

**Tribhuvan University**

Morrison's *Jazz* and *Beloved*: Sense of Cultural Loss

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By

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## **Abstract**

Toni Morrison, in *Jazz* and *Beloved*, exposes injustices, restlessness and loss felt by the Black people. She also tries to create the cultural identity of the Black community. Her characters, who feel themselves being victimized in White dominated society, struggle hard for new identity challenging the system of segregation and slavery. Both the protagonists Joe and Sethe in *Jazz* and *Beloved*, respectively express their repressed desires by killing Dorcas and Beloved due to fear, suspicion and frustration created by the White dominated society. Such situation leads to the loss of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness in African American cultural. Morrison does not lament only in such situation but she is also hopeful that a distinct identity will be created through music and art.

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## **Chapter – One**

### **Toni Morrison, and *Jazz* and *Beloved***

The first Afro-American to receive the noble prize for literature, Toni Morrison talks about loss, insecurity, frustration, fragmentation created by the system of slavery and segregation due to white domination and at the same time she tries to create unique cultural identity through music and art. She was born as Chole Wofford in Lorain, Ohio, America on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1951. She is the second child of George Wofford and Ramah Willis Wofford. She was proud of her origin, Black culture, rituals, music and language from her childhood.

As a child, she became well acquainted with the myths and folklore which figure prominently in her works. Her parents frequently told her ghost stories, and her grandmother kept a journal in which she documented her dreams, believing they could foretell the future.

Morrison read avidly as an adolescent, with her interests ranging from classic Russian novels to the works of Jane Austen to Gustave Flaubert. These books were so magnificently written that they spoke directly to her out of their own specificity. She was not thinking of writing then but when she wrote her first novel *The Bluest Eye* years later, she wanted to capture that same specificity about the nature and feeling of culture she grew up in.

She graduated with honors from Lorain High School and went to the Howard University, where she studied English and classics. There she adopted the name Toni. She received her master's degree from

Cornel University in 1955 where she wrote a thesis on "The themes of suicide in the works of William Faulkner and Virginia WOOIF".

Morrison has won international acclaim for works in which she examines the role of race in American society. Using unconventional narrative structures, poetic language, myth, and folklore, she addresses such issues as black victimization, the emotional and social effects of racial and sexual oppression, and the difficulties African Americans face in trying to achieve a sense of identity in a society dominated by white cultural values. In her explorations of such complex social, political, and philosophical concerns, Morrison acknowledges that reality is ambiguous and that truth is frequently impossible to apprehend. The principle themes in Morrison's works is that her novels are strategic attacks on 'innocent' readers, who assume that art (or any other human communication) carries reliable messages to or form the obscure territory of the inner self. In awarding Morrison the Nobel Prize for literature, the Swedish academy, praised her for giving life to an essential aspect of American reality in novels Characterized by visionary force and poetic import.

Morrison began her first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and then after she started to write vigorously and has published around a dozen books including essays, drama, criticism etc. in spite of her mastery over fiction. Her major fictions are *Sula* (1973), *Song of Solomon* (1977) *Tar Baby* (1981), *Beloved* (1987), *Jazz* (1992), *Paradise* (1997) and *Love* (2004). Her only play *Dreaming Emmatt* (1988) and the critical

work *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and literary Imagination* (1992) raised her height as a versatile author.

Later on she becomes interested in the study of African American Culture. She finds loss and fragmentation in the black community which is expressed in both novels. Killing of Beloved by her own mother Sethe and killing of Dorcas by her own lover Joe become the major issues in these novels to study African American Culture, its loss and creation of unique identity. In the first chapter of this thesis, there is discussion of cultural loss in Morrison's works. Second chapter not only discusses about loss but also talks about struggle for the creation of new identity in African American culture. Chapter three talks about the particular texts and search for the loss and new identity of the blacks. Last chapter concludes the essence and bibliography.

### **Experience of Loss and Cultural Mourning in Morrison's Works**

Morrison's novels including *Jazz* are populated by a number of lost or orphan children. Some of these are literally orphans. Loss and cultural mourning is the hidden reality of Morrison's works. Sense of absence or loss becomes the key term of her works, mainly of novels or fiction. In this sense her fiction is full of absence or loss. Loss can be seen either at individual or communal levels. Individual loss is the outcome of identity crisis of the individuals and communal loss is the result of the white domination due to which black people are marginalized and they can not enjoy in the society with different social practices i.e. norms and values. The African Americans, whose

ancestors were kidnapped their native land and sold into slavery in an alien country, were, in fact, America's only truly orphan group.

Cholly Breedlove (*The Bluest Eye*), Who was abandoned at birth by his mother in a dumpheap and whose father never knew of his existence, Pilate Dead (*Song of Solomon*) who was born an orphan at the moment of her mother's death; Sethe (*Beloved*) who was separated by slavery from her mother and never knew her father. Others are emotional orphans like Pecola Breedlove (*The Bluest Eye*) and Sula Peace (*Sula*), who experience themselves as radically estranged from their parents. Another group includes cultural orphans, like Jadine Childs (*Tar Baby*), who, besides being literally parentless, Wobbles ambivalently between black and white worlds. Both literal and metaphoric orphans figure prominently in *Jazz*, beginning with the major figures in the love triangle / tragedy announced on the first page. Joe and Violet Trace and Dorcas Manfred are each the offspring of dead, missing, or emotionally unavailable parents. Dorcas, Joe Trace's eighteen year old lover, was orphaned in childhood. Her parents were innocent victims of the violent race riots that consumed East St Louis in 1917, leaving more than two hundred African Americans dead. Her father was stomped to death and her mother died when their house was torched. Dorcas's friend Felice is, if not an actual orphan, arguably an emotional one. Raised by her grandmother while her parents worked on the railroad line in other cities, Felice knew her father and her mother primarily through the brief visits that punctuated their much longer absences.

In this way, African Americans feel the sense of loss in different ways. They are frustrated due to their cultural mourning. They want to get enjoyment and relaxation from their cultural activities but all is in vain. Frustration increases day by day due to the lost lives and possibilities, produced by slavery and also the loss of cultural productions through appropriation by white culture. Through her novel, *Jazz*, Morrison re-claims black music both by reconceptualizing the Jazz age and by employing the literary equivalents of its musical forms. Her novel *Jazz* shows the voice of Afro- Americans and this voice is the song of their cultural loss. There was the overlapping of various modes of artistic development in response to an interval of dynamic social and cultural changes about the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most regrettable features of histories of the period has been the tendency to maintain a segregated perspective, restricting the contributions of artists of the Harlem Renaissance to the "Colored only", side of long- perpetuated division in cultural and aesthetic analysis. For example, in *modern and modernism: The sovereignty of the artist 1885-1925* (1985), Fre Derric R. Karl traces the common aesthetic roots of modernist literature, painting and music without mentioning a single African-American artist in any of those mediums. More recently, revisionist scholars of the immensely fertile period that encompassed both the Jazz Age and the Harlem Renaissance have corrected such narrow views, not only underscoring the conjoined contribution of musicians, writers, and painters of the period but acknowledging the vital cross-fertilization that occurred among artists of different races

and mediums. Thus, focusing on the artistic vitality of New York city during the second decade of this century, Ann Douglas emphasizes the "Free and creative borrowings across race, class, and gender lines" (295).

Marsha H. levy-warren, drawing on Freud's theory of mourning and Melancholia, stresses that "a move from one's culture of origin can be seen as similar to the loss of a loved person, which initiates a process of mourning" (305). By implication, the effect of such an experience can be only magnified if the cultural relocation is involuntary, collective, brutal and experienced without recourse to mourning rituals and other structures that enable the process of grieving to resolve:

In Morrison's fiction, the sense of loss – the presence of absence – has evolved into representations of what I call cultural mourning in two distinct senses. I use the term culture to signify both a cultural identity and its aesthetic productions of African American. Mourning names the process through which losses might be grieved and resolved: both the historical aesthetic sense of loss as a result of white appropriation of cultural creations and the psychoanalytic sense of loss as the working – through of individual and collective grief resulting from massive cultural dislocation and its ramification over time. In the latter sense of cultural mourning, for African Americans that grief originates in the events that occurred generations

earlier when their ancestors, forcibly transported to the United States as slaves, were subjected to involuntary separations, violations, and traumatic personal losses. Ineradicably woven into the fabric of African American experience is the cultural memory of injury and loss – lost lives, lost possibilities, lost parents and children, lost parts of the body, lost selves. Naming and embodying that grief, Toni Morrison expresses the responsibility that she feels for "all of these people unburied, or at least unceremoniously buried, people made literate in art" (Naylor 209).

In this sense, sense of loss is shown in two different ways. On the one hand, loss of cultural identity and on the other hand loss can be traced in aesthetic productions like art, music and literature, African American culture is full of lost lives, lost possibilities, lost parents, lost children, lost parts of the body, lost selves. Her novels are full of incomplete expressions, phrases and sentences. It shows the feeling of loss in Afro-American art and literature.

### **Review of Literature**

Numerous critics have diversely interpreted *Jazz* and *Beloved* since their publications in 1987 and 1992 respectively. In this connection *Angela Burton* talks about the collapse of hierarchical binaries of racial differences in *Jazz*. She asserts:

Thus, through her representation of Gray's identity collapse Morrison allows us to see how abjection functions as

deconstructive space in which the false hierarchical binaries of racial differences collapse. In this she signifies on abjection by showing it as space of disenfranchisement (Gray's identity collapses with the collapse of white ideology) but also as a potential space of empowerment (the collapse of white ideology offers Gray the chance to "see" beyond it and realizes his new identity as black Man's son). In this way, the ambivalence of abjection allows Gray to glimpse beyond his racial prejudices – which is may be why two gallops beyond that hair, that skin, their absence was unthinkable (184).

It shows the abjected condition of the Afro-Americans. They are just like Golden Gray. Golden Gray is the son of Vera Louise Gray and Henry Les Troy, he is half black and half-white although his golden curls and light skin make him appear completely Caucasian. Raised his mother and True Belle in Baltimore, Golden Gray leads a privileged existence and is told that he was adopted at a young age. When he is 18, he learns the truth about his parents and flies into a rage. He travels to Vienna, Virginia, intending to hunt down and kill his black father but he runs off in the woods with wild instead.

Ann Hulbert gives her different opinion on *Jazz*. She says that Morrison has tried to romanticize blackness and vilify whiteness. She views:

Morrison is determined to shakeup not just her readers; it seems, but also herself. She intends to challenge our

assumptions about race and literature, and to question her own instincts, which she admits toward "romanticizing blackness and vilifying whiteness". (248)

According to her view Morrison's *Jazz* tries to romanticize the Afro-American culture. Her intention is to search the aesthetic beauty in Afro-American culture. Such beauty can be found in their paintings, art, literature, music, costumes, languages, foods and cultural practices. Carol Iannoe takes '*Beloved*' as the novel of fascination. In this regards he also tries to show aesthetic beauty and artistic excellence in this novel. He remarks:

Still, while far from successful as a work of art, *Beloved* is fascinating to view in the progression of Toni Morrison's work in which a tropism for simplistic plight – and protest has done fitful battle with the more capacious demands of a functioning moral imagination. True, miss Morrison doesnot display a really sure hand in her treatment of her moral dimensions of Sethe's initial act of child murder, yet unlike the almost of hand treatment of similar crimes in *Sula*, she does not make the deed stand as a matter of great gravity and consequence . . . interesting too is the way in which *Beloved* can almost be read as Miss Morrison's own effort to exorcise the Burden of history, to be free in her work of what it Howe called the "defining and cropping" violence that has been the subject of the black protest novel. (232)

*Beloved*, in this sense, is the black protest novel which invites all the Afro-Americans to be united through the artistic excellence to be fascinated in black culture.

Eusebio L. Rodrigues regards the criticism of the book *Jazz* as celebration rather than solution:

Jazz does not solve but does celebrate instead of my story of human love, of human life, too. It asks questions, not comic questions like *unde malum*, but questions about the presence of evil in the city streets. The story of Joe and Dorcas is associated with the Garden of Eden and apple. Human beings (as Morrison's other novels, especially *Tar Baby*, imply) have to move out of paradise to enjoy the fruit of knowledge and to experience love and pleasure and pain. After 20 years in the city, fifty three-year-old Joe has not lost his country innocence and is still a sixteen years old 'kid' (p. 121), until he meets Dorcas. Through Felice, Dorcas sends Joe a cryptic message; there's only one apple ... just one' (P.123). The message confirms Joe's interpretation of the Eden story: 'I told you again and you were the reason Adam ate the apple and its core. That when he left Eden, he left a rich man. Not only did he have Eve, but he had the taste of the first apple in the world in his mouth for the rest of his life; (165).

Here, he is trying to show the postmodern trace in *Jazz*. Nothing is solved in *Jazz*; instead celebration can be seen. This novel tries to

rupture the hierarchy. The love story of Joe and Dorcas is associated with the Garden of Eden and apple. Without suffering pain and pleasure can not be realized. Joe and Dorcas get pain and pleasure because of their deep love. It shows the celebration of love.

Black cultural and social identity is reflected in Morrison's *Beloved* according to Rafael Perez-Torres. In this connection his comment goes like this:

Beloved weaves a story on a singular frame: interpretation represents an internal part of black cultural and social identity. In Toni Morrison's book, the fictional characters and communities as object of exploitation in both slave and free market societies transform an essential absence into a powerful presence. A sense of self emerges from experiences of exploitation, marginalization and denial. Analogously, Morrison's narrative, confronting a facelessness the dominant culture in America threatens to impose on black expression, forges out of natural and social absence a voice and identity. *Beloved* creates an aesthetic identity by playing against and through the cultural field of postmodernism (128).

He does not talk only about the loss but also about a sense of self emerges from experiences of exploitation, marginalization and denial. Though they are exploited, marginalized and denied by the white society, but still they are not frustrated by the loss and they try to create inner power for the optimism of black society.

