

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research



Larbi Ben M'Hidi University, Oum El Bouaghi

Faculty of Letters and Languages

—
Department of English

*Postcolonial African American Female Writing:
the Use of the Ghost as a Magical Realist
Device in Toni Morrison's Beloved*

A 'Memoire' Submitted to the Faculty of Letters and Languages, Department of
English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master in Anglo-American Studies

by

Tounsi Chahrazed

Board of Examiners:

Mr. Koussa Toufik, Director

Miss. Haddad M , Member

2012-2013

Dedication

Dedicated to:

To my lovely family, especially my parents and grandparents.

To my best Friends throughout the years.

Acknowledgments

Praise be to Allah, the Glorious, without whose help none of this would be possible. I am particularly grateful to my Academic advisor Professor Koussa Toufik, he has been a source of academic inspiration, motivation and critical discussion. His guidance, high standards, patience, taught me a lot throughout the past years. My warmest gratitude is also extended to my parents, my sisters and brothers, and to whom provided me with anything I asked for whenever I asked especially my father- May God grant him long life-. Furthermore, I am grateful to my Best Friends: Chahrazed, Sabiha, Rania, Houda and Meriem, for their kind moral support and special encouragement. Because whenever I lost direction; they were the ones to bring me back on course. Special gratitude for my classmates or sisters and brothers whom I spent with years full of moments of hard work, pleasure and kind friendship, wishing them the best future of happiness and success.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge everyone who has contributed to the realization of this study including the English Department of teachers and administration. Especially, Mrs. Maameri Fatima, who in fact made it all happen with her valuable experience, guidance, and hard work.

ABSTRACT

This study tries to investigate the representation of Black women in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* from the slave mother point of view. The main objective is to demonstrate how Morrison- in a postcolonial context- draws on history, memory, magical realism and imagination in order to invert dominant Western assumptions. In order to highlight this point, an analyses of the development of Magic Realism is made to understand its connection with History. Following this, the next stage is to analyze the presence of the ghost of *Beloved* in the narrative by defining its identity, and denote the reasons and effects behind its presence on the characters and the community. The study also attempts to make a link between Postcolonial theory and African American literature. The main concern is to show that the concept of “Postcolonialism” exists in the American literature, through analyzing the history of the colonized societies within. By focusing on showing that the literature produced by some African American writers can be regarded as postcolonial; by examining their hybridized characters, and try to show how they live in the space of in-between-ness. Using Black women’s response to the conflicting roles shaped by the American society, the question asked is How these women reflected and challenged the norm to create a new meaning of Black Womanhood, and define the context of slavery for Blacks, and How Black women operated in slave society to affirm their identity through their writings. Furthermore, the thesis discusses magical realism as a form of literary expression and artistic style used by some postcolonial authors. First, a definition of this term is given, in addition to its postcolonial significance in the Black Feminist Thought. Further, a clarification of the use of one of its devices – the supernatural- is made to explain the significance of the “Ghost” in literature and popular culture.

Table of Content

Dedication

Acknowledgments

Abstract

Table of content

Introduction.....01

***Chapter One: Post Colonial Literature in America: Does it Exist?*.....09**

1- Definition of Postcolonial Theory:.....10

 1-1: Colonialism and Imperialism.....12

 1-2: Postcolonial Discourse: Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha.....14

2- American Literature and Postcolonial Theory.....17

 2-1: Native American Literature as Postcolonial.....19

 2-2: African American Postcolonial Studies: Identity, Hybridity, and the

 Other.....22

 2-3: Postcolonial African American Women Writers: Phillis Weathly, Zora

 Neale Huston, Alice Walker, and Toni Morrison.....27

3- **Notes**.....33

Chapter Two: Postcolonial Black feminism and the Use of the "Ghost" in a Magical

Realist Texts.....37

- 1- Feminist History and Theory in a Postcolonial Setting.....37
 - 1-2: Black Women: Shaping Postcolonial Feminist Theory.....42
- 2- Magical Realism as a Postcolonial Device.....46
 - 2-1: Definition of Magical Realism.....47
 - 2-2: Magical Realism and Postcolonialism.....50
- 3- The Use of the Ghost as a Magical Realist Device in Literature.....54
- 4- **Notes.....58**

Chapter Three: Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: The Use of the Ghost in a Magical realistic

Text.....62

- 1- Short Introduction.....62
- 2- Toni Morrison and *Beloved*.....64
- 3- Magical Realism in *Beloved*.....66
 - 3-1: What is "Real" and What is "Magic" in *Beloved*.....68
 - 3-2: Characteristics of Magical Realism in *Beloved*: Time, Space, and Identity.....74
- 4- The Ghost Significance in the Narrative of *Beloved*.....77
- 5- **Notes.....85**

- *Conclusion*.....89
- *Work Cited*.....93

Introduction

Toni Morrison in her novel *Beloved* used Magical Realism as a decolonizing agent in a postcolonial context. Morrison's narrative in *Beloved*, takes the advantage of both realism and magic to challenge the assumptions of an authoritative colonialist attitude; and so can be alleged as a powerful and efficient method to project the postcolonial experience of African-American ex-slaves in the United States. It can also provide an alternate point of view to Eurocentric accounts of reality and history to attack the solidity of Eurocentric definitions, and as a consequence to portray the hidden and silenced voices of numerous enslaved generations of African-Americans in the history of United States.

Introducing a magical character with a narrative voice, *Beloved* distorts the traditional conception of reality, where it becomes the medium through which victims of the Middle Passage gain a literate voice. This functions as a narrative strategy of transgression, since it allows the expression for the voices of under- or un-represented. In this way *Beloved* can be understood as a writing back from the periphery. Accordingly, Morrison's work adds to the incomplete canon of American literature that has neglected the story of the silenced African-Americans who survived slavery. In a word, being dedicated to "Sixty million and more", *Beloved* is quite successful in memorializing a vast absence the words can never fill (Razmi and Jamali 118).

To sum up, the objectives are made by answering these questions:

First, How can the reality depicted in a colonial presence and state of slavery make them similar in a postcolonial context?

Second, How African American women writers are described as postcolonial in character in the construction of their writings? And How they were able to portray

postcolonial concepts of Hybridity, Diaspora and Third space in the depiction of their oppressive reality in their fictional works?

In the case study of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, an attempt will be made to explore How magical realism- as a postcolonial device- highlights the novel as an essential text of postcolonial literature? And under the light of Magical Realism, How is the supernatural (Ghost) as a metaphor in *Beloved* is playing a decolonizing role by depicting the situation of Black female oppression?

The methodological process in order to answer these questions and fulfill the aim is:

In the First chapter, the objective is to show that the African American society is postcolonial. First, the meaning of postcolonialism as a term and a theory will be clarified as it studied works that explain conditions under imperialism and colonialism; as about conditions coming after the historical end of empires. I will examine the relationship between place and identity by considering How these diasporic identities, which are product of migration and globalization and cut across and displace national boundaries, are negotiated in their literature. Where Black writers favored it as a medium, in which they tended to connect knowledge with reality and question colonizer's power and affirm their history.

In the Second chapter, a clarification of Feminism as a women movement for social justice and equal rights will be provided With the distinction of Black Feminism that added race in the category of gender in women studies, to speak about their own distinctive history and identity. By using their writings, they were able – as African American women- to affirm their space in a postcolonial setting. Also, the meaning of “Magical Realism” as a postcolonial literary mode used by African Americans in their fiction is explained. Where it enabled them to draw a magical

dimension in the line of reality to perfectly depict their experience. Moreover, I will elaborate the significance of the “Ghost” - as a device described as magical- in postcolonial writings and culture.

In the Final chapter of the study, *Beloved*, as a postcolonial novel written by an African American female writer is the main example of the fact of slavery. So, a brief introduction about Toni Morrison’s life and literary works, and the story behind *Beloved*, as her most successful works, that was the medium through which she attempted to revise history and the stories of slavery from the point of view of a female character will be provided. More importantly, this work has been linked to magical realism and more particularly compared to Garcia Marquez’s novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. As one can tell, the supernatural is being naturalized, while creating at the same time an atmosphere of Gothic Horror and trauma, as being the real. This creates a sense of mystery and suspense for the first time reader. This unusual mingling of the realistic and supernatural events in the narrative –as previously noted- is required to be implemented in the magical realist mode. In this concern a number of questions will be answered: Why is there a ghost in the house? What is its significance in the narrative, to make this text a case of a magical realist mode by an African American tackling a sensitive terrain of slavery? And How magical realism, as a narrative technique-can tell about mostly traumatic experiences involving people who have memories of the past that controlled their present as socially marginalized?

Considering the magic of the novel, the “Ghost of Beloved” revealed the horrors that have been repressed. The mere mention of a ghost in the novel makes it unavoidable to discuss the status of the supernatural. Since the title of the book refers to both a character and her ghost portrayed in the novel as “little girl whose throat was

cut by her own mother, a runaway slave” (Scheel 156). Of course there is much more to Beloved’s identity rather than particularly “unspeakable” crime. It is also identified by the people around her, to denote the crime of slavery as an unspeakably traumatizing social system. Where, the author inscribed her work to reveal the experience of the African American. As a result, the analysis is to discover and explain How the caricature of a haunted house is employed to produce a novel on the topic of slavery? Through the different interpretations of the Ghosts identity – other than being Beloved- the significance of each one throughout the narrative can help to conclude the effect of the supernatural on the struggles of identity, history, and future possibilities that are present in magical realist work of Toni Morrison.

The concept of Post-colonialism (or often postcolonialism) deals with the effects of colonization on peoples, cultures and societies. The term is originally used by historians after the Second World War such as ‘post-colonial state’, where ‘post-colonial’ had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post-independence period. However, from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization. The actual term ‘post-colonial’ was not employed in these early studies of what came to be called ‘Colonialist Discourse Theory’ to shape the form, opinion, and policies in the colony and metropolis even though, the study of the controlling power of representation in the colonized societies had begun in the late 1970s with the text such as Said’s *Orientalism*, and led to the development of postcolonial studies in the work of critics such as Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha. Still, the term postcolonialism is a center of discussion by many contemporary writers.

Postcolonialism is an approach to literary analysis that concerns itself particularly with literature written in the colonizer’s language in formerly colonized

countries. It usually excludes literature that represents either French, British or American viewpoints, and concentrates on writings from colonized cultures like: Australia, New Zealand, Africa, South America, and other places and societies that were once dominated by European cultural, political, and philosophical tradition.

Consequently, the meaning of postcolonial thought included more spaces and interpretations. In which the “post” of “postcolonial” has two meanings, referring to a temporal aftermath- a period of time after colonialism, on one hand; and cultures and discourses that are beyond, but remain closely influenced by colonialism, on the other hand. Both meanings made the interaction between them problematic that has made “postcolonialism” such a contested term. Postcolonial studies, also, have shown that the “colonizer” and “colonized” were both altered by the colonial process. Both of them are, accordingly restructured by decolonization. This of course doesn’t mean that both are postcolonial in the same way. Moreover, postcolonial process is articulated alongside other economic, social, cultural and historical factors, and therefore, it works differently in various parts of the world.

Accordingly, postcolonialism –here- is taken to mean an opposition to the colonial, but it also describes a period of time –after colonialism-. In this respect, there are numerous arguments about whether post-colonial literature can be produced during the colonial period, because of its oppositional nature, or whether, strictly speaking, it only develops once colonialism has ended and independence has been achieved.

As a result, it becomes difficult to determine the precise and proper content, scope, and relevance of postcolonial studies. It is more helpful to think of postcolonialism not just as coming literally after colonialism and signifying its demise, but more flexibly as response to the colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism. Post colonialism may be better conceptualized as historically dispersed

set of formations which negotiate the ideological, social and material structures of power established under colonialism .

Theories of colonial discourses have been hugely influential in the development of postcolonialism. Postcolonial discourse was the result of the work of several writers such as: Frantz Fanon, Ngugi Wa Thiango, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha, among others. In general, their work explores the ways of representations, and modes of perception that are used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonized people under colonial rule.

The rejection of the Western hegemony forms the heart of the postcolonial discourse, which in turn creates space for marginalized groups or the disadvantaged nations. It exploits the strategies and subversive modes. In other words, it provides a means of reclamation of cultural past and resistance by which any exploitative and discriminative practices can be challenged. The colonized in its textual expression of resistance of colonialism, expressed the evil methods and suffering of the colonized made by the colonizers in their own homes. My aim is not to add something new to the postcolonial discourse. In fact, by this ideology, I am trying to introduce the Black American experience as a space, through which we can study postcolonialism in America. Consequently, The aim of this study is to make a connection between the African American experience and postcolonial theory. Whereby focusing on the African American female writing, the question asked is How the Black female experience - of physical, sexual oppression, and domination by the dominant white and even Black men- clearly elaborated and discussed in their literary works, which refer to a colonial present in America, and has no difference from other colonial realities.

African-American writers or Blacks tried to establish the same aspect of resistance even though, it was a matter of race or color. They showed that their suffering is what colonialism is about on the social, political, and cultural level. Despite the difference that may exist between the notions, slavery and postcolonialism, they provide the same aspects of struggle. Where, In the United States, the African American is constituted in a white/black binary of signification that defines whites as normative and superior, and that represents the African American as a devalued, inferior Other, produced by the White- American ideological dominance.

The experience of the African American women was at the heart of this resistance, in order to affirm their identity, and history by developing new interpretations of Black women's experience and oppression in their fictional works. The success of African American women has itself been a liberating model of many other Black women writers. It has helped to establish and provide a framework to confirm a sense of identity for all women around the world. Among the famous figures in this field include: Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Angela Davis.

These African American women writers tried to develop a new type of novel, that represents the hopes, aspirations, and historical memories of "colored women" (Hellman 262). Where, their struggle against racism in a male-centered society is challenging. Reacting to the narrowly defined feminism, the African American writer Alice Walker coined the term "Womanist" that includes the entire people, male and female. The term "Black Feminism" appeared to denote that sexism and racism are related, and is often used to encompass the needs of all women of color.

Morrison's novels reflect the true identity of the African-American women who are marginalized on account of their race, gender and class. In her works, she

addresses the fundamental issues of African-American community, the complex realities of their ancestral past and political present. She asserts that African-American female identity is a cultural construct influenced by multiple oppression and marginalization. She states that the issue of racism is very vital in American society as it oppresses inferior groups, especially that of Black women who are a gendered subaltern. Morrison, being a doubly marginalized women writer, emphasizes that gender causes the agony of being the second sex and adds the miseries of Black women. These issues of racism and sexism get more complicated in the context of a capitalist society where the Blacks are mostly the poor. Thus, her novels construct a space for the Black women, where they can reclaim and redeem their true female identity, changing the overwhelming male make up of the African-American literary canon.

Chapter One: *Postcolonial Literature in America: Does it Exist?*

The literature that we hand down to future generations is the literature that we value because of its importance and universal truth. Starting from marginalized positions some authors had to say something that proved to be “important for us to understand, remember, and pass on to our off springs” (Cain 3). Like William Butler Yeats, Joseph Conrad, and more recently Chinua Achebe.¹ From the topics of their writing they elaborated a connection between their writings – described as postcolonial in character- and parts of the American history. The connection is similar to a postcolonial genealogy: Yeats looked into the past and prophesied the future and, with Joyce and other Irish writers, invented a unified Irish society that could then resist English oppression; Conrad, even as he was also implicated in it, revealed the brutality of European colonization of Africa; and Achebe revised the history that he read in Conrad's work. Contemporary American literature, especially that written by women and especially that written by female members of a minority ethnic group, follows the examples that these earlier writers provided. Based on the concepts of revising, and the recovering the past, to reveal the oppression that they experienced on the hands of the dominant culture (Cain 3).

This state of oppression in the American history is identified- in my opinion- in the personal status of the Native and African American history. From this connection, the questions that can be derived are: How postcolonial theory and American Studies can mutually inform one another? And, How key concepts introduced by postcolonial studies like: Diaspora, Hybridity and Third Space apply to the United States? Based on the arguments of the previous writers, on what are the principles of colonialism, we can conclude How America as a nation, through its literature and history witnessed a colonial present, and now can be identified as

postcolonial from the history of Native Americans and African Americans.²When these cases are compared with the real image of the colonial presence in Africa and other colonized countries, a fact will be determined, that these experiences, focusing mostly on the Black experience, have colonial past, and a postcolonial identity in America. As a result, we find that certain insights attributed to postcolonial theory are incipient in earlier African American intellectual history, even though the American foundation was never acknowledged as starting from what colonialism is all about. Furthermore, the evidence from the literary writings of male and most significantly female African Americans, who successfully depicted their slave conditions in U.S. characterized by: Violence, Control, and Exploitation, is a match to the conditions witnessed by the colonized in a real state of colonialism. As a result, their After-Slavery experience can be called as postcolonial in fields of literature and culture.

