

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Ain Temouchent - Belhadj Bouchaib



Faculty of Letters, Languages and Social Sciences

Department of Letters and English Language

Dismantling Identity: The Portrayal of Slavery's

Impact in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for a
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilisation*

Submitted by:

Miss Nora Fathala
Miss Souàd Ghorzi

Supervised by:

Dr. Selma Belhamidi

Board of Examiners

President:	Dr. Samira Laoufi	MCB	University of Ain Temouchent
Supervisor:	Dr. Selma Belhamidi	MCB	University of Ain Temouchent
Examiner:	Dr. Assia Benfodda	MCA	University of Ain Temouchent

Academic Year: 2023/2024

Declarations

I hereby declare that this extended essay entitled “Dismantling Identity: The Portrayal of Slavery's Impact in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*” was written by us, Miss Nora Fathala and Miss Souàd Ghorzi under the supervision of Dr. Selma Belhamidi This work will be submitted to the Department of English Letters and Language in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master’s degree in British Literature and Civilization.

Dedications

First of all, thanks to **ALLAH** who gave me the power to end this work. I dedicate this work to my **Mother**, she's the first one who encouraged me and supported me in everything.

To my brothers, Mohamed and Abderrahim, To my sister Yamna and her husband Boualem, to my favorite persons in the whole world my nieces Safaa and Basma. To my uncle and his wife, to my cousins, Fatima, Bouchra, Mouna, Mohamed, and Walid, without forgetting my little angel, Mohamed Kossai.

To my best friends Souàd, Mimouna, Bachir and Amine. To my lovely supervisor Mme Belhamidi Selma.

To my best Iraqi friend Mohammad Majeed thanks for believing, supporting, and helping me, to his brother and my favorite friend Baqer Majeed; thanks, I appreciate everything and I'm so lucky to have you in my life, A big love for my Egyptian friend Menah Ali, thanks for your prayers for me.

To everyone I forget to mention his/her name, believe me, you're in my heart.

Nora

Dedications

Every challenging work needs self-efforts as well as guidance of elders especially those who are very close to our hearts.

Before all, Thanks to **Allah** for guiding and giving me the strength to finish this modest work which I dedicate to the candle of my life who devoted her life to making me happy, my mother.

To my lovely sisters, To the one who offered me trust and support, my bestie Nora.

I also dedicate this work to my team work who has offered me support and motivation. A special dedication goes to my teacher Mohamed Malki, to all my friends who trusted me and encouraged me, and to me.

Souàd

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we are grateful to the Almighty Allah for giving us the power to finish this master's dissertation.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supervisor Dr. Selma Belhamidi for her patience, support, guidance, and valuable comments that helped us during all the time of the research. A special thank also go to the members of the jury Dr. Samira Loaufi and Dr. Assia Benfodda

We're also grateful for Mrs. Zahera Hassaien who has built our knowledge in methodology and encouraged us with her kind and supportive words, who also never hesitated to offer help. I am also indebted to all my teachers who throughout the years shared their knowledge and created unforgettable memories with us.

Abstract

Differences among individuals have always created trouble for those regarded as “the other.” African Americans are no exception, they were and still are racially discriminated. From the time of slavery and even long after its abolition, they were always regarded with inferiority and hatred and rarely enjoyed the status of American citizens. As a consequence, they faced a history full of traumatic experiences that had different physical and psychological impacts on many generations. This work investigates the impact of slavery on the African Americans' identity by referring to Toni Morrison's masterpiece *Beloved*. How Morrison's protagonist exemplifies the experience of slavery lived by many African American slaves is at the heart of this research; shedding light on the traumatic impacts of slavery and the physical abuse to the dehumanization by the white supremacists, which are true hidden facts that were barely present in the books of history, the author endeavors to rewrite the past to highlight its darkest side. *Beloved* works to mirror the consequences of those experiences on those traumatized selves by tackling the darkest element of the protagonist's life. In doing so, Morrison gives voice to the pain and wounds of those African Americans who were never heard.

Key Words: African American Identity, Slavery, Trauma, *Beloved*, Legacy, Memory

Table of Contents

Declarations	I
Dedications.....	II
Acknowledgment.....	IV
Abstract.....	V
Table of Contents	VI
General Introduction	1
Chapter I: Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery’s Role in Identity	
Destruction.....	4
1. Introduction:.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2. Untying the Connection of Slavery and Identity in <i>Beloved</i>	5
3. Slavery as Foundation in the Formation of African American Identity.....	7
4. The Haunting Legacy: Slavery’s Imprint on the African American Community	
9	
4.1. Dehumanization: Stripping the Self from the Enslaved	10
4.2. Enduring Echoes: The Lasting Shadow of Slavery.....	16
5. Conclusion.....	18
Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in <i>Beloved</i>.....	20
1. Introduction	21
2. The Ravages of Slavery on African American Identity	21
3. Deconstructing Identity in <i>Beloved</i>.....	26
3.1. Sethe's Struggle: Escaping the Chains of Her Past.....	27

3.2. Denver's Descent: Losing Identity in Sethe's Shadow	29
3.3. Beloved's Odyssey: Seeking Identity and Its Impact on Sethe and Paul D	
32	
4. Conclusion.....	34
Chapter III :Remnants of psychological abuse in <i>Beloved</i>	35
1. Introduction	36
2. Psychological Trauma.....	36
3. The Enduring Impact of Memory in <i>Beloved</i>	38
4. Healing and search for freedom in <i>Beloved</i>	39
4.1. The Healing Process in Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i> Error! Bookmark not defined.	
4.2. Beloved and the Long Road to Freedom.....	42
5. Conclusion.....	47
General Conclusion.....	49
Works cited	52

General Introduction

General Introduction

General Introduction

African-American literature, produced by writers and poets of African descent, has a rich history dating back to the 18th century. During the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, authors like Toni Morrison gained recognition for their works focusing on social justice, freedom, and racism. This period saw a shift in public perception of race and empowered African-American writers to address issues such as racial discrimination and the contributions of African Americans to American society. The term "black race" replaced the outdated term "Negroes" in these literary works, which served as a counterpoint to traditional American literature. Important works like "Roots" by Alex Haley and "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker received critical acclaim, with Toni Morrison's "Beloved" achieving notable success in terms of sales and awards.

The protagonist of Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*, Sethe, is an African-American woman who is a former slave and seeks to rediscover her own identity through the use of storytelling. She must travel back to her ancestors' stories and her memories of her time on Sweet Home to discover what it means to be free. As she attempts to begin a new life, she is confronted with a multitude of stories from her past, and in whatever form they appear, they define her identity, her daughter's identity, and her partner's identity.

Throughout the novel, the characters must decide whether they will continue to keep their silence, or if they are prepared to confront their past and begin to tell their history. What appears to be a simple task is revealed as a wrenching and frightening ordeal in a world where those who have never shared the same experiences are barely able to comprehend them

This research work aims to answer the following research questions:

- How does Toni Morrison portray the effects of slavery on identity in *Beloved* ?

General Introduction

- In what way do the characters of *Beloved* represent the legacy of slavery on the loss of identity ?
- What are the effects of psychological trauma on the characters ?

it hypothesizes that The impact of slavery on African-American identity ultimately led to the demise of slavery and the division within the African-American community. The mistreatment and denial of basic rights inflicted upon them prevented them from controlling their own decisions and even their own names. This legacy of slavery was passed down through generations, as depicted in the novel "Beloved" with characters like Sethe and her daughter Denver. The psychological trauma from slavery continued to affect the African-American community long after the end of slavery, making it difficult for them to overcome.

This research work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is entitled "Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction". This chapter included the relationship between slavery and identity, which we considered and emphasized as a strong relationship that is very difficult to separate. As the loss of identity was a result of slavery, and if there was no slavery, Africans would not have lost their identity and belonging, it was explained how Toni Morrison portrayed the loss of identity through the novel *Beloved* and how she used it as a gateway to explain the suffering and tragedy that they experienced and made them lose their sense of self and being, in addition to dehumanizing them, then moving on to the permanent legacy of slavery, which was a form of psychological oppression.

The second chapter entitled "Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*", focused on the impact of slavery on identity and how Africans suffered from the bad treatment they were subjected to during the period of slavery and the deprivation of their rights and duties, and referring to one of the reasons for their enslavement, namely their skin color, as

General Introduction

well as their racial discrimination and how they exploited them sexually and psychologically, as happened with Seth when her milk was stolen from her, moving to Denver, the innocent girl who lived under the shadow of her mother's past, and ending with the beloved who was searching for her identity that she lost as a child and was subjected to injustice by her mother.

The content of the third chapter under the title "Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*" included the concept of psychological harm and the suffering of the characters from the impact of psychological trauma, which was a collective inheritance, as it was not limited to the characters of the novel but included all Africans in general, so we touched on memories and their negative effects that constituted a major obstacle in the progress of their lives and kept them under the shadow of the past, which made the characters think about taking a new path, which is to search for self-healing and also for their freedom.

To conclude, the works cited and the methodology in writing, in addition to this research paper format follow the seventh edition of MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

Chapter I:

**Repression and Breakage: Exploring
Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction**

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

1. Introduction

In Toni Morrison's seminal work *Beloved*, the author skillfully presents many social problems during the twentieth century such as identity, slavery, and violence. The novel as a whole is related to life under slavery and its effects on identity, she notes that slavery stops the slaves' progress towards finding their identity, while offering a profound impact of slavery on the African American identity and community.

This chapter delves into the intricate relationship between enslavement and identity formation, examining the way identity was destructed by slavey which was one of the society's major issues of that period, and the profound impact it had on the African American community and how slaves resisted under such harsh and serve way of living.

2. Untying the Connection of Slavery and Identity in *Beloved*

Toni Morrison masterfully explores the intricate relationship between slavery and identity, examines the connection between an enslaved past and the distortion of identity and delving into the ways in which the characters' experiences with slavery have shaped their lives, relationships, and sense of self. Slavery, after all, was a system predicated on dehumanizing and impersonalizing human beings; the system was called for the crushing of the language, family names, culture, and tribal history of the slaves. The enslaved Afro-Americans were treated like objects and were "moved around like checkers" with no respect to filial relationships (*Beloved* 23).