*Jazz* provides the opportunities for a generational examination of three southern black women whose lives are shaped and complicated by their rationalized and gendered historical circumstances in the South. Morrison offers literary portraits of southern black women during three significant moments of American history: American slavery, Reconstruction and the Great Migration. Thus, in Eusebio Rodriguez's Words, Morrison's novel "Jazzifies the history of people ... by giving us rapid glimpses of their life in rural south after Emancipation" (742). As a cultural and historical conservator, one whose work explores is about, "Movement from liberation to conservation", Morrison inscribes her three characters True Belle, Rose Dear, and Violet as the texts of their respective historical movements, American slavery, Reconstruction, the Great Migration, by revealing how their particularized histories inform their lives (Morrison 1998:12). As an artist to write history, Morrison has to take the road not taken before so as to bring fact in an artistically imaginative way to the real front. For Morrison a historian is different from an artist in writing about history because:

Historians must necessarily speak in generalities and must examine recorded resources ... they habitually leave out life lived by every day people. History for them is what great men have done. But artists do not have any limitation, and as the truest of historians they are obliged not to. (qtd. In Mitchell 49)

The history that Morrison represents does not appear merely as something to be read, nor does it appear to be a reference to the past events. On the contrary history for her is a great force which comes, as James Baldwin posits, "From the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled and shaped by it in many ways" (qtd. In Isaacs 275). This inescapability, inevitability and all controlling forces of history must be the point in discussing on Morrison's *Jazz*. Roberta Rubenstein talks about the relationship among Afro-American culture, history and music particularly in *Jazz*. She discusses:

I wish to argue that Toni Morrison has done much more than merely protest while appropriation of African music. Focusing on her novel entitled *Jazz*, I hope to demonstrate the ways in which she engages in a kind of "cultural mourning" that ultimately serves both as an expression of grief for lost lives and possibilities and as a form of reappropriation of lost (appropriated) cultural creations. (140)

In this sense *Jazz* does not talk only about loss of cultural possibilities but also the cultural creations through music, art and history.

Susan Bowers analyzes *Beloved* and says:

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* joins a long tradition of African American apocalyptic writing. Apocalypse is a more diffuse experience in *Beloved* the traditionally conceived, and it is presented as something which can be survived, not as an event at the end of linear time. In *Beloved* it is an attempt to free African Americans from guilt and past

suffering. What *Beloved* suggests is that while the suffering of the "black and angry dead" is the inescapable psychological legacy of all African-Americans, they can rescue themselves from the trauma of that legacy by directly confronting it and uniting to loosen its fearsome hold. *Beloved's* redemptive community of women epitomizes the object of salvation in biblical apocalyptic literature: "The creation of a new society" (282)

In this way, Susan finds the novel *Beloved* as an attempt to be free from guilt and past suffering for the creation of a new society and to challenge the white domination. The novel also takes about diffuse experience of Afro-American. Such experience described as in *Beloved* is not just an individual one but it is the experience of the whole black community.

Karla F.C. Holloway claims the novel *Beloved* to be full of myth of Afro-American culture. He Views:

Myth dominates the text not only has Morrison's reclamation of this story from the scores of people who interviewed Margaret Garner shortly after she killed her child in 1855 constituted an act of recovery, it has accomplished a mythic revisioning as well. Morrison refused to do any further research on Margaret Garner beyond her reviewing of the magazine article that recounted the astonishment of the preachers and journalist who found her to be "very calm ... very serene" after

murdering her child. The imagination that restructures the initial article Morrison read into her novel *Beloved* is the imagination of a myth-maker. The mythological dimensions of the story, those that recall her earlier texts, that rediscover the altered universe of the black Diaspora, that challenge the western valuations of time and event (Place and space) are those that, in various quantities in other black women writers and sustained quantities in Morrison's works, allow a critical theory of text to emerge. (287-88)

In this novel *Beloved*, Morrison talks about the experience of mythic revisioning according to Karla. *Beloved* is nothing but just an imagination of a myth-maker. It has been able to challenge the western valuations of time and event.

Jennifer Fitzgerald gives psychoanalytical comment on *Beloved*. This comment goes like this:

*Beloved*'s obsession with Sethe can be characterized psychoanalytically as per oedipal. She also functions as figure auto whom others can project their fears and desires. She can thus be read in two ways, as Morrison herself suggests: both as a psychically damaged real-life salesgirl and as a ghost (fantasy object for the emotions of others). *Beloved* narrates her story in the fragmented monologue which appears to describe her abduction from Africa and transportation in a slave ship. It expresses the vehement

attachment to a woman on land and on the ship who, in psychoanalytic terms, plays the part of the mother and primary caregiver (whether she is her mother or not). This woman fits Melanie Klein's notion of the 'internal mother; who is a 'double' of the external person playing the care giving role. The double is psychologically created by the infant's ambivalent emotions of both love (and dependence) and hate (and fear of dependence). For the person who looks after it. She is both idealized and demonized, both all loving and all abandoning (114).

Beloved is killed due to complex situation created by the white society. On the one hand there is always fear in the mind of the blacks due to white domination and on the other hand blacks want to fulfill their repressed desires. The desire is the desire to be free from white domination but it's not easy to be free. They have to follow complex and unique method. Sethe thinks that there will be psychological satisfaction after murdering Beloved and kills her.

Michael wood tries to see the connection between the novel *Jazz* and Jazz music. He remarks:

The novel is dedicated to the state and the air of Jazz, to what Jazz says to people who care for it. No one in this book would have an anxiety attack at a Louis Amstrong concert, even supposing they got to a concert. "Race music", as Jazz used to be called, and as a character once calls it here, is the recognizable music of their desire, the

sound of their hopes and their dangers. Jazz is risky, like the city, but its risk is its charm Dorcas's severe aunt hear "a complicated anger in it", but also an "appetite", a "careless hunger". "Come," she hears it saying, "come and do wrong". Later in the book the narrator listens to young men on the Harlem rooftops playing trumpets and clarinets, and gets a different, easier feeling. "You would have thought everything had been forgiven the way they played." You would have thought: only an impression, no doubt, but one of Jazz's real gifts to us. (259).

Jazz music is not just music but it is the music of Afro-American's desires, hopes and their dangers. Desires, hopes and dangers are blended in their music. This music is risky in the sense that whites may attack them at any time and this music is as complex as city life. The novel Jazz also shows the same situation. The events described in the novel are as complex as Jazz music and city life. In this way, Morrison has been able to create charm even in risk through the novel Jazz.

## Chapter – Two

### Culture

#### Meaning

The word culture appears frequently in the media and in academic texts.

To a sociologist, culture refers to the systems of signs, meanings, and worldviews of particular groups of human beings. It is everything that the members of a group learn to do, think, use and make as part of growing up in the group. Culture in this sense has two levels: material and non-material. Material culture refers to all the objects, or artifacts, that have meaning to the members of a society or that are used by them. Artifacts include tools, clothes, buildings, weapons, and art objects.

Non-material culture refers to the norms, customs, behaviors, beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge and language of the society. Material and non-material cultures are related in that the artifacts of the material culture reflect aspects of the nonmaterial culture.

As anthropologists use the term, culture is the way of life shared by a group of people. It is what makes people similar to one another and unites them as a group, overcoming individual differences in personality. Culture is acquired behavior, it is learned rather than inherited genetically.

According to *The Columbian Encyclopedia*, Culture is the "integrated system of socially acquired values, beliefs, and rules of conduct which delimit the range of acceptance behaviours in any given society (696-697). It also quotes E.B. Taylor who opined that culture or civilization in its ethnographic sense, "is that complex whole which includes

knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (696). This restrictive sense of culture (ethnographic) has undergone a massive change.

"Subculture" is a small culture that exists within a large, dominant culture get differs from it in some important aspects. Accepting other aspects of dominant culture, subculture maintains somewhat distinct style of its own. Also existing in a society is 'counter culture' that arises in opposition to the dominant prevailing culture. It is an experimentation with alternative norms and values basically attributed to youths. The basis difference between these two is that counter culture is a self-conscious opposition to the prevailing culture, which it hopes to influence through its oppositional life style. Subculture, on the other hand, is defiance to dominant culture with dress, behaviour, attitude and activities while accepting such dominant culture as a power and material success. However, the process of 'assimilation' which refers to a process by which cultures are absorbed into a single mainstream culture, can not be ruled out in any society correlative to the country's diverse culture.

Mark J. smith reviews Raymond Williams in three levels to define culture. Culture as the 'ideal' which refers to the embodiment of perfect and universal values so that analysis is limited to the discovery of such timeless values within the lives of the writers. Secondly, culture as 'documentary' refers to the documented forms of human behaviors and thoughts in certain codes (perferably language). They are valued

through comparisons with the ideal or through references to certain traditions and societies in which they appear. Lastly, culture as 'social, as a way of life', "Whereby it expresses the structure of feeling of a social group and therefore should be analyzed and valued in terms of the meaning and values of ordinary behaviour and social institutions as well as in terms of their place in art and learning" (smith 23). Williams countered the anthropological view of culture referring it as the 'voice of people' lastly culture is viewed neither as people's way of life nor the voice of the public rather as the battleground of social conflicts and contradictions.

Postcolonial criticism took culture to another level. Critics formulated their critical perspectives on texts around the cultural differences, social authority and political discrimination. In modern world order, it forces us to engage with culture as uneven, incomplete production of meaning and value often composed of limitless demands and practices, produced in the act of social survival. Edward Said studied the contradictory relationship between the east and the west. According to said, "culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate, denote, interdict and validate: in short i.e. is the power of culture to be an agent of and perhaps the main agency of powerful differentiation within its domain and beyond it "[9]. These days, culture has often been associated with rationality giving the individuals a secular identity. In this sense, culture is a source of identity rather than a force for division and a combative entity. For Raymond Williams the dominant culture is 'hegemonic', the way in which it

receives the consent of subordinate class to their domination. He views hegemony as three dimensioned: first the 'effective', dominant or the hegemonic culture. Secondly, the 'residual culture' that contains the historical meanings and practices which may eventually become incorporated as part of the dominant culture. Third, the 'emergent culture' which is "of new ideas, meanings, experiences, style which eventually becomes incorporated in some form even though initially they constitute as oppositional or the counter culture" (Williams 235-239).

### **Cultural studies**

Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field that incorporates studies in literary theory, mass communication, philosophy, sociology and criticism. The theory has its origin in the belief that because human is social in nature, some specific human behavior are always learned within a particular cultural context. Since those specific behaviors can not be attributed to biochemistry, the reason for such behaviour should be sought in common sociological factor. They are responses learned within a particular culture. Social and cultural inferences are so strong for human beings that it is impossible to reduce the multiplicity of human behaviour to any simple biological trait. Cultural studies theorists argue that a culture's values and meaning are closely tied to its arts, literature, popular culture, and institutions of learning. Race, class and gender are the three major areas in which culture is typically examined, and theorists compare and contrast how these areas are represented in the culture. It is a set of practices which has developed

into a loose and un-united movement. During the last forty years, a cultural study has gained immense popularity as an academic discipline. It comprises of elements of anthropology, Marxism, new historicism, feminism, gender studies, races and ethnicity, popular culture, and post colonial studies. Most of these disciplines focus on social and cultural forces that either creates community of cause division and alienation. Bellington quotes Bellah defining culture as, "those or patterns of meaning that any group or society uses to interpret and make sense of its condition of existence" (qtd. In Bellington 28). Cultural studies reviewed this definition for under economic factors in culture. Culture is concerned with the way in which social groups develop distinct patterns of life and give expressive form to their social and material life experiences. Thus, culture was perceived as created and experienced with the emphasis placed on the empirical details of specifically working class culture.

Discourse, now, is believed to be the production of class struggle and relating conflicting ideological position. Consequently, power strnggles can manifest themselves as contest over meaning. In any society those will be a whole range of systems of ideologies. They are embodied in complexes of discourses, structures which rule our ways of speaking, thinking and acting and which operate by forming us into subjects.

There will be discourse governing all aspects of our social lives including conceptions of the basis of judgement between right and wrong. Texts are viewed as manifestation of a culture or set of practices and it's meaning is produced in the interplay between text and the

reader. So the moment of consumption is also a moment of meaningful production. Culture and society are two living and charming historical processes rather than stagnant artifacts.

### **Identity**

One of the major areas of concern in cultural studies is 'cultural identity'. Cultural, once labeled as the representation of ones identity, becomes a discourse of tradition. Identity is never universal rather the productive of discourses regulates the identity portrayed. Identity is, thus, constituted by representation rather than found within certain cultural or social background. Culture creates enormous pressure for conformity today as it is often referred as the individual or group identity. The hegemonic conceptualization of culture brings it down to a contested space. As Mark J. Smith argues, "By approaching culture through the use of the idea of hegemony, culture can be conceptualized as a space within which struggles between social forces are conducted"(81). Hegemony is the way in which social forces engage in a constant struggle for political, intellectual and moral leadership resulting into the cultural dominance. Precisely, hegemony can be defined as the process of making, maintaining and reproducing ascendant meanings and practices. But hegemony is not all power and dominance of the dominant culture as it also has the consent of subordinate groups that enables the dominant culture to exercise social authority. The 'power' being addressed here is the process that generates and enables any form of social action, relationship or order. In contrary to the earlier belief of power being constraining, it is also enabling.

Ideology, the beliefs and historic understanding that maintain power, is expressed in the form of representation going along the above mentioned, gramscian notion of hegemony, text, the prime source of representation, is nothing more than the signifying practices that dominant culture exploits to generate. Thus identity now comes down to generating meaning and consumption. Identities are the product of discourses and regulate the individual's worldly perception. In this backdrop," social identities are therefore accomplished through struggle; they are fluid and open to continual transformation and they are never complete but unfinished business" (Smith 80).

Now culture is a product of fragile connections established between the various elements of language and it is also bound by the institutions which are themselves the product of cultural practices. As quotes Hall:

Cultural identity, is a matter of becoming as well as of being. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like every thing which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. (83)

But this is the second notion of identify that, Hall insists, firstly comes from the shared culture which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. "Our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as one people, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of references and meaning beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual

history" (qtd. in Baker 83). However, the dominant or superior culture enjoys the power to influence or dominate the others. Cultural identity is the point of identification or future, which is made, within the discourse of history and culture.

