plot of black dirt. Our innocence and faith were no more productive than his lust or despair. What is clear now is that of all now is that of all of that hope, fear, lust, love, and grief, nothing remains but Pecola and the unyielding earth. Cholly Breedlove is dead; our innocence too. The seeds shriveled and died; her baby too.(4)

Both the narrator and the focalizer of these passages is the same person, for the perception of the things which the narrator shares with the reader is of the narrator's herself. So, the focalization is internal because of the situatedness of the perceiver inside the diegesis (story world). The focalization tells us about both the focalizer and

the focalizeds. We can know from the focalization that the focalizer was a child who used to plant the seeds of the flowers, probably for business. Pecola and her father are the focalizeds and it has been said that Pecola's father impregnated her that resulted in begetting which unfortunately died shortly after.

“Our innocence too[died]”, the sentence indicates that the narrator, now is an adult. She is no more an innocent child attributing the false cause to the things, but she knows well the cause and effect relationship behind the happenings. Previously, she and her sister had the conception that it is because of the fault of her that the “seed”, the metaphor of Pecola's baby did not live for “[she] had planted them too far down in the earth” that she and her sister could not help her, but now she has understood that it is not her fault rather the fault of the society (“unyielding earth”). So, right from the beginning of the novel the novel the narrator –focalizer clarifies that her project is to critique the African- American culture because now she has understood, the society has its part in her peril whose member she herself is also.

It has been proposed that the narrator-focalizer assumes double stance while narrating taking sometimes the identity of an adult person and the identity of a child at other times. Her stance of child becomes explicit when she opines “We do no, cannot, know the meaning of all their words, for we are nine and ten years old. So we watch their faces, their hands their feet, and listen for truth in timber” (10). She means that as she and her sister are still children they only seek for some declarative and informative sentences in the conversation of adult.

There is another facet of narrator focalizer in the novel too that is omniscient and anonymous and detached. While narrating the life history of Cholly and Pauline, Geraldine and that of Soaphead Church she uses the kind of narrator as:

[Pauline] was ninth of eleven children and lived on a ridge of red Alabama clay seven miles from the nearest road (87)[...]”when Cholly was four days old, his mother wrapped him in two blankets and one newspaper and placed him on a junk heap by the railroad. (103)

Such things occur long before Claudia got to know Cholly and Pauline, so, the person who narrates about their childhood life, adolescent life, their love affair and so on must be other than Claudia because she was the friend of Pecola, daughter of Cholly and Pauline, whom she had known since they shifted to Ohio. But whatever the facet of narrator- focalizer, Morrison uses it to make criticism of both African-American and white culture.

Claudia, the narrator repudiates, in African culture, the tendency of commanding the children especially the female children without offering the proper information about why they are to do the particular work:

Adults do not talk to us- they give us directions. They issue orders without providing information. When we trip and fall down they glance at us; if we cut or bruise ourselves, they ask us are we crazy. When we catch colds, they shake their heads in disgust at our lack of consideration.(05)

As Claudia is female here, the third person pronoun she uses “us” indicates the female children. Though the whole race of African- American people is suppressed by the white culture, the black society itself is not democratic to its members. It treats unequally to male and female which applies at the level of children also. Women members, from the early childhood, are prevented from the right to information and are demanded to obey without complaint. They are helpless and are to obey the things as ordered, no matter what kind of result the work yields. Had there been the male

children, the situation could have been different. Perhaps they would have been informed about the nature of their work that they are to undertake and the anticipated outcome. So, from the extract the narrator shows the way the subjectivity of women in black society constructs which is different from that of male. To limit the female kinds to alluring mistresses, they are, right from the outset of their socialization, curtailed from certain rights.

In the novel, the family of the narrator, Claudia is shown economically well off which owns private house spacious enough to harbor four members (Claudia, her sister Frieda, and their parents) and also enough to provide some rooms for tenant. Henry Washington, one of the tenants is expected to settle there very soon. But before he arrives there, the women around the neighborhood assemble and talk about him and his private affairs like his personal behavior, his love affair and so on. The narrator focalizes their conversation and comments over it as:

...gently wicked dance: sound meets sound, curtsies, shimmies and retires. Another sound enters but is upstaged by still another: the two circle each other and stop. Sometimes their words move in lofty spirals, other times they take strident leaps, and all of it is punctuated with warm-pulsed laughter- like the throb of a heart made of jelly (9).

