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*The Female Gothic Representation in the Fictional  
Contemporary Novel Beloved by Toni Morison*

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## *Dedications*

I dedicate my humble work to the lamps of my life, dear father and lovely mother, my brothers who are my supporters in life Said and Abdelkader, my little sister Jannat and those close to my heart Katie and Lulu. To everyone who stood by me and believed in my abilities and encouraged me to achieve my dream and finally to myself.

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## Abstract

In this research paper, the main attention is focused on the presence of women in literature in general and their touch on Gothic literature in particular. This study led to the selection of the African-American writer Toni Morrison and her famous novel *Beloved* 1978. The purpose is highlighting the gothic fiction as genre and feminine gothic representation in the novel. By examining the female Gothic characteristics in our literary work, we were able to ascertain the changes made to this style of writing as well as the connection between the gothic elements and femininity in *Beloved*. This was made feasible by the fascinating situations and content of the book *Beloved*. The main concern is linking the elements of modern and traditional Gothic, highlighting Morrison's touch in bringing a fictional feminist tool that led to drawing a new style for the contemporary gothic novel. Furthermore, the research paper discusses the supernatural elements in the state and their connection to the past and their impact on the characters and controlling them in the present.

**Key Words:** female gothic, contemporary gothic, ghost, supernatural, traditional gothic.

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*General  
Introduction*

## INTRODUCTION

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Literature provides readers with the ability to experience the world through the eyes of other people, sometimes even inanimate objects. As a result, they serve as a window into how others perceive the world. It is a journey recorded on the pages and driven by the reader's imagination. In addition, literature and gender brings together an introduction and an anthology of literary works that convincingly show how the interests of the sexes relate to the study of literature. In order to get the reader's point across, the gothic novel, for example, uses a mixture of the supernatural, the grotesque, and the funny as its main driving force. Thus, the Gothic has been a particularly comfortable world for women since it has provided a platform for female writers to reclaim history and explore issues like marriage and domestic servitude, the female body, and autonomy, women used gothic literature as a response to physical aggression especially for black females.

As reason for this physical aggression, Painful experiences lived by black Africans peoples they all share the same anguish of loneliness and experienced various forms of segregation, inferiority, dominance, and slavery in the American territory. These events occurred deep inside their hearts and minds, becoming unavoidable nightmares.

Among the black feminist writers, Toni Morrison is set to be a postmodern black woman writer from the South. In most of her works she tackled with women's issues. Moreover, Morrison puts a special emphasis on real life of black people, but more especially on the black women. She published eight books, the fifth of which, *Beloved* (1987), details the tribulations of a slave lady who has been psychologically scarred by years of physical and human torture. While she works to forget the past, its scars and ghosts torment the present.

This research work is a sort of a thematic study of *Beloved* written by the Afro-American writer Tony Morrison, the approach employed in the investigation of the sample novel would be a multidisciplinary approach concerned with the qualitative study of modern



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female Gothic literature and the traditional Gothic. Female Gothic literature will be analyzed as a literary genre, especially in the selection novel Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), and how it employs its elements and the property of linking fantasy to the past and present to construct the idea of mystery, which is among the characteristics of modern gothic literature, and as evidence of the relationship between the mother and the ghost. The focus will be also on haunted house and its significance in the novel and the role of the female ghost within trauma and Flashbacks.

The study aims to explore two different feminist forces presented in the novel, the imaginary power of the female ghost and the power of the main character that lived with the traumas of the past that haunted her and faced the unknown present. In addition, the researcher tries to clarify a new idea that Morrison has made, which is linking two completely different fields from each other and integrating them into one novel and one idea, which is the inclusion of Gothic literature and the feminist touch by using a Gothic feminist element as a main tool in *Beloved*. The gothic feminist element, which is the ghost, contributed to the creation of a strategy and a modern touch by including modern gothic characteristics and feminine elements, that's what Morrison tries to make *Beloved* become a supreme contemporary gothic novel.

Thereby, the objectives are made by trying to answer to the subsequent research questions:

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1. What made Morrison succeeded in joining the female within the gothic fiction to voice out women's issues relying on female ghost as main element of gothic in *Beloved* ?
2. How did the writer depict the ghost as a supernatural element that illustrate the traumatic past of Sethe?

It is hypothesized that the ghost is used as a way to remind each individual in the novel of their personal past, while also reminding the entire African American community of the sufferings their ancestors endured during slavery. To achieve this goal, Morrison must transform the ghost into a sense of reality. The next hypothesis is that ghost supposed to be a close link of political mediation and historical memory... The ghost is primarily a symptom of what is missing. He gives notice not only of himself but also of what he stands for.

In order to investigate the questions above and to reach our results, we will complete it using the MLA style. Then, divide the research paper into three chapters .The first chapter is a theoretical part that deals with the conceptions of the gothic, its developments and main elements that we need to explore the novel. We tackled with an analytical part of *Beloved*, mapping the gothic structure within the novel, and from the characters analyzes into the female power depicted in the novel. Then, we will apply another type of analyses that shows up the gothic genres found in *Beloved*, such as the traditional gothic ,the contemporary gothic, and the female gothic , Thus, we will answer the questions we have already asked.

In addition to this, we will show that *Beloved* is a contemporary gothic novel from feminine perspective. Through incorporating gothic elements, Morrison creates a space for black women where they may rediscover and save their genuine feminine identity, altering the predominance of males in African-American literary style

*Chapter One:*

*Conceptualizing*

*The Gothic*

## Introduction

The first chapter of this study will be devoted to main and secondary titles, as first main title, the origin of Gothic literature and the stages of its development as a literary genre, next, mentioning the most important factors that helped in its spread. The chapter is divided into several points, such as a point centered on the Gothic imagination, from its basic characteristics to the study of gender in it, and the comparison between the female and male Gothic aspects, while mentioning the role and importance of the feminist aspect in Gothic literature.

## Gothic Fiction History and Origins

The term gothic first appeared in French literature over a thousand years ago. The canon does not always include Gothic literary works. In fact, the phrase is used to describe a distinctive, elaborate, and opulent medieval style of architecture (and ruins). Gothic literature is a literary subgenre that emerged in the 18th century. The first known work of Gothic literature, *Castle of Otranto*, appeared around 1764. The article was written by British author Horace Walpole and titled *A Gothic History*. There are a lot of dark, romantic, otherworldly elements in this book, despite the fact that it sometimes feels like a clever joke.

## Introducing the Gothic Genre

Gothic literature is a literary subgenre that has evolved considerably since the 17th century. By giving voice to absurd and frightening ideas and images, Gothic literature frequently challenges Enlightenment and fuel the need for violence, terror and death. Therefore, it is related to the puzzle. Stories about the supernatural and the unknown often contain elements of horror, ghosts, and the occult. The term gothic, which has many

Varied definitions, has been widely criticized despite its various applications. According to David Punter, a scholar who studies Gothic architecture, in his book *The Literature of Terror* (1980), the term gothic is a word that even today has many meanings and even more meanings in the literature. It is used in a number of different fields; as a literary term, as a historical term, as an artistic term, as an architectural term. And as a literary term in contemporary use, it has many different applications.

According to Kaliff, the term gothic essentially denotes a relationship or association with the Goths or their language. This phrase is most commonly used in architecture, painting, music, and literature. According to *Dictionary.com* and *the Oxford English Dictionary*, gothic literature is a literary genre characterized by a dark atmosphere and frightening, mysterious, or violent events.

The gothic style blends disturbing imagery with mysterious structures, strange animals, and unbelievable events. Using this avant-garde aesthetic, black artists were able to promote social change in white society and communicate ideas. Far more obvious than the *Interpretation of the Supernatural* in Radcliffe's novel. Gothic supernaturalism was eventually explained in Hand, on the other hand, was largely not. Another manifestation of Gothic fascination with extreme situations and behaviors is thought to be related to widespread anxiety and social concerns. Among these anxieties are those of repressing previous traumas and shame, worry about class and gender, worry about revolution, and worry about advancing scientific knowledge.

The early Goths are thought to have descended from a nomadic Germanic people who rebelled against Roman rule in the late 3rd and early 4th centuries AD. Western Goths are called Visigoths, but Eastern Goths are called Ostrogoths. In the book *Terrorist Literature*, David Punter says:

The original meaning, not unnaturally, was literally to do with the Goths, or with the barbarian northern tribes who played so somewhat unfairly reviled a part in the collapse of the Roman empire, although this apparently literal meaning was less simple than it appears, because the 17th- and 18th century writers who used the term in his sense had very little idea of who the Goths were or what they were like. One thing was known that they came from northern Europe, and thus the term had a tendency to broaden out, to become virtually synonym for 'Teutonic' while retaining its connotation of barbarity (4-5).

