

Chapter I: Introduction

Morrison and *The Bluest Eye*

Toni Morrison brought recognition to the genre of African American literature. Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, written in 1970, prominently expanded American literature. This novel not only analyzes the destructive psychological effects of racism on both children and adults but also explores rape thoroughly and realistically, which affect forming one's identity. The novel is about a naive girl whose quest for self-esteem, self-definition, and self-value ends in identifying ugliness with blackness. Pecola Breedlove, an unloved, 11-year-old black girl, believes that the absence of blue eyes is central to her ugliness. Raped by her father, she falls prey to absolute absence and silence. She accepts her inferior position because society deems her ugly and unworthy of affection, value, esteem, and encouragement. Pecola's story shows her complete victimization by both white and black culture. She is lost in obsession towards the search for self-identity, self-respect and individual life when the black community, mainstream society, and the biological family affect Pecola's victimization. The Afro-American women's obligation to live a life of a complete drudgery as they are sexually abolished and crushed emotionally which is also identified with Pecola. Pecola's story shows her complete victimization by both white and black culture. In this research, Pecola's search for self and identity is demonstrated. The researcher aims to show how important it is to have identity for those women who are racially and socio-culturally misbehaved and pushed away from the sense of being a human.

Toni Morrison is an important novelist who continues to develop her talent. Part of her appeal, of course, lies in her extraordinary ability to create beautiful

language and striking characters. However, Morrison's most important gift, the one which gives her a major author's universality, is the insight with which she writes of human problems. At the core of all her novels is a penetrating view of the unyielding, heartbreaking dilemmas which torment people of all races. Morrison's upbringing has additionally contributed to her character choice, themes in her novel and how she views white people. Her father was the main contributor towards her outlook on whites.

The songs and stories of Chloe Wofford's childhood undoubtedly influenced her later works. Toni Morrison's draws heavily upon the oral art forms of African Americans. Toni Morrison's writing was also greatly influenced by her family. Her grandparents had relocated to Ohio during the national movement of blacks out of the South known as the Great Migration. Her mother's parents, Aredelia and John Solomon Willis, after leaving their farm in Alabama, moved to Kentucky, and then to Ohio. They placed extreme value in the education of their children and themselves. John Willis taught himself to read and his stories became inspiration for Morrison's *Song of Solomon*. Inevitably, however, she began to experience racial discrimination as she and her peers grew older. It was also during this time that she wrote the short story that would become the basis for her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*.

One of the most critically acclaimed living writers, Morrison has been a major architect in creating a literary language for Afro-Americans. Her use of shifting perspective, fragmentary narrative, and a narrative voice extremely close to the consciousness of her characters reveals the influence of writers like Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner: two writers whom Morrison, not coincidentally, studied extensively while a college student. All of her work also shows the influence of African-American folklore, songs, and women's gossip. In her attempts to map these

oral art forms onto literary modes of representation, Morrison has created a body of work informed by a distinctly black sensibility while drawing a reading audience from across racial boundaries.

Critics on Morrison and *The Bluest Eye*

Jennifer Rubin is the noted critic of Toni Morrison. She has made a systematic study of most of the novels of Morrison. According to her, the recurrent theme of Morrison's novels is the issue of inner problems faced by Africans within American society. Once Blacks got freedom from slavery, they struggled to get relocated in the same society where they were once enslaved. As the Black people slowly got settled in society, there too class division and alienation arose. But Rubin does not look at the core thematic content of *The Bluest Eye*. She simply dwells upon the formalistic aspect of this novel. Rubin makes the following observation regarding this novel:

The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel which is praised for its richness of language and boldness of vision. It tells the story of black, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove. Pecola prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be as beautiful and beloved as all the blond, blue-eyed children in America. In the autumn of 1941, the year the marigolds in the Breedloves' garden do not bloom. Pecola's life does change- in painful, devastating ways. The core essence that is represented in this novel is the vivid evocation of the fear and loneliness at the heart of a child's yearning. *The Bluest Eye* remains one of Tony Morrison's most powerful, unforgettable novels- and a significant work of American fiction. (17)

Rubin praises that being the first novel of Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* succeeds in being the most important novel. Its fresh theme has appeal and attraction. The portrayal of a

female character like Pecola is somewhat controversial. But Morrison's style of handling a new subject matter is acceptable.

As a critic, Paul Smith undertakes the task of discovering Morrison's intention of writing the novel *The Bluest Eye* and diagnoses the fatal effect of internal racism. Smith shortly gives the following view to highlight Morrison's goal of writing this novel:

In the afterword to *The Bluest Eye*, Morrison explains her goal in writing the novel. She wants to make a statement about the damage that internalized racism can do to the most vulnerable member of a community—a young girl. At the same time, she does not want to dehumanize the people who wound this girl, because that would simply repeat their mistake. Also, she wants to protect this girl from “the weight of the novel's inquiry, and thus decides to tell the story from multiple perspectives. She shapes a silence while breaking it, keeping the girl's dignity intact. (54)

The entire novel is, according to Smith, an affirmation of statement as to how harmful internalized racism is. Within the Black community, there are many vulnerable groups prone to disasters and hazards abundantly. To combat those risk factors, it is necessary to discuss openly how harmful the hidden inferiority is and how individuals should be empowered to deal with them, as in shown in *The Bluest Eye*, to defend the dignity of a Black girl who is victimized by internalized racism.

Andrew Sanders points out Morrison's loyalty and special preference to the doctrine of post-estheticism. The novelist has an undying passion for symbols. More than the tactful combination and choice of words, Morrison makes use of symbols to

strengthen the power of sufferings and hope of Black salvation. In this regard, Sanders says the following thing:

Claudia and Frieda find out that Pecola has been impregnated by her father, and unlike the rest of the neighborhood, they want the baby to live. They sacrifice the money they have been saving for a bicycle and plant marigold seeds. They believe that if the flowers live, so will Pecola's baby. The flowers refuse to bloom, and Pecola's baby dies when it is born prematurely. Cholly, who rapes Pecola a second time and then runs away, dies in a workhouse. Pecola goes mad, believing that her cherished wish has been fulfilled and that she has the bluest eye. (37)

Sander's main claim is that the use of symbol is an inseparable part of Morrison's novel. In other words, it can also be said that the clarity of meaning remains obscure without a cluster of symbols and images. To give the impression that Morrison is close to the mythological and folkloric elements, she often relies on symbols and images. Not only in this novel but also in other novels, Morrison uses this technique. In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola's friends plant a flower hoping that the blossoming of this flower promises the birth of Pecola's baby as she is impregnated by her father.

In the novel, characters are elevated to the symbolic level. So the main character Pecola serves more than what a character simply represents in this novel. In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola is elevated to the symbolic level by the author so that her predicament can be the source of permanent lesson to those who are deviated from the normal track of maintaining one's own self and subjectivity. However appealing white notion of beauty might be, the Black people should not be attracted towards it

by sacrificing one's own beauty. In terms of suffering Pecola appears to be a timeless figure. With respect to this aspect, Emily Cappo briefly sums up her view:

Pecola is also a symbol of the black community's self-hatred and belief in its own ugliness. Others in the community, including her mother, father, and Geraldine, act out their own self-hatred by expressing hatred toward her. At the end of the novel, we are told that Pecola has been a scapegoat for the entire community. Her ugliness has made them feel beautiful, her suffering has made them feel comparatively lucky, and her silence has given them the opportunity for speaking. Pecola's aimless wandering at the edge of town haunts the community, reminding them of the ugliness and hatred that they have tried to repress. (32)

Because of her deviant passion for the white beauty, Pecola had to become a scapegoat for the entire community. The danger of going away from one's own community and established communal values brought the tragic downfall of the main character Pecola. If the novelist had limited Pecola and her suffering in the same literal level, its significance might have been weak. But since the novelist has raised Pecola to the symbolic level, there is strong possibility of immortalizing a character by raising her to the symbolic level.

John Tammy argues that the root cause of the problem of many mulatto Black is their inability to remain loyal to their selves. In the face of the alluring beauty of white girls and women, Afro-American girls are unable to remain attached to their selves. Different kinds of weaknesses and inconsistencies lurk in the bottom of their selves. That is why they are unable to handle the suffering. In front of the temptation

of white beauty, they are too vulnerable. The idea of loyalty gives in to the looming threat of white beauty. Tammy delivers the following opinion as their decline of self and soul native to Afro-American heritage:

The Bluest Eye provides an extended depiction of the ways in which internalized white beauty standards deform the lives of black girls and women. Implicit messages that whiteness is superior are everywhere, including the white baby doll given to Claudia, the idealization of Shirley Temple, the consensus that light-skinned Maureen is cuter than the other black girls, the idealization of white beauty in the movies, and Pauline Breedlove's preference for the little white girl she works for over her daughter. Claudia remains free from this worship of whiteness, imagining Pecola's unborn baby as beautiful in its blackness. (74)

The problem of fascination to the alien beauty especially the beauty of the white and inability to remain loyal to one's own self are the striking causes of the disintegration of intra-racial harmony and fraternity. The increasing gradation in the class status of Afron-American Blacks has implanted the seed of psychological inferiority and backwardness. The more inferiority welled up in their hearts, the more attracted and obsessed they became. As a consequence, degeneration and disintegration can take place in the entire community.

