

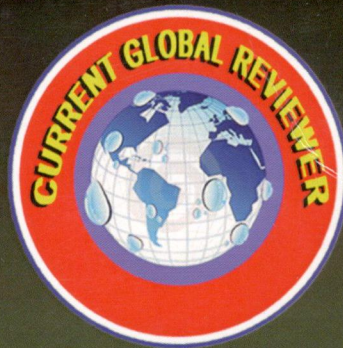
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Mr. Arun B. Godam

Editor
Dr. Sunita Sangole
Dayanand College of Arts, Latur

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-
11. Janta Curfew: An Attempt of Discourse Analysis 62
Prof. Doke Nitin Narayanrao
-
12. अलका सरावगी की कहानियों में हाशिए पर खड़ी स्त्री 66
डॉ. पुष्पलता अग्रवाल
-
13. "जागतिक महामारी - एक विश्लेषण" 71
प्रा.डॉ. स्वामी नितेश
-
14. Similarities in the Plays of Vijay Tendulkar and Satish Alekar: A Study 75
Dr Madhavi V. Kulkarni
-
15. दयानंद कला महाविद्यालयातील प्राध्यापक व कर्मचारी यांचा कोरोना प्रभावकाळातील 78
मनोसामाजिक अभ्यास
डॉ. अंजली जोशी - टेम्पुर्णीकर,
-
16. बहुसंस्कृतिवाद म्हणजेकाय? 84
प्रा.डॉ.संतोष गुणवंतराव पाटील
-
- ✓ 17. Conceptual Analysis of Toni Morrison's Select Novels 89
Zample Vivek Baburao
-
18. सायबर गुन्हे - कोरोना व्हायरस आणि कायदाव सुव्यवस्था 93
प्रा. डॉ. खंदारे रामेश्वर माधवरा
-
19. जैनंद्र कुमार की कहानियों में नारी समस्याएँ 97
डॉ. प्रणिता फड
-
20. कोरोना आणि जनसंपर्क यंत्रणा 100
प्रा. चैतन्य बाबुराव शिंदे
-

Conceptual Analysis of Toni Morrison's Select Novels

Zample Vivek Baburao

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Toni Morrison as being Afro-American writer mainly deals with themes of Race, ethnicity and gender in her novels 'Sula' and 'Tar Baby' by heart. Her concern and depiction of being tortured and humiliated by white race is worth appreciating factor in her novels. We can find Toni Morrison's focus is on racial discrimination as well as on an extreme and double bind sufferings of women under helpless circumstances. This article will try to portray those elements of 'race, ethnicity and gender' from Toni Morrison's novel's 'Sula' and 'Tar Baby' one by one. First, I start with 'Sula'

'Sula' is not an exception to what I already mentioned as Race, ethnicity and gender are heart of Toni Morrison's novels. The novel 'Sula' begins with prologue in which we find 'a nigger joke' which is very satirical on the racial discrimination and about master-slave relationship of white and black. This nigger joke also points out how white cunning people are responsible for poverty of black people in the bottom which is infertile land. This also focuses on the slavery of black people which was there in America before Civil war. Toni Morrison used the words "Kind" and "good" very cleverly and ironically in the prologue.

Black people have nothing to do with wars but they are forcefully added in that by whites. Shadrack and Plum, who lived in a very remote place, is examples of this. We can see horrible effects of war on both of them. Shadrack is terrified that he might die unexpectedly. He institutes a self-proclaimed National Suicide Day as a means of coping with his fears. The world now seems to him a thing of chaos. In the hospital scene, Toni Morrison used a very remarkable metaphor of three colored food in the plate for showing racism. In the scene we find Shadrack with a plate having three different and separate colours of foods like white, red and brown. Here Shadrack feels plate as world and three different colour foods as three different permanent races in the world. Though these three races are existed in the same world, they have a lot of distinct feature and characteristic of their own. The word 'food' can be taken as metaphor for human beings, and Plum equally terrified by war. He returns home with troubling memories and heroin addiction.

Helene also suffers from racism as she can see by her experiences on the train. The order and boundaries of her conservative, religious, middle class respectability do not protect her from racism. She inadvertently gives her approval to biased, raciest authority, insisting the anger and hatred of other passengers. Her effort to placate and please the rude conductor only makes his sense of superiority more secure, we can call it as a double jeopardy. She is suffered as being female and also being black. On page no 25 to 27; there is conversation between Nel and her grandmother Rochelle. After meeting Rochelle, Nel realizes that there are women who can go beyond the conventional boundaries, whether of religion, femininity or race.

White people remain peripheral figures in the text. Though they are peripheral, whenever they are appeared in the novel, they are presented in the position of power. For instance, according to the white bargeman who finds Chicken Little's body, black people are simply "animals, fit for nothing but for mules, only mules didn't kill each other the way nigger did" (63). For whites the death of a black child to be of little consequences; one even suggest that the bargeman through it back in the water.

Similarly according to the most of the residents of the Bottom, the worst thing a black woman like Sula can do is to sleep with a white man "They insisted that all unions between white men and black women be rape for a black women to be willing was literally unthinkable. In that way, they regarded integration with precisely the same venom that white people did. "(113) The trenchant irony is not just that both blacks and whites employ binary thinking, But that black women attempt to look more like white women (with all of their nose pulling

Chevaliers where she rejects her family and culture one final time. Ondine tells her that 'A daughter is a woman that cares about where she comes from and takes care of them that took care of her' 242). Jadine replies that she does not want to become like Ondine a grave insult to the woman who gave her all to this ungrateful girl. This story is not just about preserving one's cultural heritage but also about maturity. As Jadine leaves with her black baby seal killer coat, Ondine and Sydney doubt that she will even bury them. Jadine proves how little she has learned when she considers the new help the 'mulatto with a leer' and calls Alma Estee "Mary". She is truly the Race-Traitor.

Therese knows that Jadine is lost. A descendant of the 'blind-race' she also knows how to detach Son from Jadine, the 'Tar Baby'. She leaves Son on the far side of Isle Des chevaliers where he has a choice, where he can be free. 'Lickety-Split' the sound both of the rabbit and of the horsemen signifies Son's freedom in the end. Thought one is lost to history, the other can carry the heritage. Toni Morrison is a complex writer who weaves deftly together difficult motifs. Her books rarely have a neat conclusion. Through her Fiction Toni Morrison intends to present problems and their solutions. As Barbara Christian writes,

"Toni Morrison presents a simple story becoming increasingly complex, mythic, beyond solution, yet teaching me a lesson I needed to know".

New York Times book Review Correspondent John Irving aptly puts "Miss Morrison uncovers all the stereotypical racial fears felt by whites and blacks alike."

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