Accordingly, the gothic novel is a genre of narrative literature that often has a scary, oppressive, or evil mood and deals with grotesque, supernatural, and extremely gruesome situations. When something terrifies us instead of excites us, we describe it as strange, mysterious, or scary. In addition, gothic fiction focuses on atmosphere, combining drama and discourse to create anxiety and feelings of tension in the reader's body. As a result, among other strong feelings, the reader feels fear and fatigue. Traditional locations in Gothic fiction are castles, mansions, and monasteries, often solitary, numerous, or built in a mysterious style. There are also depictions of spectacular supernatural beings such as ghosts, vampires, demons, and wandering giants. The term "Gothic novel" was first used in Horace Walpole's 1764 publication of the Gothic novel *Otranto Castle*. The word originally meant "savage", which is fitting because the book is about the brutality and superstition of the middle Ages.

The gothic became first of all understood as part of the Romantic reaction toward an uncritical faith in Enlightenment and modernity (Riello 1927; Kiely 1973), but in view that then the perception of the Gothic has evolved, and in recent times it's some distance generally conceived as a far wider transhistorical and transmedial not unusual place concept tied to

fashionable cultural fears and anxieties. Using the mind of horror and terror, nature and the

supernatural, and male/lady roles and characteristics, Gothic literature have become created.

Gothic has since acquired a hobby from scholars which it considers one of the genres of mediums and forms of studying, and has been studied from some theoretical points of view... For example, the inter- or transmedial nature of the Gothic has been explored with the resource of the usage of Noël Carroll (1990), Linda Badley (1995) and Yvonne Leffler (2000), whilst students which encompass William Patrick Day (1985), Manuel Aguirre (1990) and Fred Botting (1996) have investigated the Gothic from an intellectual angle. Women within the Female Gothic normally have a tendency to depend upon reason, more than they do on passion. They assign the roles that have been set with the resource of the usage of the Gothic standards. Many have moreover blended intellectual and feminist approaches, for instance, the famous Anne Williams (1995), also Eugenia C. DeLamotte (1990). A common depiction of women, used by most Gothic and male writers, is that they are weak, selfless, and virtuous, but in reality Gothic gives women far greater power and challenges to authority. And the ability to unite and find new paths for themselves.

### **The Development of Gothic Genre over Time**

Gothic form was significantly influenced by the political and social climate of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The majority of the following factors contributed to the changes that happened at this time:

The social class divide was impacted by both the French and Industrial Revolutions, which England had witnessed. Through colonialism, Britain was able to grow into a prosperous empire. In 1790, the first Gothic novels and short stories were printed. The themes were sometimes barbarous, reflecting the period, and many of the stories were set in castles, ruins, or convents. Some gothic fiction is less acceptable than others since it typically presents horrifying scenarios in a sensationalist and delicate manner (Punter 7-8).



As a response, Wordsworth added a lengthy introduction to the *Lyrical Ballads*'s second printing (1798 and 1800). The gothic is sealed off from the outside world and situated in a remote country, such as Italy or Spain, to compose stories that are exceptionally enticing and suspicious, and to provoke an irrational thought, such as dread, in the reader. As a result, Cultural, social, historical, and political factors all shaped its development. Events such as the great Depression and World War II sparked further advancements, eventually leading to the modern gothic genre. In comparison to its predecessor, the subsequent genre integrated science fiction while omitting the romantic element.

However, a new Gothic had emerged by the end of the nineteenth century, one that focused its tales on the urban present and gave modernity a language of terror. With this in mind, Kelly Hurley claims that the "fin de siècle Gothic rematerializes as a genre in many ways unrecognizable, transfigured, bespeaking an altered sensibility that resonates more closely with contemporary horrific representations than those generated at the far edge of the Enlightenment" (Hurley, 4). In preparation for the grim events that would unfold as the twentieth century progressed, the Gothic style was established.

The modern Gothic combined fresh viewpoints on human history and the natural world to bring Gothic fear to the heart of the late nineteenth-century city. As a result, the eerie atmosphere that characterized the latter years of the nineteenth century was wonderfully captured by the miraculous transformations and otherworldly terror of contemporary Gothic fiction. As was already established, Gothic is a literary genre that has influenced every literary movement, including postmodernism. As an experimental science, postmodernism seeks to investigate reality. The Gothic subgenre persisted into the centuries that followed the eighteenth century after Walpole popularized it with his book and swiftly evolved by embracing new traits, styles, and other media. Gothic plays, poetry, artwork, publications, films, and more are included in this extension. Since the Age of Enlightenment, the Gothic has become ingrained in

practically every literary movement, adhering to its core principles while experimenting with fresh means of evoking a Gothic mood. The Gothic is more than just a spooky tale featuring ghosts or devils; it compels readers to suspend reason, unearth the mysteries of human nature, explore the uncharted, and confront intense emotions.

The word Goth comes from the name of a German tribe called Goten. The term Gothic was later used in medieval architecture for the construction of buildings with pointed arches and vaulted ceilings. Gothic literature is closely related to the Victorian Gothic or Neo-Gothic architectural movements of the same period. Medieval abandoned buildings were a powerful source of inspiration for writers, and even castles were named after their architectural styles. By setting the novel in a Gothic building, the authors were able to more easily summarize emotions such as awe, despair, fear, loneliness, and suspense.

The Gothic style began in the 18th century. During the Romantic period, many novels based on Gothic romance were published. As mentioned earlier, Gothic novels of the period were known for their unique sounds and smells, and their surprisingly eerie and frightening environments. With his novel *The Castle of Otranto*, Horace Walpole started the trend of bringing together mystery and suspense, trapdoors, ancient prophecies and beautiful heroine settings.

In the early 19th century, the famous monster Frankenstein was evolved by Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*. Or "Modern Prometheus" (1818), considered the first science novel. Polypore's *The Vampire* (1819) introduced vampire characters that are still popular today. Charles Maturin wrote his 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer*, considered by critics to be the last work published in his genre of traditional Gothic.

Recently, spirits, ghost, and magical power are increasingly being replaced by immortal heroes and supernatural beings such as vampires, werewolves, demons, and witches.

Modern Gothic romance novels not only offer more characters and space for romance, but also more detail to the background of the places in which the stories take place and the moods of the people. The horror aspect has shifted from a very serious aspect to a mystical approach that runs throughout the novel. Gothic literature is perfect with all ages, but it has evolved and changed a lot over the years. The basic essence of this form of writing still consists of two things: horror and mystery.

### **Main Elements of Gothic Fiction**

Fantastical, supernatural, and "darker" themes are frequently found in gothic literature. Because they could occasionally manifest as undesirable or irrational urges, these energies are sometimes referred to as the "dark side" of human nature.

In literature, "Gothic" refers to the enormous, erratic architecture and occasionally obtrusive or forceful decoration of Gothic medieval cathedrals. One of the wicked Germanic tribes that toppled the Roman Empire is where the word "Gothic" first appeared. They were known as "Goth." Thus, the Gothic subgenre is associated with savagery and cruelty in both literature and architecture.

### **Supernatural Power**

The supernatural is one of the Gothic's main features. By explicitly mentioning supernatural elements or by leaving it up to the reader's imagination, Gothic authors use these elements to create tension and extraordinary effects for the reader. This theme is not especially gothic because the supernatural has always been a popular literary motif. When illustrating the supernatural in English literature and tradition, Gothic authors can draw inspiration from Shakespeare's ghosts, fairies, and sorcerers. Romantic authors Sir Walter

Scott and Samuel Coleridge include supernatural themes in their works, proving that even at the height of their fame; Gothic poets did not possess sole authority on the subject.

Gothic literature frequently features ghosts, enigmatic apparitions, and strange occurrences. As a response to the Age of Enlightenment, the Gothic genre first appeared shortly after a revolutionary era “in such, it seems to abandon rational thought” (Finley 45). Even while the paranormal incidents may initially appear to be coincidences or unrelated, a closer look reveals a different narrative. The Gothic ghost story evolved into a vehicle for the non-confrontational discussion of cultural issues, especially cultural critique. Stories in this genre “often stress the conjunction of external and by extension public, class status and internal, private matters” (Lynch 67). So the terror factor in the genre comes from two different places. While the danger of irrational, unexplainable supernatural powers induced fear on the surface, the underlying societal judgment led to pain on a personal level.

### **Female Characters in Distress**

In Gothic literature, the representation of female identity is crucial. The presence of women may frequently have a significant impact on a work, significantly changing how the reader interprets it. Women frequently appear as the objects of love, parents, otherworldly entities, and other roles in the narrative poetry of John Keats, Angela Carter, and Bram Stoker, including "The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories," "Dracula," and other works. But what interests me the most is how this typecasting evolves. An author may make their work more intriguing and fascinating by enabling female characters to flout gender norms.

The "predator" and the "victim" are the two principal female characters in Gothic literature. The first figure is both horrifying and seductively alluring; he represents the conflict between pain and pleasure that has come to be synonymous with Gothic literature. In contrast

to the latter, which is weak and defenseless, the former provides the heroes something to preserve and is often what they are given as a sign of appreciation for their courage. The emphasis on sensitivity and frailty gave rise to a new kind of literary character known as the

"damsel in distress," a central figure in the Gothic genre. A malevolent king or members of a religious order will frequently confine and torment a female character while she is in a castle or monastery. In gothic fiction, female characters are sometimes referred to as "damsels in distress," "victims," "domestic governesses," "evils," "predators," and "prisoners." Ironically, despite the fact that these women are portrayed as helpless and weak, the "damsel in distress" stereotype appears to pose the greatest threat to the current patriarchal system.