Joseph Gibaldi contextualizes psychological problem of individuals, faced by individuals need to be grounded in the socio-communal context. The disintegration of psychology and surrender to deviant taste are major events ruinous to the health of individuals. Gibaldi points out: "Pecola is obsessed with having blue eyes because

she believes that this mark of conventional, white beauty will change the way that she is seen and therefore the way that she sees the world'' (71).

The level of obsession faced by Pecola Breedlov is rooted in the phenomenon which has happened in the Afro-American community. Thus it can be said without a moment's delay that the problem faced by Pecola is not the individual problem but the problem that has arisen in the society of Black people. The growing hierarchy amidst the Black people of Afro-American community has exerted pressures on the psychology of an individual.

Although all those critics examined the novel from different angles and arrived at different findings, none of them noticed the issue of a Black girl's quest for self identity that results into hazardous ending. Therefore, the present thesis seeks to explore what causes Pecola to face ultimately such a violent end, as shown in the novel? Who is responsible for her catastrophe? Is it the effect of assimilation that a marginalized group suffers in their attempt of getting their place secured in a society that is run by dominant power, which is different in culture and tradition from theirs? Pecola's story exposes a bitter truth that human being, in his/her attempt of being accepted in a society goes to the extreme and invites danger. They suffer most because of their identity crisis. The present thesis thus aims at examining the issue of identity in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, an issue which is most debatable in determining one's self including his/her other tags that determine nationality, culture, language, and similar others.

The proposed thesis will follow the extensive planning. The first chapter of this research deals with the introduction of the topic. Topic is discussed and the essential tool will get brief coverage. Different views of the critics will be examined

and the proposed topic will be contrasted. The design of the proposed thesis gets mention in the first part of the thesis. The second chapter deals with the various views on racism. Different critics and theorists would be cited in this chapter. In the third chapter, the researcher analyzes the novel *The Bluest Eye* thoroughly by bringing the theoretical insights of different theorists of racism in the context of textual analysis. In the last chapter, the researcher will conclude how Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* critiques a society that conforms with white standard of beauty, and how a little black girl, in search for her solid identity goes into insanity.

Chapter II

Theory of Racism and Class Consciousness

Racism is the ill treatment to the people on the basis of race, colour, and religion. It is a useless tradition and pointless hatred, envy or prejudice which is obviously expressed in the form of terrorization or abuse. It is discrimination to the people on offering jobs. Racial discrimination is often based on the bias of colour where the word 'discrimination' denotes the denial of equality based on personal characteristics such as race and colour. Discrimination is based of prejudice, dead habit and stereotype refers to forming an instant fixed idea of a group, usually based on false or incomplete information and prejudice refers to prejudice based on ideas that are formed without any knowledge about others. Gretchen Gerezina defines racism as:

In active or passive response to the specious belief that is genetically transmitted traits linked to social characteristics. Racism at individual level involves a misguided personal belief that an entire racial group is deficient or superior because of a set of moral, intellectual, or a cultural trait that are thought to be indicated by the group's biological origins.

(126)

Racism is the formation of racial chauvinism, and it works with 'biological and sociological definitions'. Queen and Greuner define, "From the biological stand point, a race is a large body of people, relatively homogenous as to inheritable, non adaptive feature. There are various criteria of race- head, skin, hair, group and so on" (21).

Around the centuries, the fundamental notion of racism is subjugated by the 'genetic determinism' or 'biological determinism', the theory that conducts the

activities of people and especially general behavioral characteristics of races. Racism, chiefly controlled by heritage, attributes the differences between the races to innate traits rather than social factors. This contemporary form of racism links itself to discourses such as patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, gender differences which is an attempt to produce the old racist exists in a society as an evil fortune. But the use of new jargon has not diminished the gap between the meanings used in the past centuries to the present century. Still each 'historical circumstances' is shaping a distinct form of racism, "racist ideologies and practice have distinct meanings bound by historical circumstances and determined in struggle" (248) as Queen and Greuner state.

Racism is the man made beliefs to show one's racial superiority over some certain group of people including the anti human activities, dogmatic beliefs and social unjust which classified the racial discrimination. It associates a generalized lack of knowledge or experience as it applies to negative beliefs and attitudes. People have unchangeable assumption of racial discrimination. It is therefore, defined the unchangeable mind as a biological determinant. It doesn't take place in a vacuum of social harmony as a brotherhood but rather is enacted and reinforced through social, cultural and institutional practices of hierarchical power of one group over another.

Racism is a misconception of race, confused with ethnicity and culture which is discriminated by human beings against human into distinguishable groups, based on physical feature like skin colour, hair texture and eye shape etc. ethnicity is an individual classification who share the common culture, religion, customs and traditions passing from one generations to another like patriotism, religion and dress whereas culture on the other hand is a broader category that extends beyond race and ethnicity to include any group of people who share common lifestyles which are

passed on to members of the particular group like socio economic status, sexual orientation, geographic location and habitual action.

A child cannot be a racist by birth but it is a learned social phenomenon through family, education, religion, the law and the media. It is difficult to grow up in a society without adopting the world views and biasness from the society. He becomes a 'made' racist and subsequently perpetuate in the same society. It is based on the tendency towards adhering to and preferring the values and personal beliefs of one's own group; tendency towards associating with the individuals or groups that have similar values and beliefs and therefore limiting the access of inter group contact and experience from which to draw; tendency towards categorizing information and using generalized assumptions, which often lead to stereotypes and negative biases; and judging the values and standards of minority group cultures by the values and standards of the majority group culture and labeling the former inferior.

The concept of 'Negro race' as inferior and European civilizations as superior is based on the belief that 'Negroes' lack certain qualities, such as lack of good social organization and social actions, lack of fellow feeling, lack of originality of thought, and lack of artistic qualities specially 'deficient on the side of mechanical arts' and in general, showing no tendency towards higher development. These characteristics are made the basis for justifying slavery and slave trade. Paul S. Reinsh in his "The Negro and European Civilization" justifies for blacks 'low social organization and consequent lack of efficient social action, form the most striking characteristics of the Negro race'(3). Paul S. Reinch believes that the extent of the black race is the result of 'race mixing' i.e. black race coming into contact with white race. For Paul S Renich "The mixed races produced by Europeans and Negros exhibit some very fine qualities" (1). He believes that 'the twentieth century world will witness the formation

of new mixed races and the attempt to adjust the mutual relations of all the various people that inhabit the globe' (2).

Racism is the belief of distinguishing human characteristics, often dealt with prejudice, that one group of human beings is inherently superior to another group of human beings. It is the matter of discussion that Racism springs from the term 'race' but the use of race for the biological, psychological, sociological and economic differences among the human characteristics are taken into considerations that these qualities of one group make it either inferior or superior to each other. European supremacy over the globe for the last few centuries has given conducive milieu to purport that 'the white skinned' or 'the brown skinned' individuals. These facets of definitions are brought into practices that Negroes are inherently to set up a system of social, economic, and political benefits for whites at the expense of blacks. So the twentieth century racism faces the use of science to justify the whites' superiority to blacks. The interracial prejudice takes its form from physical slavery of 1860s to a more modified form of slavery.

The physical slavery with the use of forces helps develop psychological domination upon blacks' mentality. Science is there to support the existing superiority for it functions at the level of 'mind' and 'soul'. George W. Ellis writes about the psychological implications for justifying racism, "we accept psychology as the science of the phenomena and functions of the minds and soul. Race is used as the mere convenience to designate the different branches of the human family" (11).

The psychology of race prejudice then involves the erroneous mental attitudes which one race entertains for or against another, formed in advance without its foundation on either reason or fact. Racial domination has permeated the society with the position of superiority and inferiority. This domination has created a state of

double consciousness in the mind of Negroes. W.E.B Du Bois writes movingly of the resulting sense of duality for black people:

Why did God make me an outcast and a stranger in mine own house.
The Negro, of a sort of the seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second sight in this American world, a world which yields him no true self-consciousness but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring ones soul by the type of the world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unrecoiled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (5)

This problem of 'colour line' as Du Bois writes is not only the main problem of the twentieth century but this twenty first century is also facing the same problem. The emergence of 'new racism' has been possible due to a few recent political and social transformations-liberal hegemony, postmodern multiculturalism-forming their background. New racism could be defined as racism without race; a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the in surmount ability of cultural differences, a racism which, at first sight, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or people in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life styles and traditions.

The concept of coloured race prejudice has worked with the production of natural inferiority of black to white, physically, intellectually, religiously, socially and morally. So, the whites take the advantages of superiority economically, politically

and socially. For the whites, the justification works as the relation with human and less human. The Negro is less human because he has “an oval skull, flat forehead, snout like jaws, swollen lips, broad flat nose, short crimped hair, calf less legs, highly elongated heels and flat feet”(13). But still many views spring regarding the single human race that nature has endowed us. All the human beings have the same cephalic angle, texture of hair, shape of the head, colour of the skin, size and shape and size and height of the brain, which have nothing to do with the capacity of the mind or the moral quality of the soul. A Negro is no more naturally inferior for he is the product of the complex and subtle forces of his milieu.

