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Body Aesthetic Myths in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the body aesthetic myth in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Body is a rich object of inquiry in the discussion of aesthetics in art and literature. In the case of this fictional work, the problem is seen in Pecola, the protagonist of the novel, who feels herself ugly and desires for blue eyes. The paper has adopted the concepts of Immanuel Kant as an approach to the novel. Kant differentiates the pleasure in the beautiful from other pleasures, by claiming that it is not based on any interest, but it is a disinterested and free satisfaction. The other theory is related to the cognitive aspect of the brain. Body aesthetics, a part of study in neuroaesthetics and neuroculture, takes some new paradigms of philosophy of perception on body aesthetics.

Keywords: Body aesthetics, neuroculture, neuroaesthetics, disinterestedness, blue eyes

Introduction

This paper deals with the African American myths on body aesthetics. The myth related to the body and beauty is the major issue in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. The novel shows the trend among African American people, particularly among girls, for unnatural and unusual transformation of body structure, facial colour and appearance and beauty. This approach is to receive attention, love and pleasure from the society. However, the text shows its adverse result and impact upon own personality and in the society. The paper, thus, discusses about body aesthetic myths in relation to the central character, Pecola, in Morrison's novel. Pecola's unusual suppressed desire of the "blue eye" moves her towards an intense condition of her life.

Pecola and her mother are highly impressed by the white culture. Her mother is one of the causes behind her desire to be like the white ones – beautiful, with white skin, fair hair and blue eye. The narrator Claudia and other character Maureen are also responsible for her desire. They are from the black community. Maureen though black is beautiful because she has all kinds of provisions. Implicitly, their words and behaviours drive Pecola towards the beauty craze. She is black, but she has an assumption that with blue eye and by drinking white milk, she will be beautiful like the white ones.

The term 'beauty' is connected with aesthetics. The word is controversial in nature. Usually, an appearance of the body is observed for the aesthetic assessment. It has been a source of delight for both the subject and the object of the gaze of the beholders. Aesthetic experiences are attached to the persons whose bodies that are used. Body is deeply connected with one's identity and a sense of self. However, the perception of attractiveness changes drastically over time. Myths on body aesthetics vary along with the development and changes in the perceptions and perspectives of the beholders.

Pecola, as it is already mentioned above, is from the black community. Her mother Pauline works in a white family. Pecola's friend Claudia often sings the song of the "Blues". Her mother also sings the song of the 'Blues'. All the white values of beauty are set strongly in their mind and heart. Pecola and her mother do not know and even do not try to understand the gap between two cultural values of beauty, of the black and white communities. She seems to be innocent or ignorant. There is something wrong in her mind. While reading the novel, a reader becomes curious to know: How and what kinds of meanings does she understand about beauty? How and what kinds of meanings do people in her surroundings understand about beauty? Do they all have one meaning or different ones? What are their cultural and social expectations? What are the adverse results of their understanding of beauty? All these questions are concerned with body aesthetics and beauty myths. As a researcher, my objective is to explore the beauty myths and their results in the African American communities.

Pecola is only a character to carry the body aesthetic myths in Morrison's novel. Human body, either of a man or a woman, can be observed from the aesthetic perspective. A handsome man is appreciated and a beautiful woman is liked and favoured. Ugliness is a curse. Thus, beauty and ugliness are in binary oppositions. This beauty myth has been a debatable issue all the time. The body is a rich object for aesthetic inquiry (Irvin 1). For instance, Pecola gives value to the colour because her skin colour is black. The black colour is ugly in her view; therefore, she wishes for the unnatural, unusual appearance, the white's standard of beauty, that is, the blue eye.

It is true that the body represents a person's sense of self and identity. One cannot ignore the existence of the body and its social and cultural values. The whites have their own standards of attractiveness in their society. They judge beauty, exoticism or ugliness with their own standards. Phenotypic characteristics are the determining factors for bodily judgments for beauty. Some black people see beauty in their blackness. Those who are brown see beauty in their brownish colour.