The attributed term “wicked dance” to the conversation of the women of black community indicates the tone of the narrator. The tone definitely is negative and the motive behind such tone is sarcasm. Through such tone she pokes satire upon the way of the women in black community. She despises their tendency to pay heed to other’s affairs regardless of their own private jobs. This shows that Toni Morrison is critical of her own culture and its way.

At another instance of critiquing, in black culture, the tendency of trivializing the presence, role or the identity of black girls, the narrator relates the incident of the arrival of Mr. Henry Washington as their new tenant and her mother's way of introducing the narrator's sister and the narrator with him: "Frieda and I were not introduced to him- merely pointed out. Like, here is the bathroom; the clothes closet is here, and these are my kids, Frieda and Claudia; watch out for this window it don't open all the way" (10).

Here, in fact, the female children's status is shown analogous to, the status of bathroom and clothes closet, the inanimate beings devoid of feelings and sensitivity. Though the mediator is the narrator's own mother, a female like the narrator and her sister, she cannot understand the feelings of the fellow children because her upbringing was also similar to their which did not cultivate in her, the capacity to comprehend the heart of a female being herself a female. Through this instance also Morrison repudiates the attitude of black culture toward black female.

History is the testimony itself of the poverty of African- American people. Brought into the country as slaves, their condition in terms of economy has not yet improved fundamentally. During 1960s, though handful of blacks had walked a long way monetarily, most of the families were still struggling for bread and butter problem. But, the pace of the well off black family was oriented to how they could become distinct from the majority of black people. Instead of investing their property to uplift the quotidian life of fellow blacks, they invested their sum on housing and decoration. Morrison's Claudia remarks on the novel:

Propertied black people spent all their energies, all their love, on their nests. Like frenzied, desperate birds, they overdecorated everything; fussed and fidgeted over their hard-won homes; canned, jellied, and

preserved all summer to fill the cupboards and shelves; they painted, picked, and poked at every corner of their houses. And these houses loomed like hothouses sunflowers among the rows of weeds that were the rented houses. Renting blacks cast furtive glances at these owned yards and porches, and made firmer commitments to buy themselves “some nice little old place.” In the meantime, they saved, and scratched, and piled away what they could in the rented hovels, looking forward to the day of property. (12)

So, Morrison’s Claudia, in the above excerpt pokes fun at the sound blacks for their hedonism. Instead of making endeavor to abridge the economic gap between the members of the black community, their investment on their individual comfort kept others at unease. The sight of the fellow member’s mansion inspired the feelings of inability in normal black people. That sight might produce the vigor to hard work to the progressing people but such things merely frustrates the people whose labor hardly yields to tackle the problem of bread and butter. In this way Morrison, through the narrator criticizes the developing culture of individualism, and the lack of ‘we feel’ in African- American society.

Morrison, also criticizes the tendency of black people of developing the self hatred. It is partly the effect of billboards and the movies which starred all white people. But the black people inferiorized themselves for their exclusion from those things and regarded themselves as ugly people. Once they were provided the spectacle of ugliness to see themselves, they took it for granted that they are ugly people but the conclusion has no ground. Morrison’s Claudia satirizes as:

it was as though some mysterious all knowing master had given each one a cloak of ugliness to wear, and they had each accepted it without

question. The master had said, “ you are ugly people.” They had looked about themselves and saw nothing to contradict the statement; saw, in fact support it leaning at them from every billboard, every movie, every glances. “Yes” they had said. “You are right.” And they took the ugliness in their hands, threw it as a mantle over them and went about the world with it.(28)

Self humiliation and the sense of inferiority is very baneful for human progress that emerges from comparison and contrast. Every human being, in every culture, is superior in its own right. But if one compares oneself and one’s culture with another, one feels inferior and begins to despise everything s/he has got. They eulogize every constituent of other culture and the characteristics of every other individual and find themselves and their belongings debased. At that time their reason is subdued and they do not go for the test if the judgment about them is scientifically right. Morrison repudiates the culture of inferiorizing themselves rampant in black people. In fact no human being is the right authority to pass judgment over others, everyone and everything is right on its own account. Self humiliation mars the progress of human beings. Everyone should uphold the nature. The status of whiteness and blackness is ascribed by the nature itself, it is not achieved with the human effort. The ascription the tag of superior and civilized to whites and their culture is thus white-man construct that lacks objectivity and scientific evidences.

