

THE DRAMA TRIANGLE IN *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES*

BY THOMAS HARDY AND

THE BLUEST EYE BY TONI MORRISON



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PLAGIARISM

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ÖZET

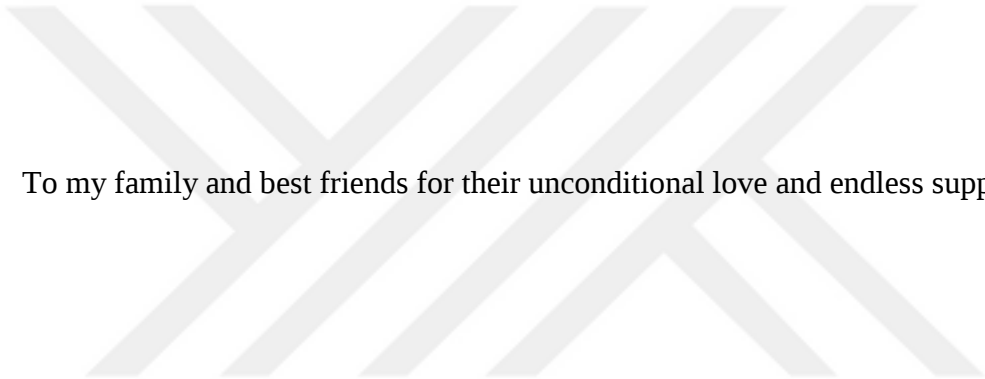
Kurban, kurtarıcı ve zorba olmak üzere üç rolden oluşan ve psikolojideki modern bir kavram olan drama üçgeni, disfonksiyonel birçok ilişkide oluşmaktadır. Bu çalışma drama üçgeninin seçili romanlarda nasıl ortaya çıktığını ve temel nedenini, yani bir kişiyi daha üstün, diğerini ise daha aşağıda olarak niteleyen güç dinamiklerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Thomas Hardy tarafından yazılan *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* ve Toni Morrison tarafından yazılan *The Bluest Eye* romanlarındaki güç dinamikleri ve drama üçgeni feminizm, Marksizm ve postkolonyal teorilere dayanılarak incelenecek ve değerlendirilecektir. Aslına bakılırsa, bu teoriler bu romanlardaki belirli karakterlerin neden belirli rollere büründüğünü açıklamada en etkili olanlardır. Romanlardaki karakterlerin disfonksiyonel aileleriyle ve başkalarıyla ilişkilerinde drama üçgenini nasıl yaşadıklarının daha iyi anlaşılmasını sağlamak için önde gelen psikologların tanımları ve açıklamaları kullanılacaktır. ‘Değişim,’ öğrenilmiş çaresizlik, bağımlılıklar ve bağımlı olma gibi diğer kavramların açıklamaları drama üçgeninin romanlarda nasıl görüldüğünü aydınlatacaktır. Belirtilen analizler ile, bu inceleme drama üçgeninin çeşitli bilim insanları ve psikologlar tarafından öne sürülen kültürel bir kavram olmadığını, bunun yerine; psikolojinin yaygın bir kavramı olduğunu göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ki bu durum, romanların farklı dönemlerde yazılmalarına rağmen drama üçgeninin hepsinde belirgin olmasından anlaşılmaktadır. Bu çalışma ayrıca drama üçgenine ve bir tarafın “kurban,” diğer tarafın ise “zorba” olmasına yol açan güç dinamiklerine çözümler sunmaya çalışmaktadır. Tüm bu analizler, drama üçgeni hem edebiyatta hem de hayatta gerçekten yaygın olduğu için, daha fazla edebi esere uygulanması gerektiğini ve karşılaştırmalı edebiyat alanında gözden kaçırılmaması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Drama üçgeni, kurban, kurtarıcı, zorba, ‘Değişim,’ bağımlılık, öğrenilmiş çaresizlik, bağımlı olma, feminizm, Marksizm, postkolonyal teori.

ABSTRACT

The drama triangle, a modern concept of psychology that involves three roles, the victim, the rescuer and the persecutor, occurs in many dysfunctional relations. This study aims to analyze how the drama triangle reveals itself in the selected novels and its main reason, which is a system of power dynamics that labels one as “the superior” and the other one as “the inferior.” The power dynamics and the drama triangle in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison will be explained and evaluated through Feminist, Marxist and postcolonial theories. In fact, these theories are the most efficient in explaining why specific characters have certain roles in these novels. To clarify how the characters of the novels experience the drama triangle in their relationships with their dysfunctional families and others, prominent psychologists’ definitions and explanations will be used. The clarifications of other concepts, which are ‘the Switch,’ learned helplessness, addictions and dependency, will also enlighten how the drama triangle works in the novels. With these analyses, the thesis aims to indicate that the drama triangle is not a cultural concept proposed by various scholars and psychologists but a common concept of psychology, which is clearly apparent in all of these novels although they were written in different centuries. All these analyses emphasize that the drama triangle should be applied to more literary works and should not be overlooked in the field of comparative literature, as it is widespread in both literature and true life.

Keywords: The drama triangle, victim, rescuer, persecutor, ‘The Switch,’ addiction, learned helplessness, dependency, feminism, Marxism, postcolonial theory.



To my family and best friends for their unconditional love and endless support.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The novels *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison surely reflect different eras and portray their own characters who do not seem to have much in common. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, written by Thomas Hardy, a white male author, portrays young Tess's misfortunate experiences and how she ends up a victim in an unfair way at the end of the novel. On the other hand, *The Bluest Eye*, written by Toni Morrison, a black female author, describes how Pecola, a little black girl ends up a victim because of her dysfunctional family and the black community's racist and cruel attitude. Despite the protagonists' differences and their unlike experiences, the drama triangle reveals itself in both novels and the characters, including the protagonists, do not only enact the drama triangle with other characters but also enact it with themselves through their addictions and deep feelings. Considering these, the reader may wonder what makes the drama triangle apparent in both novels. The answer to this question is definitely unjust systems that label one person as "the superior" and the other one as "the inferior." These unfair power dynamics usually result in the superior one's oppressing the inferior one and thereby, the superior one generally turns into a persecutor and the inferior one ends up a victim. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, these unjust systems are patriarchy and capitalism, while in *The Bluest Eye*, these unjust systems are racism and patriarchy. These certainly victimize some characters and make some others persecutors and some others rescuers.

What is common between these novels is not only their vivid descriptions of victimization and persecution because of these unjust systems but also male oppression that both protagonists Tess and Pecola go through. It is obvious that Tess and Pecola are both silenced and cannot express the male oppression, especially rape, which they have gone through. In fact, they and some other characters cannot even articulate that they are victims; however, the reader can certainly understand that they are literal victims when their actions and feelings are analyzed through Feminist, Marxist and postcolonial theories. Contemplating the novels' contexts, one could see that *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* should be evaluated through Feminist and Marxist theories, while *The Bluest Eye* should be analyzed through postcolonial and Feminist theories.