The myth of beauty differs from society to society because cultural and social values are not the same everywhere. Black people and white people have different beauty ideals, but some black people highly honor the ideals of the white beauty. Black beauty is set in the diasporic society, sensibilities and process of transculturation (Tate 2). So far as the ideals of white and black beauty are concerned, it is all radicalized aesthetics, the link between the psyche and the social mediated by the surface of the skin and a process of self discovery throughout one's life (Tate 2). Morrison creates a typical character, representing the black community women who wish for the blue eyes of the white beauty and such desires have devastating effects on the persons as well as on the society.

In Morrison's *The Bluest Eyes*, her idea is that "beauty was not simply something to behold; it was something one could do" (xi), which intertwines the body aesthetic myth with the black community. In the novel, Pecola is seen hunting for the blue eye for her to become beautiful and get advantages like the white girl and also like Maureen, the black-and-white girl, of her society. In her entire life, she has heard that she is not pretty

and her ugliness is because of her skin colour. Finally, she receives the blue eyes with the blessing of the church but she turns to be mad. Morrison suggests that beauty is not only in the eye of the beholders, but that remains in the mind with a belief and understanding.

Kant's Aesthetics and Body Politics

The title of the novel *The Bluest Eye* suggests its theme, that is, body aesthetics. The novel ends with a myth that a person with blue eyes is beautiful. A desire for beauty, with unnatural process, becomes a disaster. Morrison brings an antithesis – aestheticism becomes an irony. Her character Pecola wishes for blue eyes so that she would look beautiful. Symbolically, with a mercy of the church priest, she is supposed to have received the blue eyes, but that leads to a bad result. She is raped by her father; she is outcast by her mother; she turns to be a dirt collector, or a scavenger. Kant's aesthetics and body politics are used here to analyse the text.

Aestheticism is a pursuit of beauty. The Aesthetic Movement of the nineteenth century maintains that art is not confined to painting, literature, sculpture and architecture; rather it is extended to every part of human life. It includes a human body. A woman makes her body beautiful for others' purposes, values and interests, not for herself. She does not evaluate herself; she lets others evaluate her. She works to make herself beautiful not for a real pleasure, but for "disinterested pleasure". Kant's seminal work, *Critique of Judgment* (1790), a foundational treatise in modern philosophical aesthetics, is highly appreciative here. Most importantly, his concept of "disinterested pleasure" from the first moment (quality) is relevant for analyzing Pecola's condition in the novel.

During the judgment of 'beauty', one becomes aware of something while watching a flower or a girl, which is "back to the subject and to its feeling life, under the name of the feeling of pleasure or displeasure" (Kant 90). The issue of "taste" of something invites a variation in judgment, which is a subjective rather than an objective judgment. One may like the taste; others may not. One may have an interest in a flower, but others may not. A king may see a great beauty in a palace that he has built recently. Others may show displeasure, saying that it is merely a waste of money and labour. Therefore, pleasure in the beautiful is not based on any interest, but it is "a disinterested and free satisfaction; for no interest, neither that of the senses nor that of reason, extorts approval (Kant 95). On behalf of the king, the object of the satisfaction is beautiful. The king has an interest in the disinterested object (i.e. palace).

Kant believes that true judgments of beauty share four characteristics: disinterested, universal, necessary and purposive without a purpose (Burnham, *Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics*). A true judgment of beauty is disinterested: it is not based on any known concept, simply a sensation of unconstrained, completely detached pleasure. The pleasure that Pecola achieves from the "blue eye" refers to the satisfaction, which is beautiful. The blue eye, the object itself, is not beautiful because an interest of any kind varies from one person to another. Pecola misunderstands and for her the blue eye is beautiful, which is mistaken. She does not show her interest in the blue eyes with her sense of reasoning. Rather that is her "interest in the disinterested".