Today identity is an issue of studying into the ethic, class, gender, race, sexuality and subcultures. Globalization has increased the rate of cultural amalgamation resulting into various forms of identity crisis. As smith quotes west who argues that identity is now a matter of life and death:

Identity is fundamentally about desire and death. How you construct your identity is predicted on how you construct desire, and how you conceive of death: desire for recognition; quest for visibility, the sense being acknowledged; a deep desire for association – what Edward said would call affiliation. It is the longing to belong, a deep visceral need that most linguistically conscious animal who transact with an environment participate in, and then there is a profound desire for protection, for security, for safety, for surety. (qtd. In smith 89)

Identity is closely linked with subjectivity according to Chris Barker for whom subjectivity is the, "condition of being a person and the process by which we become a person, that is, how we are constituted as a subject" (163). The conception we hold for ourselves is what constitutes ourselves identity while the expectations and opinions

others form our social-identity. Identities are wholly social constructions and can not exist outside cultural representation. Going through postmodern notion of fractured subject, individual identity involves the subject in shifting. Thus, fragmented multiple personalities are formed. Identity has been viewed in various cultural contexts and concepts like Hybridity, Diaspora and Representation have been preferred over fixed identities.

These concepts transcend national boundaries in terms with the increasing globalization. "Hybridity" is something that arises out of the interaction between two classes, basically the colonizers and the colonized. In a sense, it is a 'cultural cross-over' where the encounter between the two classes forces the colonized to hybridity of culture. It is an expression of everyday life in a post-imperial era. Hybrid culture exists in the colonial society where people occupy an in-between space by trying to imitate the colonizers. 'Daspora' is the shared cultural or religious commitments that bind culturally and ethnically diverse groups to a single mainstream culture but with a sense of exile from the origin. People in Daspora are culturally displaced and forced into exile accepting plural and partial identity. They are always haunted by a sense of loss and rootlessness. For Hall Diasporic experiences are constantly producing and reproducing themselves a new through transformation and differences. For critiques, it is a tool to study into the dispersed intellectual. "Representation", a key component of cultural identity, is embedded in the object of study (text) or its preferred framework (discourse). Meaning is connected with representation and

they are better understood under specific social contexts. Edward Said's orientalism is a prime example of how western discourse formed stereotype image of east to gain control and govern the orient through western discursive practices, it tried to gain power over the orient which Foucault had suggested 'discourse as representation' and is a form of power.

### **Africanist presence in American History and Literature**

White American has unfailingly considered questions of morality and ethics without reference to the situation of its black population. The supremacy of mind and vulnerability of body, the blessings and liabilities of progress and modernity are the white American considerations. Where they customarily ignore the situation of its black population. The mapping out of pervasive presence of black people's area of reference in America indicates the Africanist presence. The presence of black people is not only a major referent in the constitution, it is also the battle over enfranchising unpropertied citizens, women, the illiterate. It is there in the constitution of a free and public school system; the balancing of representation in legislative bodies; jurisprudence and legal definition of justice. It is there in theological discourse, the memoranda of banking houses; in the preeminent narrative that accompanies the initiation of every immigrant into the community of American citizens. In her critical writing *playing in the dark*, Morrison establishes:

'The presence of black people is inherent ... in the earliest lesson every child is taught regarding his or her

distinctiveness. Africanism is inextricable from the definition of Americanness from its origins through its integrated on disintegrated twentieth century self. (5)

Africanism is always present in making America. The vested attempt to divorce Africanism from America, no matter how forceful it is, falls prey to failure.

The literature of the United States, like its history, represents commentary on the transformations of biological, ideological, and metaphorical concepts of racial difference what is more about literature is literature has an additional concern and subject matter because it is the site where the product of the private imagination and the external world it inhabits interact.

Encoded or explicit, in direct or indirect the responses do not only present Africanism but also help complicated texts. The consequence is the novel written by the black writers such as Morrison and her texts like *Beloved* and *Jazz* where the readers pass through confusions and series of ordeals in their endeavor to access to the meaning (s). Fragments of information rush along unconnectedly, the written voice "hurtles along offering no explanations, dropping more bits of information that stubbornly refuse to come together and make sense" (Rodrigues 155). We readers read on impatiently, wanting to interrupt and ask questions but the voice is in reckless hurry to tell everything at once without stopping. It throws additional information we read on, bewildered but intrigued looking at the words, listening to their rhythm, their rhymes, seeking desperately to discover the meaning (s) of the text. This is why

Rodrigues finds Morrison produces a "textual continuum ..."  
("Experiencing Jazz" 155).

Studies in American Africanism should and must be investigations of the ways in which non-white, Africanist presence and personae have been constructed-invented-in the United States. Clarifying her mission as a representative writer Morrison puts, in the some book "My project is an effort to avert the critical gaze from the racial object to the racial subject; from the described and imagined to the describers and imaginers, from the serving to the served" (90). This is indeed, exactly the voice of the blacks.

Readers' approach to the American literature makes first assume that black people signify little or nothing in the imagination of white American writers. Other than as objects of an occasional bout of jungle fever, other than to provide local color or lend some touch of verisimilitude or to supply a needed moral gesture, horror or bit of pathos, blacks seem to have made no appearance at all. This attitude of marginalizing had impacts on the live of black characters in the work as well as the creative imagination of the author. Now what would the impact be if written or imagined otherwise, if black people are to be situated through the pages and sense of a book "like some government quota" – The impact would obviously be "ludicrous and dishonest" (Morrison 1998: 26)

Shifting the focus from a reader to writer, Morrison is of great help to share how would a black (woman) writer in a racially articulated and predicated world locate himself/herself. Morrison must have votes or

acceptance in reading to this aspect of the American cultural and historical condition. Morrison began to see:

“How the literature I revered, the literature I loathed, behaved in its encounter with racial ideology. American literature was complicit in the fabrication of racism ... I wanted to see when literature exploded, undermined it.”

(*playing*16)

These concerns, however, lead to much more important ones: "to contemplate how Africanist personae, narrative, and idiom moved and enriched the text in self-conscious ways, to consider what the engagement meant for the work of the writer's imagination" (16). The white American author, since s/he is non-black, did not write about anything other than the normal, unracialized illusory white world that provided the fictional backdrop certainly "... no American book was ever written for black people no more than *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was written for black people ..." (16).

Africanism claims its urgency, for the history of the American Negro is the history of strife – a longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of

opportunity closed roughly in his face (souls 39). He become neither and African nor an American but an African-American with this tool – "Africanism" – he contests and resists against a force – Americanism. Africanism is claimed by its users to be the vehicle by which the American self knows itself as not enslaved, but free, not repulsive but desirable; not helpless, but licensed and powerful; not a blind accident of evolution; but a progressive fulfillment of destiny. The concerns of autonomy, authority, newness and difference, absolute power, therefore, become the major themes and pre supposition of American literature. More, each one to these issues is made possible by, shaped by activated by a complex awareness and employment of a "constituted Africanism" (Morrison 45).

### **Black Aesthetic Movement**

The idea of black aesthetic as a central point of blacks' activities emerged in 1960s, the time when the black arts movement came into existence. In other words, black arts movement is the root of black aesthetic.

When multicultural literary studies emerged from social and political movements within the academy in the 1960s, the grip of monoculturalism slowly got weakened and, ethnic and minority studies, such as black studies, women's studies, acquired identification as an inseparable part of this multicultural world, especially in the United States of America.

The decade of 60s is especially known for the 'black consciousness'.

Blacks were very much aware about their social status amidst the white

Americans. So, they raised their voice not only for equal rights but they were also equally active in expressing their view, through the artistic creations. The rigorous to bondage and restrictions did no crush the slave's creative energies and through the means of various cultural forms such as songs, stories, slave narrative, dance, etc; the slave could view himself as an object; hold on to fantasies about his status; engender hope and patience, and at least use rebellious language when contemplating his life. Things have apparently changed since 1950s and 60s, especially after the civil rights movement and the feminist movement. Black artists have overcome the sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others. At the moment, black artist's destiny is not there at the hand of the whites, they live in a society or options. According to "black literature" by Nathan A. Scott, a young black write, Julius Lester, Said "I am Afro-American. This implies that I am an amalgam. It's my responsibility to reflect the Afro-side of the hyphen. The other side has been too much reflected" (305). In this way, these Afro-American were deterministic to distinguish the Negro writer and the new element that come into the fore in the sixties. Afro-Americans felt their duty to reveal or to emphasize what is unique of 'black'. They were not only interested to introduce a radical separatist ethnicism to disengage themselves from the larger world of American literature but also from the funded bequests of the entire western tradition. To fulfill this aim, they had started different movements, and black aesthetic is one of them.

y aesthetics, we generally understand the principles of art. Similarly, black aesthetics would mean the principles of black art. In *Glossary of Literary Terms*, it is defined as, "The Black Aesthetics that was voiced or supported by representative writers in the movement rejected, as aspects of domination by white culture, the 'high art' and modernist forms advocated by Ralph Ellison and other African-American writers in the 1950s" (24). Black art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the black power concept. As black power says that black is powerful, Black aesthetic says that black is beautiful. Black aesthetic envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of black America. The Major expression of this attempt for "a radical reordering of the western cultural aesthetic" (306) has been an aggressive advertisement of the 'Black A esthetic'. Black aesthetic motivated by a feeling that such cultural expression encouraged group identification and that the slaves were not solely dependent on the white man's cultural frames of reference for their ideas and values. Nathan A. Scott in his essay "Black Literature" quotes different writers like a Addison Gayle who defines black aesthetic is an attempt to be "a corrective a means of helping black people out of the polluted mainstream of Americanism" (307). He maintains that black aesthetic helps people to come out of the polluted mainstream history of white American and oreate a separate distinct identity different from theirs.

Likewise, Adam David Miller maintains that "a literature responsive to the black aesthetic is one whose task is that not so much of telling it 'like it needs to be' ... [if a black man is] to make sense out of his

experience" (307), Miller focuses on the reformation side of black art which makes black aesthetic similarly, John O' Neal expresses his view that a truly Black art is "affirmation of the Black reality ... 'Affirmation of Black potential, not trying to take black dreams and paint them white till even we don't know the difference anymore" (307). Gayle and Neal have similar views that should not be merged within white culture. It has its own immense qualities and virtues.

Many writers attempted to define what exactly black aesthetic is but none have arrived at agreeable definition. Even the black writers accept their inability to define it in exact words. Julian Mayfield, who in an essay charmingly entitled "You Touch My Black Aesthetic and I'll touch yours", insists that he knows "quite definitely what black Aesthetic is not" but admits that he is hard pressed to present a coherent account of what it positively comprehends within itself, for, as he candidly says, "it is easier to define in the negative" (307). However, black aesthetics is a movement in which the young writers of the black ghetto have set out in search of a black aesthetic, a system of isolating and evaluating the artistic works of black people which reflect the special character and imperative of black experience. The black aesthetic is a way of perceiving the world through the unique experience of African American's self awareness. It is the set of Criteria by which we can judge the unique quality of black arts. They try to justify whether a particular work or art produced by black is truly black or just it is getting a derogative name. It is a way of perceiving from as more than simply aesthetic beauty.

Many blacks believe that aesthetic is the realization of the painful years of being told they are not beautiful; and now they want to claim their beauty; to shout it through their art: Their realization of the actual beauty of blacks that they are no uglier as told by whites has been expressed through this movement, and they have tried to reveal their own unique and supreme beauty 'blackness' to which they only possess. 'The black is also beautiful' has become their strong slogan. They believe that the beauty of black people is not yet revealed and their obligations to dig up the beauty of black people through artistic creations so, their effort is to segregate black from the mainstream culture and judge them through their unique artistic quality. Yet, there are many black writers who think that the black works should be judged through the universal standard of judgment. Henry Louis in his essay "*Tell me sir ... what is black literature?*" quotes Dexter Fisher who rightly puts the dilemma of this movement:

The emergence of the black Aesthetics movement in the 1960s Focused attention on the dilemma faced by minority writers trying to reconcile cultural dualism, willingly or otherwise, minority writers inherit certain tenets of western civilization through American society, though they often live alienated from that society. At the same time, they may write out of a cultural and linguistic tradition that sharply departs from the main stream. Not only does this present constant social, political, and literary choices to minority writers, but it is not challenges certain aesthetic

principles of evaluation for the critic when the cultural gap between writer and critics is too great, new critical approaches are needed. (16)

The black aesthetic reflects the black experience as well as black history. Likewise, it emphasizes the need to change and change is the 'lifeblood' of black aesthetic. Julian Mayfield in his article *Black Aesthetics*, writes, "if the black aesthetic is anything it is 'the search for a new program' ..., the search for a new spiritual quality, or the recapture of the old one, lost and buried deep in our African past" (4). It means black aesthetic is not only a search for new but also an attempt to recapture the old one. So, the past is not dead but very actively present in the societies, and songs. Their African heritage combines with their new experiences with their cultural past is the beginning of the Black nationalist consciousness and multiculturalism.

The black artists at the same time are concerned about how to accept one's past. One's history; how to learn it; how to use it in a positive and assertive way. This counter memory is not just a rejection of history, but a reconstruction of it. Toni Morrison argues that it is like literary archaeology visiting the site do see what remains was left behind and to reconstruct the world that these remains imply in order to provide a sense of racial continuity in a culture structured in its denial. Morrison's own fiction aims to bear witness to a history that is unrecorded, untaught in mainstream education and to enlighten people by telling the stories most often ignored. The black aesthetic has to do with the

realization of the link from past to present and the decision to create a revolution for the people through the art.

In the past, that is, before the civil rights movement in America, not only the reading public, but also the critics were dominantly white. A black artist was, to some extent, judged by the aesthetics of the white writers and critics. White aesthetic held that blacks were uncivilized, less of human, and so were the black artists. Bishun Sapkota in his article, *The Black Aesthetics* writes, "White writers beginning with Shakespeare (Othello as black and ugly, caliban in *The Tempest*, etc) to Daniel Dafoe (*Robinson Cruse*) "presented black as ugly and inferior" (23).

Against this background, the historical function of the judgment of black artists is another important issue related to black aesthetic. Black aesthetic supports the segregationist idea in the sense it, too, views that black arts should be judged on its own standard of judgment. It carries a rigorous policing action with respect to the reputations of Negro writers and with respect to the territory that black literature may or may not explore. They are also eager to denounce those white critics who risk any public discussion of black literature. These black writers do not like those white critics who try to make a criticism of a field they are totally unknown. Harold cruse in his book *The crisis of the Negro intellectual*, for example, insists that "criticism of Negro writing is mainly the Negro's responsibility, or again, Johan Oliver Killens says."White critics are totally and I mean totally-incapable of criticizing the black writers .... They do not understand Afro-Americanese" (307). So, the

black aesthetic emphasizes upon the segregation of black literature from the mainstream and for its judgement on its own set judgement.