Morrison’s adult narrator, Claudia presents Pecola, the central character ironically because she believes in false cause. As being a black skinned girl, she develops a sense of inferiority and yearns for blue eyes like those of white people. She thinks that if she could be able to possess blue eyes, then the situation would be utterly different. She believes that her parents would not quarrel; the school teachers

would cast an amiable glance to her and male classmates would be interested to share desk with her. Her reasoning could partly be true, the school teachers might be the color descriminists; they might have attracted to Maureen Peal, her classmate, because of her white skin. But even then it cannot be believed utterly. His seemingly fascination towards Maureen Peal can be because of her talent and intelligence which Pacola may be does not possess. And the boys might not have sat on her desk being scared of her ugliness; there might be some different reasons. Similarly, the quarrel between her parents definitely has no affinity to her blackness. It is nothing but the self inferiorization which Morrison criticizes through the narrator Claudia by ironic presentation:

As long as the way she did, as long as she was ugly, she would have to stay with these people. Somehow she belonged to them. Long hours she sat looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike[...]it had occurred to Pecola sometime ago that if her eyes, those eyes that held the pictures and know the sights- if those eyes of her were different, that is to say beautiful. She herself would be different. Her teeth were good, and at least her nose was not big and flat like some of those who were thought so cute. If she looked different, beautiful may be Cholly would be different, and Mrs. Breedlove too. May be they would say “why, look at preety-eyed Pecola. We must not do bad things in front of those preety eyes.(36-37)

Morrison repudiates black people to find their blackness to be the source of everything. In fact its lack of their confidence and volition on their work. Whatever the case with the attitude of the school teacher who does not cast friendly look over

Pecola and the school boys who do not sit beside her, the case with her parents, that is, their quarrel is not because of her “ugliness” which we, as reader can understand. The lack of family responsibility and carousal nature of Cholly, her father and the nagging nature of Pauline, the mother is the instrumental for their quarrel. In fact the quarrel would be friendly; they rejoice uttering vulgar words and hitting with whatever handy. “The tiny undistinguished days that [Mrs and Mr Breedlove] lived were identified, grouped, and classed by these quarrels. They gave substance to the minutes and hours otherwise dim and unrecalled. [They] relieved the tiresomeness of poverty, gave grandeur to the dead rooms. In those violent breaks in routine that were themselves routine,[they] could display the style and imagination of what [they] believed to be [their] own true self”(31). So, the thought of Pecola regarding the outcome of her “ugliness” lacks convincing substance. It’s just the product of her sense of inferiority, in large the sense of inferiority of whole black people.

In the instances of the novel where Pecola gets the role of focalization from the narrator. She focalizes the things full of bias. As her mind is preoccupied with blackness and inferiority, she perceives everything in that term. Once Pecola, with some penny, goes to a candy store of Mr. Yocobowski, a white shopkeeper. There she focalizes the shopkeeper through the spectacle of her own ideology or bias, according to the narrator:

she looks up at him and sees the vacuum where curiosity ought to lodge. And something more. The total absence of human recognition-the glazed separateness. She does not know what keeps his glance suspended. Perhaps because he is grown, or a man, and she is a little girl. But she has seen interest, disgust, even anger in grown male eyes. Yet this vacuum is not new to her. It has an edge; somewhere in the

bottom lid is the distaste. She has seen it lurking in eyes of all white people. So, the distaste must be for her, her blackness. All things are in her are flux and anticipation. But her blackness is static and dread. And it is the blackness that accounts for, that creates, the vacuum edged with distaste in white eyes(36-37)

Focalized by Pacola as it is, one of the characters and the partaker of the story it is an instance of internal focalization which owes to ideological and other kinds of biasness, thus being subjective. The characters are provided the opportunity of focalization; however their perception is restricted because as the narrator's motive is to critique the follies and drawbacks of the society black, she lets them infer that their blackness is the cause of everything. We are to believe the portrait of the shopkeeper provided by the focalizer but there lurks the question: does he feel the same as the focalizer focalizes and the narrator tells us what he feels? Cannot it be the biased perception? Cannot it be the consequence of the spectacle that is replete with inferiority complex? It is definitely so. The narrator plays politics to make focalizer see what the narrator wants her to see as per her purpose.