Paul Daniels states that Kant is a little contradictory in his view when he presents the statement that aesthetic judgments are subjective, but they are also objective in voice (*Kant on the Beautiful*). Daniels presents Kant's concept in his paraphrasing in the following way,

Kant advances two major claims during the argument of the compatibility of the subjectivity and universality of the experience of beauty: (i) That aesthetic

judgments are "disinterested", and (ii) That the universality of an aesthetic judgment derives from the transcendental idealist's account of ordinary spatio-temporal experience — that is, our ordinary cognitive framework can explain the experience of beauty. (*Kant on the Beautiful*)

Daniels joins these two claims into one thesis that "while the experience of beauty is wholly subjective, it nevertheless speaks with a universal voice (or the experience of beauty can be related among subjects" (*Kant on the Beautiful*)). We can see the "marriage [connection] of subjectivity and universality" (*Kant on the Beautiful*) in Kant's philosophy of the aesthetic judgments. The experience of beauty is subjective as well as objective, but the difference is in a reflective mode of "disinterested" and a cognitive mode of interaction such as the "freedom of moral action", which is a free play of imagination and mind's priori structure. The objects of taste are experienced empirically, but the aesthetic pleasure of taste is judged subjectively. Aesthetic judgments are "disinterested" because the genuine aesthetic judgment does not include any extrinsic considerations (*Kant on the Beautiful*). Pecola's aesthetic judgments of the blue eye are "disinterested" because her judgment does not include any sense or cognitive interaction or reasoning or knowledge, or other extrinsic considerations.

Daniels argues that, for Kant, judgments have either reflective powers or determinative powers. He aims to establish the governing principles of reflective judgments to legitimize (among other things) the inter-subjectivity of aesthetic knowledge (*Kant on the Beautiful*). Reflective powers and determinative powers are two different concepts. The former relates with an aesthetic experience, but the latter concerns with knowledge. Determinative powers include empirical concepts, cognitive factors, and prevailing and common-sense assumptions. If one uses the determinative power, i.e., prevailing and common-sense assumption as reflective power, that will be a mistake. Aesthetic judgments made under this process will turn to be either subjective judgment or fallacious judgment (*Kant on the Beautiful*). Kant rejects the aesthetic judgment as part of the determinative power; the aesthetic judgment is rather under the reflective power.

Daniels further comments that if the interest is considered as a criterion for beauty, the meaning of beauty gets misused. Beauty yields a pleasure and what is pleasurable is beautiful. Beauty is not sensuous, but the beautiful is entirely different from the sensuous. Sensuousness is an inherently variable factor depending on a particular person's inclinations. Kant's theory conceptualizes that an aesthetic judgment is subjective but it should be universal/objective. He claims that an aesthetic judgment is processed by cognitive facilities with a spatio-temporal experience, which indicates that it is "nothing other than the state of mind in the free play of the imagination and the understanding" (*Kant on the Beautiful*). Neuroaestheticians also refer to the same "state of mind" that plays an important role in aesthetic judgments.

Semir Zeki pioneered the term "neuroaesthetics". Di Dio and Gallese define it as "the neural underpinnings of aesthetic experience of beauty, particularly in visual art" (682). The new theoretical responses are given to the universal questions related to aesthetics. These responses are concerned with the nature of mind and consciousness, the social and moral nature of man, and most particularly, what drives us to make and appreciate art (qtd. in *Body Aesthetics* 4). These responses are based on the knowledge of how the human brain operates because it is the brain that integrates and interacts with the rest of the body and with its physical and social environment that determines everything a person does and expresses in his or her behavior, feelings, thoughts, or beliefs (qtd. in *Body Aesthetics* 4). Apart from the study of neural mechanisms, neuroscience makes a comprehensive study of the human psyche and nature, a combination of brain and mind,

and biological entity and psyche. It offers a cognitive insight and comprehensive knowledge about the human brain. The brain is a constantly changing organ in both structure and function, continuously absorbing and transforming information from the environment (qtd. in *Body Aesthetics* 4).