The black aestheticians believe that the black literature having its own unique artistic quality can not be judged by the universal measurement.

There is a kind of black aesthetic or 'blackness' in every writing produced by blacks which can only be seen if we look it through the black standard of judgement. And this unique long of presentation makes them distinct from other so-called canonical writers.

### **Sense of Cultural Loss in African American Culture**

#### **Reasons:**

#### **I. Segregation**

White society is what may also be called a supremacist society. White people can safely imagine that they are invisible to the black people. This is because the power they hence historically asserted, and even how collectively assert over black people has accorded them the right to control the black gaze.

The word 'White' it associated with white people and it refers white with light and therefore safety (and purity, spirituals, transcendence, cleanliness, virtues, and number of positive terms) and 'black' with dark and therefore danger (and dirt, sin, and number of negative terms) and that this explains racism. With slavery come an ideology which declared either that the slave (along classical lines, following Aristotle) was "born to serve" or (along Christian line) was destined for the same purpose as the "Children of Ham." This ideology found its champions

also in the nineteenth century, on the cusp of emancipation, for example in Thomas Carlyle who said, "you may depend on it, my obscure black friends, it is and was always the law of the world, for you and for all men: to be servants, the more foolish of us to the more wise, and only sorrow, futility and disappointment will betide both in some appropriate degree, get to conform to the same" (Pieterse). The clear point made in these lines is the assertion of slavery as a vocation, a destiny and a continuation of it by another name, not as an occupation.

The supporters of slavery and slaveholders needed different supportive grounds, arguments and logic to continue with slavery. With the growth of profitable was morally justifiable. In this way religion, logic, social sciences, philosophy were twisted and utilized to prove the white supremacy. Logic was manipulated to meet their need. The Slaveholder white intellectual meet their need. The slaveholder white intellectual masterly handled logic to give slavery an intellectual trademark. The formulation of the argument for the inferiority of the Negro ran in the shape of syllogism.

God, as everybody knows, is not a Negro: Therefore the Negro is not a man what is Negro then? Something (can even someone) less than man, less than human-subhuman, caliban?

Academicians were not an exception. They happily climbed on the myth mountain. On their ascent they took the so-called Teutonic theory which heavily supported them to breath the oxygen: only the Teutonic race had been imbued with the ability to build state of government (king 99)

Historians from the "confer academic towars" of oxford, like bishop William stubbs and edloard freeman, expounded this theory in British intellectual circle soon letting is spread like a wild give over leading American universities like Harvard and Cornell (king 99). Even natural science, which we believe is committed to the inductive method, detached objectivity, was utilized to give credence to a political position. A whole school of racial ethnologists developed such term as "species", "Genus" and "race" these words ran as vogue Dr. Samud G. Morton's head-size theory is funny example. He put it that white are intellectuals their head size is larger. In this way the doctrine of white supremacy was given a market form.

The simplistic and essentialist "us" and "them" dictomy remained a vigilant presence in every activities ranging from socio-cultural to literary representation. The well fondled phrases "The American Dream" remained always a dream, no, "Declaration of Independence", no "Emancipation proclamation" could materialize and actualize the to be self-evident' truths, "that all men are created equal, that they are end owed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" even as late as 1970s (Jefferson 5).

Whiteness makes its presence feel in black life most often by exercising a terrorism of imposition, a power the wounds, hurts and tortures. Collectively, black people are silenced about being represented in white cultural and literary tradition.

Racial practice has been an inevitable encounter. The act of enforcing racelessness is itself a hoist by its own petard Morrison herself writes in *Playing in the Dark*:

The world doesnot become raceless and will not become unracialized by assertion. The act of enforcing racelessness in literary discovers is itself a racial act ... pouring rhetorical acid on the figures of blackhand may indeed destroy the prints, but not the hand. (49)

## **II. Dislocation and Displacement**

Dislocation refers to the lack of 'fit' when one person moves from known to an unknown location. It is the outcome of willing or unwilling movement from known to unknown place. The phenomenon of dislocation in modern society is the result of transportation from one country to another by slavery or imprisonment, by invasion and settlement. Its as quoted by Hall, Eronesto Lau defines dislocation as structure that is characterized by a never-ending process. He claim, "a dislocated structure is one whose center is displaced and replaced by another ("The question" 278).

Dislocation is a socio-cultural phenomenon. Historically it was developed in the institution of slavery as well as the system of indentured labour. For instance, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin say, "the practice of slavery and indentured labour resulted in worldwide colonial Diaspora" (key 69). In this sense, diasporic communities, formed by slavery, indentured labour and forced or voluntary migration

are dislocated and displaced and alienated in new socio-cultural milieu. Thus, diasporic movement seems to be beginning of dislocation and alienation as well.

In postcolonial discourse dislocation is the outcome transformations from one country to another. In defining the term dislocation Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin write:

A term for both the occasion of displacement that occurs as result of imperial occupation and the experiences associated with this event the term is use to describe the experience of those who have willingly moved from the imperial 'Home' to the colonial margin, but it affects all those who, as a result of colonialism, have been placed in a location that, because of colonial hegemonic practices, needs, in a sense, to be 'reinvented' in language, in narrative and in myth. (Key 73).

Dislocation can also be extended further to include psychological and personal dislocation resulting from cultural denigration as well as voluntarily chosen status. In many cases, dislocation exists within the country as well. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin add "... Dislocation is a feature of all invaded colonies where indigenous and original cultures are, if not annihilated often literally displaced i.e. moved off what was their territory" (75).

The is the crisis of identity. A term often used to describe the experience of dislocation is Martin Heidegger's term 'unheimlich or

unheimlichkeit that literally means 'unhousedness' or 'not-at-home-ness' which is also sometimes translated as 'uncanny' or 'unmanliness'.

Place and displacement are the crucial features of post-colonial discourse. The concepts of place and displacement demonstrate the very complex interaction of language, history and environment in the experience of colonized people and the importance of space and location in the process of identity formation. For some critics, dislocation is not only transformation to different location; rather is a key factor which helps to form a distinctive form of culture as Rajan and Mohanram argue the very term place does not simply mean the physical landscape. It is rather an issue of culture and its elements. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin see 'place' as a term that can not be separated from the issue of culture. According to them:

"... place in postcolonial societies is a complex interaction of language, history and environment. It is characterized firstly by sense of displacement in those who have moved to the colonies or the more widespread sense of displacement from imported language of a gap between the experienced environment and descriptions the language provides, and secondly by a sense of immense investment of culture in the construction of place. (Reader 391).

Linguistically speaking a sense of displacement, of the lack of 'fit' between language and place, may be experienced by both those who possess English as mother language and those who speak it as a second language. In many contexts, 'place' does not become an issue in a

society's cultural discourse until colonial intervention radically disrupts the primary modes of its representation by separating 'space' from place (key 177). The necessity of dislocation has indeed become the mother of invention. Hence, the disruptive and disorienting experience of dislocation becomes a primary influence on the regenerative energies in post culture. Similarly, a sense of place is embedded due to the profound discursive interference of colonialism.

In addition to the separation of 'place' from place, brought about by European ways of measuring a universal space and time that becomes an issue within language. The concept of place itself may be very different in different societies and this can have quite specific, political as well as literary effects in the context of displacement. For example, in aboriginal societies, place is traditionally not a visual construct, a measurable space or even a topographical system but a tangible location of one's own being. As Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra point out, "place in aboriginal culture, rather than existing as a visual construct, is a kind of" ground of being (Reader 792). Thus what becomes more vivid is the 'place' is much more than the land. The theory of place does to propose a simple separation between the place managed and described in language, and some real place inaccessible to it, rather indicates in some sense "place is language, something in constant flux, a discourse (key 182).

### **III. Slavery**

Slavery is legal practice, slaves may be held under the control of another person, group, organization, or state. The legal designation of

slavery is rare, as most societies consider slavery to be illegal, and persons held as in such condition are considered by authorities to be victims of unlawful imprisonment. A specific form, known as chattel slavery, is defined by the absolute legal ownership of a person or persons by another person or state, including the legal right to buy and sell them just as one would any common object.

The 1926 slavery convention described slavery as "... the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised ... " Therefore, slaves can not leave an owner, an employer or a territory without explicit permission (they must have a passport to leave), and they will be returned if they escape. Therefore a system of slavery; as opposed to the isolated instances found in any society – requires official, legal recognition of ownership, or widespread tacit arrangements with local authorities, by masters who have some influence because of their social and/economic status.

The word slave comes from the Latin term *sclavus*. The current usage of the word serfdom is not usually synonymous with slavery, because serfs are considered to have some rights. In the strictest sense of the word, "slaves" are people who are not only owned, but who have no rights and are also not paid aside from food and water.

The International Labour Organization defines "forced labour" as "all work or service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily", albeit with certain exceptions military services, convicts,

emergencies and minor community services. The ILO asserts that child labour amounts to forced labor in which the child's work is exacted from the family as a whole.

In some historical contexts, compulsory labor to repay debts by adults has been regarded as slavery, depending upon the rights held by such individuals. Mandatory military services (conscription, colloquially called a "draft" in some places) in liberal democracies is a controversial subject occasionally equated with slavery by with those on the political left. By extension, acceptance of conscription is seen as a sign of chauvinist, ultra-rationalist and/or fascist ideologies, justified by philosophers such as the Hegelian notion of nations having rights which supersede those of individuals.

The most common types of slave works are domestic service, agriculture, mineral extraction, army make-up, industry, and commerce. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, domestic services are required in a wealthier household and may include upto four female slaves and their children on its staff. The chattels (as they are called in some countries) are expected to cook, clean, sometimes carry water from an out door pump into the house, and grind cereal.

Many slaves have been used in agriculture and cultivation. The strong, young men are forced to work long days in the fields, with little or no breaks for rehydration or food. There have been efforts by developed countries to discourage trade with countries where such servitude is legal, however.

In mineral extraction, the majority of the work is done by the men. They provide the salt that is used during extensive trade not as much in this day and time, but this was especially true in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the men that are bought into chattel slavery are trained to fight in their nation's army and other military services. This is where a great deal of slave trading amongst wealthy officers takes place. Different military leader can see the strength of a young slave, and make trades to get the young chattel on his side.

Chattel slaves are trained in artisan workshops for industry and commerce. The men are in metalworking, while the females are in the textile ones. They are sometimes employed as agents and assistants in commerce, even though they go without benefits or breaks, the majority of the time, the slave owners do not pay the chattels for their services.

Female slaves, mostly from Africa, were long traded to the Middle Eastern countries and kingdoms by Arab traders, and sold into sexual slavery. There is a pragmatic tendency to consider the effects of slavery in purely monetary terms, and even then the context is often dropped. There are a broad array of effects arising from the adoption of slavery. In terms of the economics of slavery, slaves provide a cheap source of labor. The reason that slave labor<sup>5</sup> was cheap was because there was much agricultural work to be done, and to hire non-slave workers would have been more expensive. As Europeans managers came to understand the vulnerability of workers in the tropics they gave more attention to the diets of their slave laborers to reduce the death rate from scurvy, malaria, typhoid and yellow fever, etc. Still in many ways

slavery was first and foremost financially based in nature; if agricultural machines had been invented and could have been had at less cost than the equivalent number of slaves per work area, than slavery would have quickly become a thing of the past in the Americas because of the bottom-line economics of the situation. In the end, slavery was abolished not only because it was morally repugnant but because European growers no longer needed cheap slave labor.

The basis of slavery is a slave master and the serf. Whilst the treatment of slaves varied, its evident that in those cases where slaves were treated better, slaves were accorded more 'humanitarian' lifestyles, in the sense that they were more likely to be productive, trained and efficacious, perhaps taking pride in their work. The alternative 'harsh' treatment has the opposite reaction, reducing morale, lowering productivity, requiring higher levels of supervision, but importantly also removing all incentive for 'slave' workers to find a more productive way of accomplishing the task. Toil is the source of inspiration if you are free to realize the benefits. By implication, slavery was undermining innovation in a second way. For these reasons, America did benefit from slavery in the short term by solving a short term shortage of plantation labour, but in the long term it only undermined the productivity incentive, and thus a nation's capacity to produce wealth. A look at US economic growth during the periods of slavery and after will demonstrate as much.

A further effect of slavery was to relatively denigrate the value of manual labour itself. Hard work became something people did if they were forced to do it, rather than for self-improvement.

It created an idle slave owing aristocracy who, while assert rich, were income poor. Although they did not pay their slaves a wage, they were still responsible for feeding, housing, providing simple medical care, and (in some cases) education for all of the slaves' lives from birth to death. Even if a slave was too old, young or crippled to work, he still had to be supported by someone. If a slave was not treated reasonably, he would only do the minimum work necessary. Slavery caused fear, suspicion and hatred between slave masters and serfs. Often these feelings escalated into uprisings resulting in the destruction of property, murder, rape, incarceration or desertion. These conflicts also increased the cost of business and judicial intervention.

## **Outcomes**

### **A distinct identity in Afro-American Cultural Heritage: Song and Music**

Afro-American songs and music play a vital role in American hybrid-culture. The songs were a great source of relief as the songs were the ventilation through which the oppressed feeling of people could pass away, second they were a silent but loud protest, and finally, they were a herald of future hope and regeneration. When the enslave Negros were commercially deported to the southern plantation, railroad construction, canalzones, they could bring nothing with them but the

memory of their past by means of which they created a home, a cultural bond among the enslaved Negroes in the land of exile with this remain they also could proudly locate themselves in an exclusive way in the cultural cross-roads of America, and get the identification of distinct colour even in an all inclusive melting pot. Black music becomes the great source of expression for the oppressed, paralyzied and paralyzed black victims. Their songs and music is the product of the lynching and the lashing the Negroes suffered callously treated by their white masters, imposed to a more than dawn dusk menial labor, whipped and bled to death for no mistake at all, the black slaves were so unfeelingly handicapped. The slaves oral tradition their music and their religious outlook constructed a cultural refuge at least potentially capable of protecting their possibilities from the worst ravages of the slave system. Basically, there are two types of Afro-American songs and music spirituals and secular. The former are religious songs, which include hymns, church songs, prayer and so on. The slaves beseech with God for their freedom, while sometimes they curse the cruel. Sometimes they pray to God with their Master in the natural disasters to their Masters' plantation and economy; wail and cry and ask for justice with God and solace themselves with the inevitable truth that death equals all rich and poor, master and slaves.