The obvious implication of the term post-colonial is that it refers to a period coming after the end of colonialism. But, this “sense of an ending, of the completion of one period of history and the emergence of another is hard to maintain in any simple or unproblematic fashion” (Childs and Williams 1). Thus, accordingly, we can question the meaning and time of post-colonial movement.

The concept is difficult to define, to begin with, “post- colonial”, as I mentioned before, was always a reference to the period after official decolonization.³Yet, much of what has been identified as post- colonial did not really belong to this period, because most of its prominent theorists belong to the colonial era. Where in literary studies, we notice that, postcolonialism in general is reflecting the meaning of what used to be lived or identified in a description of conditions or opposition of power. So, when? Can simply mean that it is “now” as recognition that it was never about a colonial past rather it is a colonial present. Over time, it passed

beyond the dilemma of history and literature to become a “general” theory about what Ania Loomba et al. call:

The shifting and often interrelated forms of dominance and resistance; about the constitution of the colonial archive; about the interdependence play of race and class; about the significance of gender and sexuality; about the complex forms in which subjectivities are experienced and collectivities mobilized; about representation itself; and about the ethnographic translation of cultures. (qtd. in Kenzo 2)

Clearly, postcolonial theory became a field of diverse studies and themes. Its discourse shifted from the forms of resistance toward the colonial and imperial power, and the conditions described after the state of colonialism; to give a specific interest to the different experiences of the colonized in all of its categories: sex, gender, and race. Also, it started to tackle the subjective experiences of individuals that shed light on the conditions of their communities and cultures.

In another perspective, focusing more on the implications of the cultural production as a major concern of the postcolonial theory; It was defined and explained by Childs and Williams in *An Introduction to postcolonial theory* that “we use the “post-colonial”, however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression ”(3). Here, Childs and Williams are arguing that postcolonial theory and thinking is, also, tackling an important dimension of resistance of imperialism in the

process of anti- colonial cultural practices, taken from the formation of ‘ continuity of preoccupation’ .⁴

In time, postcolonial theory proved to be a historical phenomena that raises a complicated question that carried the implication of the shifting power between people within the same territory, or in different parts of the world. Postcolonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds where “a number of recurring post-colonial themes do emerge: Displacement or Diaspora, Exile, Migration, Nationhood and Hybridity” (Madsen 1). Most of its prominent theorists belong to the colonial era like: Achebe, Homi Bhabha and others. This fact means that “postcolonial literatures encompass that complex and various body of writing produced by individuals, communities and nations with distinct histories of colonialism” (Mullany 3). On this basis, the analysis of postcolonial societies works with the sense that colonialism is the only history of these societies.

Defining colonialism, on the other hand, is not a straight forward or easy task because through history, the nature of interaction, and relationship between different types of peoples changed. As a result, a variety of forms can emerge to be described as colonial in character. Two problems can emerge, about what should be included or excluded from the definition of colonialism. First, by defining the term “too narrowly”, some communities who have been characterized “as colonial” and “experienced injustice” are obviously excluded. Second, the case where colonialism is taken “too broadly” can include any relation between different parties or sides with simply the feature of “inequality of power” (Butt 2). Other aspects of power included under colonialism helped to make it a concept that deals with the ideological, social, and material structures of power established under it; these strategies give the colonizer authority to claim an imperial state on the colonized.

A recurrent problem concerns the relation between the terms “colonialism” and “imperialism”, where it is perhaps useful to pause and briefly distinguish them. On one hand, “Colonialism refers to the practice of planting and securing colonies, initially for capital and commercial gain as in the operations of the British East India Company in the Eighteenth century” (Howe 3). Here, is a particular example model of political organization, with the sense of a process of exploitation made by settler in a colony with a purpose of farming settlement or plantation. But, increasingly “with the rise of the European empires in the Nineteenth century” it came to refer “to those areas subject to systems of rule or control by European powers” (Howe 3). And on the other, imperialism, with its different “attitudes, structures, philosophies, or processes that facilitate the practice of colonialism” (Mullany 3).⁵

In the same respect, “postcolonial literature and criticism arose both during and after the struggles of many nations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere for independence from colonial rule” (Habib 738). Moreover, Mullaney explained in her book *Postcolonial literatures in Context*, the use of the term ‘post-colonial’ (with a hyphen) or ‘postcolonial’ as a term that described a period or epoch deployed in all fields by political scientists, economics and historians “ usually contiguous with a distinct moment of political independence” (5). Consequently, postcolonial literature was inspired from the struggles of the colonized in the colonial era. From this perspective, it appears that “Anti-colonialism had many of the characteristics commonly associated with postcolonialism such as: Diaspora, transnational migration and internationalism” (Young 39). This implies that postcolonialism was about the description of sameness or rather the shared features of experiences of oppression from the perspectives of marginalized groups. It means “to reexamine the history of colonialism from the perspective of the colonized; to determine the economic,

political, and cultural impact of colonialism on both the colonized peoples and the colonizing powers; to analyze the process of decolonization” (Young 39).

This process can be related to the significance of the “post” in postcolonial that “stresses continuities and departures.” Where continuities refer to the conditions still in control of the colonized attributed since the first contact in the wake of colonization. While the departures are “the moment of political independence in which those conditions are not depicted exactly as they were before liberation, but pictured in a transformed or a renewed image by its powers in the aftermath” (Mullany 5). This recognition relates to another usage of the term ‘postcolonial’ that describes a range of critical practices, or approaches employed to understand the various dimensions and ramifications of colonization and its aftermath. These approaches are the theoretical and critical voices associated with postcolonial studies; interested mainly with the oppressed minority groups. Their presence is not only crucial to the self-definition of the majority group; but also critical, placing the subaltern group in a position to re-direct the authority of those who have the major power (Kenzo 5). Among the various researchers in the postcolonial field are: Franz Fanon, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha who actually contributed to the definition of postcolonial literary studies and post colonial theory.

According to Mullaney, “Said influential work “ Orientalism”, on one hand, takes as its central concern, the construction of the “Orient”, as an object of western investigation and control.⁶ And, on the other hand, considers “Orientalism” as ‘western style’ or “discourse” for ‘dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’” (6). Assumed that western culture and values -as opposite to oriental ones- are superior. Before Said’s critical work, Frantz Fanon has already published the important *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and years later, *The Wretched of the Earth*

(1961).⁷ Where “ he made an analysis of the psychological effects of colonialism on the identity of those being colonized” (Fonts 3). Also, he explained that to achieve national unity or ‘national consciousness’, “ sentiment is an integral stage in the struggle for independence from colonial rule” but “it proves to be an “empty shell” because of pre-colonial antagonisms based on race and tribe”(Habib 742). Pictured as the ideologies planted by the colonizer to break the unity of the colonized society from within.

Homi Bhabha, on the other hand, has become one of the leading voices in colonialism since the 1980s.⁸ He challenged the notion of fixed identity with the notion of hybridity that expresses a state of “in-betweenness”, as in a person who stands between two cultures to create a new transcultural forms. A mixture of different cultures making contact with each other, due to colonization, creates a zone of contact known as “the Third Space”.⁹ In Bhabha terms, the objective of colonial discourse is to create worse types of population to justify their colonial conquest. They described the colonized at once as “Other”, and at the same time, they attempted to abolish their “Otherness” and include them in the Western understanding. Consequently, the colonized tried to confirm their “Otherness”, and make their character similar to the dominant; but they failed to do neither. Simply, because, they created a space that included the mixture of both, without focusing on one aspect (qtd. in Howe 743).

Bhabha, also explored the possibility of reading colonialist discourse as endlessly ambivalent, split and unstable; never able to install the colonial values, they seemed to support.¹⁰ According to what he thinks, the ambivalent position of the colonized men is a source of anti-colonial resistance, to challenge the discourse of colonialism by using English; to reject the representations that attempted to fix and define them. This is why he offered Mimicry “as the desire for a reformed,

recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (qtd. in Howe 743).¹¹ Whereby hearing their English in the mouths of the colonized, the colonizers will face the threat of being the same or resembling the colonized.

The resistance of postcolonial writers to imperial powers, cultural resistance, and literary deconstruction were actually weapons in this war , in which “ it rejected the reality and perceptions of the colonizer, attempted to reject the language and labels of the colonizer, and sought a cultural purity, free of the “contamination” of imperialism and colonization”(Jia 4) .This can be explained through the concept of Ngugi Wa Thiong’s the rebuilding of national identity, through the use of our mother tongue- the language spoken by the native/colonized peoples- and, completely reject the colonizer’s language and the hidden messages behind it. For him, this is the way in order to rediscover the original identity, that was almost erased by the colonizer. Who imposed his own foreign language, where if chosen, is related to its identity (qtd in Jia 4). However, some writers find it difficult to admit the purity of the culture from what the colonized attempted to mix, instead they “acknowledged the hybridity of their identity” (Jia 4), as a point of strength used positively to enrich and expand their own culture. Here, the language of the colonizer is regarded as an advantage, to open an opportunity to use it as a tool of subversion, as Bhabha notes “to the extent to which discourse is a form of defensive warfare” (121). In which, language is used without including the traditions and ideologies of the colonizer, in order to “write back to the empire”.¹²

Later on, the struggle of post colonial discourse was not centered only on the comprehensive sense that it deals with cultures that are affected by the imperial process of colonization; it extended over the domains of gender, race, ethnicity, and class. In this way, the opposition of west as superior disappears because same

homogenous entities can oppose each other, and this oppression can be manifested in both “the west and in colonized nations”. Hence, “postcolonial discourse potentially embraces, and is intimately linked with, a broad range of dialogues within the colonizing powers, addressing various forms of “internal colonization” as treated by minority studies of various kinds such as African-American, native-American, Latin American and women’s studies” (Habib 738).

As a final comment, when we outline the meanings of the term through current usage rather than from the actual meaning when it first appeared we notice that:

The unhyphenated version is taken to denote the field as an area of recognizable interests, debates and controversies. Understood not as limited to the implicit temporal marking of the ‘post-’, but as the sign of a critical orientation towards colonialism and its legacies, postcolonial literature then designates the representation of experiences of various kinds including those of slavery, migration, oppression and resistance, difference, race, gender, space and place, and the responses to the discourses of imperial Europe.” (Quayson 10)

Thus, It is conventionally assumed that postcolonial literature is as much a reflection on conditions under imperialism and colonialism proper, as about conditions coming after the historical end of empires. Speaking about the reflection of lived conditions, America, even though, described as an imperial country, witnessed the emergence of voices of resistance that presented evidence of the existence of a postcolonial present. That denotes the colonial past lived by these groups, who are mainly the minorities of the American society; described as inferior in character and without stable identity. Even though, they were able to offer an enormous works of

literature and history that was identified later on as an integral part of the American history and literature, that should never be denied.

Clearly, the literature of America is important, on its own, for several reasons where “ the United States has become the major world power politically and culturally; the English that it is written in has become the major language of world business affairs; the United States has traditionally attracted immigrants from other countries who want to share in the American wealth and culture” (Cain 22). America made a promise to give a voice for everyone, but democracy has always been an ideal, never a complete reality. As the Eurocentric excludes in many ways members of groups whose origins are not in Europe, made the American studies experience in crisis; where it focused mainly on a canon of “dead white men” and “high” cultural history. The discipline was very much shaken by the social and cultural revolution ushered in, with the civil rights movement, the Europe of 1968, and Vietnam. Scholars and activists alike called for an examination of America’s “denied” past, including slavery, colonialism, and immigration, for a reorientation towards popular culture, feminist, and minority studies. (Cain 22)

“The denied past” by the American literature, gives the impression that the oppression of "Other" groups began when the first Europeans invaded this continent, and has continued to the present. The example of the Civil Rights Act, which became law in 1964, can be a clear evidence on the basis that it made discrimination of race illegal, and racial discrimination is still practiced among many members of the hegemonic culture. The organized protests of African Americans against such discrimination in the 1960s were directly responsible for the Enactment of Civil Rights laws, and other oppressed American groups to demand a voice in society, and with the

slow progress, much of contemporary American literature represents the viewpoints of these oppressed peoples (23).

According to Madsen, Deborah in her book *Beyond the borders: American literature and post-colonial theory*, in the different ethnic literatures of the United States of America, postcolonial theory provides a powerful approach to use it as powerful lens, to read these diverse literatures, and to question the constitution of national ethnic literatures. Even though, this diverse body of writings, with which contributors engage, of very different identities and cultures; vary according to history and geography. Together, they draw the way in which they owe much of their thematic shape, to perceived tensions with the national power exerted by the U.S.(1).

In this sense, Postcolonialism, had been linked to different meanings through history, one meaning referred to those writings produced in a previously colonized nation after its independence from colonial control. Where, for the United States, it speaks about all literature produced after the war of independence. The Second sense describes four phases: The pre-colonial, colonial, independence, and de-colonized periods of a nation's development, and this meaning is used to describe aspects of the Vietnamese, Indonesian, Burmese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Asian American, African American, Puerto Rican, Haitian and Latin-Caribbean. The Native American literatures of the U.S., also, apply perfectly to this sense, where postcolonialism is used to encompass the whole complex of historical and cultural processes; starting with the pre-colonial period and leading up through independence from colonial control to a state of decolonization(2). Here, the authors of the Native American literature adopted a postcolonial perspective that analyzed the ways in which their own postcolonial status, as members of colonized cultural groups, is a part of the American literature.

As a result, America has been racially diverse since the very beginning. This emerging demographic diversity has raised fundamental questions about America's identity and multiculturalism. Writing literature which is defined as multicultural literary mode, started with immigrants to the United States from Latin America and Asia. Since then, multicultural literature has appeared to raise awareness and sensitivity to other ethnic groups, celebrate diverse cultures and common bonds (Al-Khatib 20). This is why, postcolonialism as a theory started to celebrate this kind of interaction between societies, where multiculturalism presents a literature that depicts and explores the lives of individuals belonging to diverse groups, especially those who have a common mark as the experience of colonialism. In this way the United States of America made postcolonial theory far beyond its ordinary meaning to accept other types of colonialisms(22). These groups struggled in the American land and described their experience and what they witnessed with a postcolonial eye, and managed to define their: Diaspora, hybridized nature that leads to a “Third space” culture, and explained their journey to establish a cultural identity free of colonial presence.

A focus on issues of “Nation” that are prominent and urgent in postcolonial literary studies today, allow us to look at Native American literatures as “postcolonial” in their own right. “Nation” can be identified as the shared language and culture, where from postcolonized places it points toward the difficulty of finding this common ground. In order to develop this focus on “Nation” in Native American literary contexts, attention should be directed to the contact between the colonial power “America” and the natives’ history, such as: the making of treaties and other historical events, that enables them to claim their sovereignty as a material legacy of the native Americans’ contact with the U.S. government, used as a power dynamic to articulate their “national” identity and “nation” (Madsen 31). This concept of “Nation” can also

be seen to signify a desire for, or a claiming of, senses of autonomy, a struggle with understanding how to identify themselves on individual and “national” levels, self-determination, and equality akin to those sought after or held by “Third World” countries (34).

Native literature, on the other hand, is radically different from Western traditions as the fundamental assumptions about life and reality it represents are entirely different. For example, the purpose of native literature is not mainly one of self expression, and the tribes hardly celebrate the individual’s ability. Instead true literature in the native sense, is that literature which has the capacity to bring the isolated private self - that is their original identity- into harmony, and balance with the lived reality. This means to accept the colonial presence, and be a part of the new change. As contrast, the Western literature is individualistic and is intended to separate the individual from others, whereas native literature is aimed at integrating the individual with the people. The function of their claim is to determine connection rather than difference, to provide a continuum of the past into the present, and present into future to be a great part of the American history and literature (Tripathy 45).

The same thing for Asian Americans, who are not all the same, being from cultures as diverse as Indian, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and many others. But they, too, share the experience of being excluded by law and by practice from the hegemonic white culture of the United States. Latin-Americans also have the distinction of being twice marginalized by the Europeans: first by the Spanish invaders, and later by the political interactions between Mexico and the United States. All of these groups have been treated as the "Other" in which the common denominato, is the oppression they have all experienced at the hands of the dominant culture (Cain 7).

Although not the main focus of post-colonial studies, African Americans are located within a diasporical space, which can be understood utilizing post-colonial studies concepts. AAs mix of mainstream white American assumptions and African traditions, African American identity is a hybrid construct that is reflected in literature. None of this can be understood without first looking back at the historical insertion of Black people in the Americas (Neto 1).