In course of critiquing the African- American culture and the behavior of African- American people she never leaves to critique the unjust treatment of a black by another black. Instead of solidarity among the blacks to fight against the encroaching white culture and the community, they have grown hostile to each other. This intra-racial tension is among the sexes to much extent where the male have always the upperhand. So, women are double marginalized and suppressed- firstly by the whites and white culture and secondly by black males. The following excerpt illustrates how the narrator Claudia critiques such tendency or the rift among the blacks themselves.

they had extemporized a verse made up of two insults about matters over which the victim has no control; the color of her skin and speculations on the sleeping habits of an adult widely fitting in its incoherence. That they themselves were black or that their own father had similarly relaxed habits was irrelevant. It was their contempt for their own blackness that gave the first insult its teeth. They seem to have taken all of their smoothly cultivated ignorance, their exquisitely learned self hatred, their elaborately designed hopelessness and sucked it all upon into a fiery cone of scorn that had burned for ages in the hollows of their minds-cooled-and spilled over lips of outrage, consuming whatever was in its path. (50)

The narrator Claudia is the focalizer too at this passage. Once on her way home from school along with Frieda, her elder sister and Maureen Peal, a white-skinned girl and her classmate, sees Pecola surrounded by colored boys. They were insulting her in reference to her black skin “black e mo. black e mo.” and habit of her father sleeping naked. In their frenzy state they had forgotten that their own skin was black and sleeping naked, the cause of poverty was pervasive to whole black community. The narrator says that it was due to the contempt of themselves because they had the inferiority complex in terms of color of the skin. Here we can infer that through this instance Morrison is repudiating black patriarchal society for its unnecessary domination of women. No matter the color of skin the boys were insulting Pecola because she was a female. So, Morrison as a female writer raises the issues of female marginalization too and criticizes patriarchal and biased black society.

In the course of attacking black people for their self hatred and the hatred of black culture and community, Morrison's narrator Claudia talks about Geraldine, a rich black woman from Mobile or Meridian, or Aiken who has moved with her husband and son Lorain, Ohio. She adopts the white ways of life and behavior as far as possible. While many rich white people who try to deny nature and natural things, she neither like to sweat in her armpit not between her thighs and to avoid of the odor of sweat she applies many cosmetic items smelling wood and vanilla. Among her son and the cat "the cat will always know that he is first in her affection" (67). Well off black woman as she is, she prefers to call herself "colored" than "nigger" for which she has concocted her own definition. To make her son Junior hate black people she also does not leave him to play with black kids:

white kids: his mother did not like him to play with niggers. She had explained to him the difference between colored people and niggers. They were easily identifiable. Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud. He belonged to the former group; he wore white shirts and blue trousers; his hair was cut as close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool. The part etched into his hair by the barber. In winter his mother put Jergeans Lotion on his face to keep the skin from becoming ashen.(68)

It is nothing but her attempt to hide nature through the so called civilization. She concocts the stipulative definition of the terms "colored" and "nigger". In terms of hygiene and clean clothes (with healthy habits and clothes) no one's nature can be masked. In fact, semantically the words "nigger" and "colored" are not very different, though they can be different pragmatically. Both mean the same, however in this age of cultural studies and politics the term "colored" is much favored with avoids direct

connotation to any single color. Her attempt to replace to one definition by another, the definition of the terms in relation to cleanliness and endeavor to detach her son from the black boys is but the self-inferiorizing and the attempt to forget one's own root which never makes one happy in the long run. In fact culture, however one attempt to lock in a box, outbursts in one way or another that becomes manifest through the desire of Geraldine's son Junior:

Junior used to long to play with the black boys. More than anything in the world he wanted to play King at the Mountain and have them push him down the mould of dirt and roll over him. He wanted to feel the hardness pressing on him, smell their wild blackness, and say "Fuck You" with that lovely casualness. He wanted to sit with them on curbstones and compare the sharpness of jackknives, the distance and arcs of spitting. In the toilet he wanted to share with them the laurels of being able to pee far and long.(68)