The secular songs are not religious songs. They are a modification and alternation to the changing shift of time such songs and music broadened the horizon of Negro culture and consciousness. They talk about industrial development and Changes.

Both types of songs and music, either spirituals or secular, help the Negroes to express their inner feeling and they talk about the need of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness in American society. (L.W.L. 217)

### **i. Spirituals, pain and Joy: Mixed feelings**

The songs and sermons of spirituals formulate and answer their question, problems, evade fear, enable them to pursue action with zest and confidence, bring them in touch with gods and spirits, and make them feel less strange in the wilderness of the world. The songs also provide them a solid center in what otherwise would almost be chaos, and a continuity in their being, which would too easily dissolve before the calls of implacable present through the sermon song. Songman who might otherwise give into the malice of circumstances find their old powers revived or new powers stirring in them, and through these life itself sustained and renewed and fulfilled (L.W.L. 248).

Their songs are full of sorrows, spirituals and joy. Such sorrowful song may rightly take one to believe that the black songs were merely imbued with a psychic division, feeling of uncertainty, being orphan and homeless. Nonetheless, the black songs are also the songs of an affirmation and confidence that good days are still to come. "One morning I was a walking down, ". . . saw some berries a-hanging down, . . . I pick de berry and I suck de juice, just as sweet as de honey in de comb". Similarly amid the deep sorrow of sometimes I fee like a motherless child, a sudden release could come with the lines "Sometimes I feel like A eagle in de air . . . spread my wings an' /Fly, Fly, Fly" (Slave Song 55).

## **ii. Secular Music: blues and Jazz**

Individual voices had been prominent in Afro-American music before the rise of blues. Both church music and secular work songs formed call-and-response patterns. Song leader's whose role was central for it was he who was answered by the group. Solo music, of comes, existed among the slaves and freed man almost any song could be song as solo piece by the individual working alone. The two chief forms of solo music that existed were lullabies and field hollers. Both of this forms are arose out of situations of physical or social distance. Lullabies were addressed to infants or children too young to respond, while field hollers arose out of special isolation. With the end of slavery, the percentage of Negro who worked alone or in very small groups increased and the use of field hollers unquestionably increased as well.

“Lydia Pirrish” writes L.W.L., “remembered how the black form workers in how the black farm worker in southern New Jersey in 1870s and 1880s would holler to each other across wide fields: the call was peculiar, and I always wondered how they came of such a strange form of vocal gymnastics, since I never heard a white person do any thing like it” (218). Thomas Tally, a black scholar from Frisk University, recalled the field hollers he heard as youngster in Tennessee during the late nineteenth century of ten these hollers would be wordless:

Hoo wee hoo wee hoo wee hoo! (218)

Sometimes they would include words and at other times they would articulate attitudes: I wants a piece of a hoe cake I wants a piece o' bread/well, I see so tired an' honey dot I se almos' dead, sometimes talking to himself: The gal I'm bovin' she can't be found.

Harold Courlander has divided hollers into two categories: calls and cries. The formers were used to communicate messages to call people to work or to attract the attention of others. The latter were a form of self-expression, the cry of an individual attempting to verbalize, or more purely, vocalize his feelings. Both forms existed in slavery (L.W.L. 219)

Blues can be said to be the first almost completely personalized music that Afro-American introduced. In all respects blues and Jazz were most typically Afro-American. The songs were enacting the psychic pain of the tortured blacks. Their laughter washes them off the pain that they are inflicted by. It releases them momentarily:

Trouble in mind' I' m blue

But I won't be blue always

For the sun will shine in my black door someday

Well trouble on may worried mind, when you see me laughin,

I'm laughing just to keep from cryin. (Black culture 230)

“The trouble in mind” of Richard M. Jones’ 1920s song increases the trouble that the protagonists in *Jazz* have faced.

Like the spirituals of the nineteenth century the blues was a cry for release, an ode to movement and mobility, a blend of despair and hope. Like both the spirituals and folktales blues was an expression of experience and feelings common to the group.

In number of respects Jazz represents much the same phenomena as blues. That is in terms of growing importance of the solo instruments and of the improvised, Jazz manifested the same individualized emphasis that was essentially new to the black music. But like blues, Jazz too remained communal music. It can be summed up then, that the transition from slavery to freedom, from rural to urban, from south to North, from self-containment to greater exposure to the larger society, black secular music became increasingly dominant expressive mode of reflection of the decay of sacred universe. But with the changes and variations the black music underwent, it remained a group-oriented means of communication and expression.

### **iii. Secular song and protest**

Black secular songs and music were an addition to the expressive dimension of their state. The study on such song over a period shows that a very sense of protest was deeply rooted from the day of its emergence. To word this in another way, protest has been one of the motivation and objects of exposures. But to argue that Negro secular song has functioned primarily or even largely as a medium of protest would distort black music and culture. Blacks do not seem to have spent all their time reacting to whites, and their songs are filled with comments on all aspects of life. Even greater would probably be the

distortion to assume that a people occupying the position that Negroes has in the American society could produce a music so rich and varied with few allusions to their situations. Secular song is not demented by such reactions; it offers a new window onto the lives and into the minds of a large segment of black population.

For millions of Negroes during the century after emancipation the normal outlets for protest remained closed. They were denied the right of political expression and active demonstration when black song is understood as protest and resistance in less restrictive and more realistic sense, less political and institutional forms, it is taken to mean the song served as a mechanism by which Negroes could be relatively candid in a society, that rarely accorded them that privilege, could communicate this candor to others whom they would in no other way be able to reach, and could assert their own individuality, aspirations and sense of being (239).

Blues and religious song generally are not vehicles for telling of explicit chronological, developed stories. This is a shared characteristic of all black song, "They never embody personal comment and reaction and put their message across through repetition hints, indirect reference and allusion", Harold Courlander argues (240). As Bruce Jackson has maintained, the structural units in Negro folktales are typically the metaphor and live together not to create a story but instead accumulate images to create feeling.

There are still voices of the workers digging railroad tunnel in the south expressing their wish to their "honey". More direct and open

secular work songs threaten the masters to leave the job. The songs also captured the fury of the prisoners against the prison captain who gave birth to a blue-eyed miscigenated baby in touch of one of the woman prisoner. In the obscure symbolism of “devil” and “muder” they sometimes challenge the master “if you don’t like the way I work Jus’ pay me off, . . . I can get another job an’ be my boss”, throughout 1920s, they paint out the discrepancy between themselves and their employers, during the Great Depression, they sing of dispossession as “Niggers plant cotton Niggers pick it out/white man pockets money, Niggers does without”, protest against hard labor but low wages, the work of loading and unloading. Next to the arbitrary boss, the low pay and the poor working condition, the chief grievance was about the lack of legal justice. In 1915 blacks in Alabama sang that if a white killed a Negro they hardly carry it out to court, if a Negro killed a white man they hung him like a goat. Blues and other forms of secular songs captured the demand and pressure of time. Their songs pare about massive burden of economic and social injustice, of disaster and calamities, of Great Depression and train collision, of blood and sinking of titanic, of murder and race riots, of world wars of the assassination of John F Kennedy and the administration of the presidents.

The expressive dimensions of black song and music can be said that black songs and black music were working both ways: as a means of expression and as arms of rebellion, sung communally or individually.

#### **iv. African Diaspora**

Harlem is initially a site of exile, where the psychological condition of the arrivants was traumatic, clouded with uncertainty. They were longing for a resting place to release their painful memories, and their pain was doubled as they lacked self-recognition. They were bound to be in a state of what Dubois calls “double vision” (Souls 16).

The dispersion begins with the Trans Atlantic slave trade that commercially deported millions of African from central, west and south western Africa to Europe, the Americas, and the Caribbean. This cycle of dispersion also includes the flight of refugees via the underground Railroad to points North. There comes the early 19<sup>th</sup> century deportation of free African Americans to Liberia under the aegis of the American colonization society; the scramble for Africa that distributed African peoples and lands among European colonizers and fragmented cultural nationalities among different imperialist administrations (Ryan and Mejoza 131). The Great Migration in the post reconstruction era includes thousands of African American’s internal migration from Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, the Carolinas and elsewhere, north and west of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Kansas and Oklahoma. The internal migration of Africans among the various Caribbean countries in the post Emancipation period, to Panama and Costa Rica to work on the construction of the canal and in the U.S. American-owned fruit exporting industries; 20<sup>th</sup> century migrations to European and North American Metropolis Paris, London, New York, Miami, Toronto-from the Caribbean, America and Africa; and the

continuing migrations from the village to city, and from city to suburbs in pursuit of an ever more hazardous ascent.

The American South, the city, was a home for the migratory men and women in the 1920s. The first site of exile is the antebellum south. Now, the African tried to define religion, ethics, folklore, music, dance, games, even food, language, naming practices etc. in their own term. The development of African Diaspora religions, Afro-Christianity, for instance, provides one of the clearest examples of the pattern of improvisation, which took place in the first site of exile antebellum south. In slave Religion, Roboteau confirm that “African beliefs and customs persisted and were transmitted by slaves to their descendants. Shaped and modified by a new environment, elements of African folklore, music, language, and religion were transplanted in the new world by the African Diaspora” (4) Ethicist Peter Paris, in his book *The Spirituality of African Peoples* explains that:

Due to the circumstances of their departure from Africa, Africans had no choice but to leave their artifacts on the continent. Yet they did not arrive on these shores as tabula rasa. Rather, different groups brought their respective cosmological understandings with them and gradually shaped a new world of spiritual and moral meaning by appropriating and interpreting various elements in their new environment in account with their African cosmologies. (35).

In this way the cultural artifacts, sedimented in their psychological build-up were manifested through cultural mobility or dynamicity, and there by these people constructed their own world. They converted Christianity to their world view, using the new religion to collectively perpetuate community culture and ideology of freedom.

On the other hand, whites had an unconscious vested interest in seeing their slaves maintain much of their cultural distinctiveness because they wanted to sustain the commonly used epithets such as “primitive”, “barbaric” and “childlike”. The enslaved Africans also were not eager to reveal the cultural autonomy to their lives within the veil. In this situation the enslaved Africans used the knowledge they brought into exile to re-construct a home in the American South.

Bernerd W. Bell does a scrupulous study on the migratory African people in his book. *The Afro-American Novel and its Tradition*. He records: During 1920s Harlem reigned supreme as the cultural capital of the new Negro movement. Between 1920 and 1925 the white neighbour in the heart of Manhattan roughly 125<sup>th</sup> street, to 145<sup>th</sup> street, South to North and from the Harlem river to 8<sup>th</sup> avenue, east west- was transformed into a black metropolis. From all points on the globe people flocked to the city within a city, searching for shelter or stardom or swinging tunes: emigrants from Africa and west Indies as well as migrants from the south; young, gifted and black artist from across the land; white blue-color workers and blue bloods from Europe; and white publishers, dilettantes, and bohemians from down town Manhattan

Harlem was the cosmopolitan black show case of the nation, a “promised land” for some and “playland” for others.

But for thousands of transplanted cotton pickers, tobacco choppers, and cave cutters, adjustment to complexity of an exploitative, industrialized urban environment made the big city a spurious paradise. Exploited as cheap labor and barred by color from full participation in their society, including some of the night clubs (e.g. the cotton clubs) in their own community, the black masses spooled out their lives in an arabesque pattern of hard work and synthetic joy: “going to meet the man, slaving for Ann,” “running a game or lames”, at tending a house party or gin with jumping music on Saturday nights, and taking their troubles to the lord in prayer and song on Sunday. These were the rituals of survival for the plain folk of Harlem and, with less intensity and sophistication, Kansas. “The ordinary Negroes”, Hughes tells no in the Big Sea, “had not heard of the Negro Renaissance. And if they had, it raised their wages any”. Ordinary folk used religion, music humor and language to cope with adversity than their counterparts (129).

The Africans are emotionally depleted by the traumas, which triggered their involuntary exile. What they can do is nothing but brush the past in order to build a new future.

## Chapter – Three

### Textual Analysis of *Jazz* and *Beloved*

#### i. Summary of *Jazz*

The novel begins in the midst of the love triangle between Violet, Joe and Dorcas. Violet and Joe are unhappily married and living together in an apartment in Harlem when Joe falls in love with a seventeen-year old girl named Dorcas. Joe and Dorcas meet when Joe comes to Dorcas's aunt's house to sell ladies cosmetics, and their affair lasts from October of 1925 to the first of January 1926, Joe talks with Malvonne, an upstairs neighbor, and negotiates the use of her empty apartment so that he and Dorcas can meet there. This arrangement continues for several months and neither Violet nor Alice Manfred, Dorcas's aunt, have any knowledge of the affair.

Although Joe brings Dorcas presents every time they meet, eventually Dorcas begins to get tired of the older man and starts going out with younger boys, attending parties with her best friend Felice, and making up excuses so as not to meet with Joe. When Joe finally confronts Dorcas about this, she cruelly tells him that he makes her sick and that he should not bother her any more. Dorcas prefers the attentions of a popular and good looking youngman named Acton with whom she dances at a party on New Year's Day. Dorcas knows that Joe has not gotten over her and will come looking for her, so he is only half-surprised when he tracks her down at the party and sees her dancing with Acton. Joe, however, brings a gun and shoots Dorcas in the

shoulder. Dorcas tell the alarmed witness not to call an ambulance, even though she would survive if she allowed some one to help her, and she consequently bleeds to death. Everyone knows that Joe shot Dorcas and rumor of their affair begins to spread in the community after the young girl's death. Violet appears unexpectedly at Dorcas' open-casket funeral and slaces Dorcas's face with a knife several weeks later, she begins to visit Dorcas's mourning aunt, Alice Manfred, and the two women begin to develop a friendship as a result of their shared tragedy. In the spring, Joe mourns Dorcas's death and he and violet patch things up in their relationship, mediated in part by their new friendship with Dorcas's best friend, Felice. As the narrator tells the story of violet, Joe, and Dorcas in Harlem she follows a stream of associations and digressive details to create a complex web of people, places, and stories extending back to the late nineteenth century. Violet grew up in a poor household in Virginia with her mother Rose Dear. Her grandmother, True Belle, came from Baltimore to live with them when violet's father abandoned the family. Soon afterwards violet's mother, Rose Dear committed suicide by throwing herself into a well. Joe also grew up in Virginia. He was orphaned at birth and raised by adoptive parents. As a young man he wondered about his birth mother's identity and tied on several occasions to find her his mentor, a hunter named Henry Les Troy and called "Hunters Hunter", hinted to Joe that his mother was the local mystery, a crazy homeless rover named wild. When Joe finally tracked wild down in the woods he asked her to confirm somehow that she was indeed his mother. Wild responded with a hand gesture that Joe

could not make out leaving him to question his own identity. Joe and violet met in a town called Palestine where they were working the fields. They got married and moved to Harlem, which is referred to simply as "the city" through out the novel.