To clarify, the ancient Gothic motif of the damsel in distress ultimately represents the helpless young woman who must be protected from the approaching tragedy of the outer world. The external regressive factor may be a lousy supervisor, a strict father, or a tight relationship. A gothic damsel in distress story typically features monsters, death, and evil magic. A stunning young lady who is thrust into perilous situations by villains, monsters, or the story's primary adversary is known as the damsel in distress. She needs a "hero" to assist her in achieving her goal of independence (Mermin, 1986). Due of her constant need for assistance, she serves as a literary example of the Gothic literary motif.

## **The Study of Gender in Gothic Literature**

The Gothic literary subgenre gained prominence in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The first Gothic novel is frequently regarded as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, which originally appeared in print in 1764. The most well-known novelist in England in the eighteenth century and the main proponent of Gothic literature was Ann Radcliffe. She heightened the suspense, presented more complex, fascinatingly terrible, dreadful antagonists, painted vivid scenes that evoked specific feelings, and focused the narrative on the heroine's fight with the male ruler. One of her works, *The Italian* (1797), has the ability to intrigue and captivate readers.

### **Masculine vs. Feminine Gothic**

The feminine Gothic style allowed women to explore and experience home in the same way male heroes explored and ventured far from home. In this sense, the central characters of Female Gothic are women who are both heroines and victims. They are usually threatened by patriarchal figures and causes, but still manage to bravely face the threat and survive. These threats in female Gothic, as opposed to the more common Gothic, are explained at the end of the novel.

Whereas Gothic fiction expects the unreal or supernatural to be accepted as reality, in Female Gothic the question is answered at the end and the reader is given a logical explanation. Feminine Gothic, as a genre that expresses the dark protests, fantasies and fears of women, is one of the earliest and most important manifestations of the shift in consciousness that accompanied the women's liberation movement of the late 1960s.

The term "female Gothic" is hotly debated. When Ellen Moers coined the term in 1976, she thought it could be "simply defined" as „the work that women have done in the literary mode that, since the eighteenth century, we have called the Gothic". However, the definition of "Gothic" is „not so easily stated except that it has to do with fear“ Moers' groundbreaking work, her two short chapters in a book that was clearly one of her early attempts to trace and honor the tradition of women's writing, was immensely rich for critics. opened up new fields. It can be seen as having a direct impact on establishing both women's literature and Gothic literature as central fields of literary study.

Feminine Gothic not only means that the text was written by a female author, but the literary genre has its own conventions. According to Moers, Radcliffe created stories with female protagonists who were both heroines and victims, which became one of the hallmarks of female Gothic. According to feminist critics, the work is also her mother-daughter story, in which an orphaned heroine searches for her missing mother and discovers that she is not dead. There are [5]. At the beginning of the novel, the heroine leads a peaceful life. And she is " “depicted as enjoying an idyllic and secluded life but suddenly she is threatened with imprisonment in a castle or a great house under the control of a powerful male figure who gave her no chance to escape (Punter/Byron 2004, 279).

Unlike the gothic female, the term male Gothic arose as opposed to female Gothic. Many critics have stated that Gothic has feminine and masculine subgenres that “which differ in terms of narrative technique, plot, their assumptions about the supernatural, and their use of horror/terror". Male Gothic is often thought of as "true Gothic". It is considered more Gothic for many reasons. Firstly, the supernatural is not clarified by an ordinary or natural cause, which causes the novels to end mysteriously (Miles 2009, 78). Second, rape is depicted more directly in male Gothic than in female Gothic. And

third, stories often take place in unforgiving worlds and feature ruthless protagonists. The belief that the male Gothic subgenre is "true Gothic" has led critics to view female Gothic novelists as shy.

In male Gothic, women are always in danger of looking unnatural, artificial monsters.

Rather, to the lust-inducing male observer, the defect is habitually projected onto the woman, and the accusation is usually framed in terms of lack of 'nature'. The masculine Gothic style preserved the so-called 'deconstructive tendencies of carnival', the misogyny commonly expressed in women's monstrous otherness, or 'artificiality', as well as psychological sexuality Bound by force. But in Feminine Gothic, the educational problem identified by Wollstonecraft, where women's true selves are questioned, exists as a tension, usually implicit but sometimes explicit (Miles 2002, 81- 82). From the passages above, it can be conclude that women in Gothic novels for men are seen as unnatural and artificial. As a result, women are always portrayed negatively. This is, of course, in contrast to female gothic novels that primarily portray women as victims and question their identities.

### **The Role of the Female Element in Gothic Literature**

Women still dominate the world of horror, while public opinion has benefited Stephen King and his contemporaries; women have robbed them of their literary legacy by making space for female voices. With Angela Carter's exploration of gender and sexuality in the world of Goth fiction, Samantha Schweblin's chillingly surreal short stories, and the work of countless other notable creators, the best and most complex goth-her-horror is still female. Is in the area. And considering our historical relationship with



the supernatural, this is certainly not surprising. In addition to the defining limitations of female identity, women are also closely associated with illusory powers.

From demonic possession to witchcraft, where obedience existed, there was also a need to personify female evil as justification for deviance. Depictions of female identity are very important in Gothic literature. The presence of women has a great impact on the work, and can greatly change the reader's interpretation. "The Robber" and "The Victim" are her two main female characters in Gothic novels. The first characters are both terrifying and captivating, emphasizing the dichotomy between pain and pleasure that has come to be associated with Gothic literature. The latter gives the heroes a goal to strive for, given their vulnerability and utter helplessness, and is usually presented as a thank you for their heroic rescue efforts.

## **Conclusion**

As the genre evolved, Gothic literature took the audience on a journey into the unknown, to a higher self-awareness that would not be possible without a harrowing journey through the sublime world. From the fear of being trapped in domineering male relationships in early Gothic literature, to the disregard for Victorian-era patriarchal values, Gothic literature has always been about women who felt helpless for themselves. Novels helps and give voice for women were they worried about their safety all day long, even at home. They lacked the power to control their own destinies, and their lack of autonomy was attributed to their own weaknesses rather than the desire for male superiority that actually caused their limitations, Rice field. Gothic writers attempted to counteract this injustice in small ways, pointing out the hypocrisy and "home cult" of Patriarchal societies. Conversely, her work was simply dismissed as "feminine," a term that completely demeaned her novels and mocked her

reading. But Gothic writers continued her writing, delighting audiences who could have expected nothing else. The tropes they created intrigued, depicted, and entertained women with the prospect of a better life, in which they could at least to some extent, control their own destinies.

# ***Chapter Two: Gothic***

## ***Elements in Beloved***

## Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the presence of supernatural and the gothic elements in the novel *Beloved* (1987). This chapter consists of three main sections, each section consisting of a main heading compounded by two sub-headings. First of all shows the most prominent Gothic elements present in the novel from the setting to the characterization. The following section identifies explicit female representation in the novel, dedicating the analysis to black feminism and motherhood between the main character and her daughters. After that, the investigation delves into the analyses of major themes the traumatic Past of Seth and flash Backs from the same main character.

### 2.1. Mapping the Gothic Structure in *Beloved*

#### 2.1.1 The Setting and Plot

*Beloved* began in 1873 in Cincinnati, Ohio, where Sethe, a former slave, lived with her eighteen-year-old daughter Denver. Sethe's stepmother, Baby Suggs, lived with them until her death eight years earlier. Just before Baby Suggs died, Sethe's two sons, Howard and Buglar, run away. Sethe believes they fled due to the sinister presence of an abusive ghost that haunted their home at 124 Bluestone Road for many years. However, Denver falls in love with the ghost that everyone believes is the spirit of her dead sister. The novel goes back in time when Paul D arrives after not seeing since he and Sethe worked together on Mr. Garner's Sweet House plantation in Kentucky about twenty years ago, stopped at Sethe. His presence revived memories that had been buried in Sethe's mind for nearly two decades.

Throughout the entire novel, the setting is constrained and a bit odd. The story begins in an eerie home. Nobody had the nerve to even knock on the door, much less go inside to meet the people, because the house was so far away. "124 was spiteful. Full of a baby's venom" (Morrison01). The opening phrase of the novel personifies the spirit that inhabits in

the house with the number 124. Sethe murders her deceased daughter in a shed while she is being followed by her previous master and slave hunters. Instead of subjecting her children to yet another life of slavery, she tries to end her own life as well as those of her children. Sethe's deceased daughter haunts 124 as a result of her awful acts, frightening away Sethe's two sons, who were also his victims, and cutting off Denver from the rest of the black community.

The use of flashbacks heightens the tension and melancholy of the novel's setting. It was also true for Sethe and the rest of the family. The reader becomes more apprehensive because of the ghost's presence in the house, but they also become more sympathetic with Sethe. Actually, the haunting is what makes Sethe's tale interesting and compelling. Every Gothic work of literature, claims Eric Savory in "*The Rise of American Gothic*": "All Gothic writing seeks to induce in the reader a particular affect from within the spectrum of horror." (181). Even though it was obvious that *Beloved* really did haunt the house, the homeowners were plagued by unpleasant memories from the past that continued to interfere with their present.