This quote poignantly describes the brutal reality of slavery, where enslaved people like Sethe and her children were treated as commodities, being moved from one place to

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

another without control or agency. The comparison to checkers is significant, as it highlights the lack of control and agency, likening the enslaved to game pieces that are moved around at the whim of their enslavers. The irony of using checkers specifically adds a layer of cruelty, as checkers is typically a game played with predictable movements, whereas the enslaved were subject to unpredictable and violent movements, their lives controlled by others.

In fact, most enslaved Afro-Americans were treated worse than animals. Barbara Schapiro states that “the worst atrocity of slavery, the real horror the novel exposes, is not physical death but psychic death” (156). Under times of slavery, blacks were not allowed to have a sense of self, a sense of individuality or self-worth. The dehumanization which Sethe and Paul D experience as slaves causes them to lose their sense of self-worth and leaves them questioning their existence as humans. These characters do not refuse to look back. Their history haunts them until they finally reconstruct the pieces of themselves and, in the process, embrace love. The ghost in *Beloved* represents the psychological effects of the experiences of slavery repressed by Sethe, Denver, Baby Suggs, and other characters in the novel.

Through themes of trauma, loss, community, internalized oppression, and healing, the novel offers a poignant portrayal of the challenges faced by enslaved African Americans as they navigate the aftermath of enslavement and strives to redefine their identities in the face of adversity. The novel's exploration of trauma and memory highlights the lasting impact of slavery on the characters' lives, as they struggle to come to terms with their past and the intergenerational effects of enslavement. Internalized oppression is another crucial aspect of the relationship between slavery and identity in the novel. The characters grapple

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

with self-hatred and a lack of self-worth, which are consequences of the oppressive system they were forced to endure.

This internalized oppression affects their sense of identity and requires them to confront and overcome it in their journey towards healing and self-discovery. The process of reconstruction and healing in *Beloved* is a complex and challenging journey for the characters as they confront the legacies of slavery, acknowledge the trauma they have endured, and underscores the importance of confronting the past, remembering, and sharing stories in order to reclaim one's identity and heal from the wounds inflicted by slavery.

3. Slavery as Foundation in the Formation of African American Identity

In the majority of her novels, Morrison highlights the importance of identity, the formation of the 'self', and the influence of the environment and society on that development. According to Ron Eyerman in *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American identity* "Cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion".

African slaves were unified by their environment and society's racial oppression, in the case of Morrison's characters in *Beloved* "The trauma in question is slavery, not only as an institution or even an experience, but as a collective memory, a form of remembrance that grounded the identity-formation of a people" (Eyerman 1). Morrison also discusses in her novels her characters' struggle for identity formation. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development "encompasses changes in people's understanding of themselves, one another, and the world around them during the course of development" (Feldman 392).

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

The experiences slaves are able to draw upon, however, are not capable of fulfilling their need for an identity because their experiences and relationships are limited due to the social and racial groups to which they belong. Both men and women are classified by their relation to each other; men's masculinity and women's femininity is based on who defines it and, in the case of the characters in *Beloved*, it is defined by the slave owners and the society in which they live. Because they are denied mature adult relationships, their psychosocial development is delayed and their capacity to understand themselves in relation to one another and society is inhibited. This is an extension of the cultural trauma produced by slavery because, by denying the basic human right to choose sexual partner for physical, emotional, and reproductive reasons, they are denied the ability to develop on a psychosocial level to achieve an understanding of their own identity.

According to Frantz Fanon (1952), the identity of black people was not a self-created one, but it was imposed and defined by the white dominant society in which they lived, mainly based on their skin color. The black people's skin color defined their cultural identity and this statement is the key concept of Fanon's *Facts of Blackness*. He states "in the white man's world, the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. The consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness" (Fanon, 1952, p. 110). He searches for the blacks' self-consciousness in the post-colonial world, and in his opinion, the black problem is the Black community's experience of inferiority created by the white society.

The dominant western society defined the blacks' customs, habits, and traditions as brutal and barbaric; the whites considered themselves as superior humans and justified their colonial labels and slavery on the black people, and forced them to assimilate the white society's

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

habits and customs. In the process of exploring self-consciousness, Fanon sees that black individuals are stuck between the two worlds. Firstly, the world that belongs to their ontology; their ancestors' heritage, traditions, and customs that were almost removed and rejected by the white dominant society because they were in contradiction with the civilization standards defined by them; and secondly, the world which belongs to the white society and does not consider them as human beings.

4. The Haunting Legacy: Slavery's Imprint on the African American Community

The central theme of Morrison's novel *Beloved* is the African-American experience. In this novel, Morrison aims to highlight the suffering of the black community and its aspiration for self-fulfillments and quest for identity. In order to do this, she exposes the issue of slavery on identity, analyzing the historical context and the impact they had on African Americans.

The main concern for Morrison in most of her writings, and specifically in *Beloved*, is to expose the issue of slavery through highlighting it within its historical context, so that people remember this issue and conceive the suffering the African Americans had and feel how it corrupted the lives and identity of those who fell under its oppression. Morrison's writings bring African-Americans experiences and issues to be reconsidered by the audience in a highly qualified literary style. Her writings are inclusive of a wide variety of African-American characters, especially African-American women, whom she often depicts in a way that reveal them as strong and unique personalities who make them best to gain their rights usurped by the community, they have existed in.

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

Morrison, in her novel, tackles this point in particular. It is a novel of “Futile forgetting and persistent remembrance. Operating independently of the conscious will, memory is shown to be an active, constitutive force that has the power to construct and circumscribe identity, both individual and collective...” (Lawrence, 2007, p45). The narrative voice of *Beloved* is mostly here as she relives and memories the distress of her slavery life. Eighteen years have passed since Sethe escaped from Slavery. After her escape to Cincinnati with her four children, Sethe was eventually chased by her old master. Rather than having children return slavery, she attempted to kill all of them, succeeding only in killing her baby girl. She lived with her remaining children and her mother-in-law.

The ghost of the dead baby began to haunt their house, causing to perpetrate Sethe's suffering. She was still haunted by the pain of the past. A girl named *Beloved* came to visit the family, and it gradually became clear that she was the ghost of the dead baby. *Beloved* lives with Sethe proving to be powerful and malicious. On discovering *Beloved*'s identity, Sethe believed that she had been given a second chance. Sethe tried to make amends for the past, but the girl's needs were devouring. The ghost did not forgive Sethe for the actions. A group of women came to force the ghost to leave, but Sethe is almost destroyed.

Toni Morrison succeeds in embodying these concepts in the character of Sethe. portrays the impact of slavery experiences on the memory of society and that of the individual, who is denied in the process any sense of workable and meaningful past, to build relationships in such a bleak, tantalizing, and thwarting existence would seem futile.

4.1. Dehumanization: Stripping the Self from the Enslaved

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

Identity refers to “the enduring aspects of a person's definition of her- or him' self, the conception of who one is and what one is over time and across situations” (Kelman 3). Personal identity is “a cumulative product built up over a person's lifetime experiences” (Kelman 3). According to Erikson, “individuals who reached early adulthood without having established a sense of identity would be incapable of intimacy” (Bee and Boyd 372). Based on Erikson's perception, characters in *Beloved* find difficulty establishing and maintaining any type of intimate relationship due to the abuse and discrimination they deal with throughout their lives. “Identity is a sense of personal continuity and uniqueness based not only on personal need, but also on membership in various groups, such as familial, ethnic and occupational” (Bee and Boyd 372).

According to this quote the characters' identities are fragmented and disrupted by the trauma of slavery, leading to a disconnection from their past and sense of self. Sethe's identity is tied to her experiences as a slave and her relationships with her family members, while Denver's identity is shaped by her mixed-race heritage and her mother's traumatic past. The novel highlights the complexities of identity, showing how it is formed through multiple factors, including personal experiences, cultural background, and social affiliations, which can be disrupted by trauma and silenced or erased by those in power.

African slaves were not only discriminated for belonging to their racial group, but also for being slaves and belonging to that social group. Since these group identities, in addition to satisfying the need for affiliation, help people define themselves, not only in their own eyes but in the eyes of others, it is clear why the characters in Morrison's novels find difficulty in forming a personal identity. In the eyes of others, they are subhuman, and this in turn affects how they see themselves because they have internalized society's racism.

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

In *Beloved*, Paul D, one of the main characters, internalizes the mistreatment he experiences for years and, despite his inner strength and motivation to persevere, that dehumanization transforms him into an unemotional man with a fractured identity. After attempting to murder one of his owners, Paul D is sent to a place Morrison describes as similar to a prison: "the ditches; the one thousand feet of earth ' five feet deep, five feet wide, into which wooden boxes had been fitted. A door of bars that you could lift on hinges like a cage opened into three walls and a roof of scrap lumber and red dirt' (*Beloved*125).

Paul D and the forty-five members forced to work on the chain gang alongside of him were subjected to humiliating treatment along with physical and sexual abuse. He locks away his memories in a tobacco tin-heart, rusted shut from years of abuse and repression. Paul D internalizes the discrimination inflicted upon him and is emasculated to such an extent that he believes he is unworthy of human attachment.

As in the case of Sethe, the protagonist in *Beloved*, the dehumanization of female slaves deprives those characters of their femininity by denying them motherhood. It was customary for infants born into slavery to be removed from their mothers as soon as possible to disallow any chance to form emotional attachment. In his autobiography, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave*, Douglass refers to this separation "Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it' For what this separation is done, I do not know, unless it be to hinder the development of the child's affection toward its mother, and to blunt the natural affection of the mother for the child. This is the inevitable result" (Douglass 17-18). This quote highlights the brutal treatment of enslaved mothers and children during slavery, it suggests that slave owners deliberately separated enslaved children from their mothers to prevent emotional attachments, ultimately blunting the natural affection

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

between mothers and children. In "Beloved", this practice is exemplified through Sethe's forced separation from her daughter Beloved, which has a profound impact on her psyche and ability to form attachments with others.