There is no question that the world is replete with distinct races. They have different physical characteristics, ancestry, and destiny. From the sociological point of view, if a race defines its distinct form and builds up its mythology of racial separateness, superiority, and destiny like the “Aryan” mythology in Germany, then the concept of superiority and inferiority evolves and that is how the white is the victim of biasness.

Neither the ancient civilization nor the middle civilization (before the 15th and 16th century) regarded and recognized human individuals in the name of race. For example, Greco-Roman people and Germanic barbarians never thought about the racial difference; they fought for mere bravery and regime. They distinguished themselves from others in terms of appearance, customs, and language or Theocentrism, but not in the form of skin colour.

The rise of national status towards the end of medieval era and the beginning of the modern era provided conducive environment for the germination of racism. To say even in more cow terms the discovery of America by the European whites was the

central determining factor of human differences in the name of skin colour and the rest of the myths are made on the basis of the same criteria.

Christian theology based on *Bible* clearly states that God created the world and first mortal human Adam and Eve. Christianity also believes that the human generations of the present world are the descendants of the original mortals. The European of the American white racists have no answer to the very simple question, if Jesus be white, then how come he make his own people have black and white skinned individuals? Does he intend to, deliberately, discriminate his own children? But the question makes them speechless. But they are not there since the theology could not work science was waiting for them to make another justification that the blacks are still inferior to the whites.

Racism and American History

The direct confrontation of two distinct cultures-the black and the white in America has left cross cultural and racial effects; one has affected another and vice versa. Suppression of one culture over another by imposing culture values of by restricting the possible creativeness of cultural behaviors or the latter one leaves psychological disintegration. In the white supremacist American society, white culture and its standards and ethos are deemed and unquestionable, just and superior to those of blacks. The static structure between black and white intensifies the polarization and triggers social unrest and conflicts.

“The problems of the twentieth century”, asserts Du Bois in the *The Souls of Black Folks*(1903) is the problem of colour line-the relation of the darker skin to the lighter dresses of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the island of sea(372). Ever since the Europeans trespassed the African territories, exiled the native of Africans

into the New World and forced them to work as slaves, the race problem has continued to haunt America in one form or another. In the past, the black people, who were supposed to be inferior to the white people merely because of the skin pigmentation and had no land, property or home, were compelled to serve their white masters in desirable way. Their culture was put to risk; they were broken down as brutes. Though various civil rights movement and other humanitarian campaigns have brought about a great deal of change in their lives, their afflicted souls are still being horrified by their frightening ghosts of the past. The dawning of the 21st century has not yet completely healed the injured soul, whose deeply embedded psychic scars time and again get revived and consequently the American spirit in its whole quakes and quavers. Cornel West in the very preface of his book *Race Matter* (1994) presents a considerable occurrence of black in present America. He says that while he was on his way to an appointment, ugly racial memories of the past flashed through his mind when he did not get a taxi as her was coloured-“The tenth taxi refused me(him) and stopped for a kind, well dressed, smiling fellow citizen of European descent.”

Nonetheless, the blacks have made a monotonous and arduous journey through the dreadful desert of injustice in the quest of getting human dignity and American identity. The black believed that slavery was indeed the cause of all sorrow and the roof of all prejudice and emancipation was a key to the solution of all problems. Even though the declaration of freedom could certainly improve the situation; it could not completely root out the black anguish. Still, the shadow of deep disappointment and despair has gripped the Negro people. Optimistically, it has at least enabled them to have leisure for reflection and time for self examination; it has changed the children of emancipation to the youth with dawning self consciousness, self realization and self respect. They have achieved self assuredness with which they

can measure the burden they bore upon their backs during the vistas and vicissitudes of American history. In a historic speech delivered to commemorate that centennial of Lincoln's emancipation proclamation on August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King thus sheds light on the plight of the black:

We must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination....the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and find himself an exile in his own land. (74)

As European settlers moved to America, they began to import a large number of captives taken from relatively restricted portion of the west coast of Africa to do the work they were reluctant to do themselves. Within the course of a couple of centuries the whole western hemisphere including Europe becomes populated with representatives of these distinct human populations. They were placed face to face with the whites but at very different levels on the socio economic scale. This categorized situation was taken as a natural expectation. The differences on socio economic scale then assumed to be inherent invisible physical differences. For the purpose to domination, the racial issues aroused by the white were considered to be unquestionable because the white race and its culture products were supposed to be superior to black ones. As the whites, the blacks were also rightful heir to America's legacy. The first attempt to settle America was located in the area that would later be known as south. The south was made a good home by the blacks with their blood, sweat, and tears. But it is pity that traditional history disavows that slaves and descendants of slaves have contributed significantly to the making of American

culture. The white narratives and the historical myths were invented to legitimized the subordination of preconceived inferior people and verify Anglo American superiority and racist Agenda. Those narratives made oppression of the blacks seem natural or designed on the basis of supposed black inferiority.

The blacks gave a new shape to the American Southern landscape by building houses, cleaning the forest and planting and harvesting crops. It was shaped by their labour so they still have the spiritual relationship with the south. But it is surprising to state that they were tenants in their own land as the blacks paid a high rent for the rooms. Their labour was valued by their dehumanized. The white claimed for the land cultivated by supposed inferior race. Black American considered as the south is their motherland. Carolyn Jones says, “the human relationship that occurred their hold the ultimate meaning the region has for the blacks and they also inscribed the realities that has affected psychological wholeness and self identity”.

The heart breaking pains that the blacks endured during the slavery are exposed in Douglass’ narratives. Through his own experience, he generalizes that bondage of black people. The slave holder who held sole and whole power were responsible to push the black into the hand of ignorance about their time and place. They were so ignorant that they did not know even their own age:

I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By far the large of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. I do not remember to have even met a slave who could tell of his birthday. They seldom come nearer to it than planting time, harvesting time, cherry time, spring time or fall time. A want of information concerning

my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood.

(15)

Such heart breaking punishment was usual in the plantations. The white masters would punish the slaves for their own pleasure. The black indeed were human who compassion among themselves but were made inhuman. In such situations the songs of black people expressed the boiling rage of souls; they were the tales of woe and testimonials against slavery and prayers to God for deliverance from chains.

Du Bois' 'The Souls of Black Folk' is a study of the instability and doubleness of the self of black people in this period. Black people were placed at the bottom the social slider. He says that black people were "born with a veil and gifted with second sight in this American world- a world which yields him no true self consciousness, but lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world" (364).]

They looked at their slaves through others eyes that could not penetrate the bodies to see the black slave. A single body having two souls, two thoughts and two un-reconciled strivings could not strive in the society. American society is habituated to make any interference of social upheavals relating them to the racial matters. On the other hand, every incident is observed and examined either through conservative or through liberal lenses. It has helped to bring intellectual poverty in the society because of the tendency of the observing the incidents through these two lenses, one fails to analyze candidly the complexities of the society these liberal and conservative natures of whites make them afraid of their possible mixing with the blacks.

Obviously, their solutions for spiritual upliftment are different because of their fear of being mixed with each other. Cornel West states;

Hence, for liberals, black people are to “included” and “integrated” into our society and culture, while for conservatives they are to be “well behaved” and “worthy of acceptance” by our way of life. Both fail to see that the presence predicaments of black people are neither additions to nor defections from American life, but rather constitutive elements of that life. (6)

Nationality, language and religion were barriers for the black people in America. Whiteness meant overall life, fortune, beauty and reward, whereas blackness stood for poverty, laziness, ugliness, dearth and all the other critical attributes. The whites enjoyed a wide freedom of opportunities such as personal freedom, democratic rights protected by the state adversely, blackness and African ancestry proved to be a curse for Afro-Americans and therefore they were victimized, dehumanized and marginalized throughout the different historical vistas-slavery, emancipation, migration and integration. The race problem in America was further improving somehow by perpetual but reciprocally conflicting desires held by both the whites and the blacks. The former deployed whatever means they found to suppress the latter and the latter, on the other hand, sought the ways to break the chains they were crippled with. The crux of the racial problem, therefore, lies in the very flaws of American society-flaws rooted in historical inequalities and longstanding cultural stereotypes. Therefore, double standards and differential treatment should be wiped out in order that the black soul can do away with spiritual hardship, eclipse of hope and absence of love of breakdown of family and neighborhood bonds.

Racism and Hegemony

Hegemony is the use of power maintained without using the direct or physical force, or threat often used by the minority class over the majority class whose interests

are in direct opposition. Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci coined when he was incarcerated by Mussolini's fascist in Italy. Although he saw the direct force by Mussolini's fascist system of the government in Italy, he was preoccupied with what he saw as:

Spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production. (12)

The hegemonies exercise of power appears as the suppression of certain class of society (who are number) without making the latter aware that the former mean to do any injustice. In this condition power seems to be nowhere but looms everywhere. Hegemony at the level of class society is to determine the continuation and consolidation of the existing power maintenance and at the level of nation is to prove dominance of one nation over another as the USA has been exercising in the late 20th century and in the early 21st century not only in Iraq and the Middle East but throughout the world positioning her to be the most democratic state in the world. The exercise of hegemonies power seems to be either the preliminary ground to impose and exercise the power to the desired end, and if not, physical or direct use of force is always the ultimate end. At the other level, hegemonic exercise of power seems to be the result of the physical (especially of the advanced weapons) threat thus giving the finality to the existing power relation: with a situational device that the power is always strong and the powerless is always is deficient.