### **2.1.2. Characters Analyses**

With one of the many motifs that make up the novel, the Gothic in general and the Gothic female in particular, which sees the female characters experience a type of oppression and injustice, both physical and moral, *Beloved* is Morrison's response to the portrayal of the heroic female life in African-American literature. Morrison would use gothic imagery to support ideas and notions about the repressive treatment of African women in the volumes that would come after, with each character having a dreadful meeting with the reality.

#### **Sethe**

Sethe, the protagonist of the book, is a complex person. She seems to be quite busy and going through a transformation based on the way she acts. When the Garners bought

Sethe, a former slave who had lost her mother when she was a little kid, she went to Sweet Home. Since Sethe married Halle when she was young in the mistaken belief that they would become husband and wife, Halle was compelled to live in abhorrent slavery. After been subjected to slavery in the past, Sethe ultimately caves. Sethe heroically chose to leave her unborn child behind and seek a better life, but the horrors of her past and upbringing still hold her captive.

After knowing and recognizing that her husband noticed the rape, Paul D. asserts that she was so appalled that "her brain was not interested in the future" (83). Sethe is a formidable, self-reliant lady who has succeeded in life without the help of her husband. Due to her ferocious love for her children and her fear of the terrible past, Sethe murders her only daughter. She is a misunderstood individual that experiences hostility where she now stays. Sethe is a strong, independent woman who has achieved success in life without the support of her spouse. Sethe murders her only daughter out of fierce love for her kids and terror of the awful past. She suffers with social awkwardness and being misunderstood because of her loneliness. Due to her love, guilt, and dedication to her children, Sethe's daughter loses herself and neglects herself when she returns home.

She struggles with the fallout from her actions but can't stop thinking about the horrors. In order " what it took to drag the teeth of that saw under the little chin; to feel the baby blood pump like oil in her hands; to hold her face so her head would stay on; to squeeze her so she could absorb, still, the death spasms that shot through that adored body, plump and sweet with life" (187). Beloved must be able to quote the passage. Sethe has undergone a total transformation and now somehow pays tribute to her history, which includes the death of her daughter. Sethe comes to understand the value of making plans for the future after Beloved disappears at the novel's conclusion.

**Beloved**

The ghost that Sethe is looking for is referred to as "Beloved" in the story. Sethe murders her baby daughter to save her from being sold into slavery because she is aware of the detrimental impacts and probable long-term implications of slavery. Her decision to murder her prized new kid is therefore justified by her inadequate comprehension of the world. A newborn girl who has been murdered before birth loses her identity and becomes into a ghost. This mode of thinking best describes the mindset and determination to life of slaves. Slave owners have interfered with the process despite the fact that slaves have their own sexual needs. It was clear from The Beloved's actions that she wanted Paul D. to touch her internal organs. "What you want in here? What you want? He should have been able to hear her breathing. "

"I want you to touch me on the inside part and call me my name" (Morrison137). And also she wants to taste all the good foods and to wear beautiful ribbons and dresses. All the good things should be reserved for Beloved:

The cooking games, the sewing games, the hair and dressing up games. Games her mother loved so well she took to going to work later and later each day until the predictable happened. Sawyer told her not to come back. And instead of looking for another job, Sethe played all the harder with Beloved, who never got enough of anything: lullabies, new stitches, the bottom of the cake bowl, the top of the milk. If the hen had only two eggs, she got both (Morrison282).

Being a spirit, it destroys all the possibilities to live with human beings and see the beauty of life. Though the things are going in this way, Sethe kills the girl to protect her from slavery. Indirectly, this spirit symbolizes the destruction of identity of the people through slavery.

## Denver

Denver is a complex character in the novel she is Sethe's daughter, the most dynamic character in the novel. She is shy, intelligent, introspective, sensitive, and often spends hours alone in her "emerald wardrobe", a wooded space formed by boxwood bushes. Her mother views Denver as a "seduced" child who has miraculously survived, and throughout the book, Denver is intimately connected with the supernatural world. Leaving 124 is likened to a kind of voluntary sacrifice: "So it was she who had to step off the edge of the world and die because if she didn't, they all would" (Morrison293). After this death comes the symbolic rebirth on the day "it was the word baby that inaugurated her life in the world as a woman" (Morrison248). What Denver really discovered was a new experience "new thought of having a self to look out for and preserve"(Morrison310), and it is especially important that she discovers this early on. As a child; it embodies hope and adaptability to life.

Denver, who "took her mother's milk along with the blood of her sister" (Morrison187), she is also a "charmed" child (Morrison258), a guardian angel to her mother, a kind spirit trying "to protect Beloved from Sethe...and her mother from Beloved" (Morrison298). Unlike the other characters "the present alone interests her" (Morrison147) and Denver does not hesitate to face the dangers of the outer world to save her mother and escape the atmosphere prevailing in 124: "she was ready to be swallowed up in the world beyond the edge of the porch" (Morrison299).

In the events of the last novel, Denver gains a more sympathetic perspective on her mother's traumatic experience. She notices that the Beloved is not a benevolent spirit, but a dangerous supernatural creature that is slowly killing Sethe. Sethe was fired from her job for becoming completely infatuated with Beloved, and leaves home alone for the first time in her search Employed to take care of her mother. She has no skills, no prior training, she gradually



learns to love herself She was accepted by the townspeople and eventually got a job as the Bowdoin family's night manager. With her mother struggling, they end up stepping in and helping Sethe dispose of her belongings.. At the end of her novel, Stamp Paid praises her by saying, "I am proud of her. She turning out fine" (Morrison313).

### **Representation of Gothic Femininity in *Beloved***

In Gothic literature, a female is often portrayed as a woman who actively resists the gender stereotypes of the Victorian era. Many of these characters experience emotional changes over the course of the story, and may exploit or suppress such unconventional emotional traits. Gothic Feminism takes a neo-feminist approach to these women's writings, treating them not as sacred texts but as thesis-driven works that attempted to instruct women in a series of strategic poses. It offers both a new understanding of the genre and a wholly new interpretation of feminism as a literary ideology.

### **The Significance of the Female Ghost in the Novel**

The novel's representation of Beloved's spirit as a bridge connecting the present to the past is significant. Former slaves who are attempting to move over their pain and adjust to a life in freedom are all the characters that communicate with the ghost. Seeing Beloved forces them to confront their past and reopens old scars. Prior experiences and deeds. For Sethe Beloved, healing and accepting her previous behavior, especially coming to grips with killing her daughter, are represented by Beloved. When she is with Sethe, she mostly reminds her of a poltergeist that ruthlessly compels her to confront the repercussions of her choices. After releasing the Beloved's ghost, Sethe is so released from her old worries. Beloved means for Denver letting go of a history she does not know, beginning to create her identity in the present, and looking to the future. Denver is encouraged by Beloved to mature, gain independence, and integrate into the community. Denver is nevertheless aware of the negative

impact Beloved has on her mother, despite the fact that Beloved assumes a shape that is more kind with her.

Sethe, Denver, and Paul D. all reside in house 124, which Beloved previously haunted in an incorporeal form, so as Beloved acquires physical form, she starts to really engage with the other characters in the book. With each of them, she starts to form a unique bond. With each of the individuals, Beloved appears to transform into a different variety of the ghosts we've already talked about; depending on their connection, she may become anything from a vengeful Poltergeist to an almost protecting Haltia:

In a conventional ghost story, the haunted house is a setting in which the characters confront and attempt to defeat a frightening external force. For Denver, Paul D, and Sethe, who all live for a time with Beloved in 124, the force is both external and internal; the house shapes and the ghost give expression to their own repressed inner conflicts. (Schmudde 412).

In other words, Beloved serves as a bridge between their history and present, compelling individuals to confront their pain and the behaviours from the past that they are denying. Beloved laid claim to the home because she was the first family member to pass away in 124 (even though, technically, the murder occurred in the shed and not within the house itself). She subsequently assumes the shape of a lady, and when she does, she resembles Sethe's daughter if she had survived. Even Sethe recognizes this since she is certain that her deceased daughter has returned to her:

Beloved, she my daughter. She mines. See. She comes back to me of her own free will and I don't have to explain a thing. I didn't have time to explain before because it had to be done quickly. Quick. She had to be safe and I put her where she would be. But my love was tough and she back now. I knew she

would be. Paul D ran her off so she had no choice but to come back to me in the flesh. (Morrison 200).

Obviously, *Beloved* seems to resemble what a life version of her should have been to the extent that Sethe is persuaded that she is, in fact, her genuine daughter rather than a ghost. The female ghost emblem in *Beloved* not only represents a link between the past and present, but also the necessity to go past the past in order to exist in the present and perhaps even establish a future.