Such desire of Junior's is but the outburst of his culture that had been masked by the so called civilization taught by his mother because by nature he is black. With the cover of civilization he was deprived of all the childhood adventures. The games 'King of the Mountain', rolling over the dirt and mud, spitting and peeing competition among the colleagues and the like. His desire to feel the hardness of the black counterparts is but the assertion of his own black origin. By satirical or the ironic presentation of Junior that is by making Junior do what his mother does not want or by obliging him cherishing the activities of black children, Morrison's narrator tries to make the point that clinging to one's own culture and leading the life the way our ancestors and community provides, caters solace to us. It can be taken as her indirect urge to return to their own black culture and community to black people. Besides, his

desire to play with the group of black boys is his longing of communion living, one of the most fundamental features of black community which cannot be anticipated in white culture. Whites are self-centered and individualistic. So the suicide rate in the white community is very high but the problems are solved and people get solace sharing with the community members in black society. So with the desire of Junior, Morrison, through the narrator, shows the importance of communion living a feature of black

In the novel *The Bluest Eye* it is obvious that Morrison critiques the follies of the black culture and particularly black people's self-inferiorizing and self-loathing tendency being fascinated with people's appearance and their culture occupies the overarching position. But how they come to value physical beauty to the exclusion of all other qualities, how they come to equate physical beauty with virtue? Morrison finds white cultural production of movies responsible to make people fix their attention on physical outlook like Pauline:

she stopped starting at the green chairs, at the delivery truck; she went to the movies instead. There in the dark her memory was refreshed, and she succumbed to her earlier dreams. Along with the idea of romantic love, she was introduced to another- physical beauty. Probably the most destructive ideas in the history of human thought [..] 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, and the scale was one she absorbed in full from the silver screen (95-96)

The extract not only criticizes white culture-cinema, for teaching people the idea of physical beauty as superior to critical and creative thoughts that is to say the

beauty of mind and heart. It also satirizes the black people like Pauline; Pacola's mother for their volition to lose themselves in illusion epitomized by cinema than to face the hardship of present lives. Watching cinema and its perfect world is not the solution of the problem but it triggers the pain of people. When people start comparing themselves and their situation with the situation of fantasized world people can never be happy with themselves. Besides, cinema were instrumental to make black people assimilate the white ideal of beauty because most of the stars who played memorable roles used to be the whites during 1940s and the blacks were used only for comic purposes if any.

As Pauline, mother of Pacola developed movie going habit, it made her realize that she was not fitting in the ideal of beauty presented there and she was ugly. She also developed hatred to her surrounding and house when she was exposed, through movie, to white men taking good care of the white woman and they, all dressed up in big clean houses with the bathtubs right in the same room with the toilet. "The pictures gave a lot of pleasure but made coming her home hard, and looking at Cholly hard" (95-96) who was not as handsome as the movie stars. She internalized her ugliness, that's why she focalizes the doctors who attend her at her delivery time not giving proper care in comparison to the white patient women:

they looked at my stomach and between my legs. They never said nothing to me. Only one looked at me. Looked at my face, I mean. I looked right back at him. He dropped his eyes and turned red. He knowed, I recon, that may be I weren't no horse foaling. But them others. They didn't know. They went on. I seed them talking to them white women: 'How you feel? Gonna have twins? Just sucking them, of course, but nice talks. Nice friendly talk. (97)

Here in the above passage from the novel the preoccupation of the focalizer, the Pauline is demonstrated. She has the preoccupation that at hospital, where most of the doctors are from white race, does not take good care of the black patients. So, in her focalization or the perception the events of hospital, she sees the doctors giving minor attention to her. However, they talk frankly with care to white woman. To herself they stare as if to find out if she is an animal not human being. And they even think she does not feel panic at delivery time. It may not be the case; may be medically she is safe and not in need of intense care from the doctors, but the ideologically preoccupied focalizer like Pauline doesn't see more than that. It is again the emphasis upon the Irresponsibility of the males inside the black community is another subject of attack within the black community, made by the narrator through her story telling. Male characters do not seem to comprehend the feeling, emotion and the sentiment of women characters. Cholly, Pecola's father represents the corrupt male of the black community. He never accompanies his female counterpart in the time of need. He only takes them the thing to be consumed and after saturation shrinks from the responsibility. As a young boy he exploits his girlfriend Darlene. During romantic time he accompanies her but when he suspects her pregnancy he decides to fly from her. Being deserted by her husband at the time of difficulty "his mother wrapped him in two blankets and one newspaper and placed him on a junk heap by the railroad" (103) because she was forlorn helpless woman without him to support him. Yet, instead of realizing the difficulty of his mother and the possible condition of his anticipated fatherless child would have, he rather rationalizes the trouble of his father: "Cholly knew it was wrong to run out on a pregnant girl, and recalled with sympathy, that his father had done just that. Now he understands"(119). And his thinking that he should find his father is nothing but a escape route. Similarly,

as an adult person he escaped from his responsibility of family support while he was settling at Ohio. In place of earning for the family, he was, fully drunk, visiting, the working place of his wife Pauline “wanting some money”