The Africans who were brought to the North American continent in chains were gathered from many different African cultures, cultures which perhaps had little in common besides being on the same continent. Since they didn't know each other's language, they were forced to:

learn to communicate with each other in the language of the dominant culture. Because families were frequently separated, it has been difficult if not impossible for descendants of African slaves to know anything about their kinship with each other, but they all had the common experience of being traded as commodities and used as animals. After slavery in the United States was abolished, after Reconstruction, after the Jim Crow laws, these people still had no voice in society, were not allowed to vote for their representatives or to hold any position of leadership except within their own oppressed group.(Cain 12)

Mainly, Diaspora here is presented by the forced displacement of Africans , that resulted into the development of slavery. ¹³But the idea of African Americans as subjects of the Diaspora has been criticized, because African slaves did not come to America from the same religious or ethnic group. As impossible to share the same

cultural memory, However, they pass on their heritage and culture through generations, thereby keeping alive their tradition .Although slaves did not share the same cultural tradition in Africa, once they set foot in the U.S. they created their own communal cultural against whites. Instead, Their shared past of slavery and historical heritage are responsible for shaping African Americans as a diasporic group (Neto 2).

As a result of being taken away from their culture and homeland to be enslaved in the Americas, especially in the United States, African descendants' identity, the African Americans, occupied an “in-between” position in relation to Africa, America and Europe. Bhabha explained that Hybridity is the mutual construction of both colonizer and colonized cultural systems and statements in a space called the Third space. That has colonial and postcolonial provinces, where a hybrid cultural identity emerges with an agreed upon cultural meanings where a group can open new spaces to articulate difference and form new strategies for self-representation (qtd. in Myles 85). But, for the African American, as the hybrid of both identities (African and American) in this “in-between” space; is not a third new subject resulting from the encounter of two identities, rather it is the influence and resistance of the dominant culture upon its original culture. So, the hybrid subject of the African American persona is that, one part affirms a position as Americans. But for their cultural knowledge and awareness, they go to their African part (Neto 2).

As a Part of the African American identity construct, the development of masculinity in this in-between place, resulted from colonial enslavement and exploitation, where the white American men as masters in their plantations decided that there status is impossible to be reached by the Black slave, since he filled in the position of commodity, not one of social subject. But, this space also respects black men’s masculinity where it presents them as “distinctive”. “The Black Drama” was

used as a way to fight stereotypes, and recreate the Black image and identity by using the audience to spread identity awareness; that helped to fight repression of the white men to establish a valid African American culture (Neto 3).

Frantz Fanon as a psychiatrist and activist issued two collections of essays where he made a critique on the construction of “Negritude” as a concept that pictured the racism and colonial dynamics of colonialism itself. In “One National Culture” (1961) he argued that the aim behind colonialism was not only to reform the present and the future of the colonized peoples, but also to reshape the past and give a strange picture about their culture. In this colonial perspective, colonial America was the “Haunt of Savages” and all Black people were decribed as “The Negro”, a savage. According to Fanon, what is needed is for the contemporary Black person to rediscover his history and reaffirm his African identity and culture. By reclaiming parts of the corrupted past, even though colonialism will shake off its power, he should seek strongly to rebuilt his nation and the culture coming with it based on up- to-date culture and narratives (qtd. in lake12). In post colonial studies of the United States, the construction of identity for the African American is given within the struggle between oppressor and oppressed in an image divided between white man, and the “Other” as the “Black man”. The “other” as the oppressed, in a postcolonial world, is present when the colonizer has a different look and perception of “Black people” only to attract the white’s man’s attention. In this respect, the “White” is a model or a desire for the Black man, where he tries to cope with the standards imposed by the oppressor to attain values that he will never reach (Neto 2). In short, the African American is represented as the passive object of a white middle class, that is the maker of history. As a consequence, other African American representations, identities, and experiences that do not fit into this White/Black binary are ignored.

Therefore, this internal colonialism, this structured relationship of white domination and Black subordination, has constructed what is called the “White/Black binary of signification.” “Internal colonialism” is “a form of colonialism in which the dominant and subordinate population are intermingled, so that there is no geographically distinct ‘metropolis’ separate from the ‘colony’” (qtd. in Hogue 23). This system of the White/Black binary, that forms the essence of the internal colonial relationship, exists first in the economic realm, but it extends into political institutions, educational systems, social practices, and all forms of social structures. Its persistence in the United States is the result of this historic relationship, which continues to operate today as racism, both by leading to individual acts of discrimination, and The African American as Other (Hogue 24). But, the African Americans were able as the oppressed to write and place themselves as a rebellion where “almost as soon as Blacks could write, they set out to redefine- against already received racial stereotypes – who and what a black person was, and how unlike the racist stereotypes the Black original could actually be”(qtd. in Maffly-kipp and Lofton 4).

The development of an African-American literature began more than 200 years ago. The first published African-American poet was Phillis Wheatley, a slave whose book of poems appeared in 1773. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before the Civil War, slave narratives also emerged as a popular form of protest literature. Though white abolitionists often penned slave narratives for political purposes, many former slaves, including Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass, among thousands of others. Where they wrote slave narratives about their personal experiences. After the Civil War, W.E.B Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, and Marcus Garvey, wrote about the conditions of Black lives in America, their work changing and correcting social and cultural understandings of race. Between 1919 and 1930,

Black authors were published in greater numbers than any other decade before the 1960s. Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Jean Toomer, and Countee Cullen were all important writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Despite this increasing exposure, African-American literature was still many years away from being recognized by academic scholarship or the popular literary world (Hogue 25).

Even though, after the Civil Rights Movements, For the first time, dominant white society began to take notice and pay close attention to the African-American voices; adding to and challenging the dominant. Ralph Ellison, won the National Book Award in 1953 for his novel *Invisible Man*, which addresses social conditions, post-Civil War Black identity, and universal themes of humanity and justice. For the first time, African-American authors were getting the attention their works deserved, winning awards and receiving honors that for so long had been reserved only for white writers (Hogue 25).

Furthermore, when we speak about post colonialism and the different literary periods passing over time like Feminism, we find that the major intersection among these two modes of writing, is the use of the language of the oppressor, so to speak. To give the oppressed a voice where, Each postcolonial writer such as Chinua Achebe, must begin by a revision of the inherited history after colonialism from the white, elite voices, and revise it to include the original people's culture. In the case of Achebe, he struggled to include his own people, but left the position of women undiscussed. The difference, here, is that women writers "have not closed the doors to others, have not left the others foundering; they have presented an ideology of inclusion. In using the language of the oppressor, they make themselves understood, not just amongst their own adherents, but also by the rest of the world." Because as opposite to male writers,

who wanted to change the worlds and achieve success for themselves, female writers wanted to transform the world for themselves and for others (Cain 10).

Since the second half of the twentieth century, there has been a commitment on the part of women writers and scholars to revise and rewrite the history and culture of colonial and postcolonial women. Taking those who have been traditionally discriminated because of their belonging to an inferior class, their skin color or simply because they were part of a colonized society. As far as history is concerned -as explained by Purvis, June- Women's history consisted basically in two kinds of texts, "the lives of "Women's Worthies" and the biography of an individual woman, often a political or religious figure of some importance" (1). The tradition of women worthies, has the aim of revealing women's capacities, and served the need of female readers to argue about what women had done and still could do. While the individual biography, is about what a women can tell about her society and culture.

Consequently, In the 1960's and 1970's a new history started to emerge known as "Women's History" that began to be written as Purvis further argued, that it "takes women as its subject matter and maybe written by men [...] and women alike" (5). Where words like patriarchy and subordination in relation to women began to appear "to challenge the silencing, stereotyping and misrepresentation of women prevalent in malestream academic fields" (8). Taking into consideration other aspects of women's subjectivity like: "race", "ethnicity", "social class", "sexuality" to construct a new version of the traditional history that takes into account the women view, and interpretation of the world. Where, this is the case with the history of Black women and the perception of their bodies, that became a crucial element in the rewriting of the history of Black women. Where, Black female bodies at the time of the slave trade and later, were associated with being primitive, savage and sexual

commodity, inviting to “both sexual and colonial conquest”, that was an instrument for the reproduction of the slavery system and colonization movement. But, on the other hand, it can also be seen as a site of memory and resistance to the past where the experience of women as victims - of sexual abuse, male violence and work exploitation- can give us a valuable knowledge of that past (Ruiz 4).

From this point, African American Feminist scholars and writers were able to make a link between domination or oppression and race only to claim that “ Black women are more oppressed than everyone else. Therefore, have the best standpoint from which to understand the mechanisms, processes and effects of oppression” (qtd. in Chew and Richards 123). In the 1980s, African American experience helped to develop new interpretations of black women’s oppression to lead to alternative ways of knowledge included in feminism discourse (Chew and Richards 123). Where according to Myles, Lynette in her book : *Female Subjectivity in African American Women’s Narratives of Enslavement*, resistance of any kind, demands more than a moment of rebellion, it requires developing subjects to remain persistent in their efforts where at :

The heart of this resistance are African American women whose marginalized positions have prompted them to resist their existence on the border of hegemonic order. To change their conditions, black women have used their fictional works as a place to focus on empowering black women by moving them from locations that place them on the edge of society to ones that place them in the center of dominant discourse. (84)

Therefore, early African American’s writings show the disastrous consequences of women experience as being isolated to remain only in the “Other”

space. Described as too isolated and alone, where we hold the aspects of that down life and at the same time, seeking new knowledge and experience to live b (qtd. in Myles 83). This kind of thinking matches what Bhabha phrased as a postcolonial concept “Third Space”, in which it helps the African American women as a space that “displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom” (Myles 83). To give them the choice to move from or remain in subjugated places by determining a response towards existing cultural practices of female oppression by a vision of new alternatives and radical changes in their ways of life.

Cain, Williams argued in his book entitled “ *Literary Criticism and Cultural Theory*” that these contemporary African American women writers together have followed the examples set by the earlier anti-colonialist writers William butler Yeats, James Joyce, Joseph Conrad, and Chinua Achebe; who had a postcolonial tendency in their writings. They shared with Yeats the search for roots, with Joyce the demonstration of oppression, the revealing of imperialism with Conrad and the rewriting of their own history as observed by Achebe(7). They have searched for and discovered traditions that are not part of the dominant culture, and they have demonstrated the exploitation that results from colonization of the mind and body. They have exposed the brutality of their oppression by both the dominant culture and by men in their own traditions, and they have revised their own histories through their novels. These women have had the imagination to create a hybrid culture from which to voice their ideas. Together these writers all point to a multicultural blending of traditions, leading to an ideology of inclusion that grows out of the less inclusive nature of the earlier men's writing (26).

Like their male counterparts, African American women played a central role

in historical production throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth Centuries. African American women continued to use the “power of the pen” to actively shape the understanding of their race and the broader public’s view about them. With the exception of the women’s consistent and aggressive challenge to contemporary gender norms, their production was hardly different from that of the men of their time. Representation and progress were important parts of their discourse, they were especially productive in the area of biographies; in short and long form, they also produced their share of race histories or emancipation narratives (Hall 175).

More specifically, Black women in their writings tried to create an imaginary world alternative to their social reality. They presented a space to call home to be able to belong to with self-determination, and no fear. Even though, they live in a diasporic nature with all of its harmful consequences, they attempt to fight oppression through literature and actually define that space within their society, as an area of security and a sense of homelike.

In the U.S., for many years African American women’s writing was probably opened up as an area for study by the critical success of more contemporary writers, including Phillis Wheatley, Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, and Toni Morrison where they focused on recuperation and rewriting of history. Phillis Weatley, is the first African to publish her work in America where she focused on the concept that the writings should be expressive and competitive. She also presented proof that the African American is able to produce and handle with the art of poetry and as a result she provided method and confidence for the women of color to go into literature but she was criticized by the whites, not only as a Black person but also as a woman, over her ability of writing literature. So, as the first black American to be recognized in the literary field, she strongly affirmed that the female writer of color must be ready at all

times to defend her work. Unlike works provided by men, there is always a question behind the actions of women.

Zora Neale Hurston is a woman whose literary legacy is defined by the idea that a Black woman could demand a space in the world; furthermore, she asserts that the woman did not have to do so in fear of her race or femininity (Walters 5) . Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* has been praised as one of the greatest literary works of its time. Walker's works reveals what she defines black women as "suspended" which is the perfect description of the experiences of women of color within a postcolonial society. The woman of this description is placed at an involuntary position. Her movements, or lack of it, are dictated by society and the powers which exceed those of woman; man dictates and the woman must obey. This is why Walker forces the reader, male and female, to reexamine the experience of the woman within a postcolonial setting; a setting wherein the men of color have found freedoms that they continue to deny their women. Toni Morrison, on the other hand, describes the novel as a product produced for the middle class. As it would seem, those who were a part of the lower class or the upper class had everything they needed; however, the middle class, in the wake of the industrial revolution, needed something to help them define the new space they would inhabit in society (Walters 152).

Mainly in their works, Black women writers in America encoded depression as a dilemma where they have consistently raised the problem of the black women's relationship to power and discourse as being the "Other" in the culture the developed west. They used literature as a way to provide evidence of the state of colonialism they suffered from of both Whites and Black men themselves. African-American writers face a situation, where they cannot be encompassed neither within the sphere of African nor of American writing. They are not African neither completely American.

We can say that they live on the edge of a narrow border between African and American culture. Although they try to keep their African tradition in their writing by recapturing the beliefs of their ancestors, influenced by the American ideology, in this context, although there is an attempt to keep or to recover their tradition, we can't forget that it has already been modified due to the contact with the American mainstream culture. Thus, helping to shape the African-American hybrid culture. The meeting of two different world visions creates a dual perspective for the African-American writers.

Notes

¹ About a hundred years ago, William Butler Yeats and James Joyce were Irish writers who deeply felt their marginalization by the colonizing English; Joseph Conrad, a contemporary of Yeats and Joyce, was a Polish writer who was similarly oppressed by the Russians; Chinua Achebe, a twentieth-century Nigerian writer, is from another culture oppressed by English imperialism, the Igbo culture, or a "Third-World" culture, as former colonies are sometimes called. Yeats, Joyce, and Conrad are considered "modernist" writers; it was in reading these modernists that Achebe found that he was further marginalized, even though Nigeria had gained its independence from England, and "wrote back" to "the empire."

² America in this study is used to signify the United States of America.

³ Decolonization is the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms. This includes dismantling the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural forces that had maintained the colonialist power and that remain even after political independence is achieved.

⁴ The critics are not in agreement whether the term should be used with or without hyphen: i.e. "post-colonial" and "postcolonial" have different meanings. The hyphenated term "post-colonialism" marks a historical period as is suggested by phrases like: after colonialism, after independence, after the end of empire". Whereas the term "postcolonialism" referring to all the characteristics of a society or culture from the time of colonization to the present. According to this, in my study, I will use the unhyphenated term for a broader scope.

⁵ At the beginning of his book *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said suggests that imperialism is "a word and idea today so controversial, so fraught with all sorts of

questions, doubts, polemics, and ideological premises as nearly to resist use altogether.”(London: Chatto,1993) p3. He tried to outline the connections between the expanding European empires, and the imperial attitudes and experiences reproduced in Western cultural manifestations.

⁶ Most critics working in the field of postcolonial studies would agree that colonial discourse analysis was initiated by Edward Said’s highly influential and extremely scholarly work. *Orientalism*, first published in 1978. Said’s work was groundbreaking in that it brought a whole new field of academic enquiry into being. Where the western knowledge created a non- existed entity “the orient” and forced colonized peoples to fit into this paradigm.

⁷ Frantz Fanon, who died in 1961, may be considered to be the founding father of postcolonial thinking. Despite the fact that Fanon was a psychiatrist. In his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, originally published in France as *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (1952). He stated that his analysis deals with Black people in countries colonized by whites, but this work has proved to influence intellectuals and postcolonial theorists from various parts of the world.

⁸ See also Bhabha, Homi. *The location of culture*. (London:Routledge, 1994). This book is a collection of some of Bhabha main theories, including his rejection of culturally perceived binary oppositions of Self/Other and East/West. In the twelve essays included he develops his ideas on the Third Space, in-between forms of difference

⁹ In short, this is the space of hybridity itself, the space in which cultural meanings and identities always contain the traces of other meanings and identities. Therefore, Bhabha argues, ‘claims to inherent originality or purity of cultures are untenable, even before we resort to empirical historical instances that demonstrate their hybridity’.

¹⁰ In Homi Bhabha's paraphrasing of Fanon's use of the hybridization process is a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once which makes it impossible for the devalued, insatiable *evolué*...to accept the coloniser's identity: 'You're a doctor, a writer, a student, you're *different*, you're one of us'. It is precisely in that ambivalent use of 'different'—to be different from those that are different makes you the same—that the Unconscious speaks of the form of Otherness, the tethered shadow of deferral and isplacement (1994: 117).

¹¹ Mimicry An increasingly important term in post-colonial theory, because it has come to describe the Ambivalent relationship between colonizer and colonized. When colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. Rather, the result is a 'blurred copy' of the colonizer that can be quite threatening.