Consequently, the reason why these novels are open to interpretation based on the theory of the drama triangle is that they both portray unjust systems, which could be analyzed through the mentioned theories. In addition, the fact that the novels were written in very different eras demonstrate that the drama triangle is not a psychological theory that is visible in only recent literary works, but it is rather a widespread theory even visible in the novels that were written a long time ago. Therefore, one of the reasons why these novels are compared in this study is to emphasize that they both reflect unjust systems that cause one to be the victim and the other one to be the persecutor, while another one may be the rescuer. Another reason why these novels are analyzed and compared in this research is to highlight that the time that a novel was written and the authors' characteristics are not effective in the way that the drama triangle manifests itself in the novel. More concretely, although *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* were written in the last decade of the nineteenth century, it still reveals the drama triangle, just as *The Bluest Eye* does. The main reason behind this is both novels' vivid and detailed portrayal of oppression and existence of the systems that are behind this oppression.

In the second chapter of this study, concepts that are necessary to understand the drama triangle will be elucidated based on prominent psychologists' and scholars' definitions. In the third chapter, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* will be analyzed through Feminist and Marxist theories and in the fourth chapter *The Bluest Eye* will be evaluated through postcolonial and Feminist theories. With these analyses, this study aims to elucidate many different characters' roles in the drama triangle and why they subconsciously choose their roles. This research also aims to demonstrate how the drama triangle manifests itself in both literary works and that it is a common theory, which could be used to interpret many more novels, since the main reason behind it is the existence of unjust systems that bring about oppression.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.The History of the Drama Triangle

Before describing the roles in the drama triangle, it will be worthwhile to explain the history behind it. Before Stephen Karpman named this concept “the drama triangle,” the concepts “the Victim trap,” “Victim,” “Rescuer” and “Prosecutor” and their roles were proposed by Eric Berne, the founder of transactional analysis, in his book *Games People Play* for the first time in 1964. He identified many different games, and the Alcoholic Game included the roles of “persecutor” and “rescuer.” According to Berne (1964), there are five roles in this game but it is not necessarily played by five people, as one person may switch their roles, and therefore the game may end up being “a two-handed one” (p. 76). The main role in the game is that of the Alcoholic. As Berne claims, this role is played by White, which is certainly not the color of the person’s skin but just an anonymous name, such as X or Y. The second main role is the Persecutor, usually played by someone of the opposite gender of White, and mostly by White’s wife. The third role belongs to the Rescuer and generally played by someone of the same sex with White, for instance a family doctor who is nice and concerned about the Alcoholic and tries to cure his addiction. The fourth role is that of the Patsy or the Dummy. In literary works, the Patsy or the Dummy is a delicatessen man who offers drinks or cakes to White with no efforts to persecute or rescue him. In true life, this role is usually played by White’s mother. She empathizes with White about his inconsiderate wife and lends him some money. White definitely finds some believable ways to ask his mother for money. Although his mother pretends to believe that he is not going to spend money on alcohol, she actually knows that he certainly will. Sometimes the Patsy or the Dummy changes their role into the Agitator, which is not an essential role in the diagram but only a minor role played by someone provoking White into having a drink with them. Another role is called the Connection, played by the bartender or the liquor clerk. This person sympathizes with alcoholic talk and is the direct provider of alcohol, which makes him one of the most important people in the Alcoholic’s life. Although this diagram of five or six people is open to more clarification, this study will not provide it, since the main focus of this research is the drama triangle. Therefore, what is significant here is the Persecutor’s (White’s wife)

switching to different roles. While she plays the role of the Patsy at midnight with her undressing White, giving him coffee and tolerating his beatings, she slides into the role of the Persecutor in the morning and reprimands him for his addiction. In the evening, she switches to the Rescuer and promises him to help him get over his addiction (pp. 76-7). As it is obvious, the roles the Persecutor and the Rescuer are significant in this game and sometimes the same person might switch to each role. However, the other role in the drama triangle, which is the Victim, is not involved explicitly in this diagram, but the Alcoholic still feels like a victim from time to time.

On the other hand, some other games proposed by Berne involve the role “victim.” One of these games is named as “Schlemiel”. In this game, there is a person named White and another person named Black. The names are not suggestive of the skin color but just random signifiers to identify each person, such as A and B. White is aggressive and pours a highball on Black’s evening dress deliberately but acts like it is accidental. White says “Sorry” about it and Black pretends to forgive them, as Black knows that getting angry with White means that White is winning and this will surely make White happy. In order to not give White any satisfaction of winning, Black pretends not to care about White’s actions and forgive them for all their mistakes. White does not stop with one mistake and acts more destructively. They damage Black’s furniture in Black’s house. Black is full of rage but still has an immense control over themselves. This gives Black a “gratifying display of suffering self-control” and gives White’s childish ego a great satisfaction for their destructive actions and being forgiven despite all. As it is obvious in the game, Black is the Victim and White is the Aggressor (p. 125). Although the Aggressor is not a role in the drama triangle, it has the same features with the Persecutor. Therefore, it could easily be synonymous with the Persecutor, despite Berne’s initial naming. Briefly, these games and the roles in the mentioned games are prominent precursors to the drama triangle.

Later, in 1968, the graphical representation of the drama triangle was proposed by Stephen Karpman, which is the reason why it is also called “the Karpman triangle” (Zimberoff, 2011, p. 159). In fact, Karpman was a student of Berne and attended his Tuesday night 202 seminars in San Francisco (Karpman, 2020, p. 17). As a former basketball player and a point guard, Karpman liked drawing diagrams, which helped him evaluate the advantages, disadvantages and strategies of his opponents. As a

psychologist, he simplified the diagrams he drew and came up with a triangle consisting of three roles: the Victim, the Persecutor and the Rescuer (Karpman, 2020, p. 17). The triangle was not at first the drama triangle, but it turned out to be one, as each role started to interact with the other. For the triangle to turn into the drama triangle, a person in one of these three roles has to initiate a game. As Karpman (2020) succinctly points out, “Anyone can initiate a game from any role position. We call it an invitation to play. Yet, in order for a game to take place, the initial invitation has to be accepted” (p. 57). With the acceptance of the invitation, the drama starts and by time the roles may switch.

2.2.The Roles in the Drama Triangle

2.2.1.The victim

Briefly, the victim could be described as the person who is saved by the rescuer and oppressed by the prosecutor, in the triangle. However, it is a necessity to explain the concept more and with details, since there are certain emotions and beliefs behind the role of the victim. The victim feels hopeless, super-sensitive and trapped. As Zimberoff (2011) succinctly points out, they feel “helpless and not in control” of their lives (p. 18). West (2020) describes encouraged emotions that the victim feels as “passivity,” “helplessness,” “sadness,” “self-pity,” and “fear” (p. 27). One could rightly add ‘lack of self-esteem’ to these emotions. In fact, victims lack self-esteem and subconsciously and sometimes even consciously feel inferior to other people and do not value themselves. They believe that they cannot achieve great things even if they try hard and blame other people for it. As a matter of fact, victims always blame someone else (West, 2020, p. 26). According to Zimberoff (2011), blaming others “serves to keep the victim feeling extremely helpless since it always shifts the power onto someone else” (p. 18). As the victim no longer has the power and feels lack of control, they believe that they are not responsible for their problems, mistakes and lives that are not going well.

A child learns to blame others in their family and keeps doing it as they grow up. This kind of families are dysfunctional families, in which the member(s) blame, manipulate, feel victimized and persecute another one. Since children can learn by imitating their parents, they can play the game of blaming with their parents and then

start playing it with other people, such as partners, friends and colleagues. The blaming person subconsciously believes that they do not have any power to change their current situation and that is why, they shift the power to other people by blaming them. Blaming other people suggests that not the victim, who is blaming others, but the blamed ones are responsible for the victim's mistakes and problems. This actually reflects how incapable the victim feels to fix their problems and to enable a better life for themselves. Therefore, they start creating excuses for their failures. The reason behind their inventive creation of excuses is their subconscious belief that they lack control and do not have enough power to achieve anything, which was taught by their dysfunctional families and results in their embrace of the role of the victim.