Likewise Morrison’s Claudia despises the shameless expression of anger of black people over black women, the anger which is caused by the white people because they have not got the gut to fight back with them. Cholly’s feelings after after he was abashed by two white hunters while he was consummating with Darlene.

There Darlene becomes mere scapegoat for no offense:

sullen, irritable, he cultivated his hatred of Darlene. Never did he once consider directing his hatred toward the hunters. Such an emotion would have destroyed him. They were big, white, armed men. He was small, black , helpless. His subconscious knew what his what his conscious mind did not guess- that hating them would have consumed him, burned him up like a piece of soft coal, living only flakes of ash and a question mark of smoke. He was, in time, to discover that hatred of white men- but not now. Not in impotence but later, when the hatred could find sweet expression. For now, he hated the one who had created the situation, the one who bore witness to his failure, his impotence. The one whom he had not been able to protect, to spare, to cover from the round moon glow of the flashlight. The hee-hee-heee’s. He recalled Darlene’s gripping hair ribbon, flapping against her face as they walked back in silence in the rain. The loathing that galloped through him made him tremble. There was no one to talk to.(118-119)

Through this, Morrison criticizes the subservient and meek nature and the false pride of black males. They should have the courage to speak against the injustice

even though they have to pay a high price for it. And if they are unable to counterattack, why should they keep such feelings secret from their women? What is the worth of such false pride?

To critique the dark and regressive aspects of black culture and people does not mean that Morrison's Claudia, the narrator, affirms white culture whole heartedly. Instead she advocates the resistance to the white culture through her own action. Frieda, her elder sister and Pecola, her friend residing at her house are fascinated with the picture of Shirley Temple, a white actress of movie, imprinted in the cup. However Claudia disgusts it and the disgust of the actress is her resistance to the white culture and a call for Afro- American people to see their own culture with positive eye. She could not make Shirley Temple her friend of fancy because she was white girl whose "socks never slid down under [her] heels" (13). Can she befriend with anyone who has the different social status than herself? So Claudia harbors the hatred for "all the Shirley Temples of the world"(13) which symbolically means the hatred to the white culture. Resistance to the white culture is manifested by her hatred to the big, blue-eyed Baby Doll offered to her in her Christmas. Picture books used to be full of little girls sleeping with their dolls. But she was physically revolted by and secretly frightened of those "round moronic eyes" the pancake face and "orangeworms hair" (13). Her feeling towards the white blue-eyed doll i.e. the white culture is manifested while she remarks:

The other dolls which were supposed to bring me pleasure, succeeded in doing quite the opposite. When I took it to bed, its hard unyielding limbs resisted my flesh –the tapered fingertips on those dimpled hands scratched. If in sleep, I turned the bone-cold head collide with my own. It was a most uncomfortable, patently aggressive sleeping companion.

To hold it was no more rewarding. The starched gauze, or lace on the cotton dress irritated any embrace. I had only one desire: to dismember it. To see what it was made, to discover the dearness, to find the beauty, the desirability that had escaped me, but apparently only me [...] I destroyed white baby doll[...]to discover what eluded me: the secret of the magic they weaved on others. What make people look at them and say, “Awwwww”, but not for me? (13-14)

The discomfort with the white blue-eyed doll is but the unease and hatred with white culture itself. White culture encourages children befriend with dolls. Instead of the warmth, affection from parents and siblings, children are provided with as many and various dolls possible. Children are expected to adore the dolls and toys as mother and father; inspired to sleep with them. But how could the narrator perform the role of mother to a child which does not seem to belong to the whole race to which she belongs? Likewise, they inhabit in a society where the fundamental features of their own culture are looked down upon due to the encroaching white culture and standard which judges everything in terms of them and simply discards those which do not fit. Cultural hegemonization of white has turned every black things ugly against which the narrator wants to fight. Her desire to dismember and the ultimate dismembering is her attempt to show that the beauty ascribed to it is simply fake, to demonstrate that the thing is only supposedly beautiful and no such beauty exist there. She wants to dismember the white culture and analyse its bits and pieces to show the contradiction and follies inherent in white culture. Through this remark or the comment from the narrator, Morrison pleads to uphold their cultural things which can be a great source of satisfaction and bliss:

In the novel Morrison criticizes the people of white community for their superiority complex but she opines that black people also have their part in arising such feeling of superiority in white people. When black people eulogize everything of the white culture and the white people themselves, it buttresses the superiority complex over the white people. They think that they can represent black people in the manner they like and speak about anything they like. White adults are always there, even their children show such cultivated superiority at the while of their indignation. This is illustrated in the novel through the quarrel among Maureen Peal, the white girl and Frieda and Claudia who are black, over the matter of Pecola:

“You stop talking about her daddy,” I said

What do I care about her old black daddy? Asked Maureen.

“Black? Who you calling black?”

“You!”

“ You think you so cute!” ...

.....

Safe on the other side, she screamed at us. I am cute! And you ugly!

Black and ugly black e mos. I am cute!(56)

Maureen Peal the representative of white people thinks that because of her white skin she is beautiful which blacks also believe, regardless of her ‘six-fingered hands’ and ‘dog tooth’ and can pass any nasty judgments over blacks. Besides the context of the above excerpt also demonstrates the white way of ruling people- becoming friends, spending money, knowing their history, and using the information to dominate themselves. Before the quarrel ensues, Pecola was rescued from a gang of boys insulting her in terms of her black skin and her naked sleeping father. Winning her favor after feeding ice-cream Maureen asks her: “Did you ever see a naked

man?”(55) Which is for nothing but to find out if she has slept with her own father or if her father abuses sexually, a process to collect data so that she can universalize that black people are barbaric or to find testimony already pervading concept of their barbarism. So, through the illustration of this white tendency, Morrison also criticizes white people behavior and their essentialist nature.

Morrison is never one sided in her cultural criticism. Criticism of the culture in which she herself was born and brought up is there, however, she also criticizes many aspects of white culture which most of the black people were tracking as the role model at the cost of their own culture. White people are arrogant over their nature, culture and civilization. In comparison to their own, they cater very minuscule importance to other people. In fact other people especially blacks are regarded as animal whom they feel no respect is detestable. This is exemplified in the novel through the address of a white child to a middle-aged black woman:

“Where is Polly?” she asked

The familiar violence rose in me. Her calling Mrs. Breedlove Polly, even Pacola called her mother Mrs. Breedlove seemed reason enough to scratch her.

“She’s downstairs” I said.

“Polly!” She called. (84)

Though the child is small and might not have proper knowledge of social etiquettes, the attitude of the entire race she belongs is reflected there. In fact Pauline, the surrogate mother, is greater than the child’s biological parents who just gave birth because all the rest of the things like feeding, caring, teaching morality and so on fall upon her charge. But such a person is addressed with a nickname as if she animal. So, Morrison criticizes whites for their lack of common sense and conscience.

In another instance of critiquing the behavior of whites, so called “role model” of the blacks who despised themselves, Morrison shows in the novel mean and cruel behavior of whites who make Cholly and Darlene, his adolescent beloved coerce into sex at their sight pointing their gun over their shoulder. After the death of Aunt Jimmy, the patron of Cholly, people assemble in her house for death rites where Cholly develops affinity with a girl, Darlene. They go for a walk over bushy area where they are attracted physically and commence to have intercourse. Meanwhile, two white people appear in the scene and exhibit their insensitivity:

There stood two white men. One with a spirit lamp, the other with a flashlight. There was no mistake about their being white; he could smell it. Cholly jumped, trying to knell, stand and get his pants up all in one motion. The men had long guns.

“Hee hee hee heeeee.” The sniker as a long asthmatic cough.

The other raced the flashlight all over Cholly and Darlene.

“Get on with it, nigger,” said the flashlight one.

“Sir” said Cholly, trying to find a buttonhole.

“I said get on with it. An’ make it good nigger, make it good.”

.....