¹² The term "write back" is from Rushdie's own celebrated article, "The Empire Writes Back with a Vengeance", (published in the London times on 3 July 1982). Rushdie's authorial stance is further validated from Bhabha's conception, as advanced in his 1994 volume, *the location of culture*, of "newness as a form of cultural imprint"(23), entailing the privileging of hybridization as a key determinant of the postcolonial (and Rushdian) world view.

¹³ Diasporas, is the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions, is a central historical fact of colonization. Colonialism itself was a radically diasporic movement, involving the temporary or permanent dispersion and settlement of millions of Europeans over the entire world. Most post-colonial theorists who have engaged with the issue have seen the study of black culture in the Americas as, in part, the study of one of the world's major diasporas. In

this respect, the history of African Americans has some features in common with other movements of oppressed diasporic peoples. *Key concepts in postcolonial literature* (NY and London: Routledge, 1998).

Chapter two :

Postcolonial Black Feminism and the Use of the "Ghost" in a Magical Realist Texts.

Women's studies were characterized as being post-colonial because they – women- taken apart from the conditions of their society fought an internal war based on them being “women”. As colonized in mind and body by men, they were considered as inferior, useless and a source of pleasure and service. But, as time passes so too does change occurs. For women, has changed much, where they have risen above obstacles and joined together to defend their new place in society as feminists, where they offered evidence that before their rise men had more power than women. As a way to manifest their presence they used words that depicted different histories, experiences and perspectives to declare their intellectual and natural talents to be a part or participate in the development of societies, regardless of any kind of sexual difference (Plain and Sellers 124). The sixties had in fact seen an impressive wave of imaginative writings by women who were already questioning women's roles, and the relationships between men and women and none of them was only concerned with the problems of women; they also explored issues such as colonialism, race, class, political oppression and mental illness. This questioning helped these writers to make it possible for “their women readers to recognize the dilemmas of their own lives and to make feminist theory thinkable” (Plain and Sellers 124).

A principle goal of Feminist movement has been to recover and honor the specificity of women's experience. Where, they share the belief that “women, too, are fully human” (Harding 12). This apparent platitude is in fact a revolutionary claim of actually taking women to be fully as human as their brothers it means they seek to equality with men, where “of course there are biological differences between females and males in every species with two-sex reproduction” (qtd. in Harding 12). But, what

they seek to achieve is not concerned with the “biological differences” but from the social conditions resulting from this difference. This’s why they advocate for improving such social conditions.

According to Susan Osborne, Feminism sprang into life in the late sixties and seventies, attracting a lot of attention from media to affect the social structure. It created energy that was realized through a long journey of many fits and starts to achieve a revolution of two hundred years, that carried with it a real change in many women’s lives. Where nowadays, is suggested that we live in “post feminist world where women have achieved equality with men and so there is no longer a need for a women’s movement” (7). Even though, the struggle still continues for more future demands to explore what Feminism Criticism has done and is doing, from the medieval era to the present. Feminism has become a huge area of study since the women’s movement in the sixties; where it was described as “a way of looking at the world, which women occupy from the perspective of women. It has as its central focus the concept of patriarchy, which can be described as a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political, and economic institutions.” Or more simply, as the “advocacy of women’s rights or of the movement for the advancement and emancipation of women” (Osborne 8). Feminists “emerged to map the distinctive effects of cultural difference and of class, race and ethnic discrimination on women. They chart the many ways in which the lives of women in different cultures and classes around the world are linked through global networks of both empowerment and exploitation” (Harding 14).

The position of women in colonial America – as an example- depended on men. For the puritans “Inferiority of women was a mark of original sin, manifest in physical weakness, smaller stature, intellectual limitations and a tendency to depend upon emotions rather than the intellect. Women should be confined to the domestic sphere,

nurturing children, maintaining the household and serving their husbands (Madsen 2). So, a woman is always subjected to her husband's authority. But, as the nation developed women gained more rights on the social level like protection from physical abuse even though calls for political equality were denied. Eventually, in the Nineteenth Century, women realized that without her husband "her status was akin to that of a minor or a slave. It was in connection with slavery that the organized movement from women's rights had its origin" (Madsen 3). A group of women, then, determined to fight for their own freedom to form the 'First Wave of American Feminism' that began in the 1840s. It was marked by the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848 set by Margaret Fuller.¹ She suggested that "the improvement of women's conditions will better prepare them for their task of moral guardianship of men" (5). Later on, it was included in a declaration of sentiments written in Jefferson's Declaration of Independence as such: "we hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal" (6). As a result, additional demands and improved conditions were added to women through time.

The Second Wave of American Feminism emerged in early 1960s.² According to Madsen, it dealt with "male sexism, the domestic oppression of women and the exclusion of women from the public sphere and sex based discrimination in the work place" (7). With one goal of "the raising of women's consciousness of gender oppression and raising as a political issue the personal experience of that oppression" (9). At this time, feminist activism saw the rise of feminist theory in the era of literary study. Where, Plain and Sellers claim in *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*, that feminist literary criticism properly begins in the aftermath of "Second Wave" feminism.

It emerged due to women's movements in the US and Europe during the Civil Rights campaigns of the 1960s. It didn't appear directly from this moment rather "its eventual self-conscious expression was the culmination of centuries of women's writing, of women writing about women's writing and of women -and men- writing about women's minds, bodies, art and ideas"(2).

Plain and Sellers also explained that the concept of woman was greatly discussed by women themselves to explain their desires. Their concepts built a solid basis for the Second Wave Feminism as a distinct and rich history for the Feminist Literary Criticism "to uncover its own origins" and "establish traditions of women's writing and early 'feminist' thought to counter the unquestioning acceptance of "man" and male genius as the norm"(2). In order to, find the future of the female subject.

As a firm basis, early feminist theory challenged the traditional approach to texts where "texts are not gendered, 'great' works of literature express timeless and immutable truths that are not affected by such worldly issues as sex".³ In this sense, traditional texts carry ancient truth or common knowledge that will never be changed to suit women or men. They deny that these 'great' works have a masculine print and serve only men interests. As a result, they focused more "upon points of continuity between the reading experience and personal experience" (Madsen 15). Where each reader is influenced by his family, society, or values acquired in private life, in his reaction toward a certain type of texts. Where, each reader has his own translation or understanding developed in his own mind. As a result, this is clearly a rejection of the traditional approach.

As feminists added new concepts, themes and approaches to literature in general, some literary theories were greatly influenced by it. For instance, postcolonialism as a theory was described as inseparable from feminism, where feminism literary studies

have played a central role in the development of postcolonial studies. ⁴Because, It has “done more to complicate postcolonial notions like resistance, identity, subjectivity and difference” (Chew and Richards 120). As a result, it helped to rise further questions and widened the area of study. Also, as women’s experience challenged sexual ideologies it “worked to decentre the normative male subject at the heart of postcolonial theory and its conceptual ground” (121). This leads to the point where feminist helped postcolonial literary studies to become committed:

To the analysis of history and social specificity and the goal of linking analyses of literary texts to broader social relations. Key areas of work in postcolonial literary studies have included the ways in which power works through language and literary culture to shape meanings, values, subjectivities and identities. The best of this work has attempted to keep power relations of gender, class and race in the frame, seeing them as always integrally related. (Plain and Sellers 286)

Consequently, postcolonial studies include the main principles of Feminism that added new concepts to the social field of postcolonial texts. In order to, confirm the identities of women, and personal subjectivity. This change or addition to the postcolonial discourse influenced the frame of postcolonial studies to include aspects of race, class and gender. This type of studies, brought new writers and critics holding new perspectives that presented the kind of experience their community witnessed, as opposite to what is usually admitted as the norm.

A good example is Virginia Woolf, as a pioneer of feminist literary criticism- who among her different issues she dealt with “the social and economic context of women’s writing, the gendered nature of language, the need to go back through literary history and establish a female literary tradition, and the societal construction of gender

that remain of central importance to feminist studies” (Habib 671).⁵ Here, concerning the importance of gender, Chew and Richards argued that feminists understood women’s experience; especially the effects of the social patterns on the depiction of one’s experience. The “political ideology” derived from it led to the notion of “sexual politics” that aimed at facing and changing “the differentiation of status and power between male and female.”(121). This is why they focused the “Feminist Discourse” on the “inequality in gender relations” where race, class and sexual orientation should be addressed. This way, Feminists made gender as a category of study and analysis in all fields of knowledge and by making a revision of the existing knowledge through the notion of gender itself where its meaning passed the limits of a biological difference to enter areas of culture, history, politics and religion (122). This new idea helped Feminists to make new assumptions about their historical roots in all disciplines in a new way to understand and rethink what’s Masculinity and Femininity.

Feminism, on the other hand, was challenged and interrogated by an opposition to its history from within and its conceptual grounds. According to Chew and Richards, in the early 1980s, the questioning came from African American scholars like: Bell Hooks, who was against the notion of a common oppression of women. In her essay: “Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory” she said that Feminism as a theory failed to connect between race, class, and gender where white American women described their sexist oppression as general and effecting all American women of all races. While, there is another diverse sources of oppression rather than “daily beaten down”. Looking to class, race, religion, and sexuality we determine that sexism itself is divided into systems and domains depending on each source (123).

Furthermore, she claimed that “the unique social status of Black women as the objects of racist, classist, and sexist oppression could challenge the prevailing social structure and its ideologies” by their experience that is directly challenging all sources of oppression to make them think in a whole different way, with world-view different from those who have a degree of privilege which is “white skin”; even though they are still women and feminists. This is exactly why she strongly argue that “it is essential for continued feminist struggle that Black women recognize the special vantage point our marginality gives us and make use of this perspective to criticize the dominant racist, classist, sexist hegemony” (qtd. in Chew and Richards). In this way their new ideology and experience reorganized the methodology of Feminism. Being excluded from the discourse of the theory, women of color had a vulnerable position that made it necessary for them to question the Feminist thought that ignored them in the category of gender. Consequently, African American women questioned Feminists and Black men at the same time, only to affirm their identity and status as different from these two groups who declared them as marginal in position (123).

From this point, African American Feminist scholars and writers were able to make a link between domination or oppression and race only to claim that “ Black women are more oppressed than everyone else and therefore have the best standpoint from which to understand the mechanisms, processes and effects of oppression” (qtd. in Chew and Richards 123). In the 1980s, African American experience helped to develop new interpretations of Black women’s oppression to lead to alternative ways of knowledge included in feminism discourse (Chew and Richards 123). As a historically oppressed group, U.S. Black women have produced social thought designed to oppose oppression, but the purpose of Black women’s collective thought is distinctly different where Social theories emerging from and/or on behalf of U.S. Black women and other

historically oppressed groups aim to find ways to escape from/or oppose prevailing social and economic injustice (Collins 9).

Black women intellectuals are engaged in this struggle to reclaim Black Feminist intellectual tradition, by discovering and reinterpreting for the first time the works of individual U.S. Black women thinkers, which were not publically introduced. According to Collins, Patricia in her book *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, Reinterpreting existing works through new theoretical frameworks is another dimension of developing Black feminist thought.⁶The best examples are:

Barbara Christian's (1985) landmark volume on Black women writers, Mary Helen Washington's (1987) reassessment of anger, and voice in *Maud Martha*, a much-neglected work by novelist and poet Gwendolyn Brooks, and Hazel Carby's (1987) use of the lens of race, class, and gender to reinterpret the works of Nineteenth-Century Black women novelists. (14)

Feminism, as it means to different people is about the female experience and she has to deliver as a woman and a person; not just as a biological category, but as a social category. Therefore, Feminists share the view that women's oppression is tied to their sexuality. But, the Black perspective added the race, as their distinctive character in their feminist discourse. For example, when the first African American poet Phillis Wheatley wanted to publish her collection of poems in 1773, she has to go through an examination of white male citizens to officially declare her as "qualified to write them." Based on the assumption that Black slaves were naturally unable to create literature- this only helped to justify the institution of slavery in America- (Mazurek 10).

As a result, as members of an oppressed group, U.S. Black women have tried to generate more practices and new knowledges designed only to determine the power of U.S. Black women as a group. As argued by Collins, Patricia, this long term resistance among African American women is sustained by a shared standpoints. About the meaning of oppression, and the actions that should be taken to resist it in a well developed distinctive interpretations of Black women's oppression, in their writings to validate their existence. These standpoints, on the other hand, are debated on whether it should be attained under the name "Womanism" or "Black Feminism." Concerning this issue, Alice Walker (1983) in her volume of essays, "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens" introduced the term "Womanist" in her first definition as Black Feminist or Feminist of color (167). Thus, she uses the terms basically as being the same, supported by many African American women who do not see difference, because they both seek to a common goal, which is the self-determination and self-definition of Black women by confronting their own views on sexism, and women's oppression.

Furthermore, Patricia Hill Collins asserted in her article "What's in a Name? Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond" that the term "Black Feminism" challenges the ideology for whites only and disrupts racism inserting that:

The adjective "Black" challenges the assumed whiteness of feminism and disrupts the false universal of this term for both white and black women. Since many white women think that Black women lack Feminist consciousness, the term "Black Feminism" both highlights the contradictions underlying the assumed whiteness of feminism and serves to remind white women that they comprise neither the only nor the normative "Feminists" (13).

So, Black Feminism came against the historical portrayal of whiteness as the symbolic expression of what is ideal and perfect, and the marker of knowledge and

morality that led to marginalize the other diverse parts of its own culture; that created hidden societies with traumatic histories, and at the same time Black women challenged the claimed approaches, that the oppressed groups can't identify their independent interpretation of their own oppression, and are less human than the white rulers, therefore, they are not able to confirm their standpoint (Collins 167). As a result, the emerging works of African American women refused to be victims under domination, and all the resulting writings of Black women struggled only to make a standpoint of self-definition on their own oppression (168).

Sandín and Perez in the book entitled *Moments of Magical Realism in US Ethnic Literatures* explained that the African American writers as postcolonial writers with an oppressed history, used in their storytelling an imaginative perspective of history to speak the “unspeakable” events and “unspoken” stories. Only because when the imagination emerges with the past it creates the process of rememory, where Toni Morrison argued that rememory is “to reconstruct the world these remains imply through an imagination act” to get the truth.⁷ Meaning that the African American writers rediscovered the meaning of the experience and history with a reference to mystery and magic to create a beautiful peace of art using different narrative techniques for the narration of this literature where when looking to these writings we can see the unfamiliar where magical realism exists. Here, what can we describe as magical is interpreted as very real to someone else where this reality is described as a ‘magical’ reality. In this way, we can say that magical realism is a way to improve upon realism in literature to create a new literary understanding and this is exactly what the African American is seeking to prove (7).

Magical realism is a concept coined by German painters and Latin American writers, it has made its presence known in literary studies internationally.⁸The theory of

literary magical realism is involving and becoming more complex since it does not only consider the supernatural, magical presences in the narratives but also entails research regarding the literary and linguistic structure, ambiguity and motifs of the characters and the postcolonial discourse (Lobodziec 103). Additionally, magical realism is a literary term that has been around in many cultures and contexts much longer and can be seen in the literature of Native Americans, African Americans, and Latin Americans. In these literatures, magical realism uses a backdrop of realistic elements with instances of the magical in order to portray an unconventional reality to the reader. Writers often use magical realism to portray events that many of their readers may not understand as reality, but are a part of the writers' cultural or political experience. For example, Native American writers occasionally use magical realism to show the power of nature, and the African American writer Toni Morrison often uses magical realism to show the spiritual power of women in her novel. From this definition, we can notice that a number of different characteristics surface within the context of the magically real, and for every culture magical realism is a bit different because the history of every culture is different (104).

According to Anne C. Hegerfeldt in her book "*Lies that Tell the Truth: Magic Realism Seen through Contemporary Fiction from Britain*" since the 1960's, a great number of texts have been considered within the framework of magic realism and a number of writers used it in their works. All these helped to broaden and redefine the concept and will continue to do so but, mostly, when speaking about magical realism certain group of writings come up in mind like Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, paradigmatic texts include not only Alejo Carpentier's *The Kingdom of This World* and Günter Grass' *The Tin Drum*, but also the novels of Salman Rushdie, especially *Midnight's Children* (1981), Isabel Allende's *La Casa de los Espíritus*

(1982), which was translated in 1985 as *The House of the Spirits*, and Jack Hodgins' *The Invention of the World* (1977).⁹ And other recent texts such as Patrick Süßkind's *Das Parfum* (1985; translated as *Perfume*), Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), and Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991) (42).