2.2.2.The rescuer

The rescuer is basically the person who saves the victim from difficult situations or from the oppression of the persecutor. Although it seems noble and admirable at first, it has its own negative aspects. A rescuer usually tries to help and save people without being asked. As West (2020) rightly points out, some rescuers do not even have the resources or skills to fix the other person's problems. What they do usually end up being ineffective (p. 35). However, they still believe that they have made great efforts to help the other person and expect them to feel grateful. (West, 2020, p. 35). As rescuers are always busy trying to save other people, they usually neglect their own needs and the needs of the people who are close to them. This may cause their close relationships to deteriorate and since their needs are not met and they are constantly in rush to meet the needs of other people, they feel pressured, tired and stressed. They also may not have enough time to finish their own tasks, which causes them to feel more stressed and unconfident.

According to Zimberoff (2011), there is a difference between really helping and acting the role of the rescuer. While helping causes the victim to feel responsible for their actions and does not take away their ability to solve their problems, the rescuer's rescue of the victim takes away the victim's ability to change their difficult situations and fix their problems (p. 67). In case of rescuing, the victim is usually encouraged by the rescuer to "remain dependent on them. So, there is a mutually dependent relationship" between the rescuer and the victim (Zimberoff, 2011, p. 14). Zimberoff

(2011) explains this dependent relationship with the rescuer's need to be needed and feel powerful. As the rescuer actually feels so powerless and out of control in their lives, feeling that the victim needs them and rescuing the victim make them feel stronger and more confident (Zimberoff, 2011, pp. 29-30). West (2020) also supports Zimberoff's view and claims that rescuing gives the rescuer confidence and self-esteem (pp. 37-38).

Rescuers, who were once children, are encouraged and discouraged of certain emotions by their dysfunctional families, which results in their subconscious conditioning to take up the role of the rescuer. According to West's comprehensive analysis, the encouraged emotions are confidence to involve in a situation –regardless of whether it is the rescuer's business or not–, “the pleasure of helping others,” “compassion,” being “sociable,” “perpetual cheerfulness,” and “disappointment.” (2020, p. 37). Disappointment occurs when the rescuer believes that the victim does not appreciate their efforts and show their gratitude, which is usually expected to be great, by the rescuer. In fact, these emotions seem to have positive aspects, except “disappointment.”. However, they actually have negative outcomes: Confidence to involve in a situation, “the pleasure of helping others,” “compassion,” and being “sociable,” result in the rescuer's saving the victim without being asked, and “perpetual cheerfulness” causes the rescuer to fake a presence and not express their true emotions and needs. As West (2020) claims, the rescuer is taught to “feel bad about meeting their own needs” (p. 37). That is why, most of them repress their needs and feelings and prefer not to talk about them. Instead, they portray a pretended cheerfulness, which was also encouraged by their families when they were children. This cycle causes the rescuer to feel powerless inside and as they feel like victims, they want to feel good by saving other people and so-called ‘helping’ them. This certainly proves Zimberoff's point about the drama triangle: “[T]he basic underlying dynamic is two victims, each blaming their feelings of helplessness and inadequacy on the other” (2011, p. 23).

2.2.3. The persecutor

The persecutor victimizes and oppresses the victim and feels a sense of strength out of it. According to West (2020), persecutors are people who are encouraged to express “lots of anger, aggression and a sense of superiority” when they are children. They believe that the world is a dangerous place and that is why, they feel the need to

be tough and more powerful than other people. Their dysfunctional families, which most probably involves a parent formerly playing the role of the persecutor, teach the current persecutor that empathy, sensitivity and being emotional are regarded as weaknesses (p. 17). With all this programming, the child is trained and conditioned to become a persecutor as they grow up.

The persecutor is usually angry, aggressive, authoritative and controlling. They are also critical of other people's attitudes and behaviors and blames other people for anything that goes wrong (Zimberoff, 2011, p. 31). In fact, Zimberoff (2011) succinctly defines the persecutor as a characteristic of the victim that attacks others because of feeling inferior, helpless and out of control (p. 31). The reason behind this is the persecutor's hidden fear of the world and wish to be in control and feel superior to other people. As the persecutor's feelings of inferiority and lack of control suggest, they are actually victims who try too hard to conceal their weak sides. In fact, their situation could be summed up with Alice Miller's words: "[E]very persecutor was once a victim. [...] [S]omeone who was allowed to feel free and strong from childhood does not have the need to humiliate another person" (2002, p. 232).

2.3.The Reason(s) of the Drama Triangle, Power Dynamics and Related Theories

Although it would be much easier to give a straight and simple answer to the reason behind the drama triangle, it is not really possible. As an attempt, one could suggest that the drama triangle occurs because of one person's feeling like a victim, and the other one's feeling like a persecutor and another's wish to be the rescuer. Each role is trying to satisfy their own needs and with their interaction, or with the game that they consciously or subconsciously play, the drama triangle comes into existence. One's feeling like a victim or a persecutor is not always about their subconscious choice or needs but also about their circumstances. For instance, in a patriarchal society, a woman may feel like a victim and a man most probably becomes her persecutor, while another man chooses to become the woman's rescuer. Similarly, in a capitalist society, a person with the most money feels powerful and persecutes others. In this case, people with less money become the wealthy person's victims. A wealthy and kind person might want to give the poor one money and chooses to become their rescuer with this action. In a racist society, a black person may feel like a victim or turned into a victim because of

white people's insults and bullying. A white person may find the other one's bullying wrong and reprimand them, therefore, becomes the black person's rescuer. Even though examples could vary, in each mentioned society, being a victim, a persecutor and a rescuer is the result of power dynamics that causes one to be labeled as "the inferior," and the other one as "the superior," or "less powerful" and "more powerful." Despite the fact that there are many different theories analyzing relationships of people described as "more powerful" and "less powerful," the theories feminism, Marxism and postcolonialism could be further described to evaluate the power dynamics in the selected novels and how the drama triangle occurs among the characters.

2.4. Other Aspects of the Drama Triangle

2.4.1. Dysfunctional families

As also mentioned in the previous section of the thesis about the victim, dysfunctional families are the basis of the drama triangle (Zimberoff, 2011, p. 12). According to Zimberoff (2011), a dysfunctional family includes "a special needs person" (p. 9). This person is someone who needs extra attention of the family members. It may be because of the person's addiction or illness (Zimberoff, 2011, p. 9). Norwood (1985) makes a longer and more illustrative explanation about dysfunctional families and enumerates what kind of families are dysfunctional. According to Norwood (1985), families that involve at least one of these behaviors could be regarded as dysfunctional: Addiction to alcohol or drugs, compulsive behaviors, which could be any kind of behavior such as compulsive eating, cleaning, working, gambling or spending, etc., physical violence between the spouses and/or children, sexual abuse towards the child that occurs on the behalf of the parent, never-ending arguments and tension in the household, parents' rejection of communication with each other for a long time, parents displaying conflicting attitudes or behaviors toward the child's devotion to the family, parents who compete with each other or with their children, a parent who cannot interact and communicate healthily with other family members and therefore actively shuns them and blames them for this shunning, extreme rigidity about any kind of behavior, such as religion, politics, exercise, money, work, etc. (p. 29).