Originally, the term hegemony meant the dominance of one state within the confederation, but in 1930s Gramsci widened the horizon of its meaning and used it

for the question of why the ruling class is so successful in determining and even promoting its interests on society. In *Key Concept on Post-Colonial Studies* hegemony is defined as:

Fundamentally, hegemony is the power of the ruling class to convince other classes that their intentions are the interests of all. Domination is thus exerted not by force nor even necessarily by active persuasion but by a more subtle and inclusive power over the economy and over state apparatuses such as education and the media by which the ruling class' interest is presented as the common interest and thus comes to be taken for granted. (116)

European mission to enter Africa in the name of civilization is a type of hegemonies practice to put the black skinned individuals under the control of the whites' supremacy, preventing the blacks a White God, blackness as the curse of the same God and the only remedy to the black skin is to serve the white. The white Europeans came with the view that they are closer to God and the only way to redeem ones' curse (blacks' blackness) was to follow the whites' way, was equally determining factor how the Negroes suffered from the inferiority complex and submitted everything to the whites and agreed to be colonized. The hegemonic exercise of power also became useful for as Gramsci speaks in *Key Concept on Post- Colonial Studies*:

Describing the success of imperial power over a colonized people who may far outnumber any occupying military force, but whose desire for self determination has been suppressed by a hegemonic notion of the greater good, often couched on terms of social order, stability and advancement, all of which are defined by the colonizing power. (116)

The 'domination by consent' principle worked during the time of colonization, later in the time of slavery and at present in the time of advancement. The 'God-chosen' people could rule any subject became first principle of domination; rightful heir for selling and buying the black individuals was made second principle; and the history taught the blacks to be inferior, so they should be inferior was made the principle in the world of advancements and a new principle of 'history' was brought into account.

The method of domination by the Europeans was supplied during the time of colonization and later during slavery. This 'supremacy' of whites worked as 'domination' on the first phase and as 'intellectual and moral leadership' in the second phase. To dominate one group of human beings by another group was not an easy task. What made blacks come under the control of whites always worked on two levels. They themselves were somehow responsible to perpetuate slavery. Whites intended a group to be formed within blacks and blacks allowed them with a group to mediate between themselves and whites. So what made the blacks agree with whites' intention to rule over the Negroes worked on the two levels? Gramsci describes as:

A social group dominates antagonistic groups which it ends to 'liquidate' or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups. A social group can and indeed must already exercise 'leadership' before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principle conditions for the winning of such power): it subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasps, it must continue to lead as well. (57-8)

The massive killings of the blacks were not supposedly beneficial for the 'civilizing mission' of the whites. No doubt the whites were replete with advanced weapons like guns while the Negroes were with the traditional weapons along with the native

vigour. The whites' proposal of tilling the blacks depopularized their mission of spreading their hegemony in other regions except in the United States and Europe like North America, South America and Asia. So, they chose a group from the same society thus making them the mediator between Diem and the blacks. In the beginning phase, either by physical or armed, the whites attained the governmental power which made them both 'leading' and 'dominant' in the way Gramsci writes:

A class is dominant on two ways i.e. 'leading' and 'dominant'. It leads the classes which are its allies and dominates those which are its enemies. Therefore, even before attaining power a class can (and must) 'lead'; when it is in power it becomes dominant but continues to 'lead' as well . . . there can and must be a 'political hegemony' even before the attainment of governmental power and one should not count solely on the power and material force which such as position gives in order to exercise political leadership or hegemony. (8)

The combination of force and consent played a crucial role in determining the role characterized by both traditional and developed attitude to ensure the 'White Man's Burden'; their keen interest in the African lands and their exploitations at the maximum level were possible only by the parliamentary regime and this regime was consented by the majority blacks and intended only for them. Gramsci writes:

The normal exercise of hegemony on the new classical terrain of the parliamentary regime is characterized by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed the attempt is always made to ensure that force will appear to be based on consent of the majority, expressed by so-called organs of public opinion-newspaper

and association-which, therefore, in certain situations, are artificially multiplied. (80)

The exercise of whites' hegemonial power over blacks is possible only through a network of presuppositions. The governmental power of the whites is aided with the mentality that the whites' desire to rule is no more that the economic sacrifice; intellectual sacrifice; and political sacrifice. The political aim of white is always winning to the black to exist the political power and judicial power to suppress them in deed. White people have set some hegemonial principles that could help them to dominate the black workers mentally and physically in all attitudes of the blacks.

Racism and Mimicry

The relation between whites and blacks has always been a matter of great concern for understanding human nature. European colonial expansion in America, Asia and Africa has put forward some important factors in determining the power relation among the individuals residing in these continents. The relation between Caucasian and Blacks can be deemed more aggressive that the relation between Caucasians and the Orients. In the earlier phase of colonialism, whites used coercive force for enacting the white superiority. Then in the second phase, they used science as the tool to prove the same. And the next phase they became more advanced in maintaining the sense of inferiority in the blacks and the sense of superiority in the whites. This phase is the phase of hegemony. In this phase, whites selected a group of blacks with the principle that blacks are born to serve whites and to be like whites and to reach God-who were less black generally because only whites were thought to be closer to God. This division of light skinned blacks and dark skinned blacks had the greatest achievement in enslaving and colonizing the Africans. But what Blacks could not understand is that within this 'White Mans' Burden' the motive of whites was to

maintain the existing power relation but in a more subtle way and convinced with this 'Burden', blacks started competing within themselves, fighting within themselves and judging within themselves thus following the same track of whites. This sense of mimicry is what Toni Morrison intending to depict in her novel, *The Bluest Eye* and she writes:

They think they have outfoxed the Whiteman when in fact they imitate him. They think they are protecting their wives and children, when in fact they are maiming them. And when the maimed children ask for help, they look elsewhere for the cause. Born out of an old hatred, one that began when one kind of black man scorned another king and that kind took the hatred to another level, their selfishness had trashed two hundred years of suffering and triumph in a moment of such pomposity and error and callousness it froze the mind. (306)

A colonized man's behavior, his attitude and his belief are almost in opposition when he behaves with a Negro and with a white man. Black individuals' this self division is a direct result of 'colonialist-subjugation' (Fanon 17) because this black individual comes with the confrontation of white minds' theories, which suppose that Negro is still in the process of evolution from monkey to man. He supposes that the language, he speaks, is incomplete and only white's language is capable to disseminate the complete human understanding. According to Frantz Fanon:

language is not merely syntactical or morphological cohesion, it above all assumes cultural representation and civilization identity. A man who speaks a language not only disseminates what he means but also carries a world through his expression of implication; the mastery over any language has to do with its immense power" (17-8).

A Negro who faces the problem of language- the language he should follow and the language he chooses – is at a state where his expression and implication both become confused because he suffers from ‘an inferiority complex’. Frantz Fanon writes:

A Negro even forgets his blackness and serves the white masters to convey their orders to his own fellow members who himself played the role of an interpreter in the first phase of colonial project and still enjoys a certain position of honour. He forgets his national identity and praises the whites’ country for its splendor and regards his native country a demigod. He still boasts for his contact with the whites for he feels himself radically changed of ‘in genetic terms, his phenotype undergoes a definitive and absolute mutation. (68-69).

If a black man uses good English or French, the people of the same race commend him. One black praises the other because “He talks like a white man” (21). Fanon writes, “Furtively observing the slightest reactions of others, listening to his own speech, suspicious of his own tongue- a wretchedly lazy organ-he will lock himself into his room and read aloud for hours-desperately determined to learn diction” (21).

The Negro adopts the language which is peculiar to him for he tries to prove himself a more ‘civilized’ because he is in contact with the white man. He reaches to a position of a split personality; he has American and European on one side and African on the other. The American or European despises African, this split Negro race but the black roosts as his unchallenged master. Negroes think that the Europeans are their civilization Guru. His breathlessness is not merely physiological and psychological. His black mentality is not black problem but the whites have permeated into the black mouths to chant their praises to keep on their supremacy. This ‘black cry’ is beyond the black’s problem. There is no question that blacks and

whites are equal in every aspect: on humanity, on the belief in dignity, on love, on charity; but the main problem is to help the black to free himself of the arsenal of complexes that have been developed by colonial environment.

Class Consciousness

Class consciousness is a term used in social sciences and political theory, particularly Marxism, to refer to the beliefs that a person holds regarding one's social class or economic rank in society, the structure of their class, and their class interests. While German theorist Karl Marx rarely used the term class consciousness, he did make the distinction between "class in itself", which is defined as a category of people having a common relation to the means of production, and a class for itself, which is defined as a stratum organized in active pursuit of its own interests. Defining a person's social class can be a determinant for his awareness of it. Marxists define classes on the basis of their relation to the means of production – especially on whether they own capital. Non-Marxist social scientists distinguish various social strata on the basis of income, occupation, or status.