### **Women's Power Depicted from the Novel**

The results of Sethe's motherly power had already begun to show by the time she killed the baby "placed in an environment of freedom, love is identified as power. Yet, when the conditions of freedom are not entirely fulfilled, love can also be the basis of great vulnerability" (Alexandru 195). This vulnerability causes the love of Sethe to grow "too thick" (Morrison 193). In an interview with Moyers, Morrison is asked what kind of love it is, to which Morrison responds "Some of it's very fierce. Powerful" (Morrison 267). "In such a context, Sethe's act of love for her children is an expression of freedom. She takes the risk and chooses to love them...Sethe's act emphasizes the perverse nature of slavery; a mother must kill her children to protect them. Sethe can choose not to love, or she can choose to kill what she loves to protect it. Either choice begets a loss of some part of the self" (Rice 106). The independence of Sethe's children is ultimately compromised by her intense motherly position. Making another person one's own "best thing" leads to a situation worse than slavery and a transfer of devotion from the source of life to its image, hence doing so ultimately results in a dehumanizing of the other person. The substantial expense of Sethe's power outweighs what little benefit it accomplishes. The cost of that power is the suffering and

agony that Sethe endures as a result of her first e “desperate but heroic act of mother love” Sethe takes to kill her daughter, and in everything she subsequently suffers (Bouson 147).

“By the dark, negative aspects love tends to take” (Alexandru 194). The murdering of her daughter has changed Sethe's life and the quality of her freedom, even though being free is a substantial and long-lasting effect. Despite her strength and dominance, Sethe is not really comforted by burying her daughter.

Despite the fact that *Beloved* is apparently a female-centric narrative, it does neither glorify nor condemn women's strength in the way that reading it may lead one to assume. On the first page of the book, Howard and Buglar leave their mother, sister, and grandmother behind, leaving them to deal with 124's "venom" on their own. Later on in the book, Paul D deserts Sethe and Denver, reflecting their own deserting. The males continue to struggle with controlling the spirit's anger, but the ladies keep going. The ghost who made the three men's lives miserable at 124 is without a doubt a strong creature. But in the end, the convictions of thirty pleading, singing women triumph. While Sethe's life was in danger, Paul D's wrath merely served to further develop the spirit's outward form.

Despite the first impression that this story criticizes males for being weak and unable to cope with the anguish caused by the past, the novel's last scene depicts a strong and adaptive Paul D returning to an emotionally and physically shattered Sethe. The only person who can survive the atrocities of the past is Paul D, but Sethe made tough choices and exhibited greater bravery by leaving slavery while pregnant. He not only exhibits the capacity to "remain whole" despite experiencing nearly continual anguish, but he also exudes a "blessedness" that only the illustrious Baby Suggs came close to matching.

In an interview with the *Paris Review*, Toni Morrison disproves the idea that she writes strong female characters that are superior to their male counterparts. “I think that our

expectations of women are very low. If women just stand up straight for thirty days, everybody goes, Oh! How brave! As a matter of fact, somebody wrote about Sethe, and said she was this powerful, statuesque woman who wasn't even human. But at the end of the book, she can barely turn her head. She has been zonked; she can't even feed herself. Is that tough?"

Morrison's opinions point to reader sexism more than a lack of inner masculinity. Paul D. is the only character in the book to recover from a mental breakdown and return to dealing with their grief, demonstrating that both sexes are equally capable of experiencing such things. Morrison, on the other hand, refrains from drawing generalizations about men or women in his literature and instead promotes inner fortitude. In other words, our character, not our gender, determines how effectively we can handle adversity.

### **Major Themes in *Beloved***

Themes are used by authors to communicate a wide range of ideas and viewpoints in their dramatic, literary, and poetic works. Even though Toni Morrison's *Beloved* introduces a few unusual ideas, these ideas are nevertheless upsetting since the novel contains actual savagery. The following analysis looks at some of *Beloved's* main themes.

#### **2.4.2. Flash Backs of Seth's Past**

Technically, Toni Morrison's novel is very much dominated by the application of flashbacks and memories. Members of Sweet Home, Baby Suggs, Amy, are imperative to present day trials of Sethe and 124. Without their involvement in the story, Sethe would lose a layer of her character that was built upon the influence of these people, whether violent or empowering. Baby Suggs as the mom of 124, and the people who live there bring an extra aspect to Sethe's experience and influence *Beloved* within the home. Her flashbacks are often related to how she sees colors and her understanding of the meaning of identity. «claiming

ownership of that freed self” (112). Without her connection to Sethe’s life, there may have been a lack of understanding as to how Sethe could release some of the anger and grief she experienced within her past; losing Baby Suggs also means losing the relationship that she and Denver shared. To the men and women of the Home, Sethe's interactions with them brought on a strange master-slave dynamic. Although the Garner’s were seemingly willing to give the enslaved men and women a voice, there was still an established hierarchy that Morrison did not want to go unnoticed. Finally, Amy gives Sethe an alternative explanation for her skin: a tree. Instead of some kind of punishment, it becomes a symbol of growth “a mighty lot of branches. Leaves too...Tiny little cherry blossoms, just as white” (Morrison93).

Each supporting character serves as a tool for Morrison to bring more layers to Sethe and the choices she makes. These subtle connections lead to a greater understanding as to how, “eighteen years” later each character ended up under the roof of 124.

#### **2.4.1. The Traumatic Past of Seth**

the traumatic memory a response to an extra violent faced by the communities in Beloved stems from the atrocities they faced during their lives as slaves. Before she ever got to 124, Sethe dealt with significantly traumatic life events. She is traumatized by some past experience where terrible memories haunt her and cause her to lose connection with the community. Memories play an important role in her life, but Sethe not only represses memories of her past, but she also doesn't become haunted by them. In contrast, Sethe's problem is not that she has repressed her memories, but that she cannot forget.

In general, we learn about the complicated relationships between the characters and the past lives of the older generation that lived on Sweet Home Plantation. When Paul D first arrived at 124, Sethe was sent back in time to the Home in Kentucky. Instead of remembering

the nature of the plantation, a terrible institution of human confinement, she remembered it with a sense of nostalgia and beauty. She admits it " although there was not a leaf on that farm that did not make her want to scream, it rolled itself out before her in shameless beauty" (Morrison7). Trauma develops when the brain is unable to release the feeling of fear associated with an event. So whenever the brain recalls the memory, it goes into the same fear mode and puts the body into a state of fear. Instead of drowning in those emotions, Sethe's brain became so fearful that it wouldn't allow him to return to that mental state, instead creating a filter on his memories so that they don't sign up like people who've been healing hard most of his life.

Neither Sethe nor Paul D belonged together when they were at Home, so they were still looking for a sense of belonging. That's why they are so eager to have sex when they interact for the first time in years. They want to belong in the biblical sense because they have been deprived of belonging for so long. However, it's not just the people living in spiritual house Plantation who struggle to belong and possess in a world that already rooled them. Denver has never lived in Sweet Home Plantation, but she is drawn to the resulting life. She is literally and figuratively haunted. Because the people around her don't belong to themselves, they don't belong to her, and she has a need for what she lacks. When her mother and Paul D got together, she immediately felt estranged from them because " they were a twosome, saying „Your daddy“ and „Sweet Home“ in a way that made it clear both belonged to them and not to her” (Morrison15). Later, when Beloved appeared in the 124, Denver some how create an emotion “love and breakneck possessiveness that charged her” (Morrison64).

When someone with knowledge and no past interacts with Denver, she seizes the opportunity to fill the void that belongs there and owns her. All these possessions slowly turn bitter, as Paul D continues to remind Sethe of his slavery and Denver begins to question

Throng about the possibility of suffocating his mother. These riches are not enough to replace the bitterness of their slave past that still haunts them.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter is considered the heart of the research because it contains all the information necessary to fulfil the work. The second chapter contains comprehensive analyzes of the novel, starting from explaining the Gothic plot to analyzing the main female characters. . A clear change in style of the narrator, when speaking of Gothic literature, tends to mention one aspect, that of supernatural forces such as the ghost, which is an essential element of the quest.

At the end of the chapter, the analysis comes in the form of a recall of the memories of the main character, Seth, and the trauma that followed those events. Here we can understand the novel from the female side, as well as show the power of women in gothic literature from its inception to the present day.



*Chapter 03: Analyzing  
of the Different Gothic  
Genres Found in  
Beloved*

## **Introduction**

*Beloved* is a wonderful novel that combines the power of fiction with feminist ideas. Morrison makes full use of all aspects of her subject because she knows exactly what she wants to achieve and how to get there. The characters are very complex. The past and the present are constantly changing in both stories, dramatic but in very different ways.

### **Traditional Gothic Elements in *Beloved***

Authors of the traditional gothic style differ in displaying the gothic elements, but they all attempt to create horror by displaying these elements. However, most of the writers employ the ghostly, which is the key element of gothic in the conventional and modern masterpieces. Ghost stories are dominant cultural elements throughout history in the literature of many European countries as well as the world literature in general. It has long been discussed whether the integration and role of ghosts in literature were elemental and influential.