In dysfunctional families, the child's needs are denied or are not met sufficiently (Norwood, 1985, p. 28). Therefore, the child usually feels ignored and powerless or feels responsible to meet the needs of the "special needs person." In the first case, the child embraces the role of the victim, while in the second case, they embrace the role of the rescuer. Or in a different dysfunctional family, the child may take their aggressive and yelling parent as a role model and grow up to be a persecutor. Even though dysfunctional families are the main reason of engaging in the drama triangle, one's social milieu, culture and patriarchal values of society may also be effective in determining their role in the triangle.

2.4.2. 'The switch'

'The Switch' could be basically described as change of the roles in the drama triangle. According to West (2020), the drama triangle is usually believed to represent each role with each person, in other words, it is usually thought that a person does not change their role throughout the process. However, findings suggest that people in the drama triangle move from one role to another (p. 11). Zimberoff (2011) claims that regardless of what position a person joins the triangle, they experience all of the positions by time (p. 56). To clarify the process of the Switch, an illustrative example could be given: A rescuer who has helped the victim is happy that they have, as this gives them self-esteem and feeling of superiority. Nonetheless, when the victim does not show any gratitude, the rescuer feels disappointed, since what the rescuer cares about is the victim's gratitude and their constant need of the rescuer. Due to huge disappointment that the rescuer feels, they start yelling at the victim or blames the victim on being an ingrate. In this case, the former rescuer turns into the persecutor. West (2020) gives another clarifying example: A man, who meets a woman in a bar, pays her a lot of compliments and buys her food and drinks. At the end of the night, he takes her home and they have sex. However, in the morning, the man does not pay her any attention and tells her how cheap she is. In this case, the woman was a rescuer in the beginning of the night, as the man expected her to beautify his world and the man was, naturally, the victim. After they have sex, the man switches his role to the persecutor and in this case, the woman is forced to play the victim (pp. 63-64). As West (2020) further explains, when a person in the triangle changes their role, the other

person or people are psychologically forced to change their roles, too (p. 63), just as in the example.

2.4.3.Learned helplessness

Learned helplessness is one of the reasons that a person subconsciously chooses to embrace the role of the victim, in the triangle. Children are usually taught learned helplessness by their dysfunctional families. A parent who constantly criticizes the child causes the child to feel powerless and incapable of changing their current condition and fix their problems. As the family reinforces this critical and negative attitude towards the child, the child embraces learned helplessness and this, eventually, becomes an inevitable part of the child's grown-up life. As an adult, the person who was formerly a child, believes that no matter what they do, they cannot change the current and negative situation. As Zimberoff (2011) succinctly points out, learned helplessness could as described as "a conditioned denial of one's ability to impact his/her environment" (p. 160). According to Corcoran (2000), the person experiences learned helplessness when they recognize a lack of eventuality between behavior and outcome. Even though the person faces a situation that might happen in the future, in other words, a situation that the person can actualize through their efforts, they still experience feelings of uncontrollability or helplessness (p. 1). For example, a student who can pass the exam if they study hard, feels like they have no control over their grade and no matter how hard they study, they cannot pass the exam. In fact, this is the perfect epitome for the theory of learned helplessness. Of course, the reason why the student embraces learned helplessness may differ from person to person. Although their families' attitudes may be the main reason, their negative past experiences, such as failing the class many times, or discouragement of their friends, could cause the child to embrace learned helplessness.

2.4.4.Addictions

Addictions play a significant role in the drama triangle, as they are one of the most effective ways the drama triangle is acted upon. Before clarifying how this process works, one should know more about the definition of 'addiction.' Phillips (2004)

describes addiction as “a progressive disease, in which the main features are preoccupation, continued use or involvement as the consequences rise, and loss of control” (p. 44). He rightly claims that as time passes, the person starts getting involved in the addiction more and frequency of use, time and money that the addict spends on the addiction increases. The addictive substance or the behavior becomes more and more effective in making the addict feel better and changing their mood (Phillips, 2004, p. 44). When the addict cannot get the substance or engage in the behavior, they feel stressed, depressed and feel an irresistible need to use the substance or perform the behavior. They no longer feel in control and could do anything to get the substance or perform the behavior that they are addicted to.

The drama triangle is not always played with other people. In other words, it does not involve two people playing out the victim and the rescuer or the victim and the persecutor or three people playing each role. Sometimes, it is played with “all doors closed, [...] Nobody knows anything about it. It no longer plays out at the social level” (Karpman, 2014, p. 86). In this case, one person acts the drama triangle with their inner parts of the psyche, through their addictions. Weinhold and Weinhold (2013) explain this process as: When a person’s inner child, which is the victim part, feels desperate and depressed, their rescuer part tries to get their favorite addiction to comfort the sad child/the victim part. In this process, the person feels a little better, as they get the substance or perform an act that they are addicted to (p. 31). However, in the long run, their addiction, which was once their rescuer, becomes their persecutor and they turn into the victim. This never-ending cycle goes on until the person overcomes their addiction.

2.4.5.Dependency

Dependency is a close concept to addictions, as all addictions involve dependency on the substance of use or on the compulsive behavior. Dependency does not only occur in case of addictions, but it is also a personality disorder, which is categorized by the person’s dependency and reliance on other people. Lawson (2020) claims that people with dependent personalities feels “the tendency to submit to others, without which submission, such persons believe that they cannot survive” (p. 190). This kind of people cannot take their decisions on their own and usually feel lack of self-

esteem without getting their family's and friends' approvals. Most people with dependent personalities naturally do not only feel dependent on their families and friends, but they are also dependent on their partners and also on relationships. According to Jantz et al. (2015), when people without dependent personality disorders goes through a break up, they consider the positive and negative aspects of the relationship and decide on their upcoming personal goals. The end of the relationship requires some time for healing, contemplation and spiritual growth. However, dependent people are unable to give themselves any necessary time for growth and reflection. They rather rush into a new relationship (p. 20). In some way, their dependency is an addiction. It is even convincing to think that some dependent people are addicted to love and relationships.



CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES* BY THOMAS HARDY

3.1. Introduction

The drama triangle is clearly perceivable in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) by Thomas Hardy, through the roles that the characters embrace, although it was written a long time before the concept of the drama triangle was proposed. Written with third person omniscient narrative, the novel portrays the characters and their feelings and actions vividly and with detail. The characters' roles switch from time to time but each of them enacts the drama triangle with their actions and emotions. There are certain reasons why each character chooses to perform a specific role, which are their dysfunctional families, their addictions, dependencies, and their position in patriarchal and capitalist society. The last concepts will be clarified based on the theories of feminism and Marxism, while the other concepts will be explained based on preeminent scholars' works and descriptions. All these analyses will indicate why certain characters subconsciously choose to perform a role or more than one role in the drama triangle. This study will also prove that women and financially poor people are usually meant to be the victim because of patriarchal and capitalist society in Victorian England in the late 1800s.

In the novel, Tess subconsciously chooses to act all the roles in the drama triangle at different times. She does not only become a rescuer, but also a victim and a persecutor in different parts of the novel. However, she mostly stays as a victim, which is clear in the amount of time she spends as a victim and also in the end of the novel. There is also one important note that needs to be taken into consideration, which is the fact that a person performing the role of the victim in the drama triangle feels like a victim; yet Tess is a literal victim in most situations. She sometimes feels like a victim, which is clear in her depression, sadness and words; but most of the time, she is not fully aware of the distinction between feeling like a victim and being a real victim. Nonetheless, this study will refer to both Tess's being a literal victim and feeling like a victim and expressing it through her actions and words.