The novel explores the devastating consequences of this traumatic experience on enslaved mothers and children, highlighting the long-lasting effects of slavery on individuals and communities. Through Sethe's story, Morrison illustrates the struggle for African American mothers and children to reclaim their identities and form healthy attachments in a society that has historically sought to erase their humanity. Many African slaves were influenced by West African motherhood practices in which the individual mother is valued, but the act of mothering was a collective communal process.

According to Patricia Hill Collins in her article 'The Meaning of Motherhood in Black Culture and Black Mother/Daughter Relationships', a woman has no choice but to evaluate her identity based upon motherhood: 'The cult of true womanhood emphasizes motherhood as a woman's highest calling. It stresses a motherhood that is confined to the home and children, under the protection of a husband' (Williams 164). When viewing this theory through the lens of slavery, it is apparent that African female slaves had little to no chance to form a mother-identity: "the idea of the cult of true womanhood has been held up to Black women for emulation, and racial oppression has denied black family's significant resources to support private nuclear family households" (Williams 164). In *Beloved*, the characters are denied not only nuclear family households, but also the base human instinct to care for their children, Sethe not only experiences separation from her children because she sacrifices her own wellbeing to send them to safety, but, as a "direct attack on her as a Black mother" (Williams 164), she is also robbed of her breast milk, the essence of her motherhood, in a very animalistic fashion.

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

Throughout the novel, Sethe focuses on her milk and the life-force she is naturally supplied with: 'All I knew was I had to get my milk to my baby girl. Nobody was going to nurse her like me. Nobody was going to get it to her fast enough, or take it away when she had enough and didn't know it. Nobody knew that she couldn't pass her air if you held her up on your shoulder, only if she was lying on my knees. Nobody knew that but me and nobody had her milk but me.' (*Beloved* 19). The quote is a powerful expression of maternal love and devotion. Sethe asserts her authority as a mother, emphasizing her unique knowledge and skills in caring for her baby, and refuses to relinquish control over her child's care, even in the face of the traumatic events that have shaped her life. This quote serves as a testament to the complex emotional landscape of Sethe's character and can be seen as a statement of self-empowerment, as well as a counterpoint to the institution of slavery, which sought to deny enslaved women their autonomy and agency, including their ability to care for their own children.

While talking about her past with her daughter, Denver, Sethe describes the event: "After I left you, those boys came in there and took my milk. That's what they came in there for. Held me down and took it." (*Beloved* 19). Sethe continues to focus on this memory because breast milk is the only part of her related to motherhood, she thinks is safe from white people. Her milk, the substance that would sustain her child's life, is the one thing that truly belongs to her, but when the white boys take it from her, they diminished her worth as a woman, a mother, and a human being. Female slaves are not the only slaves being dehumanized. Male slaves are denied the ability to identify themselves as masculine or, for that matter, human. Mr. Garner, the original owner of the plantation Sweet Home where Sethe and Paul D lived, allows his male slaves to feel like men: 'The Garners, it seemed to Sethe, ran a special kind of slavery,

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

treating them like paid labour, listening to what they said, teaching what they wanted to know' (*Beloved* 165).

Even though the method by which Mr. Garner runs his plantation seems positive, he too 'dramatizes the numerous ways in which the white slavocracy exercises its power to define the experience and identity of slaves' (Peterson 63). The slaves are allowed to feel artificially masculine because they are only granted secondary characteristics of masculinity. Mr. Garner allows them to carry guns, learn to read, and grants them the privilege of sexual agency but allowing Sethe to choose her partner and husband, Halle. These are all secondary characteristics of masculinity because the feeling of masculinity, and femininity as well, comes from within. In fact, while Mr. Garner permits them to act like men through these secondary characteristics, he in effect owns their masculinity and denies their ability to internalize their identity as men: 'Even a benevolent slaveholder like Mr. Garner employs this privilege of definition: he boasts to other slaveholders that unlike them he has 'men' who work for him. His power to name his slaves 'men', however, calls into question their very experience of manhood' (Peterson 63). Since the male slaves on Sweet Home plantation need permission to act like men, the process of labelling themselves as such is artificial as well.

The slaves' experience with masculinity is short lived, however. After Mrs. Garner's brother-in-law, a man the slaves refer to as 'schoolteacher', gains control of Sweet Home, the men are denied secondary masculine characteristics: "Paul D grew up thinking that, of all the Blacks in Kentucky, only the five of them were men. Allowed, encouraged to correct Garner, even defy him. To invent ways of doing things; to see what was needed and attack it without permission. To buy a mother, choose a horse or a wife, handle guns, even learn reading if they wanted to". (*Beloved* 147) The quote highlights the oppressive environment and limited

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

opportunities afforded to enslaved people, particularly men, who were expected to perform manual labor and were denied the same rights as their enslavers. It also touches on the complexities of gender roles during slavery, where women were expected to perform domestic work and care for children, while men were expected to work in the fields. The quote emphasizes the dehumanizing effects of slavery, which erased the humanity and dignity of enslaved people, particularly men, and underscores the importance of agency and autonomy in shaping one's own life.

Schoolteacher strips them of anything that makes them feel more powerful as men: by taking away their guns, he takes away their ability to hunt for food or protect themselves; by denying them the ability to learn to read, he guarantees their stay at Sweet Home. With every ounce of pride schoolteacher takes away from the men of Sweet Home, his power grows exponentially while that of the slaves grows weaker. The dehumanization of the slaves in *Beloved* extends beyond the denial of basic human desires, such as motherhood, or the identification of one's own femininity or masculinity, and progresses into the categorization of slaves as animals. While Sethe is living at Sweet Home, she overhears schoolteacher during a lesson with his nephews. As schoolteacher instructs the pupils to list the characteristics of the slaves and sort these characteristics into categories, human and animal, he is teaching the children to ignore the humanity of the slaves and to use their social and racial group against them.

4.2. Enduring Echoes: The Lasting Shadow of Slavery

As Morrison unveils the impact of slavery, she focuses her stories on the aftermath of enslavement and psychological effects on slaves, besides destroying identity, slavery creates an unpleasant past that still haunts the freemen by evoking memories for example, Sethe escaped

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

slavery but is still in pain from “every mention of her past life”, her life as a slave. The trauma of slavery is such that no one touched by it is able to break free of the past, even years after physical liberation. This is true of the novel's protagonist, Sethe, attempts to murder all four children, murdering her two-year-old daughter in the process, in order to protect her from the legacy of slavery and spare them all the life of subjugation and violence with which she was very well acquainted.

Traumatized by the manifold atrocities of slavery (displacement, isolation, oppression, violence), Sethe's own memories are a constant source of re-injury, and her unresolved pain manifests in an anguished consciousness and a "haunted" present. The angry ghost of her murdered daughter plagues Sethe's home at 124 Bluestone Road, both signifying and perpetuating the displacement, isolation, oppression and violence of slavery into Sethe's "free" life. This ghost is metonymic, for she is not only the ghost of the individual victim, Beloved, or even of all the victims whose stories have not been told, but she is metonymic of all the unhealed wounds the survivors and their descendants still carry. How this ghost may be laid to rest can also heal Sethe and her remaining family, and can also redeem the African-American community in Cincinnati, as the legacy of slavery is significant enough to degrade their souls.

More significantly, Morrison includes the destruction of family, an important aspect of the dehumanization of slavery, in *Beloved*. Morrison writes, “To love anything that much was dangerous, especially if it was her children” because separation always follows. Paul D, who reunites with Sethe, believes that “For a used-to-be-slave woman to love anything that much was dangerous, especially if it was her children, she had settled on to love. The best thing, he knew, was to love just a little bit, so when they broke its back...you'd have a little love left over

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

for the next one.” He understands well that slavery forces parents to discard their love to avoid future sorrow.

African Americans have borne the enduring burdens of slavery, their souls forever marked by its indelible imprint. This historical legacy continues to reverberate through their daily experiences. Morrison identifies slavery's roots deeply intertwined with the African American historical through shedding light on the past's unexplained or unclear elements making the past simultaneously haunting and resurfacing [15], and emphasizes the necessity of memory as a double-edged sword. While acknowledging the horror of the past, she advocates for a memory that is constructive and non-destructive [12]. This quote highlights the intricate connection between slavery and the African American experience, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging and understanding the past in order to move forward. The quote suggests that the roots of slavery are deeply embedded in the historical experiences of African Americans, and that these roots continue to haunt and resurface in the present.

Morrison perceives slavery's memory as an ever-present ghost, profoundly affecting the present and future of African Americans. *Beloved* brilliantly captures the legacy of slavery and the challenges of healing the psychic wounds wrought by trauma. The author represents what the legacy of slavery is capable of: it can tear families apart, destroy one's spirit and identity, and even force parents to conduct the most immoral act of humanity and makes Their lives are forever entangled with the brutality and dehumanization of slavery, and they bear the weight of that history in the form of ghosts, memories, and psychological scars.

5. Conclusion

Repression and Breakage: Exploring Slavery's Role in Identity Destruction

Toni Morrison sought to embody the reality of Negroes who lived under the banner of slavery and were unable to prove their existence in reality, due to the treatment they were suffering from at the hands of whites. In this chapter, attention is converged upon discussion of the exploring the relationship between slavery and identity and her influence on the identity of the African American community and their sense of self and left a lasting legacy of the traumatic collective past of the black community as slaves. Toni Morrison showed through her characters the real nature of slavery, she made it clear just how awful and atrocious the consequences of slavery can be and she depicted them in that manner through illustrate how slavery stripped Black individuals of their dignity, history, and cultural heritage, ultimately resulting in a deep sense of fragmentation and loss.

Chapter II:
Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of
Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

1. Introduction

According to Jenkins "Identity refers to how individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities", which means that identity is a unique characteristic or attribute that differentiates individuals or groups from others in their social interactions. Essentially, it's how we recognize and understand ourselves and others within our social contexts. This definition highlights that identity is not a fixed or singular concept but rather a complex interplay of various factors that shape our social relations with others.

The novel *Beloved* explores the impact of slavery on one's sense of identity, showing how interactions and relationships are limited by social and racial groups. Men and women are defined by their roles and relationships, such as slave owners or society itself. This hindered psychosocial development leads to a lack of understanding of their own identity and belonging. The deprivation of basic rights leaves them ignorant of their affiliations and connections to any particular group.