Furthermore, she argued that magical realism has been described as a “critical concept, a category, a literary current, a tendency, movement or trend, a discourse and a phenomenon” (46). Within the more specific vocabulary of literary criticism, magic realism has been referred to as a genre as well as a mode in which authors have not given much thought to a possible difference in meaning between the two terms, but quite simply use them interchangeably. But, both focus on different aspects of literature where a genre is defined as “a well-defined and historically identifiable form”, whereas mode is a “particular quality of a fictitious world that can characterize works belonging to several genres, periods or national literatures” (46). This better describes Magical Realism as manner of narration distinguished with certain features.¹⁰ One of the most noted features of magical realism is the fusion of realistic and fantastic elements. Where magical realist fiction presents a fictional world that is clearly recognizable as a reflection of the extratextual world. In this respect differing sharply from fantasy literature or the fairy tale where its:

use is made of fantastic elements that clash with the realistic features. Significantly, the fantastic elements in the magic realist text cannot be explained away, reduced or reconciled to its realism – they cannot be “recontextualized”. The fantastic event does not turn out to be a hallucination, a dream, an elaborate intrigue, a practical joke, or an outright lie on the part of the narrator, but is part of the fictional world. (Hegerfeldt 51)

As a result, Magical realism can have a sense where magical things do really happen, in a way that magical realism blends elements of the supernatural and the extraordinary with elements of the living reality. Most of the magical-realist narratives frequently address violent and traumatic events of the past, and the tragic nature of these events imply an associated sense of loss and mourning on the part of both the characters and, often, the books' authors with an imaginative dimension (Hegerfeldt 51).

Consequently, magical realism is connected to the political context in which the magical realist can have different possibilities to articulate the texts where essentially, postcolonialism “refers to the political and social attitude that opposes colonial power, recognizes the effects of colonialism on other nations, and refers specifically to nations which have gained independence from the rule of another imperial state”. As a result, The majority of postcolonial theory and criticism, particularly that relating to literature, recognizes colonialism and postcolonialism as also a form of discourse, that is a socially and politically determined form of language and expression. Thus, postcolonial novels that are written in postcolonial discourse “adopt assumptions and attitudes which are associated with a political perspective. that opposes or recognizes the effects of colonialism on the context of the novel” (Bowers91). With this view, magical realism can be assimilated to postcolonialism where Bowers clarified in her book *Magic(al) Realism* this connection where by:

Drawing on the special effects of magic realism, postcolonial writers in English are able to express their view of a world fissured, distorted, and made incredible by cultural displacement...[T]hey combine the supernatural with local legend and imagery derived from colonialist cultures to represent societies which have been repeatedly unsettled by invasion, occupation, and

political corruption. Magic effects, therefore, are used to indict the follies of both empire and its aftermath (92).

In a further comment on the reasons behind this connection between magical realism and postcolonialism; the Canadian postmodernist critic Stephen Slemon cited the characteristics that are identified as “magic realism” where he claimed that magical realism is able to express three postcolonial elements:

First, due to its dual narrative structure, magical realism is able to present the postcolonial context from both the colonized peoples’ and the colonizers’ perspectives through its narrative structure as well as its themes. Second, it is able to produce a text which reveals the tensions and gaps of representation in such a context. Third, it provides a means to fill in the gaps of cultural representation in a postcolonial context by recuperating the fragments and voices of forgotten or subsumed histories from the point of view of the colonized. (qtd. in Bowers 92)

As explained in his article *Magic Realism as Post-Colonial Discourse*, Stephen Slemon argued that the first involves describing the real historical representation of the process of colonization with a mythaphorical way. ¹¹The second is the shortening of history so that the time scheme of the novel metaphorically contains the long process of colonization and its aftermath. (12)And the third involves the basic themes of those gaps, absences, and silences produced by the colonial presence and reflected in the text's language of narration (13).

These postcolonial writers, in this sense, choose to use fragments of forgotten stories and transmitted tales to build an alternative history where, in their opinion, the process of colonialism has ruined their sense of identity to form a relationship with their history that the colonized power tried to redefine according to its purpose. As a way to

move from the position of being “the colonized” they attempted to reconstruct the remains of their history or other people’s history from their own perspective (Bowers 94). As Slemon stated in his article “*Magic Realism as Post-colonial Discourse*” that “This imaginative reconstruction has echoes in those forms of postcolonial thought. Which seek to recuperate the lost voices and discarded fragments, that imperialist cognitive structures push to the margins of critical consciousness” (16). This means that postcolonial texts use oral telling as a source of alternative perspectives on history. Such as Toni Morrison, who provided another history of slavery that challenged the one entailed by the dominant power. This oral tale has an alternative version of the written history that survived (Bowers 94). As Slemon points out, the political objective of these texts is that “the dispossessed, the silenced, and the marginalized of our own dominating systems can again find voice” (21).¹²

Moreover, magical realism is a way that provides a means to recover not only the past, but also discover the spiritual and creative aspects of the colonized people. In which they turned to myths and legends of their own culture as a method to confirm its survival and respond to the oppressors, who violated their presence in the forms of slavery and conquest (Bowers 95). For example: Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* includes realism and magic which seem at first to be opposites where they are, in fact, perfectly reconcilable. Both are necessary in order to convey Marquez’s particular conception of the world. Marquez’s novel reflects reality not as it is experienced by one observer, but as it is individually experienced by those with different backgrounds. These multiple perspectives are especially appropriate to the unique reality of Latin America—caught between modernity and pre-industrialization; torn by civil war, and ravaged by imperialism—where the experiences of people vary much more than they might in a more homogenous society. Through

magical realism he conveys a reality that incorporates magic, superstition, religion and history which are unquestionably infused into the world (Geetha 349).

In general, magical realism provides a means for writers to express a non-dominant or non-western perspective from any specific standpoint. Where it can be seen to provide a positive and liberating voice to the imperial history and what has left behind it as its legacy. In which magic realists texts suggest that to find the future, a revision of the past is needed in a complex and imaginative thinking that transforms otherness into new codes to recognize a real community with true cultural heritage (Slemon 21). In this case, magic adds or builds upon the realistic world or works alongside reality in some way. Where, the writer can present a wider scope of reality through its own narrative perspective.

As previously discussed in terms of distinctive features of magical realism, it is generally held that magical realist fiction combines fantastic or dreamlike elements with reality and it combines elements of dreams, fairy story, or mythology with the everyday events. Magical realism, in this way, as a literary device makes us able to see the world in which there is a space for the invisible forces- if we can say- of dreams and legends. That find a place in the aspects of magical realism as a tool to further discuss the different dimensions of reality. The fantastic elements tend to be left unexplained and the fantastic situation or event is treated realistically. In this sense, a magical realist piece often leaves the readers uncertain as to which interpretation they should believe in - the magical or the realist interpretation- Also, magical realism invites the reader to adopt a view of reality where magic can actually emerge from the real by combining both realism and the fantastic in a way that makes magical elements appear out of the reality described like “Scheherazade” (Ženíšek 129).¹³

Magic realist works tend to produce detailed narration and are characterized by the use of symbols of imagery. Where the intention behind this is to show reality more truly with the marvelous aid of metaphor through certain attributes which are: “rising from the dead or ghost-like appearances, supernatural healing abilities, divine guiding hand or supernatural assistance, inexplicable oddities and incorporated folklore or mythology” . Where, Humans are used to explain the unexplainable phenomenon by attributing a character, human or inhuman, which they associated with supernatural skills and power. And since the human imagination knows no limits, a wide scale of archetypal characters have been created, such as gods, demons, ghosts, spirits, freaks, monsters or villains. Stories and legends describing their power started to spread about them. Despite the fact by the development of science many so far incomprehensible phenomena have been explained, these archetypes and legends are still being used in literature and other branches of art (129).

The category labeled “rising from the dead” denotes the seemingly supernatural reappearance of people deemed dead or so called “The Ghost”. Where it was first included in the category of evil demons and supernatural creatures, who can cause harm to humans. Then, considered to be the spirit of a human one who died in circumstances that made a problem in the burial or funeral like: “The improperly buried, youths who died before they could reproduce, those who died alone in the desert and remained unburied, the drowned and unrecovered, and those who died from animal attacks or accidents, either because such deaths damaged the integrity of the corpse, or the ghost was angry due to a premature or violent death” (Poo 27).

In literature and popular culture, the most common explanation of ghostly phenomena is that the souls of individuals with “unfinished business” remain on earth until that which troubles them has been resolved like *Shakespeare’s Hamlet* where

hamlet's father, one of the archetypal ghosts of world literature, asks the living "his son" to help him seek vengeance for sins committed against him. In magical realistic fiction, on the other hand, ghosts have always been present. Through ghosts, literary texts make the past become part of the present in a very immediate way, thereby, showing the influence that the past has over the human mind. And has an impact on the individuals' perception of the present like the character of Sethe in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. Who became very obsessed with what she takes to be the ghost of her baby daughter to the point where she loses contact with everyday life. In other texts, the ghosts can simply accompany the living in their everyday life (qtd. in Hegerfeldt 267).

In addition, ghosts might be discussed as an expression of the "psychological". Where what is imagined or taken as an obsession by the human mind becomes external. Or in another way, if equated with the concept of the past instances of the "abstract" made "concrete" (Hegerfeldt 266). Garcia in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* presents another dimension of the Ghost presentation in the novel. Throughout the novel the characters are visited by ghosts that denotes "The inevitable and inescapable repetition of history" (Geetha 347). The protagonist in the novel is controlled by their pasts and the complexity of time. The ghosts are symbols of the past and the haunting nature it has over Macondo. The ghosts and the displaced repetition that they evoke are, in fact, firmly grounded in the particular development of Latin American history. History ensured that Macondo and the Buendías always were ghosts to some extent, alienated and estranged from their own history, not only victims of the harsh reality of dependence and underdevelopment but also of the ideological illusions that haunt and reinforce such social conditions (Geetha 347). So, ghost appearances are a constant reminder of the history portrayed as the past to be included in present.

Also, magical realism's use of the ghosts emphasized the importance of personal and collective histories as in the cases of conquest or slavery and are self-consciously identified as coming of guilty conscience. Where for example in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is estimated that the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar continued appearance is due to the fact that he was killed by his friend Arcadio Buendia. Who was completely tortured by the guilt that he started to confuse everybody with Prudencio's ghost. As a result, this literal presence of the past in magical realistic fiction is an example of how one can be so occupied with the past events to consider the past as real as the present (Hegerfeldt 267).

In this respect, Anne Hegerfeldt suggests that the feature of past-made-present can take a number of different functions: "it may provide an opportunity to confront and settle one's guilt. However, the past may also come to dominate, causing individuals to relinquish their grip on the present" (267). Here, the representation of the ghost is not for an alternative past, but it is a living magic or present magic. Where, in some cases we find that these ghosts can interact with the living population in the community. As if they are asking to be recognized as part of the cultural memory as they depict the silenced and forgotten stories of that community. In fact, ghosts because they are magic, they are considered to be different from the cultural memory and stories of the community. So, rather than presenting a past, these magical signs are the creation of something new in the present to be an invention of the real. This is why, in the face of the magic, sometimes it is impossible to know what is real and what is magic in the present (Aldea 90). Essentially, the ghost, in other words, functions as the trace of an absent presence, the evidence of things not seen. And, only that which has not been completely forgotten can return as a ghost.

Harold Bloom in his book *Toni Morrison's Beloved* offers an interesting interpretation of the ghost in literary writings. Where in the rewriting of the event or the revision of history, that the ghost appearance brings the possibility “a different story or history is made possible” (80). He also explained that the encounter with the ghost can create a moment where one is attached to history and forced to reexamine it. By witnessing the experience of the haunting, history stops and doubt and uncertainty starts to emerge by a moment of questioning about the past and the living present. This reality will be disturbed by feeling that something is missing, and the story is incomplete. And this trace that the ghost exemplifies is what Bloom calls “Absent presence” where it can refer to something missing or a loss, but also “to future possibility, a hope” (81) to find what is missing and pay attention to things you did not see before. In this process of imagination, in order to see what the remains left behind in history. Fiction is the nature of the imaginative act used. Thus, she attempts to reconstruct the history that these remains imply by imagining spirits as a substitution of what is missing based on the remains. She also confirmed that in order to find the truth of historical silences and forgetting, only the act of imagination can help. This indicates is that sometimes fiction is more truthful than facts. Imagination can bring “dead” facts to life in a way to turn “inhuman” facts into a living narrative (81). Beyond the particular story of the return of the Ghost of Beloved and *Beloved*, as a contemporary ghost story, is the attempt to address a contemporary haunting, the social trauma of slavery that lives on in American culture.

As a final comment in this chapter, magical realism in its postcolonial forms is a response to violence by those who were violated in one way or another by colonialism or slavery. Its most characteristic feature is that it makes the supernatural sounds natural. By integrating fantastic, or mythical features into the realistic moments of the

narratives. That is not based totally on free working of the writer's imagination, but on the social and political realities itself.

Notes

¹ Fuller means that women need to “grow.” They need to evolve out of who they’ve always been and explore themselves. They need to “live freely” without being restrained by what men and society think, and need to expand their roles. It became a “classic of feminist thought,” and would go on to pave the way for the Seneca Falls Convention three years later (“Margaret Fuller”). Translated in this women’s rights convention. That took place in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York and produced “The Declaration of Sentiments.” Organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, 68 women and 32 men signed the document that pushed for women’s suffrage (“The Seneca Falls Convention”).

² ‘Second-Wave’ feminism emerged in the aftermath of, and in conjunction with, a number of radical political movements. For many women – writers, critics, activists – the personal became the political in contexts as diverse as the American Civil Rights Movement and the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). The result of this activist parenting was a critical practice that was always already political, or rather, one that – in contradistinction to the assumptions of common sense patriarchal humanism – always already knew itself to be political. (Sellers and plain 116).

³ See “Treason Our Text: Feminist challenges to the Literary Canon” by Lillian Robinson. From *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* (1983: 83-98).

⁴ Feminism in the United States has never emerged from the women who are most victimized by sexist oppression; women who are daily beaten down, mentally, physically, and spiritually-women who are powerless to change their condition in life. They are a silent majority. A mark of their victimization is that they accept their

lot in life without visible question, without organized protest, without collective anger or rage. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* is still heralded as having paved the way for the contemporary feminist movement- it was written as if these women did not exist. Friedan's famous phrase, "the problem that has no name," often quoted to describe the condition of women in this society, actually referred to the plight of a select group of college-educated, middle and upper class, married white women-housewives bored with leisure, with the home, with children, with buying products, who wanted more out of life. . . . She did not speak of the needs of women without men, without children, without homes. She ignored the existence of all non-white women and poor white women.

⁵ Virginia Woolf, 'the founder of modern feminist literary criticism' (Goldman 66). As Jane Goldman demonstrates, Woolf's groundbreaking essay *A Room of One's Own* constitutes a 'modern primer' for feminist criticism, and her influence on later generations of feminist thought has been immense. Woolf matters to feminist literary criticism not simply as a writer and critic, but also as a subject of critical enquiry.

⁶ For a detailed explanation about Black Feminism project see "A Black Feminist Statement" written by a black feminist group in Boston led by Harriet Tubman (June 2, 1863) 210-218.

⁷ The remembering, on the other hand, as Homi Bhabha argues, is "a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present"(63).

⁸ The term "magic realism" and "magical realism" appear to be used interchangeably and denote the same literary mode. For the sake of consistency, "Magical Realism" is used in the present study.

- ⁹ Furthermore, Geetha explained that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* “is an exemplary piece of magical realism, in which the supernatural is presented as mundane, and the mundane as supernatural or extraordinary. The novel presents a fictional story in a fictional setting. He carefully balances realistic elements of life [...] There are many purposes of this. One is introduce the reader to Marquez’s Colombia, where myths, portents, and legends exist side by side with technology and modernity. Another reason for this leads the reader to question what is real and what is fantastic.” P.346.
- ¹⁰ The reading of magical realism’s mode of narration takes issue with those approaches that suggest an interweaving of the magic and the real. See Familiar Grounds, *Novel Trajectories: “the Fantastic, the Real and Magical Realism”*. In. *A Companion to Magical Realism* (2005:20).
- ¹¹ Stephen Slemon in his article also provides the basis for considering why Magical Realism has been such a central element of postcolonial literatures. He proposes that “in the language of narration in a magic realist text, a battle between two oppositional systems takes place, each working toward the creation of a different kind of fictional world from the other rules of these two worlds are incompatible, neither one can fully come into being, and each remain suspended.”
- ¹² For more explanation about giving voice to the dispossessed. See *The Question of the Other: Cultural Critiques of Magical Realism*. Wendy B. Fris p101. In which the status of magical realism and its critical use are in debate, including one aspect that permitted new voices and traditions to be heard within the main stream.
- ¹³ Sheherazade is a paradigm for women who successfully resist male domination to save and to give life. A Mexican writer and critic, Margo Glantz characterizes Scheherazade in the following way: “Scheherazade is the image of the most absolute

vitality: is a being who speaks through all her mouths, through the first one she brings to light all of the stories and through the second one she gives birth to all of the bodies the Sultan engenders in her.”. in “Images of Scheherazade: Representations of the Postcolonial Female Subject”, Nagy Zekmi. *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 2003. P.174.