3.2. Tess's Dysfunctional Family

In the beginning of the novel, Tess is more like a rescuer to her parents, rather than a victim. Her mother Joan is so busy with her children and domestic chores that Tess feels like she needs to help her even if she is not asked. For instance, when she returns home from the May-Day dance, she feels “a chill self-reproach that she had not returned sooner, to help her mother in these domesticities, instead of indulging herself out-of-doors” (Hardy, 2018, p. 34). In fact, Tess does not only take care of the domesticities but also keeps an eye on her parents, as if her parents were her children. For example, when her drunk father John goes to the pub to drink more, her mother goes to fetch him. When she does not come back home after some time, Tess tells her younger brother Abraham to go to the pub and get their mother and father. However, as Abraham does not return home soon, either, Tess goes after them to take all of them back home. In the incident, Tess surely acts like a parent, while her parents act like irresponsible children. After this incident, Tess’s father cannot go to Casterbridge to deliver the beehives to the retailers, as he is drunker than usual and sleepy because of the time he spent in the pub at night, instead of sleeping. That is why, Tess decides to take the journey with Abraham (Hardy, 2018, p. 41). This does not only show that Tess is a rescuer to her family, but also emphasizes her parents’ reckless and thoughtless nature.

Before analyzing Tess in detail, it is more efficient to explain how her family represents a clear example of a dysfunctional family. First of all, John, Tess’s father, is an alcoholic and he satisfies his family’s neither material nor emotional needs. He acts irresponsibly and cannot work consistently. Instead of working, he spends a great deal of time in a pub, drinking and talking. Just as the incident described in previous paragraph shows, John is drunk most of the time and does not make enough efforts to work efficiently both because of his addiction to alcohol and his lazy nature. In the novel, he is described as “a slack-twisted fellow; he had good strength to work at times; but the times could not be relied on to coincide with the hours of requirement; and, having been unaccustomed to the regular toil of the day-labourer, he was not particularly persistent when they did not coincide” (Hardy, 2018, p. 56). As the description points out, although he is capable of working, he does not work when his work is required the most and even when he is able to work when he is required to, he prefers not to, since he is not used to working regularly. His addiction to alcohol and laziness prevent him from taking care of his family and therefore, Tess works very hard

to help her family get by, while her mother also works and looks after her younger children. In other words, Tess's father obviously compels her to embrace the role of the rescuer, by causing her to feel responsible for her family.

Tess's mother Joan does not have any addictions, unlike her husband, but she certainly does not meet Tess's and her other children's needs sufficiently, as she is too busy taking care of her younger children and doing the house chores. The narrator's portrayal of Tess and her five younger sisters as "six helpless creatures, who had never been asked if they wished for life on any terms, much less if they wished for it on such hard conditions" (Hardy, 2018, p. 40) shows that they live in poverty and cannot receive enough physical and emotional care from their parents. Besides her incapability of taking care of each child sufficiently, Joan is also emotionally immature to her children and thereby does not satisfy the emotional needs of her children. Gibson (2015) sets a lot of criteria to determine whether a parent is emotionally immature or not and one of these criteria is a parent's disability to express much empathy or emotional awareness (p. 27). Joan certainly fits into this criterion, since she is not empathetic and understanding most of the time, and she thinks in a narrow-minded way. For example, all she ever wants is to marry off Tess to a gentleman, but she does not really care about how Tess feels. When Tess hates Alec d'Urberville after he rapes her and does not want to marry him, Joan feels very angry, since she sees Tess's possible marriage to Alec as a financial opportunity for all of her family. She reprimands Tess for not marrying Alec, after his rape (Hardy, 2018, p. 126), although she should have blamed Alec and found Tess's decision right, if she gave her daughter some emotional support. However, as Joan only thinks about her family's financial benefits that they can get from Alec, she continues to blame Tess constantly. She says "After all the talk about you and him which has reached us here, who would have expected it to end like this! Why didn't ye think of doing some good for your family instead o' thinking only of yourself? See how I've got to teave and slave, and your poor weak father with his heart clogged like a dripping-pan" (Hardy, 2018, p. 126). Despite Joan's words, Tess's father is not a man who needs sympathy of people because of his coronary disease. It is not really true that he cannot work, he chooses not to work because of his lazy nature. It is obvious that Joan tries to make herself and her husband seem like the victims and pushes Tess to become their rescuer.

As these examples illustrate, Tess's parents contribute to her dysfunctional family and causes Tess to have psychological problems and enact the drama triangle with other characters and also with her inner self in the novel. In their work *Adult Children: The Secrets of Dysfunctional Families*, Friel and Friel (1988) succinctly refer to characteristics of adult children of dysfunctional families. With the concept "adult children," they refer to adults who act like children, since they are immature both because of their actions and emotions. Some of the characteristics that they explain in their work are noticeable in Tess's feelings and behavior. These characteristics are one's feeling emotionally neglected due to their mother's emotional absence, abusing themselves but taking care of everyone else, and suffering as much as they can (pp. 19, 20). In fact, what Friel & Friel (1988) mean by "abusing" is not necessarily hurting oneself or performing harmful actions that will eventually be detrimental to oneself. What they claim also includes one's putting too much pressure on themselves, which is undoubtedly applicable to Tess's situation. Friel & Friel's other term "suffering as much as one can" does not necessarily mean suffering consciously but, indeed, entails suffering subconsciously as a result of one's capability of feeling intensely, which is also accurate for Tess. While Tess's abusing herself but taking care of everyone else are related to her role as the rescuer, her feeling emotionally neglected and suffering as much as she can are associated with her embracing the role of the victim. Her acting as the victim eventually causes her to turn into a persecutor, which will also be argued in the following study.

With an alcoholic father, who is "the special needs person," according to Zimmeroff's description (2011, p. 9), and an emotionally absent mother, Tess's family is a perfect embodiment of a dysfunctional family. After analyses of Tess's parents, Tess's psychology should be explained in order to understand how she plays all the roles of the drama triangle with herself. In fact, regardless of which parent is an alcoholic, almost every adult child of an alcoholic goes through similar experiences. As Bowden and Grawitz (1985) point out, adult children of alcoholics "have survived the experience of living in a family where inconsistency was the rule [...], where everything was arbitrary [...]" Children like Tess, who have an alcoholic parent or parents survive "living with a family in chaos. Almost every day there were crises and emergencies at home" (p. 2). As Tess also grows up experiencing these traumas, she takes up the role of the rescuer in order to get rid of the crises at home and carries out

adult levels of responsibilities that her parents cannot properly take. Nonetheless, Tess's being a rescuer to her family does not let her feel good about it, but it rather causes her to feel more responsible and become harder on herself. For instance, when she goes to Casterbridge to deliver the beehives, the family's horse Prince gets killed by a mail-cart. Tess is asleep just before the accident and she wakes up to the sound of the accident. Although the accident is not her fault, she blames herself for Prince's death and even considers "herself in the light of a murderess" (Hardy, 2018, p. 55). That is why, she cannot reject her mother's offer to go and ask Mrs. d'Urberville for help and work for her, which is the beginning of all her misfortunate experiences. Tess also finds other jobs after she quits working for Mrs. d'Urberville, in order to help her family financially. She pressures herself to support her family and takes a lot of responsibilities that are hard to carry out, since she is actually very young. In this cycle, Tess's performing the role of the rescuer to her family turns her into a persecutor to herself and she victimizes herself through her own oppression. In other words, she enacts the drama triangle not only with other people but also with her own self. With this subconscious oppression, Tess's one role of the drama triangle switches to the other ones and this prevents her from having a healthy mental state.