2. The Ravages of Slavery on African American Identity

African American refers to a person who is an American citizen or resident with African heritage. a phrase created to the negative connotations attached to terms like "black" and "negro." During the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and British colonial periods, as well as the first eight decades of the United States of America, an estimated 10 to 12 million slaves of African descent were forcibly transported to the Americas. Their cultural ties to Africa have been lost or distorted, and their original gene pools—primarily from West and East Africa—

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

have been mixed with those of their European slave owners. However, some genetic traits—such as the sickle cell trait and some lineages' tall stature—have persisted.

The group that endured slavery suffered severe violations, including being deprived of their basic right to safety. They faced genocide and extreme racism, losing their identity in the process. Even after slavery was abolished, their existence and identity continued to be undermined. This led to a constant struggle with the question of identity, affecting not only their own lives but also their descendants. Many saw themselves as 'free slaves' rather than truly independent individuals. An anecdote of an abolitionist asking a slave who they were highlights the profound impact of slavery on a nation grappling with its history of brutality and oppression.

Harriet Jacobs, in her book “Incident in the Life of Slave a Girl” mentions how slavery has broken the African American identity and how their simple rights were taken away from them, which every individual is obligated to enjoy:

But he was my master. I was compelled to live under the same roof with him where I saw a man forty years my senior daily violating the most sacred commandments of nature. He told me I was his property; that I must be subject to his will in all things. My soul revolted against the mean tyranny. But where could I turn for protection? No matter whether the slave girl be as black as ebony or as fair as her mistress. In either case, there is no shadow of law to protect her from insult, from violence, or even from death; all these are inflicted by fiends who bear the shape of men. The mistress, who ought to protect the helpless victim, has no other feelings towards her but those of jealousy and rage. The degradation, the wrongs, the vices, that grow out of slavery, are more than I can describe. They are greater than you would willingly believe. . (1861)

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

Harriet Jacobs portrayed the moral injustice and the dark side of slavery, which led to the absence of rights and duties for slaves, especially women, who suffered more than they could bear, and also explained the inhuman experience that everyone had to live against his will and above his will, and also added that they were treated with great oppression and they are only property, they have no freedom of opinion and expression.

Jacobs expressed this in an angry tone and conveyed a great sense of not accepting or keeping up with the matter, which is the result of the inability to do or act anything about it, and also pointed to and even clarified the idea that slaves do not act of their own free will, but obey the orders of their masters under great pressure and are forced to do so. They do everything without rejection or objection to it, and this greatly affected their loss of identity, lack of belonging to their origin or even self-defence.

Skin color was a tool to justify slavery in the Americas. The Portuguese and Spanish were among the first to bring African slaves to the Americas. In 1542, the enslavement of indigenous people in the New World territories was made illegal by the government of Spain, an action that greatly expanded and facilitated the primary use of Africans in the North American transatlantic slave trade. As David Brion Davis (2008) has said, "It was not until the seventeenth century... that new global slavery began to be closely associated with people of black African descent." This indicates the temporal connection or the period of time in which they began to exploit slaves psychologically and physically, and that their exploitation to serve the Americans was not only in the seventeenth century but rather this began since the beginning of black-skinned people or since the beginning of African society.

Kevin Bales pointed out a very precise idea or term about the extent of exploitation of Africans and the extent of society's cruelty in robbing them of their identity and freedom and

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

even treating them like “animals” and burying their talents because they were satisfied with them as slaves and wanted to remain their slaves to meet their requirements and he said: “It's as if all identity has stolen from them, except their identity as slaves”.

He emphasizes that the slaves were completely stripped of their identity, except for their identity as mere slaves, which means that their history and culture were forcibly taken from them and nothing was left of them. He highlights the profound impact of slavery and how it ended and eliminated the identity of an entire society. But even on their intrinsic value as a human being who has the right to decide his life and its destiny, and this is exactly what the African-American community has lost.

The most common thing in the case was taking away their names, changing them, and stripping them of themselves. The masters used to give insulting and disgusting names to the African slaves in order to reduce their value and destroy their self-confidence. There were many names that described them as animals, and many of the masters were they choose special names for their slaves in order to make it clear that they are the private property of their masters. and that the slave is not responsible for himself because his only task is to bow to his master's orders without discussing how and why.

“During slavery, the same slave master who owned us put his last name on us to denote that we were his property. So when you see a negro today who's named Johnson, if you go back in his history, you will find that his grandfather, or one of his forefathers, was owned by a white man who was named Johnson. If his name was Bunch, his grandfather was owned by a white man that was named Bunch.” (Malcolm X)

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

Malcolm X highlighted the enduring effect of servitude on African American character and names. He focuses out that numerous African Americans nowadays bear the titles of previous slave aces This serves as a powerful reminder of the dehumanization and ownership that was imposed on African Americans during slavery. In its emphasis on the enduring legacy of slavery and the ways in which it shaped African American identity. By noting the origins of many African American surnames.

The masters stripped the slaves of their mother tongue and forced them to speak English, and this was confirmed by linguistics professor John Rickford when he stated that the owners of southern plantations were afraid when they heard the slaves speaking their mother tongue, and the reason for their fear was their belief that they were conspiring against them to overthrow and assassinate them, and this is what made The masters act harshly until they force the slaves to use the English language for two basic reasons: Stripping them of their mother tongue and erasing their culture and identity, so that the masters feel comfortable and not afraid of the plots of the slaves. The slaves were not very interested in the English language because they wanted to hold on to their language and be proud of it. Although the majority of the slaves were fluent in the English language well, they would hide it and pretend that they only understood a little. They would even read the news to find out what was new without any of the masters knowing. This is what Frederick Douglass expressed, saying: "Ignorance is a high virtue in a human chattel"

The quote highlights the significance of how those in power perpetuate systems of oppression by keeping those they oppress in a state of ignorance. By promoting ignorance, the oppressors maintain control and limit the ability of the oppressed to challenge their circumstances. This is exactly what the slaves were seeking, because they were aware that the

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

masters wanted them to be ignorant, unable to read or write, so that they would not be aware of the conspiracies going on around them, and so that they would not be able to eavesdrop on them and hear their secrets. Therefore, they always wanted them to be submissive to them, and the answer was always. “Yes sir” “Thank you sir”.

3. Deconstructing Identity in *Beloved*

The novel *Beloved* is one of the common novels that express identity and the suffering of slaves, and this is what Toni Morrison embodied through Sethe and how she lived her period of slavery and her escape from that miserable life. The treatment of slaves by masters contributed greatly to the destruction of identity, and Toni Morrison focused on this during her novel.

Morrison focused greatly on the manifestations of the destruction of slavery and how Africans became lost in the cycle of slavery that deprived them of their human rights and duties and even the inequality between them and the masters who considered blacks their private property and that they didn't belong to anything and were created to be slaves only.

Slavery had a major role in the psychological and physical harm that continued to haunt the slaves even after their freedom was taken and they no longer felt like themselves and that they were just a commodity that the masters could use however they wanted. As a clarification to the above, the school teacher's punishment was very severe, especially on Sixo, who burned him without any pity, and also whipped Sethe on her back after she exposed his relatives when they sexually assaulted her, the school teacher's reaction was not out of nowhere, but as a warning or a stern warning to them so that others do not dare to oppose their masters or stand up to them.

3.1. Sethe's Struggle: Escaping the Chains of Her Past

Sethe is the protagonist of the novel, a woman who's escaped from the slavery from the schoolteacher who was cruel to her. the black community or to be more specified the black women has suffer a lot during their slavery trade, Sethe is a symbol of that black women who suffers a lot and being a slave left on her physical scars and mental problems.

She was raped by schoolteacher nephews and when she complained from them he flogged cruelly like animal and that flog left on her back scars like a tree, Sethe can't handle this pain anymore, especially when they took her milk when she was pregnant by her first daughter:

‘They used cowhide on you?’

‘And they took my milk.’

‘They beat you and you was pregnant?’

‘And they took my milk!’ (Morrison 20).

Milk symbolizes the strong and interconnected relationship between the mother and her child, and according to Seth’s belief, since they dared to take the milk, which is essentially the infant’s right, they are able to take the child and treat him as harshly as possible.

The repetition of the word “They took my milk” is evidence of the extent to which Sethi was affected by the situation she was forced to live in while she was a slave. Despite all this pain that she suffered, she endured the physical pain and could not bear the idea of her children living the same situation as her, or even of them being slaves. Since she was a person who had lost her identity and belonging, she saw it as a great injustice for her children to lose their freedom and identity, and this is what made her kill her infant daughter, believing that by doing

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

so she had mercy on her from being a servant or slave to anyone, and that she had done the right thing for her child:

“How if I hadn’t killed her, she would have died and that is something I could not bear to happen to her. When I explain it, she’ll understand, because she understands everything already” (1987)

The quotation uncovers a powerful sense of guilt and deep desperation. Sethe, attempting to justify her act of murdering her own baby daughter, declares that she had done it for love's sake, because she had believed in the child's better life beyond the slave system. The quotation also reveals a form of self-denial and illusion as Sethe convinces herself that her daughter will comprehend and pardon her for her act.

The quote from the book *So Black and Blue: Ralph Ellison and the Occasion of Criticism* “a mother could cut the throat of one of her children in an attempt to kill them all to avoid having them returned to slavery”(79) it explores the complex moral dilemmas faced by the character Sethe in relation to themes of love, sacrifice, and the impacts of slavery. It suggests that a mother's extreme actions, such as contemplating murder to protect her children from the horrors of slavery, are driven by a deep sense of love and fear for their well-being. Other researchers and critical writers, including Adriana in her book *Toni Morrison's Novel Beloved*, argue that Sethe's behavior is a natural response grounded in motherhood.

Sethe tried hard to escape from her past, but the power of the memories made her immersed in her swamp and made her guilt follow her throughout her life, and this greatly affected her and her introverted daughter, Denver, especially since they believed that the ghost of Beloved continued to haunt them.

3.2. Denver's Descent: Losing Identity in Sethe's Shadow

Denver is Sethe's daughter and the only one who stayed with her after Howard and Buglar escaped from 124 house. The house was like a ghost cemetery for them. She was born during Sethe's escape to get her freedom, her name belongs to Amy Denver, the white girl who helped Sethe during her birth.