Chapter Three:

Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: The Use of the Ghost in a Magical realistic text.

In colonial America, people commonly believed that women were morally and physically inferior to men. As the weaker sex were subordinate to men and subject to male authority. Women were expected to be wives and mothers. Within colonial society, although, women were subordinate to men, elite white women shared with men certain privileges based on race and class. African American slaves were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, and their lives were limited by their oppression. Enslaved women were exposed to sexual exploitation. And unlike Black men, black women were forced to face the fact of being a black and woman. As a result, black women started to question or ask themselves: how does a black woman handle the claims of being both black and woman? In an attempt to answer this question, many Black women have used writing as a means to discover and assert their identity. African-American writers have used a variety of genres like: slave narratives, autobiography, poetry, drama, novel, short story and essay. The various genres have provided the Black authors with creative ways to challenge racist assumptions and to foreground major themes including the quest for identity, self-definition, self-determination, power, resistance and intersections of race, class and gender (Vijaya 3).

Literature is the medium through which the Black women fiction writers took the spotlight to depict the African-American experience. Black writers have argued their humanity, raged against social injustice, and celebrated the rich cultural traditions of African and African-American life. Rising from their roots in the early years of

enslavement in America, black writers have reached the highest honors available to any author, regardless of culture or color (Bader 1).

Historically, in this literature, Black women has been basically depicted in terms of their maternal role, a defined role on women as the only source of identity by the society. Toni Morrison sees motherhood as an important experience for women. But for her, mothers are first human beings with distinctive identities. Black mothers served the role of strong protective figures, and self-sacrificing creatures where their identities are not separate from their nurturing services (Ghasemi and Hajizadaeh 1)¹.

Beside Toni Morrison (1931), Many black women writers have challenged the negative representation of black women in their fiction. But Morrison's novels not only challenge those stereotypes but also destroy them. Her novels give us deep insight into black women's minds and souls. She makes us listen to the voice of the suppressed group who are left out of literature. In her novels, she presents black women as subjects who try to cultivate positive identity in a very hostile world. When she first began writing fiction, Toni Morrison did not believe she would become a writer. History has proven otherwise as Toni Morrison is recognized as one of the best known and most respected contemporary authors. Her work, though intentionally black, appeals to readers of all races and has earned a following from both scholars and the general public. Of her writing she has said, "I simply wanted to write literature that was irrevocably, indisputably black, not because its characters were, or because I was, but because it took as its creative task and sought as its credentials those recognized and verifiable principles of black art"(Bloom 12).²

Toni Morrison, was born on February 18, 1931 in Ohio, she began writing fiction as part of an informal group of writers when she was teaching at Howard University. In one meeting, she showed up with a story about a black girl who longed

to have blue eyes in her first novel *The Bluest Eye* (1970). In 1973, Morrison's novel *Sula* was nominated for the national book award. Her third novel, *Song of Solomon* (1977) brought her national attention, as the first novel by a black writer to be chosen since Richard Wright's *Native Son* in 1940. She followed this success with the publication of *Tar Baby* (1981). Morrison's popularity decreased with the publication of *Beloved* (1988) when it failed to win the National Book Award. After the protests of a number of writers, it won the Pulitzer Prize. The novel "*Beloved*" was adopted into the popular film starring Oprah Winfrey and Danny Glover. After she published *Jazz*, she was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature. Other novels include *paradise* (1998), *Love* (2003), and *A Mercy* (2008) (Sickels 32).

Beloved is Morrison's most sensitive novel till date. It deals with the forgotten era of slavery and the experience of black slaves. The most striking element is the heart breaking story of a black female slave, Sethe, who kills her own daughter to protect her from the horror of slavery. Morrison has always perfected the creation of her female characters. Her novels show a deep sense of bonding between the female characters. In *Beloved*, the female bonding and the multiple layer of meaning in their relationship makes the story emotionally appealing and it is the story that, "...penetrates perhaps more deeply than any historical or psychological study could, the unconscious emotional and psychic consequences of slavery" (Gupta1). Thus, the story touches the social, psychological, philosophical and supernatural element of human life.

Beloved's Epigraph "Sixty Million and more", referring to the estimated number of slaves who died in the middle passage.³ Sethe is the heroine of the story. She is a black slave who lost her mother at a very early age. She was brought to the Sweet Home Plantation as a slave where she marries Halle Suggsn and bears four children from

him. She suffers the most inhumane treatment at the plantation by the white masters. This incident traumatizes Sethe to an extent that she decides to run away from the plantation. She gathers all her courage and escapes to take refuge in the house of her mother-in-law at 124 Bluestone Road. She is soon traced and finding no hopes for freedom takes the most horrific step of killing her own daughter to show resistance towards slavery. She is imprisoned for seven years for her crime and later excluded by the community and declared an outcast. Her own family deserts her. Her two sons escape the situation, Baby Suggs eventually dies and her daughter Denver withdraws herself from her mother. She struggles to move on from the past and find freedom (Gupta 1). Where, the novel basically, is based on the true story of a female runaway slave in Kentucky called Margaret Garner.⁴ At about 10 o'clock on Sunday 27 January 1856, eight slaves escaped from the estate of Archibald Gaines situated in Richmond Station in northern Kentucky. When their escape was discovered Mr. Gaines made chase, crossed the Ohio River into Cincinnati, and discovered that they were hiding in a house of a black slave called Kite, near the Mill Creek bridge. The house was surrounded, but before they could capture the slaves Margaret Garner slit the throat of her two-year old daughter, and tried unsuccessfully to do the same with her two sons (whom she simply wounded). As she said when captured, she would rather kill all her children than have them returned to slavery in Kentucky (2).

The incident shook the United States. Morrison decided to tell the story, not only because it was part of her local folklore, but because the story touches a nerve in the American psyche.⁵ Morrison, in general, explores the effects of slavery on the individuals and society, the depth of a mother's love, and the power of memory. The novel also addresses black masculinity, spirituality, and the meaning of freedom (Sickles 41). Where she said, about slavery. "Slavery is very predictable," she said. "There it is, and there's some stuff about how it is, and then you get out of it or you

don't. It can't be driven by slavery. It has to be the interior life of some people, a small group of people, and everything that they do is impacted on by the horror of slavery, but they are also people"(Morrison 2).

Morrison's style of writing can be considered as difficult. Where, she is known with her lyrical narratives and epic storytelling influenced by Faulkner's lyricism and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's Magical Realism. She writes about magical events and mythical characters to describe a brutal reality. Her themes are mostly concerned with memory, community, gender, and identity. She examines the history of racism and slavery in the United States, depicting the injustice and inhumanity witnessed. And at the same time reveals the power of love and faith. In *Beloved*, for instance, her writing style of the story is described as not complicated because the readers are not confused by the plot or characters. But, in the process of reading *Beloved*, the narrative appears to be complex because it is based on the characters' flashbacks. As a result, readers can't fully understand what happened to the characters until they finish reading the novel and combine clues together. This kind of narrative is connected to Morrison's intention to write about history and trauma. In Morrison's fiction, the narration of the characters speaks of repressions, hallucinations, and gaps associated with trauma; in an attempt to present the characters' traumatic experiences in slavery. In this way, Morrison uses memory as the metaphorical sign to explore and represent dimensions of slave life that was omitted by history. Through a stream of consciousness technique that provides fragmenting hints through the mind of various characters to reconstruct a portrait of the past, both individual and communal (Sickles 32).

In her book *Magic(Al) Realism*, Maggie Ann Bowers stated that the novel of *Beloved* is a way where the writer attempted to revise history to make it relevant to the

present circumstances. Morrison has stated that to forget the past leads to spiritual and cultural emptiness. She claims that she wrote the novel *Beloved*, which is an attempt to recover the stories of slavery from the point of view of female slaves, in order to remind African Americans of their past. She hoped, by doing so, to gain recognition that they lived in the injustice; and for the African Americans to confront and move on from the pain of the slavery period and its aftermath (76). As she stated clearly in her interview about *Beloved* that:

Beloved is a ghost story—a young woman suddenly appears 18 years after the child’s death, and the characters believe she is the slain infant returned to earth. “I wanted it to be our past,” she said, “which is haunting, and her Past, which is haunting—the way memory never really leaves you unless you have gone through it and confronted it head on. But I wanted that haunting not to be really a suggestion of being bedeviled by the past, but to have it be incarnate, to have it actually happen that a person enters your world who is in fact—you believe, at any rate—the dead returned, and you get a second chance, a chance to do it right. Of course, you do it wrong again.”(Rothstein 2) ⁶

Furthermore, Bowers explained that by being pictured as a stranger in one’s culture. One is forced to use or express himself in the vocabulary of the dominant discourse. This is why, in Morrison’s stories that are told from the perspective of women slaves, face the fact of being unidentified, and not clearly represented in this culture, and their point of view is not very well understood. As a result, she attempted to create a history for such women by using magical realism to express the real that is beyond the spoken language in stories. Morrison used magic realism and its devices to

disrupt fixed categories of truth, reality, and history usually determined by the ones assumed as superior (77). This multiplicity of perspectives in texts creates a space beyond the discourse that has authority. Where, what is taken as unrepresentable can be expressed. In this perspective, Bowers also noted that for Toni Morrison, the history of the slavery of African Americans from their own perspective remained untold is due to the dominant American culture. Where, “America is the innocent culture in which immigrants can come and start over” (81). Only because in this land the past is always erased, so the truth about this past is never realized or known as it really was.

Through the use of Magical Realism, that Morrison described as a way to provide “another way of knowing things”. This other way, is established by the blending of two worlds of practicality or reality and magic together. Thus, allowing the story to be expressed against what the history from a European American perspective claims. And, also, allows the expression of African American Myths that was not a part of the European American culture, to make them as a meaningful approach for the African Americans in a modern context (81). The aim behind this is to construct narratives of African American history with a cultural memory. Only to remember what past achievements they had, to have a sense of realization, of how they become who they are today. This creation of cultural memory is made up by using aspects of African American culture and myths that evolved during the time of slavery. Here, these aspects are mixed with the real experience of slaves and their suffering to give a strong impact in a magical dimension (82).⁷

The presence of two opposing discursive systems of magic and real in the novel, written from the point of view of African Americans who do not have social and political power, can reflect the tensions between the colonized and the colonizer

discourses in a postcolonial context. In postcolonial terms, realism represents the discourse of the colonizer while magic is a reference to the strategy of opposition and resistance used by the colonized. In another sense, it can determine a full cultural representation that discovers the forgotten voices of histories. Who represent the point of view of the colonized. *Beloved* is surrounded by this idea of giving a voice to the female character. To explain its own experience in its own point of view (Razmi and Jamali 112). Where, realism is depicted as, the circumstances or the fact of slavery and oppression determined by the whites. In which, black men are only used for labor with no right. And black women, are abused physically and sexually. The magic, on the other hand, is the images and symbols used as a clarification or proof that stands against this oppression and demand rights and freedom. Like the hard image of Sethe murdering her own baby girl to save her from slavery. While *Beloved*'s appearance, allows the community to see the pain Sethe is experiencing: "the singing women recognized Sethe at once and surprised themselves by their absence of fear when they saw what stood next to her" (*Beloved* 261).

Thus, Magical realism that is introduced by the Other in a non-logical and non-scientific account to attack the assumptions of dominant culture- as formal realistic, logical western discourse- through literary texts, that claims of having a logical truth. This challenge in *Beloved* lies in the fact that once the reader finds that the category of the real is not definite, the truth becomes vague. More specifically, in *Beloved* the setting is real, but the fiction employed in questioning the reality make it less certain. Where, in *Beloved*, for instance, there is no distinction between the spirit and material world, between living and dead, between past, present and future. The family starts to accept the presence of a child ghost and live in the house with no fear (Razmi and Jamali 113).

The last sentence denotes that the supernatural- ghost- in this case, becomes not a simple matter, but rather is an ordinary matter that happens every day. Accepted and integrated in the rationality. Where the magic is considered normal in a magical realism narrative, and the supernatural phenomena becomes a part of everyday reality. In *Beloved*, the characters take Beloved presence for granted, and never question awkward appearances.⁸ For instance, Sethe and Denver always wage “a perfunctory battle against the outrageous behavior of that place; against turned-over slop jars, smacks on the behind, and gusts of sour air. For they understood the source of the outrage as well as they knew the source of light” (*Beloved* 1). Moreover, they expressed this ordinary and irrational phenomena by the manner in which “Seth and Denver push the sideboard moved by the ghost back to its original place. As if it were an ordinary household task” (Lobodziec 110). Also, other women in the community speak about Beloved’s return as a natural thing before exorcism:

"Ella. What's all this I'm hearing about Sethe?"

"Tell me it's in there with her. That's all I know."

"The daughter? The killed one?"

"That's what they tell me."

"How they know that's her?"

"It's sitting there. Sleeps, eats and raises hell. Whipping Sethe every day."

"I'll be. A baby?"

"No. Grown. The age it would have been had it lived."

"You talking about flesh?"

"I'm talking about flesh." (*Beloved* 134)

On the other hand, Eva Aldea in her book *Magical realism and Deleuze: The Indiscernibility of Difference in Postcolonial Literature* offers an interesting interpretation of what is meant by the magic and real in magical realism found in the story of *Beloved*. She asserts that Morrison indicated in her writings to speak the “unspeakable”, that was interpreted as the character of Beloved. Thus, considering the magic of the novel as a way to reveal the horrors that have been repressed. However, by taking Sethe’s memory of her sexual and physical abuse, that she experienced in her life, to be as realistic episodes. The character of Beloved seems more significant, where it takes its identity a repressed memory, through the realization of those realities in Sethe’s life including her horror when she killed her own daughter. Moreover, the memories of Sethe and Paul D are included in the story of *Beloved* as passages of realism, with physical presence. These memories are the legacy of slavery that seems persistent like the scars on Sethe’s back. Indeed, the frame narrative of the novel is real adding the family, the domestic setting, the black neighborhood in Cincinnati, and the third person narration of this setting. All these establish the voice of realism (69).

In a magical realist narrative used by Morrison, one of the techniques adopted is the oral storytelling technique that is explained in a way where “the storyteller, who can alter the story each time it is told can be asked questions by the listener who thereby guides the storyteller”. This method of “call and response” storytelling technique is in fact understood, that there is no one correct interpretation of the story, but rather many. Because, as many as, there are questions that can be asked by the listener, multiple ways of seeing and interpreting the story can emerge. In *Beloved*, where the line between the real and the magical have already been broken. The use of the storytelling technique, denotes multiple versions of the story. In the case of *Beloved*, it allows the possibility of expressing multiple perspectives in the text. That

creates a radical position that magical realism resists the basic assumptions made by the dominant discourse. where in *Beloved*, each question asked is directed to reveal the truth about the past of the black experience in general. And discuss the black female struggle in every aspect possible (Bowers 85).

In another perspective, Lobodziec, Agnieszka in her article, "Toni Morrison's Discredited Magic-Magical Realism in *Beloved* Revisited", offered an attempt to estimate the extent to which Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is representative of magical realism. Where, she presented a more complex and diverse treatment to the connection between *Beloved* and magical realism. But, in general, she attributed the magic in *Beloved*, to the extraordinary depiction of African Americans to their oppressive reality based on real scientific and philosophical concepts of race (104). She asserts that Morrison stresses the distinction between African American folk culture, and Latin America magical realism. The difference between both expressions is their different origins. She preferred to translate her interpretation of magic realism, where the black people in order to identify their history, they had to invent their magic in the middle of a new American reality. For her, this makes a huge difference from that of the latin American writers, who understood the reference of their magic. While, slavery gave a multidimensional aspect to the magic in the novel. Where Black people's day to day survival strategies is what makes their status magical. As a result, Morrison made the supernatural seems real and ordinary, and at the same time, uses the characteristics of magical realism to picture the real as magical, in a miraculous way. For example, in *Beloved*, when a white girl sees Sethe's swollen feet and compares them to those of a dead man she saw while fishing. "then she did the magic: lifted Sethe's feet and legs and massaged them until she cried salt tears"(*Beloved* 19).

This statement calls for several moments of magic. Another moment, is when Sethe calls for baby Suggs' fingers that brought Sethe's numb body back to life (111).

In the same sense, Denver's birth is portrayed as magical. Where her favorite story is "the magic of her birth" (*Beloved* 16). In fact, it is Sethe's powerful imagination that saves her and her body. Evoked by her imagination, she calls for a white girl, who helps her to deliver the baby. Here, the role of imagination is an important characteristic of magical realism. Whereby the "use of imagination claims to supplement reality by heightening its distinctive elements through ideal imagination, the essence and not necessarily the vehicle" (Lobodziek 112). Another magical motif in Toni Morrison's novel is the character's response to reality with extreme violence such as, in Sethe's case, she was ready to kill her own child to save her, was an ultimate act of resistance. For one hand, to confront a new reality in the new world, and the other hand, to redefine, their existence and humanity (112). Thus, the magic for Morrison is used in various manners, mainly to question "the ideological justification of the dehumanization of enslaved blacks by western science and philosophy" (113).