In the course of telling Joe and violet's story, the narrator recounts the stories of periphery characters such as Vera Louise Gray and her son Golden Gray. The narrator shows the connections between the characters, focusing on the perspectives and experiences of individuals and sometimes allowing them to narrate their stories in their own words. Golden Gray, the mixed race child of a white woman, Vera Louise, and a black slave, Henry Les Troy, was raised by his mother and True Belle in Baltimore. He believed all his life that he was a white adopted orphan, but when True Belle told him the truth about his father, he set out for Virginia to confront Henry Les Troy. When he arrived near Vienna, Virginia, Golden Gray spotted wild hiding alongside the road. When she turned quickly and knocked herself unconscious, he decided to take her with him to his father's home. Wild was very pregnant and gave birth to Joe when they arrived at Henry Les Troy's house. Golden Gray never returned to Baltimore after this incident but lived with wild in the woods, totally apart from civilization. These stories about Harlem and Virginia are recapitulated and fleshed out several times throughout the novel in flashbacks and digressions.

## **ii. Summary of *Beloved***

*Beloved* begins in 1873 in Cincinnati, Ohio, where Sethe, a former slave, has been living with her eighteen-year-old daughter Denver.

Sethe's mother-in-law, Baby Suggs, lived with them until her death eight years earlier. Just before Baby Sugg's death, Sethe's two sons, Howard and Buglar, ran away. Sethe believes they fled because of the malevolent presence of an abusive ghost that has haunted their house at 124 Bluestone Road for years. Denver, however, likes the ghost, which everyone believes to be the spirit of her dead sister.

One the day the novel begins, Paul D, whom Sethe has not seen since they worked together on Mr. Garner's Sweet Home plantation in Kentucky approximately twenty years earlier, stops by Sethe's house. His presence resurrects memories that have lain buried in Sethe's mind for almost two decades. From this point on, the story will unfold on two temporal planes. The present in Cincinnati constitutes one plane, while a series of events that took place around twenty years earlier, mostly in Kentucky, constitutes the other. This later plane is accessed and described through the fragmented flashbacks of the major characters. Accordingly, we frequently read these flashbacks several times, sometimes from varying perspectives, with each successive narration of an event adding a little more information to the previous ones. From these fragmented memories, the following story begins to emerge: Sethe, the protagonist, was born in the south to an African mother she never knew. When she is thirteen, she is sold to the Garners, who own Sweet Home and practice a comparatively benevolent kind of slavery. There, the other slaves, who are all men, lust after her but never touch her. Their names are Sixo, Paul D, Paul A, Paul F, and Halle. Sethe chooses to marry Halle, apparently in part because he has proven

generous enough to buy his mother's freedom by hiring himself out on the weekends. Together, Sethe and Halle have two sons, Howard and Buglar, as well as a baby daughter whose name we never learn. When she leaves Sweet Home, she is also pregnant with a fourth child. After the eventual death of the proprietor, Mr. Garner, the widowed Mrs. Garner asks her sadistic, vehemently racist brother-in-law to help her run the farm. He is known to the slaves as schoolteacher, and his oppressive presence makes life on the plantation even more unbearable than it had been unbearable than it had been before. The slaves decide to run.

School teacher and his nephews anticipate the slaves' escape, however, and capture Paul D and Sixo. Schoolteacher kills Sixo and brings Paul D back to Sweet Home, where Paul D sees Sethe for what he believes will be the last time. She is still intent on running, having already sent her children ahead to her mother-in-law Baby Sngg's house in Cincinnati. Invigorated by the recent capture, school teacher's nephews seize Sethe in the barn and violate her stealing the milk her body is storing for her infant daughter. Unbeknownst to Sethe, Halle is watching the event from a loft above her, where he lies frozen with horror. Afterward, Halle goes mad: Paul D sees him sitting by a churn with butter slathered all over his face. Paul D, meanwhile, is forced to suffer the indignity of wearing an iron bit in his mouth.

When school teacher finds out that Sethe has reported his and his nephews' misdeeds to Mrs. Garner, he has her whipped severely, despite the fact that she is pregnant. Swollen and scarred, Sethe

nevertheless runs away, but along the way she collapses from exhaustion in a forest. A white girl, Amy Denver, finds her and nurses her back to health. When Amy later helps Sethe deliver her baby in a boat, Sethe names this second daughter Denver after the girl who helped her. Sethe receives further help from Stamp Paid, who rows her across the Ohio River to Baby Suggs's house. Baby Suggs cleans Sethe up before allowing her to see her three older children.

Sethe spends twenty-eight wonderful days in Cincinnati, where Baby Suggs serves as an unofficial preacher to the black community. On the last day, however, a school teacher comes for Sethe to take her and her children back to Sweet Home. Rather than surrender her children to a life of dehumanizing slavery, she flees with them to the woodshed and tries to kill them only the third child, her older daughter, dies, her throat having been cut with a handsaw by Sethe. Sethe later arranges for the baby's headstone to be carved with the word "Beloved." The sheriff takes Sethe and Denver to jail, but a group of white abolitionists, led by the Bodwins, fights for her release. Sethe returns to the house at 124, where Baby Suggs has sunk into a deep depression. The community shuns the house, and the family continues to live in isolation.

Meanwhile, Paul D has endured torturous experiences in a chain gang in Georgia, where he was sent after trying to kill Brandywine, a slave owner to whom he was sold by schoolteacher. His traumatic experiences have caused him to lock away his memories emotions, and ability to love in the "tin tobacco box" of his heart. One day, a fortuitous rainstorm allows Paul D and the other chain gang members

to escape. He travels northward by following the blossoming spring flowers. Years later, he ends up on Sethe's porch in Cincinnati.

Paul D's arrival at 124 commences the series of events taking place in the present time frame. Prior to moving in, Paul D chases the house's resident ghost away which makes the already lonely Denver resent him from the start. Sethe and Paul D look forward to a promising future together, until one day, on their way home from a carnival, they encounter a strange young woman sleeping near the steps of 124. Most of characters believe that the woman who calls herself Beloved is the embodied spirit of Sethe's dead daughter, and the novel provides a wealth of evidence supporting this interpretation. Denver develops an obsessive attachment to Beloved, and Beloved's attachment to Sethe is equally if not more intense. Paul D and Beloved hate each other and Beloved controls Paul D by moving him around the house like a rag doll and by seducing him against his will.

When Paul D learns the story of Sethe's "rough choice" – her infanticide—he leaves 124 and begins sleeping in the basement of the local church. In his absence Sethe and Beloved's relationship becomes more intense and exclusive. Beloved grows increasingly abusive, manipulative, and parasitic, and Sethe is obsessed with satisfying Beloved's demands and making her understand why she murdered her. Worried by the way her mother is wasting a way, Denver leaves the premises of 124 for the first time in twenty years in order to seek help from lady Jones, her former teacher. The community provides the family with food and eventually organizes under the leadership of Ella,

a woman who had worked on the Underground Railroad and helped with Sethe's escape, in order to exorcise Beloved from 124. When they arrive at Sethe's house, they see Sethe on the porch with Beloved, who stands smiling at them, naked and pregnant Mr. Bodwin, who has come to 124 to take Denver to her new job, arrives at the house. Mistaking him for schoolteacher, Sethe runs at Mr. Bodwin with an ice pick. She is restrained, but in the confusion Beloved disappears, never to return. Afterward Paul D comes back to Sethe, who has retreated to Baby Suggs's bed to die. Mourning Beloved, Sethe laments, "she was my best thing" but Paul D replies, "You your best thing, Sethe". The novel then ends with a warning that "[t]his is not a story to pass on." The town, and even the residents of 124, have forgotten Beloved "[i] like an unpleasant dream during a troubling sleep."

### **iii. Analysis of *Jazz* and *Beloved***

Morrison's *Jazz* and *Beloved* are full of cultural loss and dislocation. Her lament on the "absence of love" has both broadened and deepened in its expression during the course of her fiction, coming to represent the experience of loss felt not only by individuals who have been separated from parents, spouses, lovers, or children, but by an entire group whose members have been scarred, directly or indirectly by a legacy of cultural dislocation, personal dispossession, and emotional dismemberment. As the character Baby Suggs expresses it in *Beloved*, "Not a house in the country ain't packed to its rafters with some dead Negro's grief" (5). Morrison's term "absence of love" represents the loss because individuals experience it not merely as absence- something

missing—but as lack that continues to occupy a palpable emotional space: the presence of absence.

Loss of parents during early childhood gives rise not only to separation anxiety and grief but to processes of mourning in which aggression, the function of which is to achieve reunion, plays a major part. Mourning signifies the emotional and psychological process whereby the bereaved gradually undoes the psychological bounds that bound him to the deceased, usually experienced by an individual in response to the loss through death or separation from a person to whom he or she is deeply emotionally attached. Its typical emotional characteristics are a combination of anger and sorrow including despair, depression, and denial, may also contribute. If we believe that the meaning of life can only be defined in the particular experience of each individual, we can not at the same time treat that experience as indifferent- uprooting people from their homes, disrupting their relationships with impatiently facile exhortations to adaptability such change implies loss and these losses must be grieved for unless life is meaningless anyway. Thus the management of change depends upon our ability to articulate the process of grieving.

In *Jazz* Morrison captures about the essential relationship between Jazz and blues music. The narrating voice conveys the literary counterpart of the blues lament, while the narrative structure transmits the literary equivalent of the variations and riffs of Jazz. In contrast to the expressed early optimism about city life as an invitation to opportunity and freedom, the narrating voice admits late in *Jazz* that the city is like

the voice itself inscrutable: unreliable, beneath the surface are other stories that may contradict the ones we have been told. Additionally as eventually becomes clear, the narrating voice is itself distracted, as much as are the people it observes, by the enticements of urban life at the dawn of a new age:

Round and round about the town. That's the way the city spins you. Makes you do what it wants, go where the laid-out roads say to. All the while letting you think you're free . . . you can not get off the track a city lays for you. Whatever happens, whether you get rich or stay poor, ruin your health or like to old age, you always end up back where you started: hungry for the one thing everybody loses . . . young loving. (120)

The voice's inventions thus also circle back, like the city's enmeshing circular tracks to Morrison's central blues theme of "love or its absence." The theme of loss in *Jazz* is expressed not only by reference to the blues lament, with its emphasis on lost love, but also formally. Morrison's techniques in *Jazz* is to show the connection between modernism and Jazz age rather ironic reminder. Her narrative inventiveness seems to owe less to her literary predecessors than to the improvisational strategies of Jazz, Morrison described her affinity, for the structural openness of this musical form, explaining that Jazz always keeps you on the edge. There is no final chord. There may be a long chord but no final chord. And it agitates you there is always something else that you want from the music.

In *Beloved*, baby suggs recalls her slave name as jenny whitlow; only as Mr. Garner delivers her into freedom can she turn and ask him, 'Why you all call me jenny?' Her lack of a name- 'Nothing . . . ? I don't call myself nothing' (141) - is testament to the 'desolated center where the self that was no self made its home (140). Baby suggs has no 'self' because she has no form of reference by which to establish one, no family, no children, no context: 'sad as it was that she did not know where her children were buried or what they looked like, if alive, fact was she knew more about them than she knew about herself, having never had the map to discover what she was like (104).

Jazz begins in the midst of the love triangle between violet, Joe and Dorcas. Violet and Joe are unhappily married and living together in an apartment in Harlem when Joe falls in love with a seventeen-year girl named Dorcas. Joe kills the girl Dorcas as he confronts her dancing with Action at a party. Complexity arises after the incident as shown:

Joe Trace, there was never anyone to prosecute him because nobody actually saw him do it, and the dead girl's aunt did not want to throw money to helpless lawyers or laughing cops when she knew the expense would not improve anything. Besides, she found out that the man who killed her niece cried all day and for him and for violet that is as bad as jail (4).

In this sense nothing can be done except lamentation in such situation. After the incident violet and Joe Trace's apartment becomes as valueless as birdcages wrapped in cloth "But up there on Lenox, in

violate and Joe Trace's apartment, the rooms are like the empty bird cages a wrapped in cloth" (11). Both Joe and violet could not enjoy the nights as earlier. "Such restless nights make them sleep late, and violet has to hurry to get a meal prepared before getting ready for her round of heads" (13). Violet becomes so silent that it creates depression in Joe as it is stated:

Less excusable than a way toward mouth is an independent hand that can find in a parrot's cage a knife lost for weeks. Violet is still as well as silent over time her silence annoys her husband, then puzzle him and finally depresses him. He is married to a woman who speaks mainly to her birds. One of whom answers back: "I love you". (24)

Morrison has shown similar type of situation in *Beloved* as well. Sethe is living with her daughter Denver in 124 Bluestone which is spiteful and the house does not have a number. Paul D. visits the house which is haunted by a ghost or spirit of Beloved. This house becomes the symbol of "Negro's grief" (5). The blacks are compelled to live in a narrow world with the heart full of grief. Denver's sense of freedom is shown in "Denver sat down on the bottom step. There was nowhere else gracefully to go" (13). On the one hand Denver has to look after her mother and on the other hand she can go nowhere due to white domination, when Paul D. appears there Sethe feels some sort of relief as Paul D. shares his feelings and asks her problems. Paul D. sings a piece of song which gives the hint of blacks hardships and poverty and sense of loss or identity crisis. Paul D. sings:

Little rice, little bean,  
No meat in between.  
Hard work ain't easy,  
Dry bread ain't greasy. (40)

Thus, Paul D. gives the hint that black people have to do hard labour with little food and facilities.