Denver lives in isolation with her memories, the only sibling born in freedom. Her mother Sethe's past as a slave influences Denver's life, as Sethe forces her to stay away from others. Denver creates her own way of living, with a secret place in the woods. She feels completely separated from the outside world, taking solace in the presence of a ghost as a friend. However, when the ghost disappears after Paul D arrives, Denver's source of happiness also vanishes.

Despite the painful situation, her biggest fear was that Sethe would kill her like she did to her sister. The idea remained in her mind that her mother had committed a crime and she was confused that her fate would be like her sister:

"I love my mother but I know she killed one of her own daughters, and tender as she is with me, I'm scared of her because of it" (205)

"All the time, I'm afraid the thing that happened that made it all right for my mother to kill my sister could happen again" (242)

Denver's dream was to have a better present and future than the past, because the pain of the past and Sethe's constant fear was not Denver's fault. She was never able to overcome their inheritance as slaves or live free. The poor girl remained between two opposite parts, with

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

no bright past and no present to be proud of and this was negatively reflected in the creation of Denver's quiet, introverted personality.

What made matters worse and contributed to the destruction of Sethe's relationship with Denver was the sudden arrival of Paul D. It made Denver feel as if she no longer belonged in this house. Denver had tolerated the presence of the ghost, but she could not bear Paul D's presence with them in the house, so Denver did not conceal the matter, but rather expressed her feeling hopeless and rejected, she told her mother: "I can't live here. I don't know where to go or what to do, but I can't live here" (17). The quote expresses a sense of discomfort, dissatisfaction, and perhaps even desperation. Denver feels lost and unable to continue living in her current situation. "can't" emphasizes the intensity of her emotions and the urgency of her need to leave.

Sethe did not care much about Denver's opinion because she knew that she was a strong girl and Paul D's presence would not affect her negatively, because Sethe saw it as her duty to keep Paul D with them because the house needed a man to support him, especially since the ghost thing had become scary for them, and Sethe admitted to Paul D that Denver is not an ordinary girl, and she's endured things beyond her years, although she did not live through the period of slavery, but she suffered greatly from the horrors of this period and its remnants. She confirmed that to Paul D and said: "'Don't worry about her. She's a charmed child. From the beginning'" (50) Paul D tries to make Sethe reassured about Denver, and he also tries to convince her that Denver is a strong and intelligent girl and that her isolation from the world will not harm her. Even Paul D's presence will not make a difference in her life because she has gone through more difficult periods than these and has overcome them.

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

After all the psychological conflicts that Denver experienced, the appearance of Beloved made a big difference in Denver's life and affected her in a positive way. This is what made her come out of her isolation and pay attention to the outside world a little to feel herself and her existence, and she even began to feel that she was responsible for Beloved and it was her duty to take care of her. She started to admire her and get used to her presence.

The feeling of responsibility that Denver felt towards Beloved was out of brotherhood because Denver saw that Beloved was the spirit of her sister, who was killed by Seth when she was young. Therefore, she took great care of her and treated her with intense love. She even felt jealous of Beloved's love for Seth, and because most of her time was with her. She began to feel again that her existence had meaning in this life and that she had come out from under Seth's wing, which she had remained under throughout her life, and because Denver had lived for a long time as ownership of Seth's decisions, she began to see that Beloved was her property and that no one could approach her or take it from her.

"I do. Love her. I do. She played with me and always came to be with me whenever I needed her. She's mine, Beloved. She's mine." (209)

Denver's deep love and possessiveness towards Beloved are evident in the quote, particularly through the use of repetition to emphasize their strong feelings. The mention of a special connection and the possessive phrase "She's mine, Beloved. She's mine." suggests a sense of ownership and control, possibly stemming from insecurity or fear of loss. The emotional and passionate tone, mixed with vulnerability, conveys intensity and devotion, but also hints at potential complexities in the relationship dynamic.

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

After 12 years Denver left the 124-house searching for food and a job that will help them to live in good situation she's also wants to know more about the outside and how life is going on out of her house, she was afraid from white people and couldn't complete her mission to find help but the soul of her grandmother baby Suggs helps her and pushes her to complete her road. Due to she was live in isolation her isolated character has strongly appear when she goes alone, she was scared from white people because she hears a lot of stories from mother about them and how much they are selfish and bad people. Even when she was far from her mother the shades of Sethe were following her throughout her whole trip,

3.3. Beloved's Odyssey: Seeking Identity and Its Impact on Sethe and Paul D

Beloved is the spirit of Sethe's daughter, whom she killed during the period of slavery. This is what the novel's characters see her as an embodiment of the two years old murdered child. The appearance of Beloved in the novel greatly expresses the past, Sethe's life, and the mistakes she committed in the past. Here, Beloved lost her identity and her existence as a member of society because her exposure to murder made her a block of the past, or more precisely, made her just a memory and a punishment for Sethe, and that punishment had been following her for many years. Even after she was freed from slavery, but she was not freed from the guilt of killing her infant daughter.

Pamela B. June states that; "Most obviously, Beloved's scar on her neck reveals her identity as the daughter murdered by Sethe" (June 24), The poor girl did not suffer from being deprived of life and identity, which, as we mentioned previously, is the basis of every human being's existence. Rather, she also suffered before her death as a result of the method of killing

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

that Sethe chose for her by ending her life, and this was brought to his attention by Paul D. that Sethe used a handsaw to kill her infant, who was only two years old.

The appearance of Beloved in the novel had a profound impact on the characters, particularly Sethe. Sethe felt as though her daughter's spirit had returned to seek revenge and find peace. Beloved's mysterious and disturbing behavior initially overwhelmed Sethe, causing her to doubt her ability to love and care for her. However, Sethe's love eventually triumphed over her fears, allowing her to nurture her relationship with Beloved. Despite Beloved's deep love for Sethe, her greatest fear was losing her and she sought to support and protect her at all costs. "In the beginning I could see her I could not help her because the clouds were in the way" (211).

The daughter's deep love for her mother led her to abandon thoughts of revenge and instead strive to be a caregiver. Returning in the body of a young girl, she seemed intent on making up for the lost years and stolen identity of her childhood. Driven by her intense love for her mother, she desired all that Seth had, excluding others from her affections. Beloved deliberately kept Paul D at a distance from Seth, forming a relationship with him to isolate Seth further. Beloved's impact on Paul D was profound, coercing him into a sexual relationship against his will. This violation of his agency diminished his masculinity, leaving him with no choice but to comply with her desires.

Darius A. Paduch, Laurent Vaucher state that the distinct or complex neuropsychological factors such as hormones, energy levels, health, social norms, emotional stability, and desires all have an impact on sex drive. For both men and women alike. this is exactly what happened to Paul D, who was resisting Beloved and then surrendered to her and submitted to the reality out of his instinct and desire as a man. The narrator also explains Paul

Chapter II: Unveiling Identity: An Analysis of Slavery's Effects in *Beloved*

d's situation and how he sees himself when he realize that a young girl raped him and forced herself on him while he couldn't stop her or stop what happen to him or even he couldn't defend on himself:

“His strength had lain in knowing that schoolteacher was wrong. Now he wondered. There was Alfred, Georgia, there was Delaware, there was Sixo and still he wondered. If schoolteacher was right it explained how he had come to be a rag doll---picked up and put back down anywhere any time by a girl young enough to be his daughter” (148). Paul D began to compare himself with his friends who were also raped against their will, but the difference in the matter is that Paul D was raped by a girl who was years younger than him or the age of his daughter. This made him feel ashamed of himself.

4. Conclusion

As a conclusion to this chapter, we have become able to realize that slavery was the most fulfilling period that the African-American community experienced, and that is because of its damage that targeted their identity and robbed them of their rights and duties, even their language, which they were no longer able to speak. Not only that, but it also caused narcolepsy and physical diseases and continued to haunt them until the period after Slavery, and this is what we saw in the novel *Beloved*, which dealt with several topics, the most important of which is also the feeling of guilt that no one can get rid of easily. This is what Morrison indicated through Sethe, and that the conditions that they lived or are living now do not prevent falling in love or deprive the person from His happiness which is embodied in the relationship between Paul D and Seth, which was almost impossible.

Chapter III

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in

Beloved

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

1. Introduction

The novel *Beloved* expands on the topic of violence and psychological harm and depicts for us the permanent repercussions of slavery, as well as the psychological trauma of all the characters. Delving deeper into this topic highlights or clarifies the cruelty that the mind cannot accept or even imagine, and this is exactly what we focused on in revealing the truth of the matter. With great precision and how the characters behaved about this matter, this is what made the narrator shed light on the interconnection between the characters' struggle to get rid of this violence and their desperate need for self-healing despite the remnants of the psychological harm that continued to haunt them through feelings of guilt and returning to painful memories of their past, especially in the context of slavery and its lasting consequences.

2. Psychological Trauma

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* studies the issues of abuse and psychological harm as key themes, focusing on the ongoing shadow of slavery as well as the psychological trauma experienced by each of the characters. Not only that, but it also depicted the manifestations of physical harm and how the African-American community was oppressed under the so-called term slavery, and this made the characters spiritually and psychologically affected.

Seth is a central character in the novel who endured the horrors of slavery and severe psychological and physical torment. This traumatic past has left a lasting impact on her, making it difficult for her to heal and move on. Despite her quest for self-liberation, the guilt of killing her own child remains a burden that haunts her and hinders her ability to move forward.

Seth suffered physical harm in the form of scars from a whip on her back, a reminder of the trauma of rape she endured. Her husband, Halle, experienced psychological distress upon learning of the attack. Paul D reassured Seth that Halle was present during the assault but unable

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

to intervene. This left Halle feeling helpless and unable to protect his wife's honor, deepening his emotional trauma.: "...Last time I saw him he was sitting by the churn. He had butter all over his face" (82). After that Sethe states "...There is also my husband squatting by the churn smearing the butter as well as its clabber all over his face because the milk they took is on his mind. And as far as he is concerned, the world may as well know it" (83). Halle and Seth were affected by a traumatic event, causing Halle to use black humor to cope with her frustration. She understood Seth's behavior stemmed from his psychological wounds from slavery.