Furthermore, the characters response to this harshness has an emotional dimension, as an emphasis on the "inner reality" of the characters lives as another characteristic of magical realism. Seeking to portray the "felt history" as different from the documented one. In the novel, the feelings of Sethe after she finds out that school teacher has told her students to analyze "her animal characteristics". Where she remembered "I commenced to walk backward, didn't even look behind me to find out where I was headed. I just kept lifting my feet and pushing back. When I bumped up against a tree my scalp was prickly ... My head itched like the devil. Like somebody was sticking fine needles in my scalp" (*Beloved* 103). Also, Sethe responded

emotionally to her past terrors as in the case, when she cried while explaining her actions to Beloved. In this way, Morrison -through the discriminating notes written by the school teacher- attempted to reveal the injustice of the documented history on the enslaved people on one community (114).

This role of community, is another significant role of Magical Realism. Magic is “communal”. Most magic realist texts encode the strength of communities more than the individual struggle. Black people, through their experience, responded collectively to the modern world’s cruelty, by rising a sense of resistance and black community (115). In *Beloved*, the communal power is present where “the black women gathered in front of 124 transform themselves by the sound of their singing into a powerful black church that liberates Denver and Sethe from the oppressive spiritual presence of Beloved”. This shared bonding is due to shared dramatic experience and history that enabled them to recall terror (116).

Lobodzic in her article, brought attention to the questioning of time, space and identity – as another characteristics of magical realism- in *Beloved*. First, the time shifting in the novel help to mix the lines between the present and past. The present is outlined at the very beginning of the novel by describing the house at 124. Where the residence is –unconsciously- a reminder of the haunted past of painful and undesirable memories of slavery. Although they seek to escape it, and erase it from their consciousness. They find themselves forced to remember where the past and present overlap. In the novel, clearly, Sethe describes this shaken sense of time:

I was talking about time. It’s so hard for me to believe in it. Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do. But it’s not. Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it’s gone, but the

place – the picture of it – stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there, in the world. (*Beloved* 20)

Here, this statement is fictional in a way that serves one dimension of magical realism, where the capacities of mind are a magical power of fiction itself. Sethe and other characters' rememory is what shapes the narrative and the overlapping of past and present. This sense of time, in *Beloved*, originates from the traumatic experience of the past, that keeps returning to the present to produce a tortured psyche (106).

Second, in Morrison's *Beloved* is a sense of the lack of a place of their own. For instance, In the house, Paul D can't find a comfortable place when Beloved appears. His condition has the sense of feeling dislocated in his own house: "It went on that way and might have stayed that way but one evening, after supper, after Sethe, he came downstairs, lay in Baby Suggs' bed and didn't want to be there" (*Beloved* 62). So, he moved from one place to another physically, but also psychologically. For instance, when "Sethe speaks of her imprisonment for infanticide, Paul D does not continue the conversation although he wants to know more about Sethe's experience. He refrains because his memory of his imprisonment in Alfred, Georgia, returns. To escape this memory he changes the subject" (Lobodziec 108). This space is also evoked with an inability to predict the following in the sitting. This is connected to the condition of the enslaved who live without "knowing where they are going to be the following hour or day since anyone at anytime can send them away or sell them anywhere"(109).

Finally, this literary space results in an ambiguity to know the identity of Beloved, where the reader is forced to speculate about it throughout the narrative. In the novel, the memories of the past, as a result, lead to Beloved appearance in the novel.

Although, it is not easy to explain it, it is estimated that Sethe's struggle with her memories evoked this magical character emergence with no real status. Whether, it is the ghost of Sethe's murdered baby, a runaway slave, or the depiction of the mother daughter bond where guilt come alive. *Beloved* tends to evoke each possibility with the lines of realism –actual events- in the novel. As a consequence, Aldea argued that *Beloved* has no identity of her own. For example, at one point in the novel she tends to become Sethe where “she imitated Sethe, talked the way she did, laughed her laugh and used her body the same way down to the walk, the way Sethe moved her hands, sighed through her nose, held her head. Sometimes [...] it was difficult for Denver to tell who was who” (*Beloved* 283). (70).

The use the magical realist device of a revenant ghost child, is translated as a way to give a forgotten past a “body” that tells a terrifying story about “disembodiment”.⁹ Where, it is possible to take the ghost of *Beloved* as “a figure for the way in which race can make the past present.” A more productive way to regard the ghost, is to take it as figure of the idea of race, where the ghost of *Beloved* can't be taken only as a metaphor that embodies the past. It also represents the anxiety about history and how race matters in the writing of history. With history, *Beloved*'s ghost also signifies the process of history because it helps to remember the past as something we have forgotten. Thus, makes the historical past as part of our own experience (Chang 109).

Still, The question of *Beloved* identity, has been described as contradictory, and its indeterminate picture make it impossible to reach a single interpretation. In his book *Ghosts, metaphor, and history in Toni Morrison's beloved and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's One Hundred years of Solitude*, Daniel Erickson, said that each of these interpretations is backed up by evidence in the novel, this suggests that *Beloved*

ambiguity is not reflect from the misunderstanding of the characters about her identity, that is reflected in the text. But, her identity in the novel is derived from her own multiplicity. Where, Morrison in her article “The Realm of Responsibility” describes that Beloved functions on different levels, that give the impression that in fact there is more than one identity:

I will describe to you the levels on which I wanted Beloved to function. She is a spirit on one hand, literally she is what Sethe thinks she is, her child returned to her from the dead. And she must function like that in the text. She is also another kind of dead which is not spiritual but flesh, which is, a survivor from the true, factual slave ship. She speaks the language, a traumatized language, of her own experience, which blends beautifully in her questions and answers, her preoccupations, with the desires of Denver and Sethe. So that when they say “What was it like over there?” they may mean—they do mean—“What was it like being dead?” She tells them what it was like being where she was on that ship as a child. Both things are possible, and there’s evidence in the text so that both things could be approached, because the language of both experiences—death and the Middle Passage—is the same. (5)

Mainly, Erickson is trying to clarify the fact that, the identity of Beloved varies with the different explanations and interpretations of it. The ambiguity about Beloved’s identity is because the narrator did not make it explicit, or confirmed of who and what she is, regardless of other character’s speculations and assumptions. On the other hand, the narrative of the novel is dominated by the interpretation of Beloved

as Sethe's dead daughter. Still, given alternative interpretations retaining some credibility- because they have a reference or association with this dominant interpretation- Beloved's own explanation of her previous place is not clear and her appearance is evoked by other characters. According to him, in the novel, the character of Sethe and Stamp Paid, made their own alternative interpretation of Beloved. As a girl who has been imprisoned for most of her life, adds more details to her connection to slavery. That suggests that Beloved –in this case- is an actual person, individual ex-slave, rather than a metaphor or a symbol. While the novel's fantastic element –the ghost- focuses mainly on Sethe's apparent recognition of Beloved as her dead daughter, can undermine this interpretation. Through traces throughout the narrative, and in Beloved own words where in the novel Beloved clearly affirmed that she is Sethe's daughter:

“Beloved, scratching the back of her hand, would say she remembered a woman who was hers, and she remembered being snatched away from her. Other than that, the clearest memory she had, the one she repeated, was the bridge—standing on the bridge looking down. And she knew one whiteman”(*Beloved* 64). (81).

Here, “women who was hers” is a reference to the ghost being Sethe's daughter , “Snatched away” by death. But, concerning the bridge and the “whiteman”, Sethe explained to Denver that “Beloved had been locked up by some whiteman for his own purposes and never let out of her door. That she must have escaped to a bridge or someplace and rinsed the rest out of her mind”(*Beloved* 64). Ultimately, the dominant explanation of Beloved as the ghost of Sethe's daughter prevails by evoking the description of the baby ghost as the “sadness that crouched in corners” (*Beloved* 11). In which, she has a childish way of behavior and difficulty with language. Also, Sethe has a “suspicion that the girl's touch was also exactly like the baby ghost”

(*Beloved* 53). With a skin which is “soft and new”(*Beloved* 28). All of these characterizations appear to give weight to the dominant supernatural reading of the baby ghost as Sethe’s dead daughter that is connected with the description of a wild child (82).

Erickson presented another interpretation of Beloved’s identity. Where, he made a connection between the misunderstanding or misreading between Sethe and Beloved. When Sethe exhausted herself in an attempt to explain her actions and justify her killing. Beloved wasn’t interested. She only said that when she cried there was no one. “She looked at her, uncomprehending everything except that Sethe was the woman who took her face away, leaving her crouching in a dark, dark place, forgetting to smile”(*Beloved* 132). He concluded that Beloved is not a ghost at all, but a real life survivor from the middle passage (84).

However, this explanation is dependent on the fact that Beloved and Sethe are following their emotions and history of losses, there are strong and clear indication that Beloved must be the ghost of Sethe’s daughter. Where for example, Beloved remembered Sethe’s song that she claims, sang only to her children (85). Andrews, William and Nellie McKay in their book *Toni Morrison’s Beloved: A Casebook* emphasized that many other details throughout the novel support Beloved’s identity as a supernatural, flesh-and blood incarnation of Sethe’s dead body. Most prominent perhaps is her name, which is not even a proper name. In the rebirth scene , when she appeared as a young girl, it is Beloved who says her name, and Sethe “was deeply touched by her sweet name, the remembering of glittering headstone made her feel especially kindly toward her” (*Beloved* 29). And this word is what she engraved on the tombstone of her dead baby. Another link between the returning Beloved and the dead baby is the “three vertical scratches on her forehead” (*Beloved* 29). Which Sethe later

identifies as “my fingernail prints right there on your forehead for all the world to see. From when I held your head up, out in the shed” (*Beloved* 108). An even stranger connection is the scar on Beloved’s neck, identical to the cut caused by her mother in the murder scene. Beloved, also, questions about the earrings that Sethe received as a wedding present:

“Where your diamonds?”

Beloved searched Sethe's face.

“Diamonds?”

What would I be doing with diamonds?”

“On your ears.”

“Wish I did. I had some crystal once. A present from a lady I worked for.”(*Beloved*1)

Here, I believe, Beloved questions about the earrings may therefore be interpreted as memories of a far past to which she now returned. All these, becomes for Sethe the final confirmation of Beloved identity as the dead baby come back to life.

In another perspective, Beloved – as the magical element in the novel- becomes dangerous in a way. She causes Sethe to go through a personal trauma, and lost her sense of identity. However, at the end of the novel, when Beloved is removed from the community. Sethe starts to go back to the land of the living. And her return to Paul D, returns back her identity. In which Paul D “puts [s] his story next to hers’ and by telling her that she, not beloved, is her own ‘best thing’, a glimmer of self appears in Sethe’s response ‘Me? Me?’ (*Beloved* 322). Essentially, the magic of the character

Beloved has a distinctive role in the search for identity, that allowed Sethe to lose it, but ultimately return it back (71).

As a result, Andrews and McKay asserted that Morrison succeeds in creating more in her novel than a sense of history; she makes the past haunt the present through the bewildered and bewildering character of Beloved where:

Beloved makes this maxim literal, as the physical manifestation of suppressed memories. Beloved is both the pain and the cure. As an embodiment of the repressed past, she acts as an unconscious imp, stealing away the volition of the characters, and as a psychoanalytic urge, she pries open suppressed memories and emotions. In a sense she is like an analyst, the object of transference and cathexis that draws out the past, while at the same time she is that past. Countering traumatic repression, she makes the characters accept their past, their squelched memories, and their own hearts, as Beloved. (114)

To explain more, the use of the ghost for Morrison is strongly attached to the memories of disturbed Sethe. Where, rememory- for her- can help to unlock or transform a repressed past. When, Denver asks her mother if this means that these rememories never dies. Sethe replied “nothing ever does” (*Beloved* 36). The past returned in the form of Beloved that forced the characters to recover their memories and narrate their stories. And this return, illustrated that the past is activated by the present, only to be revised. Where, the traumatized will reach a closer and a complete understanding of her/his memories. This is why, Beloved- as the supernatural- is more or less a memory that has been forgotten.¹⁰ Sethe, in order to survive tried to forget the painful past and repress her memories of slavery. As a result, Beloved haunted her, to

oblige to confront her disturbed past. And at the same time, revise the effects of slavery on individuals (Razmi and Jamali 116).

As the horrors of slavery caused Sethe to kill her daughter, Beloved witnessed her mother's suffering and learns the reason behind her death, as explained by Sethe in the novel "I will explain to her even though I don't have to. Why I did it. How if I had not 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. I will tend her as no mother ever tended a child" (*Beloved* 200). From the point of view of Sethe, here, other than making Beloved understand, she sees it a golden opportunity to seek forgiveness from her daughter. Because Sethe's rememory have the effect of making the past in the present and that there can be no future without the past. When she murdered Beloved, she made all community angry and was under the mercy of a spirit seeking vengeance (Mondal 1). For me, this denotes clearly that this murder is not legal or moral to comprehend or consider as an act of self-defense. Only because the ghost, or better the daughter came to ask why? And this definitely tells that no one under any kind of conditions have the right to decide about death or life of any person. Each one has his own journey to live.

A feeling of guilt that drives Sethe is an evidence of bad acting, because if it is "the right thing to do" it would feel otherwise. In the novel, Beloved got anything she wanted by her mother. She must tell her the story over and over again, to herself and Beloved, to explain just what she did and why she did it, to come to the meaning of her actions for Denver and herself. To convince herself that she did not make a mistake. So, as a ghost-made-flesh Beloved is the story of embodiment of the past (Mondal 2). In this why, Sethe is able to, partially; heal the wound she made on her child and herself too. To rebuild her past and see the fact that her murder is not

because of Beloved being a slave, but it is the violence of the oppressor (Razmi and Jamali 117).¹¹

Consequently, we can understand that Beloved was not only considered as a manifestation of Sethe's guilt, but It helped to link between the personal history –of Sethe- with the communal history that allows the community to save Sethe from Beloved. The loss of Beloved devastates Sethe, having lost the object of her projected identity; she at first wants to move on to death, but later on her death makes it possible for her to move on. Just as her appearance helps Sethe develop- when she realizes Beloved has returned to her she said: “my girl come home. Now I can look at things again because she's here to see them too” (*Beloved* 107). So does her disappearance. Sethe's murder of her daughter expressed not only the will to power of a negative mother complex, also it gives her an opportunity to come to consciousness about the hidden aspect of her decision in the return of her murdered daughter, which is slavery . But she continues to deny any motive but love, and her Beloved as a victim refuses to believe her. The two are locked in hopeless conflict, Sethe resisting guilt, Beloved insisting upon it leads to her disappearance. That makes the birth of Sethe's subjectivity grounded in her own being possible (Martinez 21).

Furthermore, she helped to recuperate a history that had been lost to the enforced silence. Morrison paints Sethe's story with the voices of people who historically have been denied the power to speak. From her experience we learn that before having a stable future, we must confront the “ghosts” of the past. As a result, Morrison suggests that like Sethe, contemporary American readers must confront the history of slavery, in order to address its legacy of racial discrimination. *Beloved*, in this case, is undoubtedly one of the great novels that deals with Black women slaves' consciousness and reveal what was hidden for centuries (Mondal 5).

Finally, It can be said that an analysis of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* in terms of magical realism is more problematic than it appears at first sight. The interpretation of *Beloved*'s identity is discussed to the concept that deserves to be taken seriously, which is Sethe's own daughter. Above all, Morrison seeks to underline the uniqueness of African American cultural experience, including literature. While focusing more on Black people's response to oppressive circumstances based on the point of view of the female character . In regard of *Beloved*, slavery is the context of the narrative. while the psychological or physical suffering and strategy of survival is incorporated by her own interpretation of magic that can be considered as an extraordinary achievement. Within Toni Morrison's texts, a character's ability to confront the pain of his or her past honestly and without repression is most often the key to the salvation of the self, and mastering this negotiation with pain has consequences for the individual, for the family unit, and for the community at-large.

Notes

¹ On this crucial point, critics have missed the psychological shadow and complex. Because slave women are viewed as breeders rather than mothers, Morrison's grounding Sethe's subjectivity in her mother role was a deconstruction of the slave masters' ideology categorizing slave women as non-mothers. While her analysis of slave owner's ideology and her naming of the use of the slave women as breeders is imaginable, her conclusion that Sethe getting her identity from being a mother was desirable misses the unconscious cultural forces at work preventing Sethe from grounding her subjectivity in her own personality. Ines Martinez, "Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: Slavery Haunting America.(4.3 (2009)).