Gothic literature explores the aggression between what we want and what we fear. The world evolves and new interests are discovered, but the Gothic novel remains an iconic stage in literary history. What started as a small idea has grown into something very big and incomprehensible. As an immersion in the human psyche, the Gothic tradition, together with the sublime concepts and theories of human psychology, played an invaluable role in the development and evaluation of the human mind. Its immense influence is still felt in works overshadowed by essential Gothic elements and considered adaptations rather than inspired originals. His individualism survives in his success, his humility in his decent decline.

### **The Ghost and Spiritual Magic**

American gothic novels in general tend to use Gothic elements to reveal the spiritual impact of these elements on the characters in the novel, because this impact contributes to the

enhancement of activities. In conventional novels, the reappearance of ghosts is used for purposes, including revenge. The impact of this look on the novel for a certain period of time ends at the centre of the story upon completion or removal of that view. On the other hand, in

American fiction, the rise of a ghost is used to reveal the dark side of the human soul as an expression of historical, political, and social activities. Thus, the positions of the ghost will appear as prominent male or female in the novel's storyline. This phantom appeared before the ghost of the toddler that Sethe had murdered earlier.

Another ghost inside human skin is Beloved. The Beloved seems to be the reincarnation of Sethe's useless child. When Sethe meets her, far from home, the reader discovers her childish behaviour. Her steps were unsteady and, unusually, she had not forgotten the song Sethe had sung to her when she was a child. His skin is clean and he has no control over his physical functions. Almost all the main characters like Baby Suggs, Sethe, Denver and Paul D believe in the presence of ghosts in the existing house. Baby Suggs stated: "we fortunate this ghost in a toddler. My husband's spirit turned into to return back again here? Of yours? „(6). It is clear that superstition is rooted in concrete nature. According to Baby Suggs, loss of life is a common problem for black people. Most blacks, their spouses, and children were killed during this period.

The first neighbourhood described as haunted in the novel is 124 Bluestone Street. Sethe's sons, Howard and Bugler, could not stand the haunting caused by the ghost and fled. The horror they face with the help of using ghosts is mentioned below: "I24 was spiteful. Full of a baby's venom. The women in the house knew it and so did the children ...' (1). Toni Morrison described a scene in which small handprints appear on a cake but no children. In addition, all materials inside the residence rotate using themselves. It was clear from the text content that the ghost wanted to punish her. The ghost won't need to be forgotten with anyone's help, so it reappears, as expressed using Sethe: «Some matters go. Pass on. Some matters simply say. I used to assume it turned into my rememory. You know. Some stuff you forged” (35).

**The Haunted House**

The house in the story is called the sweet house, but the conditions are quite the opposite, showing the contradiction within and within it. It causes misunderstanding because it frightens and frightens the reader, the place is actually haunted. The house is said to be haunted because its address is "124". The house is represented as a living being that feels and understands everything. This is how he is described 'she smiled at him, and like a friend in need, the fireplace coughed against the cold pulling him down from the sky.' Window sashes shuddered in a blast of winter air" (Morrison130). The opening of the book tells us that House 124 is taking revenge and expecting a child. It is said that the women and children in the house have known this for a long time.

However, it's ironic that only Sethe and her daughter Denver can see it. The story opens with the death of her grandmother, Baby Suggs. . Sethe's sons all left home when they were thirteen. Both are forced to leave the house because they are too terrified of the ghost's strange methods to do so, such as when he uses a scary noise or a creepy apparition. Similar to how Buglar noticed two small handprints on the cake when looking in the mirror after the cake fell. The house began to move on its own, and apparently the spirit was trying to teach Sethe a lesson. According to Sethe, who remembered her story, some things fade beautifully but there are things that will stay in your mind forever. Not just memories, but things you feel connected to. The ghost doesn't want anyone to forget him, that's why the ghost comes back many times. She sets an example that even if the house you have lived in for many years is destroyed, you will never lose your memories; they will be with you for the rest of your life. The house comes to life upon arrival. "White staircase climbed towards the blue-and-white wallpaper of the second floor" (11). In the story, ghosts are described as having the ability to turn missing objects into real people. Even inanimate objects began to come to life when Paul D went to 124 Bluestone Road and exorcised. Along with this, House 124 has a warehouse in

the back where Sethe committed suicide and her children to evade capture by slave hunters. The barn continues to be a refuge of sin and secrecy for those who live there.

*Beloved* used as a response to mercilessly seduce Paul D and keep him away from Sethe. Also, *Beloved* disappeared in the warehouse while cruelly playing hide and seek with Denver. As the game progresses, *Beloved* says, «This is the place I am" (146), indicating the transitional area between the light and the dark of the hangar. In this way, the *Beloved* hints at his intimate relationship with the House of 124 as well as his role as a bridge between the living and the dead. Upon entering, the *Beloved* is first seen as a supernatural manifestation. However, the more his appearance is seen in the real world, the more his manners, actions, and behaviours are perceived as human and the supernatural element seems to diminish in both importance and meaning. The most notable examples of Morrison's use of magical realism in his writing are the haunting of 124 Bluestone Road and the arrival of the *Beloved*. Through the birth of the *Beloved*, these "supernatural" events include the end of slavery and turning the book into a realistic magical novel.

In Morrison's work, the house is transformed into a colourful metaphor. The Negro's desire for a home, the horrific attack on a black woman's home, the eviction of blacks from their home and subsequent exile, the arduous search for a home. Real home and other topics covered in her discussion. The traditional gothic sinister house " is present in many of Morrison's works: for example, the spiteful 124 Bluestone Road [. . .] which *Beloved* haunts, or the Convent mansion in Paradise, where the mystical and ghostlike women, reside" (Beaulieu 146). Gender studies in Gothic a Mercy are based on the basic idea of Gothic literature: the haunted house is, undoubtedly, a "failed house", a dark place and source of terror, symbolizes the rebirth of the repressed. Her creepy haunted mansion is testament to the identity problem that black people, especially black women, encountered.

### **The Contemporary Gothic in *Beloved***

By incorporating a contemporary feminine touch into the conventional gothic style while preserving its basic constructs, Toni Morrison has produced a fresh take on the genre in her novel *Beloved*. In terms of revitalizing the outdated and wishing for a rejuvenation, *Beloved* is a fantastic example. To start, this narrative is a member of the Gothic genre. It centres on a form of dread and panic and develops inside that.

In her novel *Beloved*, Toni Morrison reinvents the gothic constructions style by fusing a contemporary feminine vision with it. *Beloved* is a fantastic example of asking rebirth and reviving the past. First off, this narrative is categorized as gothic and is centred on a sense of dread and misery.

### **The Gloomy Atmosphere**

From the first page, the reader is drawn into the novel by its distinctive, enchanting, and menacing atmosphere. However, because to the way the time periods are mixed up and how they are presented, the sorrowful events that are shown in this work make it challenging to read. Everyday life exposes people to typical, everyday circumstances. As a result of the usage of contemporary gothic elements, the reader is also likely to feel a gloomy and foreboding mood from the start of the novel.

The home, which serves as the backdrop for the most of the action in the novel, is one of the magically endowed items that improve the mood. It is easily recognized, or more precisely, it has the number 124. Throughout the narrative, the term "that" is used more than 80 times, whereas "an" is hardly ever used. "House". But given Toni Morrison's dedication to symbolism and the fact that practically every component of her works has a purpose, it's probable that this number wasn't chosen at random. The author could have provided a solution, but instead to let the reader's imagination run

wild. Whatever the origin of the house's name, the incorporation of magic realism's features in the story reveals its relevance. The home itself is shown as a living thing with the ability to experience human emotions, rather than being portrayed as a static object that houses the characters: "She smiled at him, and like a friend in need, the chimney coughed against the rush of cold shooting into it from the sky. Windows sashes shuddered in a blast of winter air" (Morrison130). The author uses a lot of imagery to convey her ideas, as seen in her description of Seth's appearance: "Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grows there still" (17). The tree really represents the scar that her time as a slave left on her back and has a symbolic value. The phrase "a chokecherry tree. Trunk, branches, and even leaves. Tiny little chokecherry leaves. But that was eighteen years ago. Could have cherries too now for all I know" (18). The way the tree appears to have grown and Sethe's memories both point to the possibility that the tree had a symbolic purpose.

Because of the contemporary gothic features, this novel frequently evokes a variety of emotions and moods. There are a few instances where happy emotions are evoked, but they are frequently followed by negative ones that are virtually as soon as they start. To get the reader to put himself in the shoes of the characters and go through what they go through, the author intentionally plays with the reader's emotions. Since the events she describes require a real context to take place in, Morrison was also required to construct a believable setting. She chooses the winter because it is dreadful, with thunder, icy fog, early dusk, and blackouts, all of which add to a dreadful and realistic scenario. Her timing was impeccable, and she also managed to accidentally influence the readers to adopt the book's tone "winter in Ohio was especially rough if you had an appetite for color" (1). Morrison didn't try to write in a brand-new gothic vocabulary. She concentrated on using words associated with the gothic aesthetic,



such as haunted, ghost, dark, and blood, to preserve the mood of gloom and excitement. Morrison employed an original approach of capitalizing each letter of the word to underline her gothic aesthetic "124 was spiteful" (1). This is obviously done to catch the reader's attention, create suspense, and create a spooky environment.