Judith Herman, a psychiatrist, explains that traumatic events overwhelm human adaptation to life. Trauma involves threats to life, bodily integrity, violence, and death, leading to helplessness and terror. Psychological trauma has a lasting impact on individuals, as seen in characters like Sethe, Paul D, and Denver in the novel. Despite their strength, they struggle to overcome the effects of trauma, which lingers even after physical liberation from slavery.

Paul D also faced many problems, as well as suffering from the cruelty that he lived as a slave and was subjected to physical abuse by his Masters, and then he was sold to a cruel person who treated him like an animal and always underestimated his value and did not consider him a human being, this made Paul d become an aggressive person because of and his going into isolation and depression. "I'd ever be Paul D again, living or dead. Schoolteacher changed me. I was something else and that something was less than a chicken sitting in the sun on a tub" (86). Sethe was not the only victim of the school teacher, as well as Paul D. who faced the same harm from the same person which hurt him to suffer psychological and physical trauma, just like Sethe's case.

The matter was not limited to adults only, but even Denver, an innocent young girl, was not spared from psychological trauma, in her case it is different from Paul D and Seth because, fortunately, she did not live through the period of slavery, but her trauma was caused by the

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

crime of her mother make her live in circle of fear "She cut my head off every night" (243). the crime remained in her mind, which caused her a state of panic and psychological instability, and she also began to imagine things out of fear that she would be the next victim.

3. The Enduring Impact of Memory in *Beloved*

Memories are one of the most important things that the brain stores, but if these memories carry pain and harsh events, they may become like a ghost that haunts that person from one place to another, and may make a person always confused and thinking a lot about the past without progress or development in his current life. Dolcos asserts that "Sometimes we dwell on how sad, embarrassed, or hurt we felt during an event, and that makes us feel worse and worse. This is what happens in clinical depression—ruminating on the negative aspects of a memory" This is what exactly happens with *Beloved* characters because their gathering in one place makes them remember the events of the past and the horrors of slavery, and this is what keeps the memories always present despite the passage of several years.

The novel explores how characters are haunted by their past and painful memories, especially after Paul D arrives at Sethe's house. His presence triggers a flood of memories from their time in slavery, with each character carrying the weight of their traumatic past. Sethe is still haunted by the memory of killing her child, a crime rooted in motherhood and the fear of slavery's cruelty. The return of *Beloved* intensifies Sethe's struggle with her past, forcing her to confront and live with the memories. Sethe's refusal to escape or forget her past reflects her strength and resilience, turning her memories into symbols of her ongoing struggle in the present.

It can be said that Denver inherited courage from Seth because she struggled to prove herself and not only related to memories but also put an end to everything and put memories on one side and her preoccupation with her life on the other. She used to avoid her mother many

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

times so that there would be no close origin between them or until Denver moved away from seeing her mother as a criminal and what happened to Denver made us realize that it is possible to carry the memories of others and be affected by them as if we lived them because the murder of the beloved was before the birth of Denver, but Denver was affected by the matter and entrenched in her memory as if she witnessed the crime and the strange thing is that her memory did not overcome this matter, but made it a knot and obsession with her life.

4. Healing and search for freedom in *Beloved*

Healing is a prominent theme throughout *Beloved*, is ever present in the novel, many forms of "healing" take place, with many different characters undergoing the "healing" process. These forms of "healing" range from healing personal conflicts from within, to healing as a community, and by healing individual is one of the most important aspects of this novel. Throughout the story, Sethe has many encounters with a variety of people. These encounters leave a definite impression on her, which is why I think that Sethe does the most "healing," both from within and by overcoming her own trauma.

Throughout the novel, Sethe induces to talk about her traumatic experiences from the past, childhood as a slave, the lynching of her mother, the sufferings in Sweet Home and her escape from there, the dismembering of her family, among other painful remembrances. Her rememorizes are painful and hurt her, but they are, at the same time, necessary to her process of healing. Sethe's past haunts her, but she becomes aware that it is impossible just to continue hiding, forgetting, or even avoiding it, because it is somehow "waiting for" (35) her. Later she is able to understand that her past is connected with her present as she says: "Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. Some things you forget. Other things you never do ... Places, places are still there ... Nothing ever dies ... it is still there, waiting for you" (36).

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

This quote explores the themes of trauma, memory, and the power of place. The speaker, Sethe, reflects on the lingering presence of her daughter's ghost and the lasting impact of her past experiences, suggesting that some events can be forgotten or left behind, but others remain embedded in our consciousness. The quote highlights the idea that certain locations can hold onto memories and emotions long after we've left them behind, and that trauma can persist even after physical death, waiting to reclaim us.

After recognizing the remarkable connection between her past and her frail present, Sethe involuntarily initiates a series of actions of healing and her fragmented memory seems to unconsciously enable her to transform and restore her present by questioning herself about what was valuable or not. By remembering her past, Sethe realized how slavery did not allow her to have her mother's presence, and she found out how she still lacked her mother's love and companionship. She also remembered how she was scared of not recognizing her own mother, because they were not allowed to talk to each other or even to see each other.

Through Sethe's process of retelling her past stories, her displaced and fragmented identity and self could be re-membered and re-signified. She also may be able to reconnect herself with her collective identity that also needed to be restored. By bringing to the surface her traumas, she could rehabilitate herself and restart where the thread was cut individually and collectively that is, where the damage occurred. Her isolation from her community and her dislocated self were revealed in her fragmented and gapped narrative from her memories of her traumatic past.

Concerning *Beloved's* role as an instrument of healing for Sethe, she remembers her most hurtful experiences from the past: her mother's and her daughter's death. Sethe's disjointed voice, full of gaps and ruptures, reveals how unpleasant it is both to speak about the unspeakable and to remember a past that cannot be spoken: "Beloved, she my daughter, she mine [...] my love was tough and she back now [...] I never saw her own smile [...], her

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

memories about that horrendous past were so agonizing that they came in broken and disconnected parts in which the death of her mother was fused with of her daughter's.

Indeed, Sethe's real healing initiates with her reintegration into her community, at the end of the novel, because being part of a community again means that she was not alone anymore, as she felt after her mother's and daughter's deaths. The community ritual of rescuing her is a symbol of forgiveness. Sethe's complete healing seems to occur because of an important process of the reconstruction and the acceptance of her self-love, as Paul D once affirmed to her: "You your best thing, Sethe. You are" (273). Sethe has to learn how to love herself, and accept herself as a person who needs to give and take love, as her mother-in-law, Baby Suggs, had taught her and the other former slaves at the Clearing: "we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard [...] Love your eyes ... your hands ... your face ... You got to love it, You!" (88).

this quote is a powerful celebration of the beauty and dignity of Black bodies, particularly those of African American women. Sethe's declaration of love for her daughter's body is a statement of self-love, acceptance, and resistance against the historical erasure and commodification of Black women's bodies. By emphasizing the importance of loving and accepting one's own flesh, Sethe is challenging the dominant narratives that have sought to destroy Black people's sense of self-worth, and reclaiming a sense of agency and power for herself and her daughter.

Denver is also associated with a capacity to heal and move beyond a particular historical constitution. Initially, Denver is read as waiting to be saved, dreaming of salvation in the safe house she created in the boxwood bushes behind 124 Bluestone. "First a playroom (where the silence was softer), then a refuge (from her brothers' fright), soon the place became the point. In that bower, closed off from the hurt of the hurt world, Denver's imagination produced its own hunger and its own food, which she badly needed because of loneliness." (Morrison, 58).

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

By the conclusion of the novel, Denver no longer needed her being to be constructed from the outside. “And to be looked at by [Beloved], however briefly, kept [Denver] grateful for the rest of the time when she merely was the looker” (Morrison, 118) In a salvationist moment of escape, which Morrison called a “stepping off the edge of the world,” Denver operated as the personification of transcendence and the first move toward recovery in the novel. Her newfound empowerment is the catalyst to direct Sethe and Paul D, though their healing process for Sethe and Paul D, to heal and humanize from the immense suffering and violence of enslavement, one must constitute it in language.

Paul D also shows the common trauma symptom of being unable to form long-lasting relationships. Beloved aids Paul D for healing and dealing with his trauma, by “his tobacco tin, blown open, spilled content that floated freely” (Morrison, 1987, p.258). Even before the complete opening of his tin heart, Beloved made “the flakes of rust” fall away from the “seams of his tobacco tin” (Morrison, 1987, p.137–138). Paul D’s heart, in which he securely placed all of his memories, has been blown apart by Beloved. All the memories he has refused to let resurface come rushing back, making him vulnerable.

It’s almost as if Beloved brings Paul D back to his love for Sethe, which is as flawed as Paul D is himself. In this way, Paul D feels as though Sethe helped him to piece back together himself; the man who was capable of love and trusting; the man who could allow himself to think of somewhere as a home without needing to keep moving. By the end of the novel, Paul D realizes that the past is over, and he can no longer let it haunt him. In this way, the author, through a quote from Paul D (“we got more yesterday than anybody. We need some kind of tomorrow”) it’s illustrating that Paul D has worked through his trauma and is ready to move forward with his life with Sethe (Morrison, 1987, p.311–322).

4.2. *Beloved* and the Long Road to Freedom

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

Morrison depicts a lack of real freedom in her characters Sethe, Paul D, and Denver all dealing with the effects of slavery. “Morrison expands the boundaries of the traditional slave narrative to explore the far-reaching damage of the institution of slavery...” (Coonradt 168-169). Her characters each cope with their feelings in different ways and separate sources keep them bound, such as the presence of each other, the memories that compel them towards their past, or fear packed tight within their psyche, disregarded or unrecognized. Though they try to overcome these obstacles, the barrier of *Beloved* prevents them from moving on and healing. However, Morrison shows how they are not a weak people, made up of a strong history and a firm desire to prevail over the ghost of slavery.

Beloved may plague the characters, seemingly worsening their situation, but they find a way to overcome her and become stronger for it, finally allowing their souls and hearts to be free. In spite of this, it is not an easy road to overcome, filled with many difficulties and challenges along the way. The society they have come to know has shaped them in such a way as to affect all aspects of their lives. Sethe displays the most obvious negative effects from slavery involving her memories and experiences. These two aspects combined are powerful weapons Sethe inflicts upon herself, she cannot allow herself to move forward when the experiences of the past haunt her especially memory of her dead child tortures her mind.