Early in the nineteenth century, the labels "working classes" and "middle classes" were already coming into common usage. The old hereditary aristocracy, reinforced by the new gentry who owed their success to commerce, industry, and the professions, evolved into an upper class. Its consciousness was formed in part by public schools (in the British sense) and Universities. The upper class tenaciously maintained control over the political system, depriving not only the working classes but the middle classes of a voice in the political process.

Class consciousness, as described by Georg Lukács's famous *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), is opposed to any psychological conception of

consciousness, which forms the basis of individual or mass psychology. According to Lukács, each social class has a determined class consciousness which it can achieve. In effect, as opposed to the liberal conception of consciousness as the basis of individual freedom and of the social contract, Marxist class consciousness is not an origin, but an achievement. Hence, it is never assured: the proletariat's class consciousness is the result of a permanent struggle to understand the "concrete totality" of the historical process.

According to Lukács, the proletariat was the first class in history that may achieve true class consciousness, because of its specific position highlighted in the *Communist Manifesto* as the "living negation" of capitalism. All other classes, including the bourgeoisie, are limited to a "false consciousness" which impedes them from understanding the totality of history: instead of understanding each specific moment as a portion of a supposedly deterministic historical process, they universalize it and believe it is everlasting. Hence, capitalism is not thought of as a specific phase of history, but is naturalized and thought of as an eternal solidified part of history. Says Lukács, this "false consciousness", which forms ideology itself, is not a simple error as in classical philosophy, but an illusion which can't be dispelled.

Economist Ludwig Von Mises argued that Marx confused the notions of caste and class. Mises allowed that class consciousness, and the associated class struggle, were valid concepts in some circumstances where rigid social castes exist; e.g., when slavery is legal, and slaves thus share a common motive for ending their disadvantaged status relative to other castes. "But no such conflicts are present in a society in which all citizens are equal before the law, according to Mises. No logical objection can be advanced against distinguishing various classes among the members of such a society. Any classification is logically permissible, however arbitrarily the

mark of distinction may be chosen. But it is nonsensical to classify the members of a capitalistic society according to their position in the framework of the social division of labor and then to identify these classes with the castes of a status society.

Philosopher Leszek Kołakowski argued that the theory of class consciousness is false and that attempts by Marxist–Lenninists to advance the concept of class consciousness necessarily led to totalitarianism.

Chapter III

Intra-Racial Conflict and Class Consciousness in *The Bluest Eye*

Pecola is the major character in *The Bluest Eye*, the first novel by Toni Morrison. Pecola belongs to the lower class of Black family. She falls prey to intra-racial discrimination and the brutal lust of her adopted father. She is compelled by situation to feel inferior in front of her white friends and upper class Black girls. Wherever she goes she comes to know that only girls having blue colors are encouraged, admired, recognized and properly treated. But she had black color. She is not treated like other friends of her. So she develops the impression that having blue color is to have identity, recognition and self-dignity. Therefore she tries to have blue color in her eyes. She begins to detest her eyes, herself and her Black upbringing. Pecola's search for blue eyes is the beginning of her search for individual selfhood and identity.

Intra-Racial Conflict within Pecola's Family

Heretofore, the intra-racial conflict has been defined as a conflict amidst people who have a sense of belonging to the same race. In *The Bluest Eye* Pecola's family itself is represented as that sort of family which has been disintegrating under the millstone of intra-racial conflict. Pecola's father Cholly Breedlove was brought up in the atmosphere of parentlessness. His mother had left him in a dumping site four days after he was born. He was brought from this loveless and motherless state by this Great Aunt Cholly. Aunt Cholly brought him up. She named him after her name Cholly. Thus he comes to be known as Cholly Breedlove. Cholly Breedlove received four years of schooling. As he entered into adolescent state he left school and began to seek the whereabouts of his father. In the course of his search for father, knowledge came to him that Samson Fuller in the name of his father. Samson Fuller scolded

Cholly Breedlove for coming closer to him. Samson Fuller, Cholly Breedlove's father, denied parental recognition to Cholly Breedlove. Samson Fuller said that he had already paid for having sex with Cholly's mother. Cholly's mother had already changed money from S.Fuller for having sex with her.

On the ground of sexual trade Cholly's father denied to offer parental identification to Cholly Breedlove. This act of denying parental acceptance created a profound sense of humiliation and an excruciating wound of psychological shock and alienation. Frustrated by the painful consequence of his search parental recognition, he returned to his great aunts house. After that Cholly Breedlove loved a girl from similar background, status and class. Her name was Pauline Williams. She was in the same atmosphere of parentless, lovelessness ignorance and helplessness as he was. Whenever the love between them deepened, both Pauline and Cholly married. After marriage they went to certain specific place where Cholly Breedlove was supposed to get a job in the either factory. Cholly used to work in factory and Pauline used manage household work. When the early hallucination of their love marriage faded time, the warmth and understanding began to migrate from their early conjugal relationship. Cholly gradually started neglecting her. He began to disregard her negligently. Slowly she began to fall prey to his affront and unrevealed atrocity. He downplayed her dignity. He wounded her feelings. He stripped her of her freedom. She was confined within the atmosphere of loneliness. Consequently she felt troubled and torture. She desired to spend a little time in the company of her friend. But Cholly disliked and vehemently opposed this desire of her for freedom and companionship. She wanted to buy some personal things for her individual satisfaction. So, she was in a sharp need of money. But cholly became cruelly insensitive to her aspiration.

Over time Cholly Breedlove come to know that Pauline has become pregnant. At this knowledge about her pregnancy Cholly Breedlove began to display his friendly and understandable attitude to her. At that turn of change over her husband's behaviour and mentality Pauline felt somewhat relieved. But after delivering her daughter Pauline was condemned to take the brunt of the same insensitive and cruelly atrocious behaviour and acts of her husband. She looked forward to see some optimistic behaviour and acts of her husband. She looked forward to see some optimistic change in Cholly Breedlove. But Cholly Breedlove showed no sign of altering this sort of cruel colour in his conjugal stupidity. Pauline's tirelessly repeated attempt to alter her husband and make him a worthy man resulted in a humiliating and terribly embarrassing consequence for her. So she started serving as a 'Mammy' in the house of white man. She was profoundly affected by the set of standard kept by the white family in almost all aspects of decent life of an individual. How overwhelming experience of working as 'mammy' in a white man's family gets reflected in the following lines cited from the text:

It was her good fortune to find a permanent job in the home of a well-to-do family whose members were affectionate, appreciative and generous. She looked at their houses, smelled their linen, touched their silk draperies, and loved all of it. The child's pink nightgown, the stack of white pillow slips edged with embroidery. The sheets with top hems picked out with blue cornflowers embroidery. The sheets with top hems picked out with blue cornflowers. She became what is known as an ideal servant for such a role filled practically all of their needs."(98-99).

It has become apparently evident that Pauline Williams, Cholly Breedlove's wife and a worker in white man's family, has been in the gripping spell of white standards and privileges. Her contact with white standards and privileges created to mounting sense of superiority. Although she herself is a black privileges created a mounting sensed of superiority. Although she herself is a black nigger her frequent presence as a worker in a white man's house implanted an obsessive concern with the established set of white privilege. As her involvement in the household of a Whiteman prolonged she internalized the outside gaze. Consequent upon internalization of outside gaze Pauline. William becomes detached from her nigger self and happened to inherit a pretentious superior self. She began detached from her nigger self and happened to inherit a pretentious superior self. She began to neglect her own house as she become more and more attached to the household affairs of a Whiteman. She began to deprive her daughter Pecola of motherly love and affection. She become, over time, enmeshed in the torturous problem of a discrimination," Some she stopped trying to keep her own house. The things she could afford to buy did not last, had no beauty or style, and were absorbed by the dingy storefront. More and more she neglected her house, her children, her man they were like after thoughts one has just like the afterthoughts one has just before sleep, the early-morning and late-evening edges of her day, the dark edges that made the daily life the fisher lighter, more delicate, more lovely. Here she could arrange things, lean things, line things up in neat rows. Here her foot flopped around on deep pile carpet and there was no whenever sound. Here she found beauty, order cleaningness and praise. Mr.Fisher said,

"I would rather sell her blueberry cobblers than real estate." She reigned over cupboard staked high with food that wouldn't be eaten for weeks, even months, she was queen of canned vegetable bought by the

case, special fondants and ribbon candy curbed up in tiny silver dishes. The creditor and services people who humiliated by her, when she went to them on her own behalf respected her, were even intimidated by her, when she spoke for the Fishers. She refused beef slightly dark or with edges not properly trimmed. The slightly reeking fish that she accepted for her own family she would all but throw in this fish man's face if he sent it to the Fisher house. Power, praise and luxury were here in this household. They even gave her what she had never had- a nickname – polly. It was her pleasure to stand in her kitchen at the end of a day and surely her handiwork. Knowing there were soaps bars by the dozens, bacon by the rasher and reveling in her shiny pots and pans and polished floors. Hearing, " We'll never let her go we could never find anybody like polly. He will not leave the kitchen until everything is in order. Really, she is the ideal servant (99).