3.3. Tess as a Victim in Patriarchal Victorian Society

As stated in the previous paragraphs, Tess is generally a victim. It is not only because her family is dysfunctional but also because of her gender and class position in Victorian England. Almost all women in England in the late 1800s were victimized by men, since the society was strongly patriarchal and women were not considered individuals but rather regarded as wives, mothers or maidens. According to Murdoch (2013), many middle-class Victorian writers published different kinds of literary works emphasizing the ideal woman and characteristics of women and these literary works "stressed that women's moral influence stemmed from their roles as wives and mothers" (p. 107). Murdoch (2013) also points out that "Middle-class Victorians [...] described married women's relation to their husbands as one of dependency, like a child to a father" (p. 109). What is common between these two views is that a woman is not regarded as an individual but rather as her husband's wife. Considering this kind of patriarchal opinions, it is not surprising that Tess's mother's only purpose for Tess is to

marry her off to a gentleman. In fact, this purpose serves two other implied purposes, which could be construed as Tess's marriage's benefits. One of them is for Tess to gain respectability in society, as women married to gentlemen are highly respected compared to unmarried mothers and unmarried old women, who are also called "spinsters" in most Victorian novels. The other hidden purpose is, of course, Tess's mother's plan of using Alec financially. She believes that if Tess marries Alec, her whole family will live comfortably with Alec's financial help. Considering the era that Joan lived in, her plan about Tess seems understandable and logical. However, it is oppressive for Tess and her mother's emotional ignorance makes her feel more depressed and desperate, which will cause her to feel like a victim, when she does not choose to take up the role of the rescuer for her family.

As also stated in the previous paragraphs, Tess victimizes herself through her own pressure to take up more responsibilities. However, she is not only a victim to herself but also a real victim to Alec because of his gender, his social class and wealth. In the modern age, it is obvious that society is patriarchal to some degree, although there are impressive feminist movements and thinkers. However, in the Victorian era, society was much more patriarchal and oppressive to women, compared to the twenty first century. Before expounding patriarchy and how it affects women in the Victorian era, patriarchy and feminism should be further explained in general terms. Patriarchy could be defined as a system where men are considered superior to women and dominate the society morally, economically and politically, while women are regarded as less important, compared to men. As Simone de Beauvoir (2011), one of the most influential feminist thinkers and philosophers, claims "from patriarchy's earliest times they have deemed it useful to keep women in a state of dependence; their codes were set up against her; she was thus concretely established as the Other. This condition served males' economic interests; but it also suited their ontological and moral ambitions" (p. 210). Since this order is beneficial for males, they preferred to keep it that way and despite feminists' efforts to end patriarchy, the unjust system did not get weaker much. Of course, its effects diminished compared to the past, but even today its effects are perceivable. Considering the Victorian era, which is the time the novel was written, patriarchy had so much stronger effects on both men and women. While it caused men to try to dominate and possess women and usually succeed in it, it weakened women emotionally, sexually and financially. This statement certainly

explains Alec's many efforts to possess Tess and rape her and Tess's obligatory and unwilling decision to become Alec's mistress. To sum up, the fact that Alec becomes Tess's persecutor and Tess is forced to be his victim is concretely the result of patriarchy.

To understand how Alec victimizes Tess emotionally, one should pay close attention to his initial and following words and actions. The first time when Alec sees Tess, he is fascinated by her beauty and wants to flirt with her. He is not as rude and oppressive as he will be in the subsequent parts of the novel and he even acts like a protective person to look nice to Tess. For instance, when he is running his carriage, Tess is with him and Alec's horse gets restless. As they speed and the carriage rocks, Tess feels afraid and Alec says "Hold on round my waist" (Hardy, 2018, p. 82). However, as they slow down and it seems like there is no imminent danger, Tess lets go her hold of Alec but he reprimands her: "Well, you need not let go your hold of me so thanklessly the moment you feel yourself out of danger" (Hardy, 2018, p. 83). The narrator goes on with Tess's thoughts and describes Tess's "involuntary hold of" Alec as an action Tess could perform with any other person, regardless of whether the person is male or female. In other words, Tess's holding Alec does not have a flirtatious or sexual meaning, she holds him only because she is afraid of the horse's speed and restlessness. She could hold any other person as well, at that moment of fear. However, Alec expects Tess to be grateful and to be considered a hero by Tess. He wants to be Tess's rescuer and also victimizes Tess for not being appreciative, just like most rescuers do, according to West (2020, p. 37). Alec's insistence does not only aim to be Tess's rescuer, but he also wants to flirt with Tess and even her involuntarily act of holding onto Alec means to Alec that Tess accepts his flirtations. That is why, when Tess lets go of Alec, Alec feels like she has rejected him and repeatedly says: "Now then, put your arms round my waist again, as you did before, my Beauty" (Hardy, 2018, p. 83). Nonetheless, Tess says "Never" but Alec still insists and he becomes more demanding. Before, he only wished that Tess would hold onto his waist, but later a new wish is added to his list, which is Tess's kissing him. Although Tess says "I don't want anybody to kiss me, sir," Alec does not care about her wishes and rejection. As the narrator describes, Alec "was inexorable, and she sat still, and d'Urberville [Alec] gave the kiss of mastery" (Hardy, 2018, p. 84). As the related chapter shows, Alec is a man embracing the values of patriarchy. First, he wants to be a female's rescuer, which is

actually the result of his victimization and weakening of all women. Since he unconsciously believes that all women are fragile and weaker than men, he thinks that they need to be saved from danger. His subsequent actions to victimize Tess show that he is insistent and oppressive. All these define his character as a macho, who pretends to act protective but does not care about women's wishes, cannot tolerate rejection and tries hard to possess women, without thinking that they are human beings, not objects.

It can be argued that Alec is the person that he is mainly because of the way most boys are raised in patriarchal society. It is obvious that there are certain gender characteristics that are expected of boys and girls in patriarchal society. Some of these characteristics are considered "feminine" and most people grown up in patriarchal society expect women to have them, while some others are regarded as "masculine" and it is believed that men should have them by most of society. In their article "What Women and Men Should Be, Shouldn't Be, Are Allowed to Be, and Don't Have to Be: The Contents of Prescriptive Gender Stereotypes," Prentice and Carranza (2002) extensively define specific characteristics as "feminine" and "masculine." They categorize "affectionate," "gentle," "sensitive to the needs of others," "sympathetic," "tender," "understanding" and "warm" as feminine characteristics, while they enumerate "aggressive," "ambitious," "assertive," "competitive," "defends own beliefs," "dominant," "forceful," "independent," and "individualistic" as masculine characteristics. Prentice and Carranza's article draws attention to these gender stereotypes that are internalized in patriarchal society, based on 1970s and onwards (pp. 269-70). However, considering the Victorian era, one could see that gender stereotypes were much more effective and patriarchal society had a stronger effect on an individual, compared to the twentieth and twenty first century. Growing up in a society like this, Alec internalizes patriarchal attitudes and chooses to become a forceful, oppressive, aggressive and assertive man, although it may not be a fully conscious choice. He, most probably, believes that being understanding and sensitive to other people's needs have a feminine connotation, which makes a man less of a man. Sexton (2019) refers to "socialization," which could be defined as social gatherings; such as family gatherings, meeting friends, spending time at work or school; briefly, any kind of activity that people meet other people and socialize, and succinctly claims that "socialization's purpose is to not only teach gender expectations, but to weed out any "feminine" characteristic [...]. This system works on the basis of positive and negative

reinforcement. Behave as a traditional male and receive entry into the group. Fail and receive physical, emotional, and social abuse until you have no choice but to conform” (p. 59). In other words, this patriarchal attitude and gender expectations imposed on men prevent them from having character traits considered feminine, if they want to be approved by patriarchal society and their family and friends grown up in this society. That is why, Alec cannot be genuine, caring, understanding and emotional but rather embraces masculine traits such as being physically strong, oppressive, assertive, protective, promiscuous and self-centered.