Sethe killed her own child to save her from a life of slavery, an existence that has been anything but truly living. This action caused *Beloved*, the slaughtered daughter, to return to her mother as a young woman, a human-like figured ghost. Despite *Beloved*'s presence slowly stealing away everything emotionally, physically, and mentally from Sethe, “locked in a love that wore everybody out” (Morrison 286), Sethe had no defense she could not unlatch herself from the guilt of letting *Beloved* go once before, unable to betray her again. The necessity to be *Beloved*'s mother *now* outweighed any discomfort or psychotic behavior received from *Beloved*. “Motherhood and slavery can function as substitutes for each other...” (Caesar 112)

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

Sethe's motherly love was deep, as binding as any slave to their master. Escaping one existence of oppression for another, Sethe remained constrained by her past, escape never seemed a possible reality.

Paul D also remains bound to his past, though he constantly tries to deny it. Emotionally, he masks his ties better than Sethe, but his actions still indicate that his subconscious is still plagued with his experiences as a slave. Paul D's life in bondage left him often in chains, sold from one slave owner to the next. As he stumbles upon his way to freedom, Paul D cannot settle in just one place. He travels to and from various locations, never inhabiting a place for too long. This new found freedom to go where he wants to go, when he wants to, is a liberty very new to him. He cannot feel satisfied wherever he resides.

Paul D is inevitably bound to the past through Sethe, she is part of his identity. Sweet Home was an enormous part of his life, Sethe playing a major part in that life. She was the untouchable, Halle's girl, representing something wonderful and forbidden. Now that he was free, the possibility to be with her also became perceptible. Paul D is drawn to Sethe. The connection of the past brings them together, their lives bound simultaneously without their consent. Believing to have finally found what he was looking for, Paul D seeks to settle down with Sethe and begin a family of his own. This dream appears a reality within reach until *Beloved* enters their lives and becomes more than he expects.

He has become a slave once again, unable to act or think for himself. His actions are controlled by another having become his master. *Beloved's* tie to Sethe, a person he feels most loyal to, weakens his ability to confront the problem and become a master of himself. Paul D seeks to remedy his captivity under *Beloved* by forming a stronger connection with Sethe through getting her pregnant and starting a family. Securing a deeper connection, done through their *own* will and desire to procreate, would allow them to become one together, helping form a new, free identity. Yet this solution is denied the chance as *Beloved* takes over Sethe,

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

completely pushing him away. “Paul D ‘was being moved’ literally (126)—out of Sethe’s bed, out of the living room, finally out of the house altogether—by Beloved...” (Wyatt 478) He could never assume the role of the master, always in submission to the higher power, thus remaining in bondage. It doesn’t matter which direction Paul D turns; he is still affected by the influences of slavery.

Sethe’s daughter, Denver, despite never living a slave’s life, also struggles for her own freedom. As she witnesses her life torn apart through the events that happen to her mother as a result of slavery, she secludes herself to her secret room. Denver develops a fear and shyness of the world because of her isolation, never leaving the house. She suppresses all of her own emotions, along with her Sethe’s, “her mother’s wish that the story [of Beloved and the past] remain unspoken, the act unnamed, the memory repressed. Denver in effect closes herself up in her mother’s silence.” (Wyatt 482)

Though Denver never lived the life of a slave, the burden her mother carried from such a life moved from her shoulders to her daughter’s. Because Sethe was new to the life of freedom, she was unable to successfully teach Denver how to live in it. Denver understood the effects of slavery through witnessing it in her mother, but she never saw it in the world herself because she constantly stayed within the bounds of her own home. She knew she was black, but what does it mean in the world? What is her personal worth? She only knew that she was less than the white man from the experiences her mother had taught her. “This identity conflict caused by the stigma of race can lead to psychic fragmentation...Black Americans are often deluded into thinking that the dominant ideology is the only valid ideology” (Sunanda 2440). Denver could claim no sense of true identity, a principle new to all freed slaves. They were never allowed an identity before, thus finally finding themselves with validity in the world would be a difficult adjustment, especially for the new generation learning how to be free in a community learning from the older generation, fresh to the idea themselves.

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

Denver remains isolated from the world until Beloved enters her life. She grows an unusually strong attachment to Beloved, becoming, in a way, a slave to her company and attention. She still struggles to find her own identity, evident in the trick Beloved plays on Denver in the shed when she disappears for a short time. Denver cannot handle the fact of Beloved's permanent disappearance, "crying because she has no self" (Morrison 145). Her very happiness depends upon it, having built her new identity on Beloved. Her life finally felt like it had purpose, constantly seeking for ways to gain the attentions of her new friend, utterly distraught when she is unsuccessful. Denver prolongs the life-style of the older generation, her existence governed upon another human being. She may not have ever been a literal slave in the South, but Denver found her own way to be tethered from true freedom as the generation before her. She could not remain neutral to slavery's lingering consequences.

Notwithstanding the obstacles Sethe, Paul D, and Denver face in order to overcome the effects of slavery, as well as Beloved being a plague of captivity that can never seem to be forgotten, Morrison's characters find respite at the conclusion of the novel. The trial of Beloved seems to help them find what they are looking for in the end. "Sethe and Denver are eventually redeemed of Beloved who embodies a part of Sethe's unresolved and repressive past..." (Eckstein 271) Facing that unresolved guilt Sethe struggled endlessly to rise above gave her the power to be free of the past, finally allowing the healing to commence and a fresh start with Paul D to begin anew.

Paul D ultimately surrenders the wretched past, telling Sethe lovingly, "...me and you, we got more yesterday than anybody. We need some kind of tomorrow" (Morrison 322). A hope in the opportunity and ability to start a new life is born within Paul D. When Denver "tries to leave the haunted house to get food for her mother and Beloved, she finds herself imprisoned within her mother's time..." (Wyatt 482). This dramatic situation gives Denver the ultimatum

Remnants of Psychological Abuse in *Beloved*

she needs to push herself towards crucial individualized growth. She becomes a free woman in every sense, a thriving member of the community with her own, genuine identity.

5. Conclusion:

Beloved is a powerful exploration of the lingering effects of slavery on individuals and communities. Through the characters' stories, Morrison reveals how the trauma of slavery was initially repressed, with slaves attempting to forget their past to escape its horrors. However, Morrison argues that confronting and re-experiencing this pain is essential for healing. *Beloved*, a supernatural presence who embodies the horrors of slavery, serves as a catalyst for the characters to confront their past and reclaim their true selves. As they navigate their emotions and come to terms with their experiences, the characters learn to transform their weaknesses into strengths and turn trials into opportunities for growth. Ultimately, they discover the power to overcome their past and achieve true freedom, allowing them to find joy and comfort in their newfound identity.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Toni Morrison was an influential writer who devoted her literary works writing about the history of her community. She wrote about the African American history in her most touching books such as *Beloved*. Morrison repaired the forgotten history of slavery and revealed the situation of the African Americans. Through her fiction's pages, she succeeded to go deeper in this watershed of American history. Thus, Morrison in her piece of work depicts all the pain, violence, and torture experiences that the African American lived during slavery.

The present work has shown to the reader what African Americans endured in an institutionalized slave system. By focusing on the dehumanizing effect of slavery we were able to shed light on the sufferings of slaves and how they managed to resist such kind of life. Each one of the major characters had been touched by the effects of that traumatic way of living under such conditions. Sethe committed a crime when murdering her older daughter. Her life as a slave influenced her psychologically. She was tortured, raped and mistreated. As a consequence, she has mental troubles. Her experience as a slave made her fear that her children will have the same fate.

Sethe's killed her daughter, Beloved lost both her life and her mother. She is representing the consequences of slavery. Though she was not a slave, she lost her life because of slavery. One can say that she experienced slavery indirectly. Denver also is suffering from the effects of that horrible past. She does not have any relation with her community because of her mother's act of murdering her daughter. She is living alone far from society in a dark world that was haunted by the ghost of her sister. Her behavior is strange, as she is isolated from the outside world and created her own world only with her ghost sister as a companion. She is living the effects of slavery through her mother.

General Conclusion

Throughout the novel, the characters have been emotionally crippled by their pasts. The mental and the spiritual wounds caused by slavery are still fresh and have not been allowed to heal. They endure severe indignities, degradation, dehumanization and suffering under the law, and are consistently victims of prejudice from American society. Sethe, the heroine, cannot overcome her outrage and sense of violation from her Sweet Home experiences, nor can she work through the guilt she feels about her daughter's death. Although Sethe and Paul D. are both dehumanized during their slavery experiences by the inhumanity of the white people, their responses to the experience differ due to their different role. Sethe managed to create her own family with Paul D. Within her psyche, she is a new and a different woman.

Thus, Sethe's process of healing in *Beloved*, her process of learning to live with her past, is a model for the readers who must confront Sethe's past as part of our own past, a collective past that lives right where we live. On the other hand, we have Paul D. who initially appeared to be a normalizing force in Sethe's and Denver's lives. His entrance into their private lives signaled the beginning of a healthy relationship for Sethe and the introduction of a father figure for Denver. Here, Toni Morrison posits that the black community as a whole must attempt to heal from the trauma of slavery and the middle passage by mourning the past. Moreover, she believes that community can heal the spiritual crisis of individuals. The end of the novel also emphasizes that happiness may be found in looking towards the future, rather they remained mired in the past.

Ultimately, this study has sought to contribute to a deeper understanding of the enduring legacy of slavery and its profound impact on individual identity and selfhood. By examining Morrison's characters and their strategies for reclaiming and reconstructing their identities in the face of oppression and dehumanization, we have gained insight into the ways in which slavery continues to shape our collective past and inform our present. As Morrison suggests,

General Conclusion

true healing can only occur when we acknowledge and confront our shared history, working towards a more just and equitable future.

Works Cited

Primary source:

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Vintage, 2007.

Secondary sources:

Abdullah, Abu Shahid. "Speaking the Unspoken: Rewriting Identity Loss and Memory of Slavery through Magical Realism in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." 27 Dec. 2017.