Neuroaesthetics is a discipline in neuroscience and provides some neuronal insights into an understanding of art and beauty. In this way, neuroaesthetics deals with the brain-mind problems and lies at the heart of neuroculture. All cultures have certain aesthetic judgments of painting, music, literature, sculpture, etc. Beauty is not something inherent in the artistic work itself, but is in fact created by the observer. Neuroaesthetics and neuroculture study impacts of art like painting, music, literature, etc. on culture and the observer's brain. A function of the human brain in art and literature is the study of neuroaesthetics.

Kant remarks that the natural beauty brings with it a purposiveness in its form by which the object seems to be, as it were, pre-adapted to our judgment, and thus constitutes in itself an object of satisfaction (129). Fine art is intentionally produced and is essentially unnatural though the observers may find them natural. It appears to be natural, but yet it is not.

Fine art differs from natural art because that is intentionally created and is the product of human freedom. Nevertheless, fine art or natural art, natural beauty, or artificial beauty, they do not have the pre-existence of representation and reading in culture. Morrison's words are reiterated here: "Beauty was not simply something to behold; it was something one could do" (xi). Beauty is not something that simply is but it is rather done and translated for its cultural intelligibility. It is an effect of discourses. When someone says, "[S]he is beautiful," he or she is beauty-ing in opposition to that which is deemed "ugly" (Nutall 2006; qtd. in *Black Beauty* 9). Beauty and ugliness are performatively produced in and through discourses. So it is possible to change the interpellation of beautiful/ugly on the basis of an alternative set of discursively constructed attributes.

From the above discussions, I have developed a conceptual framework for this analytical research paper, which is presented in the following figure.

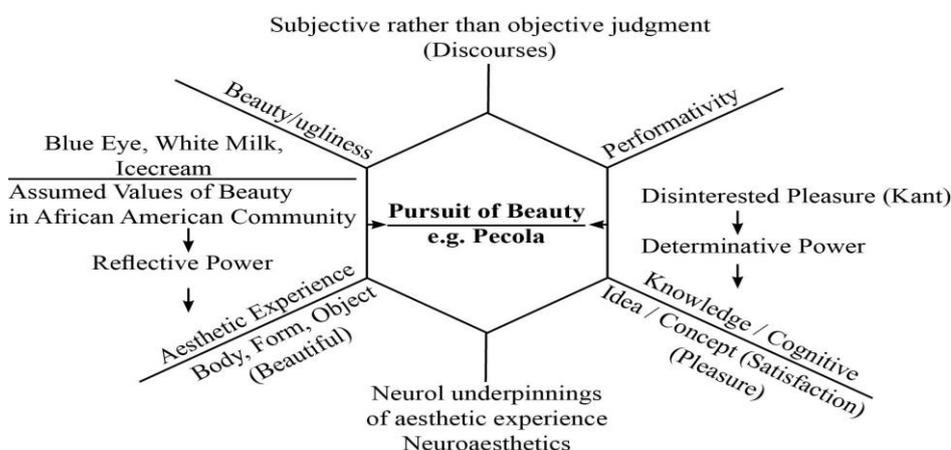


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework on the Pursuit of Beauty

The above figure shows that Pecola is in pursuit of beauty. Her concept of beauty is subjective. She does not have an objective judgment. The issue of beauty is raised and discussed in discourses. Discursive or subjective judgment of beauty is based on assumed values of individuals and individual communities. Beauty and ugliness are

evaluated on the basis of natural and unnatural conditions. Performativity is also a beauty measurement criterion. Pecola feels herself ugly. She thinks that the whites and some blacks are beautiful because they eat ice cream and drink white milk. The whites are beautiful because they have the blue eyes.

In the novel, Pecola performs her prayers in the church and receives the blue eyes with blessing. In the present world, cosmetics, body surgery, gender change, fashion, etc. are beauty performances by which a woman feels that she has gained her beauty. She thinks she will appear beautiful in others' eye, but truth is that it is her subjective judgment.