Sethe and Paul D. have met each other after a long gap when they had left sweet home plantation in Kentucky. In this meeting Paul D. shows his little acquaintance towards Sethe as they have been separated for a long gap: Paul D. made a few acquaintances; spoke to them about what work he might find. Sethe returned the smiles she got. Denver was swaying with delight. And on the way home, although leading them now, the shadows of three people still held hands. (49)

So, Sethe remained deserted from Halle and she also had not met Paul D. for more than 18 years after leaving sweet Home plantation. Sethe's smile was hidden during the gap though she thinks she may get some sort of relief and delight from Paul D. The arrival of Beloved in 124 Bluestone makes everyone give their different reactions to her. Denver is excited to have a companion. Sethe feels tender towards the young woman. Paul D. feels uneasy about Beloved. She does not give her last name to him. The dog named Here Boy also refuses to come to the

house as it becomes strange to him. The following lines prove the sense of identity crisis of the blacks:

"Sethe believed it was a recovering body's need after an illness – for quick strength. But it was need that went on and on into glowing health because Beloved did not go anywhere. There did not seem any place for her to go" (55).

Not only before death but also even after death black people have been dislocated and suffered. This can be proved through the condition of Beloved as mentioned:

This girl Beloved, homeless and without people, beat all, though he could not say exacting why, considering the colored people he had run into during the last twenty years. During, before and after the war he had seen Negroes so stunned, or hungry, or tired or bereft it was a wonder they recalled or said anything who, like him, had hidden in caves and fought owls for food; she is good; stole from pigs; who, like him, slept in trees in the day and walked by night; who, like him, had buried themselves in slop and jumped in wells to avoid regulators, raiders, paterollers, veterans, hill men, posses and moneymakers. (66)

Thus, Beloved seems to be isolated, helpless and homeless. There is no chance to enjoy with prestige even for the spirit of the blacks in American society.

In *Jazz*, like in the novel *Beloved*, most of the characters have been dislocated in their own culture. Dislocation can be seen physically as well as spiritually. At least Violet Trace and Dorcas Manfred had actual parents during childhood; Violet's husband, Joe Trace, never did. Abandoned by his mother at birth and raised by another family, he gave himself a surname that retains the story of the parents who "disappeared without a trace" (124); he reaches the age of fifty still trying to fill the "inside nothing" (37). In this way, sense of loss is always there in the mind of Afro-Americans. Sense of completion is ever needed but everything what they get is just like broken pieces of mirror, such broken images are reflected even in their language, music and songs. So, the novel *Jazz* is full of broken images. Jazz and blues are also the music of broken images of the blacks. Morrison gives the description of the city i.e. Harlem with different broken images. She says:

Blind men thrum and hum in the soft air as they inch steadily down the walk. They don't want to stand near and compete with the old uncles positioning themselves in the middle of the block to play a six-string guitar, Blues man. Black and bluesman. Black therefore blue man. Everybody knows your name. Where – did – she – go – and – why man. So - lonesome – I – could – die man. (119)

The above mentioned lines help us to know the city Harlem is the city full of loss and fragmented images. The sentences are grammatically incomplete and the description is of handicapped as well as blacks

dominated by the whites. The writer tries to connect the voice of such people with the music blues.

More literally than Felice and like her younger rival Dorcas, violet Trace was orphaned during adolescence. Her "phantom father" (100) deserted his family to seek his fortune, leaving his wife, Rose Dear, to raise their five younger daughters. When Rose Dear was brutally dispossessed from her sharecropper's hut, she moved her family to an abandoned shack. Before long, however, she found her hardscrabble life unendurable and, broken in spirit, drowned herself in the well when violet was 20, leaving her daughters in the care of their grandmother, True Belle. Violet was convinced by her mother's suffering and despair that she never wanted children of her own, several miscarriages and many years later, the inner emptiness produced by that decision haunts her in the form of a "mother hunger" so intense that she sleeps with dolls and even takes a baby from a carriage. She imagines her husband's lover Dorcas as "a girl young enough to be that [lost] daughter of her failed pregnancies and, torn between regarding her as "the woman who took the man, or the daughter who fled her womb" (108-109), at Dorcas's funeral she finally acts out her anguish by mutilating the dead girl's face. The narrator, regarding violet's subsequent effort to learn as much as she can about Dorcas, acerbically comment, "May be she thought she could solve the mystery of love that way. Good luck and let me know" (5). Later, the voice speculates that violet's violent action can be understood as "a crooked kind of mourning for a rival young enough to be a daughter" (111).

White domination creates dark, small and narrow world which is hot and dry and it is very different to be existed there. Such situation is shown in the novel *Beloved* when Beloved tells her identity to her sister Denver "In the dark my name is Beloved" (75). She further adds, "I'm small in that place. I'm like this here." Denver wants to know more and to fulfill her curiosity Beloved says, "Hot. Nothing to breathe down there and no room to move in" (75). Thus, Beloved proves herself to be dislocated and suffered in white society even after her death.

Morrison thinks that music and song is the best way to get relief from pain and sufferings. Music makes all human beings equal. There is no discrimination in music. Amy Denver is white girl and she helps Sethe while delivering Denver in a boat. Though she is white, she has to be busy all day and whenever she is free she sings such songs:

When the busy day is done  
And my weary little one  
Rocketh gently to and fro;  
When the night winds softly blow,  
And the crickets in the glen  
Chirp and chirp and chirp again;  
Where, pon the haunted green  
Fairies dance around their queen,  
Then from yonder misty skies  
Cometh Lady Button Eyes. (81)

There are no such lines of songs in the novel *Jazz* but this whole novel is the collection of the pieces of songs. Because of the fragmented feelings of the blacks Morrison has not given full lines of songs.

The depiction of loss is further shown in different ways in *Jazz*. If Joe Trace is in any way reborn, however, it is in an ironic sense, precipitating an even deeper need; the trial that leads him to his mother's primitive burrow becomes emotionally entangled with the trial that leads to his young lover. The "little half moons [that] clustered under [Dorcas's] cheek bones like faint hoofmarks" (130) signal her "wild" animal link to Joe's mother, wild. Dorcas temporarily occupies the empty "inside nothing" space in Joe's heart, becoming the "Beloved" in a way that temporarily assuages the unappeased hunger he feels for the mother who abandoned him at birth. Telling Dorcas details of his earlier life that he has never before shared with another person, he explains that she is the central figure in his vision of paradise: the reason Adam ate the apple and its core. That when he left Eden, he left a rich man. Not only did he have Eve, but he had the taste of the first apple in the world in his mouth for the rest of his life. The very first to know what it was like. To bite it, bite it down. Hear the crunch and let the red peeling break his heart. You looked at me then like you knew me, and I thought it really was Eden ... (133)

The suggestive meanings of paradise obviously continue to interest Morrison, as demonstrated by the novel that immediately follows *Jazz*, entitled *paradise*. The wish/longing for a vanished Eden or paradise is a nostalgic fantasy that encodes our human knowledge of the inevitable

original loss at the individual level: separation from infantile bliss. For actual orphans like Joe Trace, there never could have been a true interlude of infantile bliss experienced as unconditional love; nonetheless, the longing to "recover" something that never existed in the first place endures as an emotionally powerful imperative.

Understood psychoanalytically, the figure of the mother "remembered" from infancy is not a true memory but a fantasy of her, an imago—"a kind of stereotyped mental picture that forms in the unconscious, reflecting not only real experiences" but also other early experiences that occur before a child's emotional differentiation from its mother and that are thus psychologically attributed to her.

In *Jazz*, Joe Trace's fantasy of his irrecoverably lost mother fuels a need so insistent that, even into middle age, it demands an outlet for its expression. Soon after Joe discovers wild's dwelling among the rocks, he calls, "But where is she?" (184). Following a significant pause (produced by the white space of a chapter break), the response – "There she is" (187) – reveals Morrison's consummate narrative sleight of hand as well as her psychological compass: the ambiguous pronoun no longer refers to Joe Trace's mother but to his young lover, Dorcas.

Psychologically, the blank spaces or rests might be said to signify the presence of absence: the space once occupied by the lost love object – originally the mother whose emotional presence or absence profoundly marks subsequent "figures" in intimate relationships. That figure itself becomes imaginatively "transfigured" as Morrison continues to plumb more deeply – in both psychological and cultural terms – what might

be called the Beloved imago that figure who signifies the image of idealized love, retained despite – or, more accurately, because of – its absence through loss or death. Indeed, what she refers to as the "dead girl" in *Jazz*. As Morrison herself has explained, I call her Beloved so that I can filter all these confrontations and questions that she has in that situation [ the circumstances of her death and reappearance in Beloved] . . . and then to extend her life . . . her search, her quest, all the way through as long as I care to go, into the twenties where it switches to this other girl [ Dorcas, in *Jazz*].

To the extent that a child's earliest primary attachment has been disrupted or severed, he or she (as well as the adult whose psychological reality has been shaped by those (critical childhood experiences) yearns for a substitute who might replace the absent Beloved, who might fill the empty emotional space that persists in the form of unresolved mourning. A complication of mourning in which the person who has experienced a loss "mislocates" the absent figure in some other figure in his or her life, regarding that person as "in certain respects a substitute for someone lost, "but for whom ultimately no substitute can suffice (161). Thus, Morrison's Joe Trace, "a long way from ... Eden" (180) in every sense, and driven by the feeling that he associates with his unsuccessful search for his mother, follow the trail from "where is she?" to "There she is" - - that is, from his absent mother in the woods to his absenting – herself young lover in the city. As he soliloquizes:

In this world the best thing, the only thing, is to find the trial and stick to it. I tracked my mother in Virginia and it led me right to her, and I tracked Dorcas from borough to borough ... [I] the trial speaks, no matter what's in the way, you can find yourself in a crowded room aiming a bullet at her heart, never mind it's the heart you can't live without.

(130)

Locating Dorcas at a Jazz party in the city, Joe is angered when he realizes that she prefers a younger man named Acton. She tells Joe in words that threaten the vulnerable space of his "inside nothing" – "I don't want you inside me. I don't want you beside me" (189). As if to punish the original Beloved whose unendurable abandonment is about to be repeated, Joe shoots her emotional surrogate, Dorcas, who bleeds to death from the wound. Later, when Dorcas's friend Felice asks Joe, "why'd you shoot at her if you loved her?" Joe replies, with a candor that makes explicit the deficiency that has stunted his emotional life, "scared. Didn't know how to love anybody" (213).

Another orphan's story in *Jazz*, one that resonates like a blues lament with Joe Trace's story and amplifies its emotional meaning, is the narratively self-contained story of Golden Gray. The most enigmatic character of the narrative, Golden Gray is a young man of an earlier time who also seeks an unknown and radically absent parent. The son of a "phantom father" who never knew of his paternity and a white woman who never acknowledged her motherhood, he is also, figuratively, the child of a black slave woman who was obliged to

relinquish her own children in order to become a surrogate mother for the mulatto boy with beautiful golden skin and hair.

Blacks have the sense of loss and identity crisis due to white domination. They take them as meaningless object. Such feelings is shown in *Beloved* as:

"Breakfast? Want some breakfast, nigger?"

"Yes, Sir"

"Hungry, nigger?"

"Yes, Sir"

"Here you go." (108)

when Paul D stays in jail with his friends they have to bear the cruelties and misbehave by the whites. It was the first sound other than "Yes, Sir" a Blackman was allowed to speak each morning, and the lead chain gave it everything he had. The black had to sing the songs of bosses and masters and misses; of mules and dogs and the shamelessness of life. They call the blacks with such names as if they don't have any name. loss and identity crisis can be felt not only in their activities but also in the names of the blacks in both novels.

When Golden Gray reaches at the age of eighteen, he learns the identity of his father from the woman who "lied to him about practically everything including the question of whether she was his owner, his mother or a kindly neighbor" (143). Tracking his father in the same Virginia woods in which, many years later, Joe trace attempts to track his mother, Golden Gray finds the cabin of the woodsman Henry Les

Troy, Awaiting the arrival of the man reputed to be his father, he describes his feelings regarding his missing parent as an amputee might describe his experience of a phantom limb, in language that most explicitly articulates the "inside nothing" produced by a child's experience of abandonment or radical estrangement from a parent:

Only now ... that I know I have a father, do I feel his absence: the place where he should have been and was not. Before, I thought everybody was one armed, like me. Now I feel the surgery .... I don't need the arm. But I do need to know what it could have been like to have had it. It's a phantom I have to behold and be held by .... I will locate it so the severed part can remember the snatch, the slice of its disfigurement. (158-59)

Here, Morrison recapitulates the imagery of dismemberment that occurs throughout her fiction as trope for the profound damages inflicted on African Americans by the emotional dismemberments of slavery and its aftermath. Remembering – "remembering" (Morrison's own play on the word) – is a crucial compensatory process that might begin to ameliorate the pain of literal and figurative, individual and communal, severances that cumulatively persist as cultural mourning.

Significantly, Golden Gray's articulation of the "presence of absence" occurs just before another birth; the pregnant woman known only as wild, whom Golden Gray has found injured on the road and taken to his putative father's cabin, gives birth to a son. Just as Golden Gray's father rejects his son, so does this mother reject her infant. Their

complementary refusals bind the several stories of abandoned children and lost parents that compose the narrative of *Jazz*, while also hinting at an explanation for the absent mother later sought by Joe Trace.

Morrison, pointing out that "the dates are the same" for the disappearance of Sethe's daughter at the end of *Beloved* and the birth of Joe Trace in *Jazz*, has explained that "wild is a kind of Beloved" Towards the end of *Beloved*, it is not clearly stated that Beloved is either a ghost who has been exorcised or she's a real person [who is] pregnant by Paul D, who run away, ending up in Virginia, which is right next to Ohio.

Morrison's provocative suggestion that wild may be both Joe Trace's mother and "a kind of Beloved" underscores the encompassing psychological truth embodied in that figure, she represents not only the lost/dead daughter named by her bereaved slave mother who took her child's life in order to "save" it but, more broadly, the Beloved imago – the vanished love- object, the missing or lost half of the original parent-child bond – that persists psychologically as an idealized, haunting, disembodied/embodied presence. Although by the end of *Jazz* Joe Trace refuses full responsibility for Dorcas's death and although violet accept his attempts at reconciliation, the "trace" of loss remains ineradicable.