Abecha, Chaima, and Nedjla Benseddik. "Dehumanization in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." Dissertation. Kasdi Merbah University – Ouargla, 2020.

Al, Nehdeep Lakra Et. "Quest for Identity in the Novels of *Beloved* and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison." *Türk Bilgisayar Ve Matematik Eğitimi Dergisi* 12.2 (2021): 1183–1188. Web.

Ashraf, Abu Fares. "Slavery of the Past and Trauma of the Present: A Study of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *British Journal of Philosophy, Sociology and History (BJPSH)*. 6 Dec. 2021.

Babis, Jaimes. "The Suffering in *Beloved*." Web log. WordPress . 26 Apr. 2017. Web.

Bee, Helen. L, and Boyd, David. R. *Developing and Testing theories of Personal Identity*. Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 2007, p 372.

Burnett, Zaron, III. "Hey, Black America, Let's All Ditch Our Slave Names." *Medium* 14

Caesar, Terry Paul. "Slavery and Motherhood in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *Revista de Letras*. 28Mar.2011.

Culler, Jonathan. D. *Literary theory: Very short introductions*. Oxford; New York, Oxford University Press, 1997.

“The Depth of Sethe’s Love.” Web log. Word choices. 20 Nov. 2018. Web.

“Dolcoses Study How Memories Impact Well-Being and How to Control Emotional Responses.” *Default*. N.p., 16 Nov. 2018. Web.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. N.p., 2009. Web

Eyerman, Ron. *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*. University of California Press eBooks, 2004, pp. 60–111.

Eyerman. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Memory*. Cambridge University Press Books, 2001, pp. 1–22.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Berkeley, Calif. Grove Press, Distributed by Publishers Group West, c2008.

Feldman, Robert S. *Development across the Life Span*. Ninth Edition, Pearson, 2019.

Fredericksen, Erik. “Beloved Characters: Denver.” *LitCharts*. *LitCharts* LLC, 16 Sep 2013. Web.

Gregerj. “Supernatural Haunting & Healing in Beloved.” *Forms and Contexts of Literary Studies*. 6 Oct. 2021.

Jacobs, Harriet Ann. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. 1861

Jenkins, Richard. *Social Identity*. Routledge, 2008

- June, Pamela B. *The Fragmented Female Body and Identity: The Postmodern, Feminist, and Multiethnic Writings of Toni Morrison, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Phyllis Alesia Perry, Gayl Jones, Emma Pérez, Paula Gunn Allen, and Kathy Acker*. N.p., 2010. Web.
- Kelman, Herbert. C. *Human use of human subjects: The problem of deception in social psychological experiments*. *Psychological Bulletin*, 1967, p1–11.
- “Kevin Bales Quote.” *A-Z Quotes*. N.p., n.d. Web
- Khaleghi, Mahboobeh. “Reclaiming Identity through the Community: A Study of Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and a Mercy.”. 7 Feb. 2022.
- Laurie, Hansen Duersch. ““A Cry for Freedom.”” *All things bright and beautiful*. April 2011.
- Lawrence, Jeanne Lawson. *Benching the Blues: Law, Narrative, and Memory in the Wake of Slavery*. University of North Carolina Press, 2007, p45.
- Lucca, Ilaria et al. “Troubles sexuels masculins et obésité.” *Revue Medicale Suisse*. N.p., 5 Dec. 2012. Web
- Mohammed. “The Impact of Slavery in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*: From the Communal to the Individual.” *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*.
- Munley, Patrick H. *Erik Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development and Vocational Behavior*. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, vol. 22, no. 4, July 1975, pp. 314–19.
- Namaoui, Chaimae. “Reading Trauma in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* 1987.” dissertation. Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University - Mostaganem, 2020.

Oan, Nawsher, and all “Slavery and Freedom as Identities in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.”

International Journal of English Research, 5 Sept. 2019.

Peterson, David. *Traditions Beyond Human Time: The Mythological Sense of History in the United States*. Louisiana State University Press.1985, p63.

Schapiro, Barbara. “The Bonds of Love and the Boundaries of Self in Toni Morrison’s ‘*Beloved*.’” *Contemporary Literature* 32.2 (1991): 194. Web

Sindhuja, M. “Destruction of Identity in Tony Morrison’s *Beloved*.” *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society*. 14 Nov.2019.

“So Black and Blue: Ralph Ellison and the Occasion of Criticism.” *Choice/Choice Reviews* 41.07 (2004): 41–3924. Web.

Stevens, Sharifa. “Stolen Milk — Sharifa Stevens.” *Sharifa Stevens*. N.p., 26 Apr. 2020. Web.

Tyler, Dick Matthew. “Spiteful Houses, Sweet Homes: Analyzing Denver’s Traumatic Space in *Beloved*.” dissertation. 2019.

“What Do We Mean by Trauma.” *Men And Trauma New Zealand*. N.p., n.d. Web

“Who Is Denver a Dynamic Character in *Beloved*.” *Bartleby*. N.d. Web.

Williams, Deborah. *A Simple Murder: New Clinical Evidence for the Case of Slavery Against Jean Laffite*. LSU Press,2017, p1.

Williams, Lisa. *The Constraint of Silence: Women and Silent Film*. University of Illinois Press.1995, p164.

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY OF CONCEPTS

Glossary concept	Glossary Definition
Identity	<p>the concept of identity basically used to explain self-identity due to the most fundamental question —who am I? (Erikson, 145; Sokefeld, 527; Weigert, 165; Woodward, 6-8). While the core of identity is based on the definition "is the sameness that a group of people has in a community." So, it tends to focus on the one-way direction to see the identity of people. Meanwhile, in defining people, we do not see the sameness between a person and also the difference from the others. So, identity is not only talked about, but the sameness also emphasizes the differences.</p> <p>It is about belonging; about what people have in common with some people and what differentiates them from others. At its most basic, it gives us a sense of personal location, the stable core to our individuality, social relationships, and the complex involvement with others. Thus, individuals and societies always search for an identity that gives meaning to their existence.</p> <p>Identity refers to personal and collective identifications from a psychological perspective. Maurice E. Evans states in his book <i>Troubling Beginnings: Trans (per) forming African American History and Identity</i>, as Stuart Hall asserts, is shaped at the</p>

GLOSSARY

unstable point where the „unspeakable“ stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history, of a culturel (03). Furthermore, identity is preoccupied with self-definition, and the self is viewed as a rather stable, internal entity that is rarely altered to match the context. In fact, the self is a core sense of who one is. That is, you are who you are; shifting is indicative of a problematic, deficient or disengaged identityl (48).

Trauma

When you are very frightened as a result of an event, or you get very anxious at the time of your speech on the stage and in front of an audience, or even you lose someone you love and being depressed. All these qualities are called trauma symptoms. Trauma is any painful event or experience that affects one ‘s ability to cope and function. Trauma is strongly related to the science of psychology that was the focus and the interest of many scholars and philosophers at the time of its discovery. Until the mid --the 1800s, psychology was mostly a branch of philosophy, but in Germany and United States, it emerged as a separate and scientific discipline.

The field ‘s evolution was heavily influenced by its philosophical underpinnings. The 17th century was a powerful time that adds a significant influence to modern psychology. Rene Descartes is one of the philosophers that contribute to that field due to his dualism concept. According to Baker, "Descartes held that: there are two

GLOSSARY

worlds one of the mental objects, and one of the material things. The mental objects are state of consciousness (e.g., pains, experience, visual, fear, enjoy) the material objects are more, or less complex bits of "clockwork" (Baker, 01). Thus, dualism is a double-sided coin "mind and body" or "mental and physical". Questioning the relationship between these two separate entities and their function developed and still evaluating psychology. On the other hand, Darwin 's theories and thoughts also had a significant impact on psychology as a whole, because most psychologists today, in their research, focus on biological principles to explain psychological terms.

Memory

Cognitive psychologist Margaret W. Matlin has described memory as the "process of retaining information over time." Others have defined it as the ability to use our past experiences to determine our future path.

Memory is the complex cognitive process by which the brain encodes, stores, and retrieves information, allowing individuals to learn from their experiences, recall past events, and adapt to new situations. The main theories that define memory include the Atkinson-Shiffrin Model, which proposes a multi-store system of sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory; the Levels-of-Processing Theory, which suggests that information is processed at different levels (shallow or deep) and that deeper

GLOSSARY

processing leads to better retention; the Working Memory Model, which posits that working memory is a system that temporarily holds and manipulates information for cognitive tasks; and the Consolidation Theory, which proposes that memories are consolidated from short-term memory to long-term memory through a process of reorganization and stabilization. These theories provide a framework for understanding how memory functions and have been influential in shaping our understanding of this complex cognitive process.

APPENDIX

Biography of the author

Toni Morrison is an African-American novelist born in Ohio on February 18, 1931, she is the only black American writer who received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1993 for her entire work, and the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *Beloved*, which is considered by many critics the greatest work of Toni Morrison, she was said to be the most important black novelist in America and is the first black to get a seat at Princeton University, which was exclusively for white men. She has published 11 novels, including *The Bluest Eyes*, which revealed slavery and its economic and psychological consequences in the nineteenth century and beyond, as well as the novels *The Song of Solomon*, *Sula*, and *The Tar Child*. Her works have been translated into various languages of the world, including Arabic.

Synopsis of the Book

Beloved is the story of a former slave, Sethe who lives with her daughter, Denver, in Cincinnati, Ohio. The story features flashbacks to the times with Sethe was a slave on Sweet Home Plantation. In these flashbacks we see the events that lead Sethe to not only run away from the plantation, but also to kill one of her daughters when her former owners try to recapture them. The story then goes back to Sethe's present where she is joined by a friend, Paul D, from the time when she was a slave. Paul D finds them living in a house haunted by the spirit of the daughter that Sethe killed, events progress and this abusive spirit, Beloved, becomes corporeal and drives away Sethe's true family. The story climaxes when Sethe tries to kill a man that she mistakes for her old owner; after this event Beloved leaves 124 house forever, Denver is preparing to go to college, and Paul D returns to Sethe, who has been spending her days in Baby Suggs's bed.