Like every individual, Pecola has also a neuroaesthetic problem. Her brain works like every observer's brain. She has neural underpinnings of aesthetic experience. She is in trap of reflective power and determinative power. Her body aesthetic experience drives with the hope of pleasure, but that is her disinterested pleasure. She pursues beauty and pleasure in disinterested faces.

The Myth of Blue Eye: An Aesthetical Analysis of Beauty

Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* covers all the choices like having a desire of blue eyes of the black women and their struggle in the American racial communities. The novel presents the general concept among African American women. A woman in the black community wishes to improve her appearance. She wants to whiten her skin, straighten her hair and get the blue eye. Beauty and virtue are interconnected, and reliance on cosmetics is thought corrosive to a "chaste soul" and a sign of normal depravity (Peiss 57). Some black women like Morrison condemn others who want to whiten her skin for changing her appearance and look like white women. They have only one desire, like that of Pecola, to be beautiful and receive all kinds of opportunities, which the white women get because of their white skin. Black women leaders protest and condemn them saying, "Why does she wish to improve her appearance? Why not improve her real self?" (207). Regarding the hair of the black, Marcus Garvey suggests, "Don't remove the kinks from your hair! Remove them from your brain" (qtd. in Byrd and Tharps 38). These women give emphasis on natural beauty, natural status and natural life. In the case of Morrison, she suggests the same thing, through her narrator Claudia, to the women like Pecola that the blue eye is not a solution. Rather women like Pecola should remove the white values of beauty from their mind.

Pecola represents the black women's mind. She is a typical character with such typical beliefs. She is very closer to the black women's conditions of life. Her body aesthetic myth is the major concentration in the novel. Morrison includes this myth in her novel and it receives more attention of the readers as she writes, "The origin of the novel lay in a conversation I had with a childhood friend. We had just started elementary school. She said she wanted blue eyes. I looked around to picture her with them and was violently repelled by what I imagined she would look like if she had her wish" (x). The above statement suggests a "violently repelled" experience of the author, with a picture of a fifteen-year old black girl with her blue eyes, which would be very absurd, very unnatural figure and beyond imagination. Morrison took the girl as the exact replica into her novel as if she wanted to experiment.

Morrison entirely agrees with the concept of beauty as put forward by Kant. She also agrees with the ideas about beauty conceptualized by Jenkins et al. Mora et al. also have the similar belief about beauty. Their unanimous thought, which is presented here by Morrison is that "beauty was not simply something to behold; it was something one could do" (xi). Pecola's wish to improve her appearance cannot be justified and rationalized. She heard throughout her life that she was ugly. She had to remove the

kinks. She had heard the "St. Louis Blues," which is the most popular songs from her friend Claudia, who sings the community's blues. The blues to which Claudia refers exemplify the cultural knowledge and values transmitted orally to Claudia that ease and assist her transition into womanhood, but the folk wisdom is not conveyed to Pecola.

Pecola's mother, Pauline Breedlove, whose wishes are of "power, praise, and luxury" that she gets from the movies, manipulates and destroys the child's mind. From the images projected in the movies, Pauline learns to equate "physical beauty and virtue" where she "stripped her mind, bound it, and collected self-contempt by the heap" (122), and in turn, these things have a terrible influence in the child's mind. Pauline ignores her children and husband because she is under the fascination of the white values: strength, beauty and youth that she has learned from the films and from the white families. Pecola has a misguided influence of her mother. This influence misleads her when she hears the 'blues' song from Claudia.