Mrs. Breedlove, Cholly Breedlove's wife, earned honest status as a servant in a white family. With that recently earned status as an ideal servant Mrs. Breedlove began to breathe swaggering air of superiority within her Afro-American minority race. First of all she began to demonstrate, discriminatory behaviour within her family. Influenced and somewhat changed by her token of ideal savant hood offered from a white family Mrs. Breedlove found her alcoholic bastard husband far more lowly, debased, decadent and corruptible. Because certain psychological and so called superiority had got transmitted into Mr. Breedlove, she began to dominate her own nigger husbands who himself was tailor-made for suppression. Both a husband and a wife belonging to the same black race are engaged in intra-racial conflict. With a view to make her husband as an utterly ruined man. Mrs. Breelove began to goad her husband to

indulge in those cardinal flows and morally catastrophic weakness. Mrs. Breedlove had seen husbands of her friend afflicted husband utterly she goaded her husband to lead a minor life of moral ravages and psychological chaos:

She took on the full responsibility and recognition of breadwinner and returned to church. First, however, she moved out of the two rooms into a spacious first own with the woman who had despised her, by being more moral than they; she avenged herself on Cholly by forcing him to indulge in the weakness she despised. (98)

Mr. Breedlove convinced at their husband's frequently indulgence in the weakness she despised with malice aforethought. Once Cholly Breedlove fucked his own daughter and impregnated her. His daughter Pecola whom Cholly Breedlove, her father fucked, told her mother Mrs. Breedlove several times about the sexual exploitation by her father Cholly. But Mrs. Breedlove disbelieved in the report. Why did not she react to the report about Pecola's sexual exploitation by Cholly Breedlove? Mrs. Breedlove become indifferent to her daughter's report about her sexual exploitation by Cholly Breedlove. She disbelieved in the news why? Answer is the (Mrs. Breedlove) wanted to see her husband Cholly Breedlove falling from the grace and dignity to the lowest line of wickedness and I disgusting situation:

"Well. Go ahead. Still what? I wonder what it would be like

Horrible

Really

Yes, terrible

Then why didn't you tell Mrs. Breedlove?

I did tell her.

I don't mean about the first time. I mean about the second time, when you were sleeping on the conch

I wasn't sleeping ! I was reading ! You wasn't sleeping! I was reading!

You don't have to shout.

You don't understand anything, do you? She didn't even believe me

When I told her.

So that's why you didn't tell her about the second time?

She wouldn't have believed then either" (158)

Mrs. Breedlove being a black wife of a nigger, deliberately goads her own husbands to treat in terrible weakness to such a dangerous extent that she does not take any initiative steps to prevent her husband from fucking her daughter repeatedly. Mr. Breedlove was also tailor-made for such victimization. In the growing discriminatory hostility between Mrs. Breedlove and Cholly lies the most aspect of intra-racial conflict.

Mrs. Breedlove is not maintaining intra-racial conflict with her husband only. She also started giving more love and care to a Whiteman children. She deprives her daughter Pecola of full fledged material love. Once due to Pecola's nervous awkwardness in the kitchen of a Whiteman, where her mother works, a kitchen pan dropped on the floor and splattered blackish blueberries everywhere. Swollen and infested by the germs of the white superiority, Mr. Breedlove chastised Pecola recklessly she (Mrs. Breedlove) spends more time in careful treatment of white baby:

It may have been nervousness, awkwardness, but the pan tumbled under Pecola's fingers and fell to the floor, splattering blackish blueberries everywhere. Most of the juice splashed on Pecola's legs, and burn must

have been painful, for she cried out and began hopping about just as Mr. Breedlove entered with a tightly packed laundry bag . . . Mrs. Breedlove yanked her up by the arm, slapped her again, and in a voice thin with anger, abused Pecola directly and Frieda and me by implication. (84)

Furthermore, her discriminatory revelation of thriftiness in displaying love to her daughter becomes transparent in the following textual citation:

The little girl in pink started to cry. Mrs. Breedlove turned to her Hush, baby, hush-come here. Oh, Lord, look at your dress. Don't cry no more polly will change it. She went to the sink and turned tap water on a fresh towel. Over her shoulder she spit out words to us like pieces of apples. "Pick up that wash and get on out of here, So I can get this mess cleaned up. Pecola picked up the laundry bag heavy with wet clothes. (85).

Intra-Racial Conflict at School

Pecola hails from interiorized,, impoverished, uglified and marginalized black minority class. She comes from the lowly and demonized, humiliated and culturally uprooted family background. She was discriminated and uglified in every section and cross-section of her life. At school she was discriminated and neglected to the point of shame and humiliation.

As long as she looked 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 the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at

school, by teacher and classmates alike. She was the only member of her class who sat alone at a double desk. (34)

The level of intra racial discrimination continues in severe mode in this way:

The first letter of her last name forced her to sit in the front of the room always. But what about Marie Appolonaire? Marrie was in front of her, but she shared a desk with hake Angelino. Her teachers had always treated her this way. They never tire to glance at her, and called on her only when everyone was required to respond. She also know that when one of the girls at school wanted to be particularly insulting to a boy or wanted to get an immediate response from him, she could say " Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove ! Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove" and never fail to get peals of laughter from those in earshot, and anger from the accused." (34)

Pecola is convinced from every side of every friend and kith and kns of her that in ugly. She is forced to believe that is not beautiful. She is pressurized to believe that her eyes are ugly, her face is ugly, her colour is dangerously dark, her body is ugly, her family is backward. She is brainwashed that she began to feel anxious that perhaps even her soul is ugly:

Even while returning from school she is harassed by other light skinned boys," Hendy with the smell of tier musk, thrilled by the easy power of majority they gailed harassed her. Black emo, black e mo yadaddsleeps necked. Black e mo black e mo ya dadd sleeps necked. Black e mo (50).

They had unprepared a verse made up of two insults about matters over which the victim had no control; the colour of her skin and speculations on the sleeping habits of an adults widely fitting in its incoherence. That they themselves were black, or that their own blackness that game the first insult its teeth. They seemed to have taken all of their smoothly cultivated ignorance, their exquisitely learned self-hatred, their elaborately designed hopeless and sucked it all up into a fiery cone of scorn that had burned for ages in the hollow of their minds-cooled-and spilled over lips of outrage, consuming whatever was in its path. They danced a macabre ballet around the victim, whom for their own sake, they were prepared to sacrifice to the flaming pit.

Once because of certain cause Pecola had to spend sometime in the house of her frinds- Friends and Clandia. While living in that house she happened to drink three quarts of milk. When mother of Claudia and Fredia knew that it is Pecola who drink milk from the Shirley Temple Cup. She gave vent to her anger in the language of intra-racial sterotyp:

Three quart of milk. That's what was in the icebox yesterday. Three whole quarts. Now they aren't none. Not a drop. I don't mind folks coming in and getting what they want, but three quarts of milk ! What the devil does anybody need with three quarts of milk?" The 'folks' my mother was referring to was Pecola. (16)

Future more Pecola is every where treated as outsider as alienated and as othered creature. She is treated in department by a black storekeeper named Mr. Yacobowski in a discriminatory and dehumanized way:

How can a fifty-two-year old white immigrant storekeeper with the taste of potatoes and beer in his mouth his mind honed on the doe-eyed

virgin Mary, his sensibilities blunted by a permanent awareness of loss, she is a little black girl? Nothing in his life even suggested that the feat was possible, not to say desirable or necessary. . . . 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." (36)

From every side Pecola was made confused. She was neglected and discriminated by her light-skinned own parents. At school she is inferiorized. At home she is estranged and alienated. In her circle of friend she is 'othered'. Hence she appears to stand as a victimized creature submerging into the treacherous quick sand of intra-racial conflict, chaos and confusion.

Impoverished and interiorized by other light-skinned swaggering mulattoes, Pecola was right from her childhood convinced of the inferiority of her own sex and class. She thought that she does not have anything which is genuinely called beautiful. The fact that she is ugly is implanted to the deepest corpus of her psyche.

So Pecola's attention began to more on the direction of beauty and charm. She began to watch those who had been held to beautiful. She began to talk about beauty and charm with her friend she asked friend how to become beautiful, what makes one beautiful, how to attract boys, how to increase the number of boy friends. She was Mourean Peal admired and respected for her standards and beauty. She gradually struggled to know that if she becomes beautiful, people stop neglecting her and cares for her.

In time she knows that blue eyes are the standard of the beautiful. So she started hankering after the bluest eyes. Frieda and Claudia incited Pecola to cultivate a

hankering after the Shirley Temple's Cup. She was made to believe that by drinking milk from the Shirley Temple's Cup one cup make one's blues. Pecola did also.

In also course of her intense hankering after the bluest eyes Pecola happens to meet a bevy of prostitutes who also goads Pecola to indulge obsessively in the lowest art of attracting many boy friend, of appearing beautiful. She build up an obsessive interest in the bluest eyes. Thinking that via blue eyes it would be possible to be charming and beautiful, Pecola becomes ready to lose anything and do anything. Blue eyes, blue, eyes, and non other than blue eyes. That becomes her single most motto echoing in her outward quest for beauty.