### **Creation of Mystery**

Obviously, *Beloved* is an important character, and that's because the book bears her name. She is, however, a mysterious character whose presence is never fully explained. The widely accepted belief proposes that *Beloved* is the ghost of Sethe's dead daughter who reincarnated as a young woman in order to exact revenge on her mother. The people in the book share this opinion. Denver is the first to realize this, and as time goes on, Sethe also comes to see *Beloved*'s apparition as a second chance for her to nurture her daughter..

Because it is both full of emotions and mystery, *Beloved* is a great novel. Morrison fully utilizes every aspect of her subject since she is aware of exactly what she wants to accomplish and how to go about doing it. The characters are intricate. The past and present are continually altering one another in both stories, which are dramatic but in very different ways. The novel's two halves don't contrast negatively with one another. Morrison's style merits special notice since it is energetic, expressive, and non-white without drifting toward vernacular. Similar to how Sethe identifies *Beloved* at the book's conclusion and understands right away that she has known who she is all along; the reader is horrified by the suffering of the black characters and the violence of the whites. But the reader also quickly understands that every instance of brutality and torture is not only conceivable but also a representation of a wide range of other atrocities that are not discussed in the book or in American history.

In a clear explanation, the darkest character in the novel *Beloved* a mystery identity that built the suspense over her presence. According to the evidence in the book, she may be

an ordinary person who has been harmed by years of imprisonment, Sethe's mother's ghost, or most convincingly the physical embodiment of Sethe's murdered daughter. *Beloved* uses the horrible history of slavery to illustrate how it continues to haunt us now. She eventually serves as a catalyst for the emotional growth of Sethe, Paul D, and Denver. As the story progresses, her presence becomes a parasitic and malignant quality.

Morrison has not shown the kind of ghost that harasses people by moving furniture about or doing other meaningless antics to make them dread them excessively. There is nothing about this that might lower people's spirits. In this scenario, the ghost's only objective was to persuade everyone that they shouldn't think of the woman as being dead but rather that she was still alive and a part of the family. When she came, an unusual atmosphere was created since even the house's walls could see into her soul. The house springs to life as she walks in. The house comes to life when she arrives. "White staircase climbed towards the blue-and-white wallpaper of the second floor" (11).

The narrative asserts that ghosts have the ability to change lost objects into actual humans. When Paul D visits 124 Bluestone Road to exorcise the spirit, even inanimate items come to life. Every door and window in the home trembles and opens and closes by itself when a ghost enters. With his screaming voice and loud rumbling of furniture, he vanquished the ghost and all those delusions that had wrongly claimed the house to be haunted throughout the area. However, after a few days, the spirit reappears. The *Beloved* spirit came from the water, clad in a black garment. Most of Denver's questions are met with hesitation as he seeks to learn more about her to ease his fears. Where did you previously live, I was asked? She gives really foreboding information.

Morrison has indicated that she is "I am very happy to hear that my books haunt, that is what I work very hard for and for me, and it is an achievement when they haunt readers"

(qtd in Anderson, 47). To assist his characters reconcile their history, Morrison uses ghosts, as stated in The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia: “there mythic elements root the novels in the African tradition and provides a spiritual and cultural bridge between the history of the characters ancestors and the lives of the characters at the time the novels and set in the United States” (79). Although there are numerous strange occurrences in the novel, each one has a long-lasting effect on the character. The protagonists are compelled to confront long-forgotten pasts through the usage of magic and ghosts. In the story, the mulberry tree represents the beginning of new life. Sethe compared her history to the chokecherry tree's metaphorical meaning.

It possessed a spirit force full of anger and fury, and although being just a baby, it was more powerful than anybody else in the house. It had returned to life to seek revenge for the destruction that Sethe had previously inflicted. Additionally, returning as only an invisible ghost was inadequate; you also needed to return as a regular human with the intention of killing living creatures in the same way as Sethe's deeds had damaged your loved one.

### **Women's Fiction uses in the Novel**

Being in a position of power is having the ability to win an argument and direct behavior. Stereotypes are too simplistic conceptions of a certain gender, social class, or race. The use of power by the female protagonists in Tony Morrison's book *Beloved* is demonstrated. Morrison dedicates the work to the "sixty million and more" people who are thought to have died as a result of slavery. *Beloved* stands for both Sethe's unnamed child and the anonymous masses that died and went unnoticed. They are also praised in this book, according to Morrison.

### **The Female Ghost's Relation with Seth**

As Beloved reappears in the novel as a ghost, Sethe is initially in denial about her disappearance and then becomes angry that she had to kill her child to save her. She then pleads with Beloved for forgiveness and becomes depressed about her past before accepting the community's assistance and the reality of what had happened. In reality, where Beloved's absence is accepted and she is no longer plagued by the spirit, Sethe is saved by Paul D. and the neighbourhood. The ghost Beloved can help Sethe reconcile her past and current selves so she can be mentally stable by having conversations and providing answers. She is actually attempting to handle a conversation with herself. She does not receive expert assistance from a therapist, but she has the support of her neighbours. They'll be able to relate to her situation and assist her in getting over her sorrow. Even Beloved, who is now a spirit, attempts to aid Sethe:

After moving easily into the family Beloved "has eyes only for Sethe" (Morrison 121). And Sethe opens herself to her since she is part of herself and, therefore, "didn't even have to see the face burning in the sunlight. She had been dreaming it for years" (Morrison132). The guilt-ridden mother is set up from within herself to be played off "like a rag doll, broke down, finally from trying to take care of and make up for (Morrison243). She tried "to persuade Beloved, the one and only person she felt she had to convince, that what she had done was right because it came from true love" (Morrison251). But Beloved looked at her. Uncomprehending everything except that Sethe was the woman who took her face away "(252). Shut up in 124 with Beloved, that is, with herself, it was as though Sethe didn't really want forgiveness given; she wanted it refused. And Beloved helped her out (252).

She finds it difficult to forgive Sethe because of her guilt. She is hesitant to embrace the Beloved's mercy. This is a typical response from neurotics who, ironically, never want

their desires to be fulfilled. Sethe's rejection is problematic since it has an impact on the entire neighbourhood. Sethe struggles to fit in with the neighbourhood and even harbours a ghost, which strains her relationship with Paul D. She will be required to choose between Beloved and the community since it requires functional members. This will cause her to enter the accepting her loss stage of her sorrow and grief process.

### **The Female Ghost's Relation to 124 Bluestone Road**

124 Bluestone Road appears as both a site and a character in the book *Beloved*. Because it was around 124 that *Beloved's* haunting first started, 124 is portrayed as a character throughout the book. Due of the different haunting that readers experience, 124 also takes on the persona of *Beloved*. The house at 124 Bluestone Road initially had little significance beyond serving as Sethe and Denver's residence, but as soon as *Beloved's* ghost started to haunt the property, it quickly took on a new significance. Sethe's home changed when she was made to kill her pregnant child in order to "emancipate" herself from slavery.

Morrison presents *Beloved* as a character in 124 different scenarios by haunting the several inmates of the residence. "Haunting" is a term used to describe a "Tradition maintained that a haunted house or other location and a spirit's restlessness were the two fundamental causes of a haunting «According to the Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology, "Haunting" is a "tradition established two main factors in haunting: an old house or other locale and restlessness of a spirit. The first represents an unbroken link with the past, the second is believed to be caused by remorse over an evil life or by the shock of violent death' (588). Because the restless spirit of *Beloved* takes up such a large portion of Morrison's work, it is easy to overlook the significance of the first factor in a haunting: an old house signifying "an old house representing "an unbroken link with the past"(Schmudde 409). Readers usually miss the fact that *The Beloved* herself is stalking 124 and its inhabitants. 124 is not only a

spooky house. According to Schmutde, the ghostly presence in the old home may have been sparked by shock from a horrific death or regret over a poor life. The thing that follows the house is Beloved's ghost, who is looking to exact revenge for her death. Traditional narratives of haunting from both European and African origins are combined by Morrison. Denver's vision of her mother being embraced by a white dress is comparable to narratives of headless, white-clad spirits that commonly appear in the tales gathered from black people around the beaches of Georgia and South Carolina (Drums and Shadows 6, 19, 29, 44, 60,123). Throughout the whole book, is depicted as a character in 124. (Schmutde 409).

By informing the reader that Beloved is a ghost that inhabits 124, it can be seen how she contributes to the home's characteristics. Along from physically affecting Sethe, Beloved also has an effect on Denver and Paul D through the house that she is haunting in the story.

### **Conclusion**

During the study of this last chapter of the research, the literary ideas related to the difference in the Gothic genre became clear, starting from the traditional elements that revolved around ghost, magic, and fantasy, to the haunted house, or rather the haunted by the unnatural spirit.

After that, the analysis contributed to presenting the novel as a modern literary piece permeated with a set of features, including the dark and dark atmosphere and the permanent ambiguity that always pushes the reader to wonder about what will happen next. Then the study moved to the extent to which women are used as a tool to express imagination and unnatural forces in The novel, and of course the unnatural forces, was by the ghost of a mysterious female named Beloved, who took over the center of Seth's personal life, exhausted by the events of the past, and this is how the ghost took over the house. The study concluded

by presenting a comprehensive reading of the elements of traditional, modern and feminist Gothic literature with a modern feminist literary perspective.