In *Beloved* Paul D, explains that he feels his manhood has been compromised by his days of slavery. Like Paul D some sweet Home men were lost, some were sold but never returned:

The last of the Sweet Home men, so named and called by one who would know, believed it. The other four believed it too, once, but they were long gone. The sold one never returned, the lost one never found. One, he knew, was dead for sure: one he hoped was, because butter and clabber was no life or reason to live it. He grew up thinking that, of all the Blacks in Kentucky, only the five of them were men.  
(125)

So, blacks are treated just like valueless objects and the whites think that black people are not human beings. Blacks have less opportunities and facilities and they have heavy worlds to be done by which they are tired and speak less which can be shown in the conversation of Sethe and her daughter:

"Don't tell me we're out of soap".

"No, ma'am"

"All right now. I'm through, Talking makes me tired"

"Yes, ma'am".

"And thank you, Sethe."

"Yes, ma'am". (195)

There were many problems of the women of 124 Bluestone. It was impossible to express their feelings, pains and sufferings in some words and single sentences.

"Almost Mixed in with the voices surrounding the house, recognizable but undecipherable to stamp paid, were the thoughts of the women of 124, unspeakable thoughts, unspoken" (199).

It shows blacks have to express many things, they have so many broken images which are unspeakable.

In *Beloved*, Sethe expresses her deep love towards Beloved though she herself killed her she says:

Beloved

You are my sister

You are my daughter

You are my face; you are me

I have found you again, you have come back to me

You are my Beloved

You are mine

You are mine

You are mine (216)

The given lines make us to be aware with the whites. Physical disappearance or loss is nothing for the blacks. The intimacy among the blacks continues even after their death Sethe's intention of killing Beloved is to save her from slavery. She thinks slavery is more cruel than death. So she killed her daughter. The repetition of the word "mine" in the monologues of Sethe, Denver, and *Beloved* suggests exactly this sort of possession and incorporation of the other as an

object. “Mine” is the haunting word that Stamp Paid hears surrounding Sethe’s house in ghostly whispers and is stressed again in a lyrical section following *Beloved’s* unpunctuated monologue. In this section the voice of *Beloved*, Sethe, and Denver are joined (the identity of the speaker in each line is sometimes unclear) while at the same time each voice remains essentially isolated. This form of possessing and objectifying the other, however, cannot satisfy – it imprisons the self within its own devouring omnipotence, its own narcissism. True satisfaction or joy can only be achieved through “mutual recognition” between self and other, between two subjects or selves.

At last, how Sethe and Denver are departed from Beloved is shown like this:

Standing alone on the porch, Beloved is smiling. But now her hand is empty. Sethe is running away from her, running, and she feels the emptiness in the hand Sethe has been holding. Now she is running into the faces of the people out there, joining them and leaving Beloved behind. Alone. Again. Then Denver, running too. Away from her to the pile of people out there. They make a hill, A hill of black people, falling. (162)

So black society is full of fragmentation, separation, loneliness and emptiness which is experienced through the role of different characters like Sethe, Beloved, Denver, Paul D and so on.

Paul D returns to 124 Bluestone, for he has heard that Beloved is gone.

His condition is shown through the following poetic lines:

Bare feet and chamomile sap

Took off my shoes; took off my hat

Bare feet and chamomile sap

Gimme back my shoes; gimmeback my hat

Lay my head on a potato sack,

Devil sneak up behind my back

Steam engine got a lonesome whine;

Love that woman till you go stone blind.

Stone blind; stone blind.

Sweet Home gal make you lose your mind. (163)

Thus, the above intentioned lives give the clear glimpse of black society and the people. Slavery is outcome of racial discrimination.

And poverty is the major enemy of the black society. Black people lose their creative mind due to poverty. In this way sense of loss is seen in their food, costumes, songs, religion and so on.

Morrison has shown the line between *Beloved* and *Jazz* as both novels are full of loss. The theme of these both novels is connected with the theme of blues and Jazz music. Thus, naming and giving still another form to the lost Beloved as the symbolic figure and transfiguration of cultural mourning, Morrison illuminates the links and resonances between emotional/psychological and aesthetic/cultural losses. Her

complex strategy bridges figurative correspondences between musical and narrative forms; from the blues she adapts the call-and-response pattern and the lyrical lament for "the heart you can't live without"; from Jazz, she adapts notions of improvisation and unpredictability. Thus herself "appropriating" musical techniques for literary purposes, she has devised a narrative design that captures both the voices we hear through it and the distinctive cultural moment in which it is set. simultaneously re-envisioning the historical period and re-appropriating its musical creations, *Jazz* sings the blues and reclaims Jazz celebrating, the central contribution of these musical forms to a vital era of African-American and white cultural history. Moreover, Morrison's "call" demands her readers' response: to acknowledge the profound psychological and cultural losses on which those aesthetic expressions are predicated.

## Chapter – Four

### Conclusion

The novels *Jazz* and *Beloved* represent the cultural loss and dislocation of the blacks in American society. Her idea is not only to show the loss but also she is trying to create unique cultural identity through artistic creations and music. The essence of cultural shock is expressed in both novels. Cultural fragmentation can be seen through different broken images. The blacks cannot get satisfaction through their own cultural practices. They lack many things in comparison with the whites such as food, dress, opportunities, homely environment and so on. They have always sense of nostalgia in their mind. They are compelled to exist in the society where there is always loss of identity, loss of happiness, loss of life and loss of liberty. There is always loss of humanity due to white domination. In the eyes of the whites, the blacks are as inferior as non-living things. The whites think that the black have lack of beauty; brotherhood, fraternity and humanity. How can blacks get enjoyments in their society if there is always exploitation of labor, desires and sexuality? Mostly the blacks are exported physically. Mental exploitation can also be seen in artistic creation as the whites dominate the blacks by showing their superiority in each and every fields. Though the whites seem to hate the blacks and their activities, they are afraid of the power or black music, their art and their inner strength. In the novel *Beloved*, the protagonist Sethe faces many obstacles and challenges during the journey of her life in white dominated society. She works hard with her friends Sixo, Paul D., Paul A, Halle and so on

in Sweet Home plantation. They are busy in the farm from day to night. They don't get chance to sleep well. They have to do heavy works. They don't get proper food and dress even for their simple living. After the death of Mr. Garner the slaves want to escape from sweet home plantation but Mrs. Garner tells her brother - in - law to help her run the farm. He becomes more cruel to them. Some of the slaves escape from there to get freedom but Sixo and Paul D are brought back by the schoolteacher and his nephews. Schoolteacher kills Sixo and brings Paul D back to Sweet Home, he sees Sethe there. She is still intent on running and she had already sent her children to her mother-in-law Baby Suggs's house in Cincinnati. Schoolteacher's nephews give unbearable tortures to Sethe. When schoolteacher finds out that Sethe has reported his and his nephews' misdeeds to Mrs. Garner, he has her whipped severely, despite the fact that she is pregnant. Sethe nevertheless runs away and collapses in a forest. It shows the dislocated situation and identity crisis of the blacks. Instead of sending children to slavery she wanted to kill her children as it was better for her rather than staying in slavery. Her sons Howard and Buglar run away but Sethe has been able to kill her daughter Behaved. After this incident Denver and Sethe are sent to jail. When Sethe's house is haunted by the ghost and when they are disturbed then Sethe replies that she has killed her to save from slavery. Then Beloved disappears. Anyway, the bitter experience of the protagonist and other characters becomes the bitter experience of the sense of loss and dislocation of the blacks.

The novel *Jazz* also shows similar situation like loss, fragmentation and dislocation. Only the little difference is that the novel *Jazz* not only gives the glimpse of loss but also it creates optimism as it is related to Jazz and blues music. The protagonist Joe kills his young lover, Dorcas due to sadness and fear. This sadness and fear is the outcome of white domination. His childhood was painful because at a young age, Joe is told that his was adopted and that he mother left him "without a trace". A feeling of abandonment and an uncertainty about his identity plagues Joe from that moment on. He is driven by the sense of depression and identity crisis. His pain is unbearable and Dorcas's death is the outcome of his depression and fragmented feelings. Sense of completion is ever needed but never fulfilled in his life. Violet is so frustrated with Joe that she slashes Dorcas's face at her funeral as she lies in her open casket. She searches for peace and happiness refusing to be a victim. She thinks that Joe has cheated her and started to love Dorcas. It shows violet's sadness and frustration is also the result of her repressed desires. Dorcas lost both of her parents in the same day when her father was killed on a street car and her mother died in a burning building during the East St. Louis riots, which left her orphaned and homeless. Then she goes to the city and starts living with her aunt Alice Manfred. She has always sense of absence in her mind. She is depressed and dislocated after being orphaned and homeless. This is also the effect of white dominated society. Golden Gray's condition also shows the same situation. He is the interracial son of Vera Louise Gary and Henry Les Troy. He is the result of a forbidden love between a white woman and

black man with his Golden curls and light skin, Golden looks completely white and he is raised to believe that he is so. His mother does not claim him as her own but says that he was adopted. When his nurse, True Belle, tells him the truth of his parentage Golden's sense of his own identity is destroyed. He sets out to hunt down and kills his father, because he assumes that the Blackman violated his mother.

In this way the novel *Jazz* also talks about loss and dislocated condition of black community.

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## **Abstract**

Toni Morrison exposes injustices and restlessness felt by the black people through *Jazz* and *Beloved*. She also tries to create unique cultural identity in black community. Her characters who feel themselves being victimized in white dominated society struggle hard for new identity challenging the system of segregation and slavery. Both the protagonists Joe and Sethe in *Jazz* and *Beloved* respectively express their repressed desires by killing Dorcas and Beloved due to fear, suspicion and frustration created by white dominated society. Such situation leads to different types of loss. Morrison does not lament only in such situation but she is hope full that there will be the creation of distinct identity through the music and art. Killing is not just loss but it is also an art of challenging dogmatic concepts of whites which is shown in both novels.

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Sense of Cultural loss in Morrison's *Jazz and Beloved***

**A thesis submitted to the Central Department of English  
In the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English**

**By**

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**Chapter – Four**

## Conclusion

*Jazz* and *Beloved* represent the cultural loss and dislocation of the blacks in American society. Her idea is not only to show the loss but also she is trying to create unique cultural identity through artistic creations and music. The essence of cultural shock is expressed in both novels. Cultural fragmentation can be seen through different broken images. The fragmentation and loss can be seen in different activities such as use of language while communicating each other, food, costumes, opportunities, homely environment, use of gesture, insecured situation, absence of family members, homelessness situation and so on.

In *Beloved* most of the characters including the protagonist Sethe struggle a lot for their survival. Through they struggle they don't get security and satisfaction. Sethe and other characters like Paul D, Paul A, Halle, Sixo work in Sweet Home Plantation at Mr. Garner's. They are not getting proper food, dress and wages. They live there like a bird in a cage. They don't get freedom for their meaningful life. They don't give security for their life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. They get beating, rape, punishment again and again. Sethe kills her daughter Beloved to give spiritual salvation to her daughter. Sethe gets whipped from the schoolteacher when she tells about the misdeeds of his and his nephews' to Mars. Garner, Sethe then runs away and collapses in a forest. It shows the dislocated situation and identity crisis of the blacks. Sethe's sons Howard and Buglar run away when Sethe wants to kill them. They run away due to fear of death. In this sense fear becomes the key of the loss of body and identity. They run away due to fear and the main cause of the creation of fear is white domination. The blacks don't get homely

environment under the white domination. Denver and Sethe are sent to jail after Sethe kills Beloved. The whites never think about the problems of the blacks. Instead of sending them to jail they could have tried to find the reason of killing Beloved. Sethe's house is haunted by the ghost. It shows blacks try to search their identity even after their death. When Sethe and Paul D make love them Beloved becomes jealous because she thinks there is no security for her mother and on the other hand Sethe and Paul D think that there will be newness after having sex each other. It will change deserted life into youthful vigor. The use of language by most of the characters is unclear and sentences are short and incomplete. It also shows the sense of loss and fragmentation. The blacks try to express their feelings clearly but they are disturbed by different broken images when they come at the same time while expressing which is experienced in this novel *Beloved*.

Jazz also shows similar situation like loss fragmentation and dislocation. It also creates optimism of new cultural identity like in *Beloved*. *Jazz* is related to Jazz and blues music. The protagonist Joe kills his young lover, Dorcas due to sadness, fear and suspicions created by white society. His childhood was painful because at a young age, Joe is told that he was adopted and that his mother left him "without a trace". A feeling of abandonment and uncertainty about his identity plagues Joe from the moment on. He is driven by the sense of depression and identity crisis. His pain is unbearable and Dorcas's death is the outcome of his depression and fragmented feelings. Violet is so frustrated with Joe that she slashes Dorcas's face at her funeral as she lies in her open casket. She searches for peace and happiness refusing to be a victim. She thinks that Joe has cheated her and started to love Dorcas. It

shows violet's sadness and frustration is also the result of her repressed desires. Dorcas lost both of her parents in the same day when her father was killed on a street car and her mother died in a burning building during the East st. Louis riots, which left her orphaned and homeless. Then she goes to the city and start living with her aunt Alice Manfred. She has always sense of absence in her mind. She is depressed and dislocated after being orphaned and homeless. This is also the effect of white dominated society. Golden Gray's condition also shows the same situation. He is the interracial son of Vera Louise Gray and Henry Les Troy. He is the result of forbidden love between a white woman and black man with his Golden curls and light skin, Golden looks completely white and he is raised to believe that he is so. His mother does not claim him as her own but says that he was adopted. When his nurse, True Belle, tells him the truth of his parentage Golden's sense of his own identity is destroyed. He sets out to hunt down and kills his father, because he assumes that the blackman violated his mother.

In this way, Morrison has woven the fragmented images of the blacks in both novels. She relates such feelings and images with the music Jazz as Jazz is the way of expression of the blacks. Jazz music is such from which blacks get a sort of relief that helps them to create a new cultural identity. Killing of Beloved by her mother in *Beloved* creates spiritual salvation which will create new identity in black community. Similarly, killing of Dorcas by Joe also shows the expression of fear, anger, suspicions and repression.

It shows unless black people get freedom there will always be the loss. So she relates fragmented feelings with music in which there is complete

freedom and music will help to create optimism for the creation of unique cultural identity in black community.

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