Finally she goes to meet Soaphead Church-a Mulatto bastard who claims to solve and suffering of any seeker and sufferer. Soaphead Church is a so-called spiritualist and psychic reader. He used to think that he is capable of bringing an appropriate solution to everybody's problem whatever brought to him by sufferer. Actually soaphead Church is a Charlattan and a Wolf-in-sheep's clothing. His apparent mission is salvation. But his inner satanic mission is to lead a sufferer into damnation.

Almost in an insane mood due to fever-pitch of obsessive hankering for the bluest eyes, Pecola reaches the haven of Soaphead Church. As she pleaded him to make his eyes blues, Mr. Soaphead reacts in a way suggestive of intra-racial biase:

Help you how? Tell me Don't frightened".

My eyes"

"What about your eyes?"

"I want them blue." (138)

Soaphead pursed his lips, and let his tongue stroke a gold inlay. He thought it was at once the most fantastic and the most logical petition he had ever received. Here was an ugly little girl for beauty. A surge of love and understanding swept through him, but was quickly replaced by quickly replace by anger. Anger that he was powerless to help her. Of all the wishes people had brought him-money, love revenge- this seemed to him the most poignant and the one most describing of fulfillment. A little black girl who wanted to rise up out of the pit of her blackness and see the world with blue eyes. His outrage grew and felt like power:

For the first time honesty wished he could work miracles. Never before had he really wanted the true and holy power-only the power to make other believe he had it. It seemed so bud, so frivolous (138).

The interaction between Pecola and Soaphead Church is reflective of the fact that Soaphead Church's manner of approaching Pecola is spoiled with trademarks of intra-racial disfavour and deceptive racial arrogance. Pecola's relationship with Maureen Peal further more brings into light some of the dark, terrain of intra-racial conflict. Maureen disdainfully and haphazardly talks to Pecola in the language of intra-racial conflict:

Maureen said to Pecola", Did you even see a naked man?"

Pecola blinked, they away. No where would I see a naked man?"

"I don't know. I just asked."

"You stop talking about her daddy", I said.

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

Why you calling black?"

"You !"

You think you so cute.

Safe on the other side, she screamed at us, "I am cute ! and ugly, black and ugly black eyes. I am cute." (55) .

Maureen is also a black. But she is a light-skinned black. She is somewhat wealthy light- skinned on the strength of her slightly upgraded status. She started calling other dark skinned blacks as blacks. This brand of Maureen-Pecola episode fragrantly dramatizes open intra-racial conflict.

Intra-racial Conflict amidst Growing Children

Frieda, Claudia and Pecola are three characters belonging to the dark-siknned class of blacks. They are economically, academically and socially much more backward. On account of this backwardness they are discriminated by other light-skinned blacks in school and elsewhere in community. In their class there is another girl named Maureen Peal. Maureen peal is light-skinned. She is wealthy. She has certain status and standing. Even teachers and most of other white girls also admire her. Proud of her status and superior standing Maureen castigates other dark-skinned girls like Pecola and Clandia.

Indignant with her much vaunted superiorities, Frieda and Clandia began to finding weakness in Maureen. They were delightfully amazed to find that Maureen had a six fingers in hand. They twisted Maureen Peal into Meringue pie. They envied her. In the growing conflictual relationship among Frieda. Clandia and Maureen Peal overtones of intra-racial conflict is eviden:

Frieda and I went bemused, irritated and fascinated by her. We looked hand flaws to restore our equilibrium but had to be content at first with

uglying up her name, changing Maureen Peal to Meringue pie. . . .

They were small triumphs, but we took what we could get-snickering behind her back and calling her six-finger-dog- tooth-meringue-pie.

But we had to do it alone, for none of the other girls would cooperate with our hostility. They adored her (48).

Intra-Racial Conflict and the Black Community

Intra-racial conflict had taken firm at family level also. Light-skinned Afro-American parents do not allow their children to mix and play in the group of the children of dark-skinned blacks. Geraldine doesn't allow her light-skinned son to dirty himself by playing with of her children of niggers:

Geraldine didn't allow her baby, junior to cry. As long as his needs were physical, she could meet them-comfort and satiety, he was always brushed, bathed, oiled and shod. Geraldine did not talk to him coo to him, to indulge him in kissing bouts, but she was that every other desire was fulfilled. It was not long before the child discovered the difference in his mother behaviour to himself and the cat. As he grew older. He learned how to direct his halted to his mother to the cut, and spent some happy moments watching in suffer. The cat survived, because Geraldine was seldom away from home and could effectively soothe the animal when junior abused him. 67

As intense animosity escalated amidst the families of light skinned black and the dark-skinned blacks. The light-skinned mulatto families didn't allow their children to mix and play in the group of the children of niggers:

Geraldine, Louis, Junior and the cat lived next to the playground of Washing Irving School, Junior considered the playground his own and the school children covered his freedom to sleep late, go home for lunch and dominate the playground after school. He hated to see the swings, slides, monkey bars, and seesaws empty and tired to get kids to stick around as long as possible. 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 farmer group: he wore white shirts and blue trousers: his hair was cut as close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool, the part was etched into his hair by the barber. (67-68)

Owing to this brand of intra-racial conflict at family level, children of the dark-skinned black had to fall prey to the evils of inferiorization and demonization. Light-skinned people and children assert their superiority and their sense of beauty. They constantly persuade the dark-skinned blacks and the children of the niggers but they are ugly. The light-skinned class continuously implanted in the psyche of nigger children the idea that they are inferior and ugly. Every organ of nigger is taken to be ugly. The light-skinned Afro-American class set the standard of beauty. This class put forward a claim that it is essential to have blue eyes to appear as beautiful. From every side of dark-skinned children were convinced that their ugliness and inferiority is color. The worst effect of the inferiorization of the black children by the light-skinned class fell upon the young growing children of black families.

Pecola is a black-skinned girl ridiculed and dejectedly called nigger by her superior friends. Her delicate psyche was contaminated completely. She was harassed,

interiorized, uglified, demonized and madden by the slightly superior mulatto people. She is told that if she gets blue eyes by hook or crook she becomes beautiful. She will be recognized and perhaps she happens to have a large number of boyfriends. She has dark eyes in actuality. She moves heaven and earth to have the bluest eyes. She leaves no stone unturned to have the bluest eyes. The high-flown obsessive hankering after the bluest eyes renders her mentally insane. Her morally bankrupt father ruins her sexually. He impregnated to pecola in her young age. Her teenager pregnancy invited unendurable shame and degeneration. Consequently she is brought to the state of insanity and social alienation. To cut the matter short, She fell to the treacherous violence of intra-racial conflict.

Class Consciousness in *The Bluest Eye*

Class-consciousness is the state of being very aware of belonging to a particular social class and the differences between social classes. It is the awareness of social divisions in society and of belonging to a particular social rank. In other words, class consciousness is identification with other members of one's class and awareness of its relationship with other classes. According to Marxist theory, the proletariat will assume class consciousness when workers realize that they are being exploited by the bourgeoisie; then a proletarian revolution will be inevitable. Class consciousness is a category of Marxist theory, that, referring to the self awareness of a social class, its capacity to act in its own rational interests, or measuring the extent to which an individual is conscious of the historical tasks, their class (or class allegiance) sets for them.

Pecola is feeling inferior in comparison with other white girls and other Black girls who belong to the upper echelon of society. She sometimes feels so inferior that

she is tempted to pray to god for blue eyes. The cult of running after the blue eyes is harmful to her. Only the sense of shame and inferiority has welled up in her heart. The following line shows how conscious she is of her identity:

Letting herself breathe easy now, Pecola covered her head with the quilt. The sick feeling, which she had tried to prevent by holding in her stomach, came quickly in spite of her precaution. There surged in her the desire to heave, but as always, she knew she would not. Please, God, she whispered into the palm of her hand. "Please make me disappear." She squeezed her eyes shut. Little parts of her body faded away. Now slowly, now with a rush, slowly again, her fingers went, one by one; then her arms disappeared all the way to the elbow. (36)

Sense of shame and alienation has come over Pecola. In the preadolescent phase, girls like Pecola should have played with other friends cheerfully. But this did not happen because she has not got a chance to enjoy it. For not having blue eyes she is mocked and jibed. She is to some extent excluded from the group of those girls who have blue eyes. Moreover there is nobody to convince her that having blue eyes of is not a great thing. There is nothing to be proud of in the blue eyes. In the absence of affectionate atmosphere, Pecola is on the dreadful path of degradation.