² Ms. Morrison said that unlike some authors, who despise being labeled—a Jewish writer, for instance, or a Southern writer—she does not mind being called a black writer, or a black woman writer. "I've decided to define that, rather than having it be defined for me," she said. "In the beginning, people would say, 'Do you regard yourself as a black writer, or as a writer?'" and they also used the word woman with it—woman writer. So at first I was glib and said I'm a black woman writer, because I understood that they were trying to suggest that I was 'bigger' than that, or better than that. I simply refused to accept their view of bigger and better. I really think the range of emotions and perceptions I have had access to as a black person and as a female person are greater than those of people who are neither. I really do. So it seems to me that my world did not shrink because I was a black female writer. It just got bigger."

³ Sixty million and more: a figure presumed to refer to the number of blacks who died in the middle passage, but that is highly problematic since historians estimate that the total number of African slaves carried across the Atlantic was between 9-12

million, of which an estimated 1 Million came to what is now U.S. territory; some 4.4 million blacks lived in the states in 1860 (see U.S. Census Bureau Population Statistics; also Naomi Mandal “ I made the Ink”: Identity, Complicity, 60 million, and more.(48.3 (2002) 581-613).

⁴ Graciela Moreila explains that Morrison learns of Garner’s Murder through accidentally seeing an old newspaper story. She says Morrison “ came across a newspaper clipping entitled, ‘a visit to the slave mother who killed her Child” published in the American Baptist in 1856, para.3.

⁵ In her interview with Rothstein she stated that, “I was amazed by this story I came across about a woman called Margaret Garner who had escaped from Kentucky, I think, into Cincinnati with four children,” Ms. Morrison said, sitting in an office at Alfred A. Knopf, her publisher, on a visit from her home near Nyack, N.Y. “And she was a kind of cause célèbre among abolitionists in 1855 or ‘56 because she tried to kill the children when she was caught. She killed one of them, just as in the novel. I found an article in a magazine of the period, and there was this young woman in her 20’s, being interviewed—oh, a lot of people interviewed her, mostly preachers and journalists, and she was very calm, she was very serene. They kept remarking on the fact that she was not frothing at the mouth, she was not a madwoman, and she kept saying, ‘No, they’re not going to live like that. They will not live the way I have lived.’”

⁶ Morrison also said about *Beloved* : “this had got to be the least read of all the books I have written because it is about something that the characters don’t want to remember, I don’t want to remember, black people don’t want to remember, white people don’t want to remember, I mean, it is national amnesia.

⁷ The reference to Margaret Garber's story is what might be called the realism of the novel, its roots in specific historic circumstances ; the most extraordinary part of the novel occurs, however, when Morrison blends that realism with a magical event, the resurrection of the murdered child, relying on her own experience.

⁸ For more information about the narrative of *Beloved*. Evelyn Jaffe's "Reader, text, and subjectivity: Toni Morrison's *Beloved* as Lacan's Gaze Qua Object" 2009: 5-12; gives a detailed clarification of the psychology of the characters and the what *Beloved* as a text is attempting to question from the point of view of each reader.

⁹ Toni Morrison's *Beloved: A Traumatic Book on the Trauma of Slavery?* *Syllabus review* 1(2009): 153-196. Provides an explanation of how magical realism and the supernatural depicted the trauma of slavery in *Beloved* as a textbook case of magical realist narrative mode where it is unavoidable to discuss the status of the supernatural.

¹⁰ Since *Beloved* "also contains the effects that slavery had, its profound fragmentation of the self and of the connections the self might have with others, she is the alternative to the past, she is also the embodiment of a particular historical contradiction who also represents the treat of being engulfed by the past". If Sethe and the community allow *Beloved* to engulf their present, they can no longer hope for a future. Thus, the " dangerous power of the (myths of slavery) to rigidify meanings and fix identities and the linear progression of history must both be explored in order to reorder the community.(from Razmi and Jamali 116).

¹¹ Morrison in her interview justified Sethe's murder. "You can really control other people's lives. You can tell them when to move and what to do, and part of this is parental obligation and part of it is excessive. And this woman did something during slavery—she was trying to be a parent and a mother and have something to say about

her children's lives in a slave system that said to blacks, 'You are not a parent, you are not a mother, you have nothing to do with your children.'”p 2.

Conclusion

To conclude, Postcolonial theory emerged from the colonized peoples' frustrations, their direct and personal cultural clashes with the conquering culture, and their fears, hopes and dreams about their future and their own identities. How the colonized respond to changes in the language, race differences, and a host of other discourses, including the art of writing become the context and the theories of postcolonialism. Thus, postcolonialism is an enterprise which seeks emancipation from all types of subjugation defined¹ in terms of gender, race and class. So, it does not introduce a new world which is free from ills of colonialism; it rather suggests both continuity and change.

Postcolonial setting was the medium through which marginalized peoples expressed their perspectives about their history and culture. While at the same time, resisted the colonial present of the dominant culture to affirm their own. Literature may be indeed a site of acting out, as well as making a critical work of traumas. Although these narratives should not be expected to heal them all, yet in contemporary women's narratives, private traumas are almost always developed as a depiction for collective traumas, where women writers attempted to both cope with private wounds and interpret the collective ones.

Black women have repeatedly asked themselves: How does a Black Woman handle the claims of being both a Black and A woman? There has been no simple answer because the solution varies with each individual. Some women see themselves as being black first and female second; others reverse that order. Still, others see the conditions more fluidly and believe that the claims don't conflict. They see Black women as people and their race and sex as aspects which contribute to their total

being. The question, then, is why we need to re-describe the past and why the past can only become part of our own experience, especially if our gaze should be directed towards the future?

In a postcolonial discourse, magical realist text can answer this question. where Magical realism can be seen to provide a positive and liberating response to the codes of imperial history and its legacy of fragmentation. Magical texts implicitly suggest a process of revision of the units of the past in a complex and imaginative thinking in order to enable strategies for the future. This process, can transform the past fragments of colonial violence and otherness into new codes. In which, the dispossessed, the silenced, and the marginalized of our own dominating systems can again find voice and recognize our place in community with our real cultural heritage.

Magical realism in its postcolonial forms is a response to violence by those who were violated in one way or another by colonialism. At first, it was defined by themes and subjects that are often imaginary and fantastic with a dream like quality. Later, it was caught on in literary circles and frequently used by critics as an established label for some forms of fiction. Characterized with some distinctive features like the mixture of the realistic and fantastic, and the use of Myths. These narratives are not based totally on free working of the writer's imagination, but on the social and political realities itself.

In the narrative, *Beloved* is the incarnation of Sethe's baby girl and of her most painful memory—the murder of her daughter to protect her children from slavery. *Beloved* is Sethe's "ghost," the return of her repressed past, and she forces Sethe to confront the gap between her mother love and the realities of motherhood in slavery. But *Beloved* is also everyone's ghost. She functions as the spur to Paul D's and

Denver's repressed pasts, forcing Paul D to confront the shame and pain of the powerlessness of a man in slavery, and enabling Denver to deal with her mother's history as a slave. *Beloved* initiates the individual healing processes of the three characters, which subsequently stimulate the formation of a family unit of love and support, in which the family members can provide for each other in ways that slavery denied them. And *Beloved* is the reader's ghost, forcing us to face the historical past as a living and vindictive presence. Thus, *Beloved* comes to represent the repressed memories of slavery, both for the characters and for the readers. *Beloved* catalyzes Sethe's memories as the novel *Beloved* catalyzes the reader's historical memories. According to Sethe's idea of "rememory," personal memories come to exist independently in the world and thereby become historical memories.

As the ghost returns to haunt the living, whether those still alive are directly responsible for the making of history or not, some people hear their wailing, see their wounds, and begin to describe their ghostly return. Some use the return of the ghost as a literary strategy to constitute and consolidate their identities, cultural, political, or gender. Some deploy haunting as a gesture for social and political critique, speaking in the voices of the dead both to consolidate identity and to call for justice and recognition. Some, however, do not believe traumas can be exorcised once and for all, and offer a cautionary strategy to describe our ambivalent relations to historical traumas. We cannot decide beforehand what approach to traumas is the most effective one, but we do know, almost always, a text of ghostly haunting affects the reader in a multitude of ways, some more effective and thought provoking than others. Perhaps the task of an attentive reader haunted by unspeakable historical legacies lies simply in ethically responding to these voices of the other to better recognize and understand why and how those narratives attempt to remember, transmit, and work through

various symptoms of historical traumas. The only responsible reading of haunting is then, to recognize its catastrophes, and to identify the wounds that hide the damages and repetitions .

Morrison does not aim at giving the judgment on the act of Sethe. It is left to the readers to analyse her decision. Her crime was condemned by the society but Sethe is forgiven in the end by the same society. The community is also directly and indirectly involved in the execution of her crime. That is why the community also shares the burden of guilt with Sethe. But it is not forgetting of the past that the author is referring to, it is actually living the past to overcome it.

Works Cited

Primary Sources:

- 1- Morrison, Toni. "In the Realm of Responsibility." By Marsha Darling. *Women's Review of Books* 5(1978):5-6. Print.
- 2- ---. "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought." *Common Grounds and crossroads: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in Women's Lives* 14.4(1989) *Signs*. Web. June 2013.
- 3- ---. "Toni Morrison, In her New Novel, Defends Women." By Mervyn Rothstein. *New York Times* 26 Aug. 1987. Art Sec. Print.
- 4- ---. "What's in a Name? Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond." *The Encyclopedia of Ethics*. Bristol: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013: 1-9. Print.
- 5- ---. *Beloved*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1987. Print.

Secondary Sources:

- 1- Aldea, Eva. *Magical realism and Deleuze: The Indiscernibility of Difference in postcolonial Literature*. NY and London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011. Print.
- 2- Al-Khatib Wafa Yousef. *An Examination of Postcolonialism, Multiculturalism, and Hybridity in Naomi Shihab Nye's Sitti's, Habibi, 19 Varieties of Gazelle Poems of the Middle East and Red Suitcase*. Diss. Middle East University, 2009. Print.
- 3- Andrews, William L., and Nellie Y. McKay, eds. *Toni Morrison's Beloved: A Casebook*. NY: Oxford University Press, 1999. Print.

- 4- Bader, Philip, ed. *A to Z of African Americans: African American Writers*. Rev., by Catherine Reef. NY: Infobase Publishing, 2011. Print.
- 5- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, *Black Scholar* 26.1(2001):9-17. Print.
- 6- Bloom, Harold, ed. Bloom's Guides: Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004. Print
- 7- Bowers, Maggie Ann. *Magic(Al) Realism*. London and NY: Routledge, 2004.
- 8- Butt, Daniel. "Colonialism and Postcolonialism." *The international*
- 9- Cain, William E., ed. *Literary Criticism and Cultural Theory: Outstanding Dissertations*. New York and Britain: Routledge, 2001. Print.
- 10- Chang, Shu-Li. "Daughterly Haunting and Historical Traumas: Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Jamaica Kincaid's *The autobiography of My Mother*." *Literary and Cultural Studies* 30.2(2004):105-27. Print.
- 11- Chew, Shirley and David Richards, eds. *A Concise Companion to Postcolonial Literature*. UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2010. Print.
- 12- Childs, Peter and R.J. Patrick Williams. *An Introduction to Postcolonial Theory*. 1st ed. NY and London: Prentice Hall, 1997. Print.
- 13- Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminism Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. NY and Britain: Routledge, 2000. Print.

- 14- Erickson, Daniel. *Ghosts, Metaphor, and History in Toni Morrison's Beloved and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's One Hundred years of Solitude*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.
- 15- Geetha, B.J. "Magical realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*." *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary studies in Humanities* 2.3(2013): 345-349. Print.
- 16- Ghasemi, Pervin and Rasool Hajizadeh. "Demystifying the Myth of Motherhood: Toni Morrison's Revision of African- American Mother Stereotypes." *International Journal of Social science and Humanity* 2.6 (2012): 477-479. Print.
- 17- Gupta, Monika. *Infanticide and Mother- Daughter Relationship in Toni Morrison's Beloved*. Garhwal University, srinagan. English department. N.d. Web. June 16, 2013.
- 18- Habib, M.A.R. *A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present*. MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005. Print.
- 19- Hall, Stephen G. *A Faithful Account of the Race: African American Historical Writing in Nineteenth Century America*. North Carolina: North Carolina Press, 2009. Print.
- 20- Harding, Sandra. *Science from Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008. Print.
- 21- Hegerfeldt, Ann C. *Lies that Tell the Truth: Magic Realism Seen Through Contemporary Fiction from Britain*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2005. Print.

- 22- Hogue, W. Lawrence. *The African American Male, Writing, and Difference: A Polycentric Approach to African American Literature, Criticism, and History*. Albany: New York press, 2003. Print.
- 23- Hooks, bell. "Black Women: shaping Feminist Theory." *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Boston: South End Press, 1984.1-15. Print.
- 24- Howe, Stephen. *Empire: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.
- 25- Jia, Lisa Lau Eu. *Women's Voices : The Presentation of Women in the Contemporary Fiction of South Asian Women*. Diss. Durham University, 2002. Print. Available at Durham E-theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/2021/>
- 26- Lake, Tim. "Postcolonial Theory and the African American Experience." *The journal of Pan African Studies* 1.10(2007):79-96. Print.
- 27- Lobodziec, Agnieszka. "Toni Morrison's Discredited Magic- Magical Realism in *Beloved* Revisited." *Brno Studies in English* 38.1(2012): 103-122. Print.
- 28- Madsen, Deborah L.,ed. *Beyond the Borders: American Literature and postcolonial theory*. London: Pluto Press, 2003. Print.
- 29- Maffly- kipp, Laurie F., and Kathryn Lofton. *Women's Work: An Anthology of African American Women's Historical Writing from Antebellum America to the Harlem Renaissance*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2010. Print.
- 30- Mazurek, Marta. "African American Women and Feminism: Alice Walker's Womanism as a Proposition of a dialogic encounter." N.p. n.d. Web. June, 2013.

- 31- Mondal, Pradip. "Narrativizing the Margins: Reading Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *An international Journal in English* 12(2012):1-5. Print.
- 32- Mullany, Julie. *Postcolonial literatures in Context*. NY and London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010. Print.
- 33- Myles, Lynette D. *Female Subjectivity in African American Women's Narratives of Enslavement: Beyond Borders*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.
- 34- Neto, Orozimbo Paolucci. "Masculinity and the Diasporic Place of the African American Man in a *Raising in the Sun*." *Anais Do Silel* 2.2 (2012): 1-11. Print.
- 35- Osborne, Susan. *Feminism*. Ed. Nick Rennison. Great Britain: Pocket Essentials, 2001. Print.
- 36- Plain, Gill and Susan Sellers, ed. *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. QNY: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Print.
- 37- Poo, Mu-Chon, ed. *Rethinking Ghosts in World Religions*. Boston: Brill, 2009. Print.
- 38- Prado-Fonts, Carles. "Orientalism: Thirty Years on. Introduction." *Orientalism*. May 2008. Web. June 2013.
- 39- Purvis, June, ed. *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945. An Introduction*. London and NY: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- 40- Quayson, Ato, ed. *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial literature*. NY and Edinburgh: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Print.

- 41- Razmi, Mahri and Leyli Jamali. "Magic(al) Realism as Postcolonial Device in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *International journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2.5(2012). 111-119. Print.
- 42- Ruiz, Maria Isabel Romero, ed. *Women's Identities and bodies in Colonial and Postcolonial History and Literature*. UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012. Print.
- 43- Sandin, Lyn Di Iorio and Richard Perez, eds. *Moments of Magical Realism in U.S. ethnic Literatures*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Print.
- 44- Sickels, Amy. *Multicultural Voices: African American Writers*. NY: Infobase Publishing, 2010. Print.
- 45- Slemon, Stephen. "Magic Realism as post-colonial Discourse." *Magical Realism: Theory and History*. Eds. Zamora, Lois Parkinson and Wendy B. Faris. NC: Duke UP, 1995:9-20. Print.
- 46- Tripathy, Jyotirmaya. "Postcolonialism and the Native American Experience: A theoretical Perspective". *Asiatic* 3.1(2009): 40-53. Print.
- 47- Vijaya, Veena. *The fictional World of Toni Morrison: A Saga of Triple Marginalization*. NY: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012. Print.
- 48- Walters, Tracy L. *African American Literature and the Classicist Tradition: Black Women Writers from Weathly to Morrison*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.
- 49- Young, Robert. *Postcolonialism: A Historical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. Print.

50- Zenisek, Jakub. "Woodoo or Allegory? Toni Morrison's Magical Realism Walks a Thin Line between Magic Reality and Mythical Folklore." *South Bohemian Anglo American Studies* 1(2007): 128- 133. Print.