Claudia's mind is also divided because she, with her sister, recognizes that they do not have all those things, which are possessed by the white. They are jealous to Maureen, too, who is a blend of white and black, turning to the yellowish. Maureen Peal is a "high yellow dream-child" (52) who embodies all the attributes valued by society. Claudia recognizes Maureen's privileged status and realizes that ". . . Maureen Peal was not the Enemy and not worthy of such intense hatred. The thing to fear was the things that made her beautiful and not us" (62). She then asks: "What was the secret? What did we lack? Why was it important? And so what?" (62). Maureen is beautiful because she assimilates herself in the white culture and enjoys all those things that the whites do and she is rich to afford for those things. Pecola is jealous, too, and enjoys eating candy and feels herself transformed: "To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane" (43). Claudia is not transformed yet: "she cannot imagine herself miraculously translated into the body of Shirley Temple so as to vicariously live the white experience as a negation of blackness" (Willis 174). Pecola denies her status, denies herself and enters into the candy images, with her transformation and progress "of nine lovely orgasms with Mary Jane" (43). Morrison thinks it was merely the damage of Pecola, "The assertion of racial beauty was not a reaction to the self-mocking, humorous critique of cultural/racial foibles common in all groups, but against the damaging internalization of assumptions of immutable inferiority originating in an outside gaze" (xi). All cultures have their own values and customs. They can be good or bad in their own ways, but projecting the assumptions of immutable inferiority in the outside gaze cannot be rationalized in any way. Pecola does not know the determinative power like sense and reasoning, but she knows the reflective powers like feelings and emotive factors. She shows her interest in the disinterested that causes her to get collapsed. Pauline, Claudia, Maureen and others trash and contribute to her collapse.

However, these characters are not dehumanized by the author because she understands that they may be partially responsible but Pecola herself is wholly responsible for her own collapse. She heard the voice of her heart, not of her mind, which is involved in both the theory of the 'disinterested' and the theory of neuroaesthetics. The author writes in the "foreword" of the novel, "I mounted a series of rejections, some routine, some exceptional, some monstrous, all the while trying hard to avoid complicity in the demonization process Pecola was subjected to. That is, I did not want to dehumanize the characters who trashed Pecola and contributed to her collapse" (xii). Mind and culture are the determining factors for aesthetic judgments. It depends on an individual whether he or she follows his or her mind or culture, or personal/subjective experience, feelings and emotions. The aesthetic judgment is subjective but it should be

objective. Pecola makes an aesthetic judgment of the blue eyes from the subjective perspective without thinking about others' perspective. She gets pleasure because she has got the blue eyes. She feels so; others observe and think that she appears disgusted with the blue eyes in her black body. This is the interest in the disinterested.

In the novel, the suppressed desire of the blue eyes may be the suppressed desire of love and sex. This aesthetic judgment of the blue eyes is based on the physical passion and pleasure. It may not be the same judgment by others in the black communities and also in the white communities. Pecola is not conscious. She is not sensible, but sensitive. Claudia is conscious and sensible. She draws conclusions by sincere reasoning. She receives a blue eyed baby doll, but dismembers and destroys it. She destroys other "white baby dolls," too, with a conviction that pain is not only endurable, but it is also sweet (26). Claudia says that she had received many dolls: ". . . big, the special, the loving gift was always a big, blueeyed Baby doll. From the clucking sounds of adults I knew that the doll represented what they thought was my fondest wish. Picture books were full of little girls sleeping with their dolls" (20). The blue eyed baby doll presents a sense of 'beauty'. It was a beauty icon of the white communities, but it was yet a suppressed desire of the black communities. Both Pecola and Claudia show an interest in the blue eyes from the aesthetic perspective, but the aesthetic judgment is different from them. Pecola sees it from the point of view of pleasure, but Claudia from the perspective of beauty. Claudia deconstructs the baby doll to construct a sense of beauty, but ironically she destroys it whereas Pecola destroys herself. Pecola does not differentiate pleasure and beauty as two different things. She does not have the aesthetic knowledge to differentiate it from the aesthetic pleasure. Pecola's craze for the blue eyes is reflected in the following quote:

It had occurred to Pecola some time ago that if her eyes, those eyes that held the pictures, and knew the sights- if those eyes of hers were different, that is to say, beautiful, she herself would be different. Her teeth were good, and at least her nose was not big and flat like some of those who were through so cute. If she looked different, beautiful, maybe Cholly would be different, and Mrs. Breedlove too. Maybe they'd say, 'Why, look at pretty-eyed Pecola. We mustn't do bad things in front of those pretty eyes'. (46)