Having these masculine traits, Alec believes that as a man, he could have anything that he wants. Therefore, he does not stop with his wish to kiss Tess but he goes on insistently with his rude and oppressive behaviors towards her. As the previously described incident shows, Alec kisses Tess against her will. Although he seems to get what he has wanted, he is still not satisfied and feels rejected when Tess does not want stay in the carriage with him. In fact, Tess leaves the carriage to get her hat that has been blown off into the road, but then she refuses to get back into the carriage with Alec and wants to walk but Alec feels really rejected and tells Tess: “You artful hussy! Now, tell me –didn’t you make that hat blow off on purpose? I swear you did!” (Hardy, 2018, p. 85). Surely, these words of Alec, and especially the word “hussy,” indicates his patriarchal and misogynous nature. Collins dictionary categorizes hussy as an old-fashioned and disapproving word. According to the dictionary, “If someone refers to a girl or a woman as hussy, they are criticizing her for behaving in a sexually immoral way” (Collins Dictionary, n.d). Similarly, Cambridge dictionary defines “hussy” as “a rude word for a woman or girl who is thought to have a lot of sexual partners” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d). In fact, this type of language aiming to degrade women is not only the result of patriarchy but also it is the source of patriarchy. As Gouveia (2020) rightly points out, for a really long time, most people have “been using language that denigrates women and casts them as weak” (p. 77). Even though Gouveia does not explicitly name it, he refers to patriarchal language and discourse. In her work *Literature and Feminism: An Introduction*, Morris (1993) comprehensively explains how language has become patriarchal. She refers to Luce Irigaray’s work *The Speculum of The Other Woman* (1974) and explains the logic behind patriarchal language and discourse as:

This logic continually collapses two gender specificities (man and not man) as in the form A and not A (or A-), rather than the logic of two different but autonomous terms such as A and B. In the former pair only the first term has a positive value attached, the second term (A-) can have only an amorphous meaning as what A is not. This is very similar to de Beauvoir's claims in *The Second Sex* that 'man' is always the positive term (the norm) and 'woman' the 'other' to that positive male as absolute subject (p. 115).

Morris's explanation certainly enlightens the logic behind binary oppositions. In patriarchal language and discourse, men are "the norm," in other words, "the absolute subject," while women are "the sub-norm," and also "the other." Therefore, binary oppositions having positive connotations are used to define men, and ones having negative connotations are used for women. While the former is regarded as positive and masculine, the latter is considered negative and feminine. Analyzing "hussy" based on these explanations, one could see that there is not even a word that is equal to the meaning of hussy for men. One could think of "womanizer" as a synonym for "hussy," in order to define men; however, it does not mean the same, since "womanizer" is used in an approving context, unlike "hussy," which is used to degrade women and disapprove of their sexual relationships morally. This certainly proves the existence of double standards for women and men in patriarchal society and language. As these explanations indicate, Alec's use of the word "hussy" for Tess and his subsequent insults to her clearly reflect patriarchal language and discourse, as well as Alec's misogynist personality and attitude.

3.3.1. Alec's rape of Tess

Throughout the novel, Alec always insults Tess. The intensity of his violent actions gradually increases and he rapes her eventually. However, some scholars do not define the incident as rape, since the narrator does not describe the scene explicitly. Therefore, scholars have controversial opinions about the scene and while some believe that it is rape, some others think that Tess is seduced by Alec. As Brady (1986) rightly suggests, "the debate has still not been resolved with perfect clarity" (p. 131). In their introduction to *Tess of d'Urbervilles*, Grindle and Gatrell (1983) refer to the incident as "rape" and "seduction" interchangeably (p. 45). As another different opinion,

Wickens (1983) believes Hardy's ambiguous scene to depict a seduction turning into rape (p. 93). Despite many different opinions of various scholars, the novel has some details proving the scene to be rape, instead of seduction. The first detail reinforcing the incident to be rape is the fact that Tess is asleep. As the narrator describes:

D'Urberville [Alec] stooped; and heard a gentle regular breathing. He knelt and bent lower, till her breath warmed his face, and in a moment his cheek was in contact with hers. She was sleeping soundly, and upon her eyelashes there lingered tears (Hardy, 2018, p. 112).

As the narrative suggests, Tess cannot give her consent to have sex with Alec, since she is asleep. Without Tess's consent, Alec's action is certainly rape. Victorian law in the nineteenth century defines rape as "the offense of having unlawful and carnal knowledge of a woman by force, and against her will" (Geary, 1892, p. 480). In this definition, what is obvious is that the intercourse is against the woman's will; however, there is no implication of any kind of situation that the woman is not capable of giving her consent. In his book *Digest of English Case Law*, John Mews (1898), a prominent scholar of the Victorian era brings attention to Victorian law concerning rape and states that "to constitute rape, it is not necessary that the connection with the woman should be had against her will; it is sufficient if it is without her consent" (pp. 548-9). The Victorian law specifically refers to a number of situations a woman cannot give her consent and one of these situations is a woman's being asleep. According to the law: "If the woman is asleep when the connection takes place, she is incapable of consent, and although no violence is used, the prisoner may be convicted of rape, if he knew that she was asleep" (Giffard, 1968, p. 612). With all these laws concerning rape constituted in Victorian times, it is clear that Tess is raped, as she cannot give consent to Alec's sexual act, while she is sleeping. Besides this, another implication reinforcing that she is raped is her crying during Alec's sexual act. As the narrator describes, "upon her eyelashes there lingered tears" (Hardy, 2018, p. 112). Based on all these facts, what Tess goes through is more specifically "acquaintance rape," as Warshaw (2019) points out. In her illuminating work *I Never Called It Rape*, Warshaw (2019) divides rape into three categories, which are stranger rape, acquaintance rape, and date rape. As the names suggest, stranger rape occurs when a person is raped by someone they do not know, and acquaintance rape occurs when they are raped by someone that they know.

The assaulter does not have to be in a close relationship to the victim. They may be a classmate, colleague, a neighbor, a relative or anyone that they know. Date rape happens when the victim is raped by a date or a partner, regardless of whether they are in a relationship or married (Warshaw, 2019). Considering these categories, it is clear that Tess goes through acquaintance rape, since she knows Alec, but is not in a relationship with him.