“Come on coon. Faster. You ain’t doing nothing for her”.(116)

This instance shows the meanness of the whites who keep blacks even below the animal level. Sex is such a sensitive thing even animals need privacy and mental equilibrium. But at this instance, the people white coerce them for their pleasure. The lover are even to control their speed of penetration as per their instruction. Poor men! Morrison’s Claudia shows such scene and the behavior of whites to show the real face of the people and culture whom the blacks want to follow blindly.

In course critiquing the white culture, Morrison's anonymous narrator-focalizer critiques the so called white intellectuals through the ironic presentation of Soapheaded Church, a white of mixed blood who reads rigorously but valorizes the trivial and misses the really important stuffs as :

He read greedily but understood selectively, choosing the bits and pieces of other men's ideas and that supported whatever predilection he had at the moment. Thus he chose to remember Hamlet's abuse of Ophelia, but not Christ's love of Mary Magdalene; Hamlet's frivolous politics, but not Christ's serious anarchy. He noticed Gibbon's acidity, but not his tolerance, Othello's love for the fair Desdemona, but not Iago's perverted love of Othello. The works he admired most were Dante's; those he despised most were Dostoyevsky's. For all his exposure to the best minds of the western world, he allowed only the narrowest interpretation to touch him. (134)

It is because of his valorizing tendency of the trivial he thought it is important to kill the old sickly dog of his house-owner by using Pecola than to rescue her from perilous dream i.e. dream of possessing blue eyes.

## Chapter IV: Conclusion

Most of The narrative of *The Bluest Eye* (1969) is narrated through the perspective the narrator-focalizer Claudia MacTeer, a black girl of a well to do family who assumes the position of homodiegetic narrator because in the story she narrates, she herself is also a part. However, for the narration of certain parts there lies the existence of an omniscient, anonymous and detached narrator-focalizer also. The first person narrator-focalizer relates the story from two stances- the stance of a child narrator functioning as the friend of the chief focalized Pecola Breedlove, and that of an adult functioning as the prudent, wise and critical member of the society. Similarly, now and then the characters are also given the role of focalization but they lack the liberty to make certain point or establish any idea; rather their perspective is analyzed by the chief narrators in terms of their own way. Nevertheless, the Narrator-focalizers, be it the first person limited or the third person omniscient, are sagacious enough to make an unbiased and neutral kind of criticism of both White and African – American.

Claudia MacTeer recounts the event of the year that lead up to her best friend's, Pecola Breedlove's rape and the death of her baby. The year is 1941, and Claudia remembers that no marigolds bloomed that year. She thinks at that time it was because of Pecola's rape by her father, Cholly Breedlove that no marigolds bloomed. As she is Pecola's friend most of the experiences they undergo together; so at that time the narrative is homodiegetic. In the story, Pecola comes to live at their house when her father deserted her family and they go to school together. However there are some events like the life history of Cholly Breedlove and Pauline Breedlove who are Pecola's parents, history Geraldine and her son Junior who is a racially mixed family, the history of Soapheaded church, a misanthrope psychic healer who comes from

racially mixed family which are simply narrated by an anonymous, omniscient and uninvolved narrator-focalizer.

In terms of focalization, the narrator Claudia is the chief focalizer, most of the things get filtered through her consciousness and she herself is responsible for the fictional world created in the world. As the narrator partakes in the story as a character the focalization is internal most of the time. However, the focalization of the omniscient narrator-focalizer is external for not becoming the part of the story. So, the novel exploits both internal and external focalization. Here and there the character focalizers also exist, but their presence is nominal.

Fixed internal focalization is confined to a single character and it includes character's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. So, it is concerned with what the character knows. Thus, the narrative in this mode can be subjective because the events are presented from the point of view of the narrator character and these events can be subjective and the character can give the subjective impression of the subject because s/he has internal impression on it. But the comment from the side of the narrator has never let the impression to be subjective and biased. The narrator equally criticizes the absurdities and anomalies of the both White- American and African- American cultures.

So, Toni Morrison in her novel *The Bluest Eye* (1969) uses 'Narrator-Focalizer' for the purpose of cultural criticism-both White and Afro- American make. The deployed Narrator- Focalizers make criticism of the behavior of the people like their treatment of women, anger, self-loathing tendency, the attitude of rich black people, and so on. Similarly, the superiority complexes of white people, lack of respect, inhumanity etc. white culture are also the target of Morrison's critique.

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