

Report of the Minor Project submission as part of Eleventh Plan

**Duality of Self: A Psychological Study of
the Major Works of Toni Morrison**

By

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OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- *To study the major works the African- American novelist, Toni Morrison from a psychological perspective.*
- *To provide a deeper psychological interpretation to the writer's consciousness in order to explain the obscure aspects in the texts.*
- *To understand the workings of the female psyche as reflected or projected in the characters.*
- *To illustrate how the split personae may get manifested as dual characters in a text.*
- *To connect the Black experience to the Indian context of caste - problem and Dalit experience.*

OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED

The present study enabled the investigator to throw light on many hidden aspects of the texts by using the various psychological concepts to analyze them. Subjecting the novels of Toni Morrison to a psychological analysis enhanced the value of her texts as of them deal with the intricate psychodynamics of the feminine psyche.

ACHIEVEMENTS FROM THE PROJECT

The study facilitated the investigator to underpin the universal issue of the displaced and dispossessed. It augments to the field of knowledge, especially by divulging in the interdisciplinary potential of literature; by facilitating a polyphonic reading of the works of a writer using the tool of psychology. The investigation can substantially contribute to the emerging realm of Subaltern studies as well as the ever expanding realm of Comparative Literary Studies. The study nonetheless expedites to highlight the ineffable trauma and dilemma of people who undergo many-pronged subordinations and discriminations concomitantly as the victims of racial prejudice, gender bias and myriad socio-political demotions. The investigator traced the parallels between the black experience to the much debated ethnic question of the Dalits.

The project helped the investigator in completing her Ph. D successfully. The knowledge and materials assimilated from the project facilitated and contributed to the chapter 'The unconventional Mindscapes' in the Ph. D thesis

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The theme recurrent in the novels of Morrison is identified to be the theme of motherhood exclusively dealing with the most poignant mother-daughter relationship. Nevertheless they strive to foreground the intra-psychical repercussion rather than the superficial concerns commonly dealt with. Morrison reclaims and validates the feminine maternal perspective either relegated to the margins or undocumented in the mainstream canonical fiction or the male narratives of masculine quests and angsts. The interesting unearthing that the exclusive African- American experience somehow vividly captures the quintessential subaltern yearnings and anguishes Indian or Western conferring universality to human sufferings irrespective of the apparent national or racial variance. This revelation underpins the inconsequentiality of trivialising or relegating experiences as third world or Western. By focussing on the gender and race she outlines the resilience of women in opposing g the double edged dominant forces of patriarchy and race despite their turmoil and torments of a racial past. The author individualistically constructs a tower of womanist edifice with her nine ultimate creations of fiction. She etches out a feminine literary tradition as opposed to the dominant male literary tradition. She bestows a female dimension to the archetypal slave narratives by conferring an evocative magical- realistic distinctiveness to the narration and by unveiling the psychic interiority into the human mind. The study enabled to relate the experience to the Indian context of caste experience of the subaltern population.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIETY

The interdisciplinary relevance and International nature of the topic, and psychological perspective rendered to the theme adds substantially to the academic realm and the general field of knowledge.