# *General Conclusion*



## General Conclusion

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The present research paper attempted to illustrate the work of *Beloved* Toni Morrison from a gender perspective. The sample novel describing all the pain and overwhelming experiences of African-Americans that had to endure during slavery. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* novel has long been considered the epitome of Gothic fiction since Gothic elements centred on the story, the gothic novel format was one of his means of achieving this in which Morrison addresses concerns about factors in life, primarily social and cultural, as well as the nature of the individual. The study set out to readers that contemporary gothic fiction is based on a past that has many different themes, where such techniques of conveying history seem romantic but also gruesome and fantastical, gothic novels create an atmosphere of suspense when strange events happen to the main same character as what Sethe faced in the novel.

Consequently, Sethe is the main character in the novel she grows up as slave. Her traumatic past comes back to haunt her in House 124. Throughout Sethe's life experiences, she displays great resilience and strength. As Sethe has overcome many difficult circumstances in her life, she is not deterred by the violent or frightening events that may occur. However, the Beloved's return and mere existence deepened Sethe's guilt, fragmentary memories, and loss of motherhood. Although Beloved's presence in the novel is negative, it helps to release Sethe's faults; this point helps Sethe who needs punishment to be rescued. For most of the novel, Sethe faces a multifaceted battle whose psychological and emotional effects have given her the upper hand, along with lingering pain. Sethe, subconsciously, accepts the punishment inflicted by the Beloved; Morrison found this to be essential in a life of misery and pain.

Along with this study, we tried to analyze Morrison's ideas and the coded message behind the novel, as the novel follows the tradition of fear and horror in light of the supernatural and feminist elements, we set out to extract the similarities between the Gothic style and the female elements, even though they look very different from each other. The

## *Conclusion general*

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study focuses more on the female aspect on the one hand and the Gothic supernatural elements on the other, by linking these two sub-genres, what we concluded are that there is a strong relationship between the Gothic type and the female gender.

The aim of this study is to prove that Morrison deals with the female as a superpower in two completely different ways, using the female ghost that haunts the house and the characters as an imaginary force and a tool linking the traumas of the past and the present, and the strength of Seth's personality as a woman who suffered from painful memories and as mother when she decided to kill her daughter. Morrison masterfully combines history and fantasy in a novel that will be read and analyzed from many angles for years to come.

Furthermore, the study tackled with the definition of gothic as genre, its main origins, elements and development, and its characteristics. After that the research examines the gothic structure of the selected novel *Beloved*, from a feminine perspective we analyze the female characters, exploring a major theme that dealt mainly with our topic, signification of the female ghost that haunted the 124 house. Going one step further, we come to analyze the traditional Gothic elements and the ghostly style in which most of the traditional gothic writers employ.

By examining our work, we have come to an answer to our research questions. As an answer to our first question: we can say that Morrison succeeded in joining the female in Gothic literature to express women's issues by relying on the female ghost as an essential element of Gothic in *Beloved*, building on the traditional plot and setting that helped us highlight female characters who were victims of slavery. This was proven in the case of Seth when she was enslaved and under white society when her body was subjected to all kinds of torture. Toni Morrison shows the horror and resistance of women in Southern farms and that's what made them victims. After that, when answering the second research question, we find

## *Conclusion general*

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that the answer is as follows: the ghost is an imaginary element and an element that connects the past and the present, because when the ghost appeared, Seth remembered the painful past that forced her to kill her daughter, and those memories still haunt her like a ghost chasing its victim. Through a comprehensive investigation of the novel, we can say that Morrison portrayed the ghost with two completely different concepts and succeeded in merging them, the fictional Gothic on the one hand, and the psychological trauma that haunts Seth on the other. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is a hauntingly beautiful story set almost after the proclamation of liberation from slavery. It's mysterious and supernatural, in addition to being a love story, a story of horror, forgiveness, loss and confusion. It is very poetic and lyrical, full of metaphors and powerful images.

At the end of the research paper, it is important to mention the most important points that made this research incomplete, either from a comprehensive analysis of the novel or from not developing the basic ideas accurately. The researcher used different sources to complete his topic and to reach his point of view, but some obstacles were encountered during the research process, including not starting early, lack of time, and lack of reliable and academic sources.

# Appendices

# Synopsis 1

*Beloved* is based on the true story of a black slave, Margaret Garner, who escaped from a Kentucky plantation in 1856 with her husband, Robert, and their children. They sought refuge in Ohio, but the homeowner and court officials soon caught up with the family. Before they were recaptured, Margaret killed her young daughter to prevent her from returning to slavery.

This novel is about women named Sethe who is enslaved by white people. During the events of the Civil War, Sethe was the mother of four children and was subjected to slavery; therefore, she kills her child because she does not want him to go through the same sufferings of being enslaved. Sethe isn't the only one to kill her children because of slavery at this point, but there are plenty of mothers who have done the same; they do everything to protect their children from violence and slavery. She escaped from slavery and wanted to free herself from slavery. When she killed her beloved daughter, she said "No more powerful than the way I loved her" (Morrison 11). This may show too much love for the Beloved to allow him to be violently enslaved in any way.

Sethe's house is haunted by the ghost of her daughter. Baby Suggs was the only person in her life who almost understood Sethe's inner conflict and supported the family. Sethe's two sons escaped because Sethe tried to kill them with an ax "The sons, Howard and Buglar, had run away by the time they were thirteen years old" (Morrison 10). They couldn't completely forget their mother's attempt to kill them. Also, they can't deal with hints of a ghost in the house, where all the inhabitants of the house embrace as the returned spirit of the murdered little girl. Denver and Sethe live alone. Past and present are first combined when Paul D, a slave, meets Sethe eighteen years apart. Everyone remembers buried memories and turbulent emotions during their time enslaving others. After Paul D appears to banish evil spirits from the house, another character appears and begins to haunt the house, a mysterious childish woman of unknown origin without clearly describing themselves.

Later in the novel we find out that she is the daughter of Sethe, who has come back to life. The novel gets even more interesting, it continues as Sethe and the Lover build this bond between them, and everyone is pushed out of this relationship. Denver and Paul Dee eventually leave the house. The really sad thing is that not everyone in town likes Sethe, because of what she did to her little daughter, she cut off her baby's head and that's why everyone who doesn't want to be around her but her actions are actually justified because the real reason she killed her little daughter was not because she was cruel or evil but thoughtful because she just wants to protect her kids because she doesn't want them to become some kind of property! She simply did not want her children to become slaves. She hatches this plan to keep her children away from her slave owners, she will kill them all, but ends up killing only one of her own and everyone in town hates her. for taking the life of the one he loved and thinking about doing the same for his other children.

The Beloved's ghostly presence guides the characters, Sethe and Paul D., through their conflicts with the past. The encounter with the Beloved demonstrates that while it is possible to be freed from physical bondage, it is difficult to realize psychological freedom. In the end, however, the Beloved disappears and Sethe ends up embracing her story with all the painful memories.

In telling the story of Sethe, Morrison recounts the painful memories and lives of black people in society. She is passionate about storytelling and tells true stories and the hardships black people face in society. *Beloved* recounts historical events about slavery and describes the cruelty, degradation, and violence that often oppressed slaves, regardless of their gender or even their age. Moreover, it speaks to the reality where African enslaved children have little chance of survival. Most of them were intentionally murdered and others died due to unfortunate circumstances.

# *Synopsis 2*



Toni Morrison, one of the most famous African-American authors, was born in 1931 in Lorain and died in 2019. She is a novelist, university professor and essayist. Her real name is Chloe Anthony Wofford. Morrison earned a Master of Arts degree in English from Cornell University; she is the first African-American woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature and one of the most celebrated authors of the 20th century. Toni Morrison is the voice and conscience of African-American literature, she is a traditional icon. Inspires readers to be better and looks to the horrors of the past so we can have something better in the future.

Morrison's first book, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), was an opening novel about a victimized teenage black girl, obsessed with white beauty standards and yearning for a get blue eyes. In 1973, a second novel, *Sula*, was published; it examines (among other things) the dynamics of friendships and expectations of conformity within the community. *Song of Solomon* (1977) is told by a male narrator in search of his identity; its publication drew national attention to Morrison. *Tar Baby* (1981), set on a Caribbean island, explores conflicts over race, class, and gender.

The central theme of Morrison's novels is the black American experience; In an unjust society, his characters struggle to find themselves and find their cultural identity. His use of imagination, a winding poetic style, and a rich interweaving of mythology give his stories great strength and texture. In 2010, Morrison was made an officer of the French Legion of Honor. Two years later, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by the President of the United States. *Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am* (2019) is a documentary about her life and career.

In particular, most of her pieces of literature have consciously challenged the perceptions that have been placed across history on black women. To encourage the reader to examine their journeys as well as the manner they are portrayed, the characters in her

narratives are brilliantly developed, thus challenging the viewpoint of history which has been formed for women.

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