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SOCIETAL AND DOMESTIC COLONIALISM IN THE NOVEL OF TONI MORRISON'S
THE BLUEST EYE

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ABSTRACT

The Novel *Bluest Eye* of Toni Morrison records the cultural critique of "Internal or domestic and societal Colonialism". The societal and Domestic Colonialism that has paralyzed the contemporary Afro-Americans. The novel is set in the age-old colonial system of slavery. *The Bluest Eye* is an artistic portrayal of the harsh realities facing Pecola Breedlove. She struggles to make her way through an unforgiving white world. She is lonely who aspires for the Blue Eyes. She believes that the Blue Eyes enable her to stand in the white dominant Society. She imagines that Blue Eyes are what will make her family and friends love her.

Toni Morrison portrays the stories of Afro-American whose bodies and psyches are still influenced and deformed by the racist colonial discourses. Under the influence of white world's enternal values, Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* pathetically believes in her insanity that she has *The Bluest Eyes* in the world, which is a symbol of white people. By picturizing the Afro-American lives, their mind and body continue to be colonized and distorted by white cultural values. Toni Morrison through her observation of internal mind of contemporary Afro-American society, she insists upon the necessity of truly emancipated or post-colonial black identity.

Critics have opined that the issue of internal colonization and decolonizing vision in Morrison' fiction. For example, Eva Iskar views "Morrison's first novel "*The Bluest Eye*" as a text dramatizing "The tragedy of centuries of Black People internalizing negative perceptions constructed by the white oppressors" (Wisker 60).

Toni Morrison shows an interest in authentic black identity throughout in her novel "*The Bluest Eye*". The central character Pecola in "*The Bluest Eye*" wishes to turn white by having the Blue Eyes by avoiding slipping back to negro-hood. Pecola's desire for Blue Eyes most poignantly represents the desire of the colonized to turn white and stand in the position of the oppressor or colonizer. Poutine, the mother of Pecola wishes to turn herself to one of the white actresses on the screen. There are some other characters like Geraldine, Soaphead Church and Helen are the characters who aspire for to turn white but also to avoid slipping back to black hood. By having such kind of white society's tendencies, the above said characters who pathetically internalize white supremacist values and wish to turn white.

In the novel "*The Bluest Eye*" Toni Morrison dramatizes the neo-colonial condition of black people who are influenced and overwhelmed by white images. In consumer culture and as a result, reinserted in to colonial discourses of white / beautiful / civilized and black / ugly / primitive. The Breedlove family represents those black subjects living in the neocolonial condition.

Pecola Breedlove desires for Black Eyes that indicates the colonized mind of black people. Pecola is obsessed with having Blue Eye along with being on the lower rung of the racial hierarchy, her family's poverty, the lack of friends and her very low self esteem that drive Pecola slowly to madness. She lives in the world of fantasy where she had bluer than blue eyes and is the prettiest girl in the world.

The *Bluest Eye* explores not only the issues of race, beauty, poverty, discrimination, abandonment, but also the hardships suffered by African-Americans.

The novel describes the disturbing themes as rape, domestic violence and abject poverty through this novel, Morrison describes the feelings of disgust, anguish, anger and desperation.

The Bluest Eye presents the saga of young black girl Pecola Breedlove, a victim of rape by her father. This act is an indication of home sexual assault by her father. She considers herself ugly, a fact which is unfortunately reiterated by everyone she meets in her young life. In order to conform to the ideal of white beauty, Pecola despises her blackness which leads to the spiraling down of her self-esteem resulting in her madness.

The novel is set in the author's girlhood hometown of Lorain Ohio. Pecola prays for her eyes to turn blue to that she would be beautiful, people would look at her and that her world would be different. Morrison tells an ugly story of an incestuous rape of Pecola by her father, creating a real beauty in the process. The girl's need to be loved takes the doomed form of a yearning for blue eyes. The tragedy in the novel can be directed back to one thing i.e., whiteness as a standard of beauty.

In America the standard is blonde blue-eyes, white skinned with regular features. It is said that blue eyes, blonde hair, fair skin are symbols of beauty valued in the Western countries. She despises herself and feels inferior even in her own eyes. Pecola's mother, Pauline is also warped by her exposure to cultural products standardizing white beauty. Influenced by white images on cultural products, the Black people are repeatedly introduced in to the colonial discourses, justifying inferiority of Black people.

The novel, *The Bluest Eye* produces that cultural products encapsulated with hegemonic white values serve as the powerful "Ideological apparatus" in Althusserian terms, which interpolates black individuals as inferior and "Ugly" subjects. Morrison explains the aged old hegemony that contemporary black individuals internalize racist ideologies. By engaging herself, as a servant in white people's house, Pauline voluntarily accepts the colonial relation of master and slave. The same Pauline she neglects her daughter Pecola. Pecola is rejected by her father and mother and by some black people. This indicates the domestic colonialism. She is discriminated by the white people that is called societal colonialism. Pauline feels her sense of identity as an ideal servant in the white master's household. Pauline blames Pecola for messing the floor. This represents Pauline's colonized mind. It is more violent than Cholly Breedlove's rape of his daughter Pecola. Pecola is exploited by her father and neglected by her mother and marginalized by some black people and discriminated by white civilized superiority. Though this novel Morrison tells the stories of African Americans whose bodies and psyches are still influenced and deformed by racist colonial discourses.

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