The narrator is ironic in the body description because she seems exaggerating about her teeth, nose, etc. Pecola has been longing for the blue eyes like those of the picture and the sights. She does not talk about her teeth and nose. She would look beautiful and different and people like Cholly (her father) and Mrs. Breedlove (her mother) would change their attitude and stop calling her ugly. Claudia, the narrator, and Morrison herself, make fun of her: ". . . and at least her nose was not big and flat like some of those who were thought so cute" (46). Within this dialogue of the narrator, twice the word 'beautiful' has been used, but the word 'different' has been reiterated four times, suggesting the sense of mockery – she would look different, but beautiful in some different way – violent in her look. How would Cholly and Mrs. Breedlove be different? They might be different in feeling towards Pecola, but they would not have a difference in body, colour and appearance. She would have some changes with her blue eyes and her teeth were good, but her nose and possibly her colour would not make her beautiful as she had expected. She prayed for the blue eyes each night without fail (45). She had not prayed for the 'big nose' and 'white colour' which could have made her different and really beautiful. Soaphead Church gave her the blue eyes, but not the big nose and white colour.

Pecola turns to be the body aesthetic myth even after having the blue eyes from the Soaphead Church because though she feels herself beautiful, but her parents and her

society look at her with a different perspective with a sense of violence and horror. Mrs. Breedlove looks away from Pecola all the time. Every time Pecola looks at somebody, he or she looks off. She thinks they are jealous, but that is not jealousy. That is a sense of disinterestedness. Beholders are really dismayed, confused and disconcerted at all. The neuroaesthetic sense is positive in Pecola's mind. It is entirely negative in people's mind in her surroundings. In short, her blue eyes do not work as she has been expecting that has gone opposite. She is not conscious. She has lost her mind. She has become mad.

Therefore, Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* depicts the rape scene in which Pecola's father, being drunk, rapes her and makes her pregnant. Nevertheless, according to Pecola's father, it is supposed to be his love for her. It is a sense of having the blue eyes. Claudia asks her how she felt such as whether she had pleasure. Maureen Peal tells her that Pecola had seen a naked man, i.e., her father. She feels ashamed. Even by the end of the novel, she does not realize a sense of beauty. Like Claudia, Pecola opts for making a life of her own erasure and annihilation. In search of beauty with the blue eyes, the erasure of Pecola's body and sexuality drives her to madness and isolation.

Conclusion

Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* presents the body aesthetic myth, which means that a girl (or a woman) with the blue eyes looks beautiful. This myth has a relation with the white cultural beauty values. The African American girls find that the body appearance is observed for the aesthetic judgement. They think that beauty is a source of delight. Having the blue eyes, drinking white milk and eating ice cream would make them beautiful like the white people. Pecola's understanding of the blue eyes is the same like others in her community. Morrison deals with these cultural and social expectations and shows the adverse results of their understanding and expectations of unnatural process of beauty-ing. For example, a desire for the blue eyes in the black face that looks horrible.

The black's body aesthetic myth of the blue eyes is incompatible with that of the white. The African Americans work with the reflective aesthetic experiences, not with cognitive or determinative factors. The African American body aesthetic myth is found in other communities as well.

Pecola is a typical character. She represents the women with a desire of beauty. According to Morrison, beauty is not only in the eyes of the beholder, but that is in mind. Morrison suggests that pleasure in the beautiful is not based on any interest, but it is a disinterested and free satisfaction. Pecola has interest in the disinterested object. Morrison argues that, while the experience of beauty is wholly subjective, it nevertheless speaks with a universal voice. This paper concludes and recommends that the unnatural and artificial process of beauty-ing has an adverse impact upon people's life. For instance, by means of using the unnatural process of beauty-ing, Pecola makes a life of her own destruction, even going mad and isolated.

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