The charm of having pretty eyes is widespread. Every girl longs to have pretty eyes. The blue eyes are the standard of pretty eyes. To seek blue eyes is to seek identity and selfhood. By seeking blue eyes, Pecola is actually seeking her identity. She is seeking her individual selfhood. Upper class Black girl and even white girls from hybrid background had blue eyes. They have freedom and recognition. So Pecola thinks that having blue eyes is to have selfhood and identity. All her desire for

Identity results as she becomes conscious of her identity. The following citation from the novel demonstrates the extent to which Pecola's obsessive longing for blue eyes:

Pretty eyes. Pretty blue eyes. Big blue pretty eyes. Run, Jip, run. Jip runs, Alice runs. Alice has blue eyes. Jerry has blue eyes. Jerry runs. Alice runs. They run with their blue eyes. Four blue eyes. Four pretty blue eyes. Blue-sky eyes. Blue--like Mrs. Forrest's blue blouse eyes. Morning-glory blue-eyes. Alice and Jerry blue storybook-eyes. Each night, without fail, she prayed for blue eyes. Fervently, for a year she had prayed. Although somewhat discouraged, she was not without hope. To have something as wonderful as that happen would take a long, long time. (37)

Pecola is intensely fascinated with blue eyes. The intensity of her desire for blue eyes is boundless. Her unbounded love liking for the blue eyes is unreasonable. But she is too young to realize it. Other parents and relatives should have taught her. Since she has not got proper schooling, she continues to think that the only way to be beautiful is to have blue eyes. This is not the right thinking. But to the preadolescent girl like Pecola, such an obsession can occur.

In Pecola's life, two phenomena occur at the same. One is the enchantment with the blue color. Other is self-hatred. She comes to realize that having black color has hindered her from getting recognition in society. She does not get a sense of being a distinct individual by keeping black color of her eyes. Increasingly she comes to perceive that blackness has become burden to her. Self-denial and self-hatred also occur simultaneously in her life. Fascination for blue eye and hatred for black color are ruinous to Pecola's mental as well as physical health. The following extract shows this point in its entirety:

The distaste must be for her, her blackness. All things 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. She points her finger at the Mary Janes--a little black shaft of finger, its tip pressed on the display window. The quietly inoffensive assertion of a black child's attempt to communicate with a white adult is doomed to fail. The word is more sigh than sense.

"What? These? These?" Phlegm and impatience mingle in his voice.

She shakes her head, her fingertip fixed on the spot which, in her view, at any rate, identifies the Mary Janes. (40)

It is dangerous to develop identity by casting aside one's own background and history. Pecola tends to do so. She takes her black color as the great stumbling block on her way to cultivating her identity. Her unbounded fascination for the blue colored eyes produces hatred for her own eyes. That is why it can safely be said that she is inferior with black color and attracted towards the blue color of eyes. She pines for blue eyes. The identity she is seeking is not the realistic in nature. Her way of seeking identity is not reasonable. By treating one's color skin as a great nuisance, no one can create and carve an identity.

Those who have blue eyes have sweet voice too. Marie Jane is a girl who has not only blue eyes but sweet voice too. When Pecola comes to befriend her, Jane rejects to talk to her and befriend her. This rejection brings pain and shame in Pecola. Then Pecola comes to acknowledge that the only way to overcome the rejection in the group of her friends is to have blue eyes. Again Pecola comes to know that to have blue eyes is to have talent, sweet voice and many other things. Such a realization creates pressures in her obsessive longing for blue eyes. She goes so far as to say that

blue eye is a key to many things. The following lines describe this sort of deviant passions of Pecola:

Her thoughts fall back to Mr. Yacobowski's eyes, his phlegmy voice. The anger will not hold; the puppy is too easily surfeited. Its thirst too quickly quenched, it sleeps. The shame wells up again, its muddy rivulets seeping into her eyes. What to do before the tears come. She remembers the Mary Janes. Each pale yellow wrapper has a picture on it. A picture of little Mary Jane, for whom the candy is named, smiling white face, Blond hair in gentle disarray, blue eyes looking at her out of a world of clean comfort. The eyes are petulant, mischievous. To Pecola they are simply pretty. She eats the candy, and its sweetness is good. (41)

To Pecola, it appears that having blue eyes is a precondition for getting many things in life. Having blue eyes brings recognition, respect, companionship, and dignity as well. This is the limited understanding of Pecola. Of course, blue eyes are attractive in comparison with dark blue eyes. But it is not the fundamental requirement for cultivating other equally important skills and habits in life. Mary Jane has sweet voice; she is talented; and she is respected everywhere in the circles of her friends. But that does not mean, she has got all those things just because she has blue eyes. If Pecola is deviated in her pursuits of blue eyes, she alone is not responsible for this predicament. There are no strong and caring guardians in her house to correct preadolescent delusions of Pecola. Since she is an adopted daughter in Breedlove family, her parents hardly try to check her demands and likings. Actually, the delusions of having blue eyes which Pecola seeks are related to her desire for identity. It is also related to her individual selfhood. Because the black community has not

developed mechanism and structure in which girls and boys of Black parents could feel self-respect and dignity, youths are vulnerable to the social disasters.

The question of love is inherently entangled in the pursuit for blue eye. Girls and women having eyes other than blue are despised and deprecated. They have no option to live with decency and dignity. Racist mentality is clearly reflected in these girls' longing for blue eyes. Non-American women who do not have blue eyes are subjected to ridicule. Discrimination persists in micro level, though it does not seem in the macro level. The following lines describe how women of color are victimized by several oppressive measures:

Except for Marie's fabled love for Dewey Prince, these women hated men, all men, without shame, apology, or discrimination. They abused their visitors with a scorn grown mechanical from use. Black men, white men, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Jews, Poles, whatever--all were inadequate and weak; all came under their jaundiced eyes and were the recipients of their disinterested wrath. They took delight in cheating them. On one occasion the town well knew, they lured a Jew up the stairs, pounced on him, all three, held him up by the heels, shook everything out of his pants pockets, and threw him out of the window.

(48)

People living in the same community are divided. They are confined in their own world of prejudice. The inherent racist mentality is the main problem which has become the root cause of division within Black people. One group is cheating the other. No favorable atmosphere is created to abolish lingering injustice. In a society every person should have the right to live freely with self-respect and dignity. But the

racist biases prevent several groups from building up belief and trust. Individuals are busy to widen the gap between their individual differences.

IV. Conclusion:

Suffering under Intra-Racial Conflict

The core finding of this research is that a helpless girl Pecola's struggle for identity is full of several ups and downs, trauma and torture as she is a victim of inter-racial oppression. Pecola suffers from both inter-racial and intra racial conflicts. She has to come across unexpected circumstances. A few people are helpful to Pecola in helping her to overcome her tragedy and tribulation. But most of the upper class Black girls neglect her, mistreat her and then jibe her. The pathos and prejudice faced by her on her way to cultivating identity are listed in this novel.

The Bluest Eye presents a more complicated portrayal of racism. The characters do experience direct oppression, but more routinely they are subject to an internalized set of values that creates its own cycle of victimization within families and the neighborhood. The black community in the novel has accepted white standards of beauty, judging Maureen's light skin to be attractive and Pecola's dark skin to be ugly. Claudia can sense the destructiveness of this idea and rebels against it when she destroys her white doll and imagines Pecola's unborn baby as beautiful. Racism also affects the characters of the novel in other indirect ways. The general sense of precariousness of the black community during the Great Depression, in comparison with the relative affluence of the whites in the novel, reminds us of the link between race and class. More directly, the sexual violation of Pecola is connected to the sexual violation of Cholly by whites who view his loss of virginity as entertainment.

The novel begins with a series of sentences that seem to come from a children's reader. The sentences describe a house and the family that lives in the

house—Mother, Father, Dick, and Jane. The brief narrative focuses on Jane. The pet cat will not play with Jane, and when Jane asks her mother to play, she laughs. When Jane asks her father to play, he smiles, and the dog runs away instead of playing with Jane. Then a friend comes to play with Jane. This sequence is repeated verbatim without punctuation, and then is repeated a third time without spaces between the words or punctuation.

An unnamed narrator explains that there were no marigolds in the fall of 1941, when she was nine years old. She relates that she and her sister believed that there were no marigolds because Pecola, a slightly older black girl, was having her father's baby. It was not only their own marigold seeds that did not sprout—none of the marigolds in the community did. The sisters believed that if they said the right words over the seeds, the seeds would blossom and Pecola's baby would be safely delivered. But the seeds refused to sprout, and the two sisters blamed each other for this failure in order to relieve their sense of guilt.

For years, the narrator believed that her sister was right—that she had planted the seeds too deeply. But now she believes the earth itself was barren and that their hope was no more productive than Pecola's father's despair. The narrator states that the sisters' innocence, Pecola's baby, and Pecola's father are all dead; only Pecola and the earth remain. She concludes by indicating that it would be too difficult to explain why these events happened, so she will instead relate how they happened.

The Bluest Eye provides an extended depiction of the ways in which internalized white beauty standards deform the lives of black girls and women. Implicit messages that whiteness is superior are everywhere, including the white baby doll given to Claudia. The idealization of Shirley Temple is cuter than the other black

girls. The idealization of white beauty in the movies, and Pauline Breedlove's preference for the little white girl she works for over her daughter are far better. Adult women take this hatred out on their children—Mrs. Breedlove shares the conviction that Pecola is ugly, and lighter-skinned Geraldine curses Pecola's blackness. Claudia remains free from this worship of whiteness, imagining Pecola's unborn baby as beautiful in its blackness. But it is hinted that once Claudia reaches adolescence, she too will learn to hate herself, as if racial self-loathing were a necessary part of maturation.

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