Before analyzing how her experience of rape affects and victimizes Tess, even more than being an actual victim of Alec that she is, it will be more enlightening to refer to why men rape. “All rape is an exercise in power,” claims Susan Brownmiller (1975) in her prominent work *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (p. 256). Indeed, rape is a way to prove a man’s power over a woman and possess her, regardless of her consent and feelings. In other words, it is a means for men to be superior to women in terms of power dynamics. Actually, rape does not only make male rapists superior to their female victims but also causes women not only to become actual victims but also intensely feel like victims and very weak. Warshaw supports Brownmiller’s claim and refers to patriarchal upbringing of girls and boys to explain why men rape other human beings to exercise their power. As she rightly claims: “Many men are socialized to be sexually aggressive –to score, as it were, regardless of how. Many women are socialized to submit to men’s wills, especially those men deemed desirable by society at large” (Warshaw, 2019, p. 58). As Warshaw’s claim suggests, men are taught to have many sexual relationships by patriarchal society and women are taught to be submissive and sensitive to others’ needs. Therefore, while most men are accustomed to get what they want, most women have a hard time saying no to men’s demands, especially when these men are approved by their social milieu. In true life, men who are not accustomed to get the answer “no,” ignore this answer in case of sexual intimacy and believe that a woman’s rejection of sex is only to make herself look like a decent woman or to make the man try harder and thus, rape occurs. Of course, this reality of patriarchal upbringing and thinking do not cause rape directly and every man grown up in patriarchal society is not a rapist, but it is one of the main reasons behind rape.

Warshaw refers to aftereffects of acquaintance rape and explains what victims of acquaintance rape go through. “In any rape, a woman feels invaded and violated, her

comfortable reality shattered because she has not been able to control her own physical safety” claims Warshaw in her book (2019, p. 99). She argues that a woman experiencing acquaintance rape is more traumatized than a woman experiencing stranger rape. The reason behind this is the fact that a woman raped by a stranger still feels that people she knows supply an area of protection for her, while a person raped by an acquaintance does not have this area of protection. She also has to deal with social myths that people believe in about rape. These myths include judging the victim’s way of dressing, believing that “she is asking for it” and blaming the victim. Warshaw claims that the victim of acquaintance rape is blamed, but the victim of stranger rape gets sympathy from most people instead of being blamed. Because of all these reasons women who have experienced acquaintance rape tend to stay silent about it and seek help much later after the trauma-even if they seek any- compared to victims of stranger rape (2019, pp. 60-99-100). Since Tess also has experienced acquaintance rape, it is really understandable that she stays silent about it and does not report the crime. Indeed, in Tess’s situation and the era that she lives in, it is reasonable that she chooses not to report the crime to the authorities, since the authorities are men and would probably be judgmental and prejudiced about the rape and blame Tess for it. In addition, her report would cause many more people to know about the rape and criticize and judge her more, which she definitely would not wish for. Thus, it is most probable that Tess does not report the crime, as she was afraid of Victorian society’s and especially her social milieu’s judgmental responses or she simply does not think about reporting the crime out of her fear, ignorance and shock. If Tess had been raped by a stranger instead of Alec, her reaction would most probably still be the same because of all these reasons.

Warshaw adds that survivors of both stranger and acquaintance rape experience “posttraumatic stress disorder” and they also feel a large scope of emotions, such as “a generalized sense of fear or a specific fear of death, anger, guilt, depression, a fear of men, anxiety, humiliation, embarrassment, shame or self-blame.” She also claims that victims “may feel one or more of these, at varying times and intensities, accompanied by radical mood swings” (2019, p. 102). Considering Warshaw’s enlightening knowledge about aftereffects of acquaintance rape, the reader can see that Tess experiences most aftereffects of acquaintance rape. She certainly feels anxiety and depression. As it is narrated in the novel:

The only exercise that Tess took at this time was after dark; and it was then, when out in the woods, that she seemed least solitary. She knew how to hit to a hair's-breath that moment of evening when the light and the darkness are so evenly balanced that the constraint of day and the suspense of night neutralise each other, leaving absolute mental liberty. It is then that the plight of being alive becomes attenuated to its least possible dimensions. She had no fear of the shadows; her sole idea seemed to be to shun mankind –or rather that cold accretion called the world, which, so terrible in the mass, is so unformidable, even pitiable, in its units (Hardy, 2018, p. 131).

As the narrative indicates, Tess feels depressed to a great degree and solely living does not make her happy. At night, predicament of living is weakened, compared to day and that is why, she chooses to spend time in nature at night. She does not want to be around people and she prefers solitude over companionship. Indeed, she does not like many people, mainly society in general, since they usually judge her, regardless of her special circumstances concerning Alec's rape. For instance, even the man who paints biblical quotes on the walls blames Tess, even though he does not know anything about her. Tess asks him whether he believes in what he paints and adds "suppose your sin was not of your own seeking" (Hardy, 2018, p. 124). Her words indicate that she did not have sex with Alec willingly and it was by force; however, the man does not understand it and says that he believes what he paints, like his own existence (Hardy, 2018, p. 124). Although Tess says that these quotes are "horrible," "crushing," and "killing," the man believes that these are what the quotes "are meant to be" (Hardy, 2018, p. 125). Then, he adds that he wants to paint another quote on a blank wall and says "one that will be good for dangerous young females like yerself to heed" (Hardy, 2018, p. 125). His words definitely signify his misogynist attitude towards young females and support the patriarchal view of blaming the victim in case of rape.

Although it is not very explicit in the novel, Tess blames herself because of Alec's rape and she also blames her mother. She says: "O mother, my mother! [...] How could I be expected to know? I was a child when I left this house four months ago. Why didn't you tell me there was danger in menfolk? Why didn't you warn me? [...] you did not help me!" (Hardy, 2018, p. 127). As a reply to Tess, her mother says that if she had told her all these, she would have lost her chance with Alec (Hardy, 2018, p.

128). She also says: “You ought to have been more careful if you didn’t mean to get him to make you his wife!” (Hardy, 2018, p. 127). Joan’s responses are concrete reflections of internalized patriarchy. In fact, all these reactions from patriarchal society justify Tess’s depression, isolation and self-blame after the incident of rape. Without their misogynist attitudes and reactions, Tess would still feel these emotions but with these reactions, it is more understandable that she intensely feels like this.

3.4. Tess as a Victim in Capitalist Victorian Society

Tess is not only an actual victim of Alec and patriarchal society, including her mother, because of the rape she has experienced, but she is also Alec’s victim due to her social class and poverty. To understand how she becomes a victim of Alec because of his wealth and higher social class, Marxist theory provides an explanation. Marxism is a social, political and economic theory named after Karl Marx, one of the most famous philosophers throughout the history. Marxism was first proposed by Marx in his landmark work *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), which he and Friedrich Engels wrote and later Engels also edited. *The Communist Manifesto* aims to empower communism and refers to persuading arguments about positive outcomes of communism. According to Marx and Engels, there are two social classes under capitalist system, one of which is the bourgeoisie and the other one is the proletariat. The bourgeoisie possesses the production tools, while the proletariat does not own anything, or owns very little and has to sell their labor for an exchange of wage they can get from the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie does not only have money and property but also “means of production,” which includes everything required to make sellable products besides the labor itself, such as materials, machinery and infrastructure. The proletariat work and are paid by the bourgeoisie so that the bourgeoisie can sell the products that the proletariat have produced. This system certainly creates profit for the bourgeoisie; yet it only enables the proletariat to survive on minimum wages. With the work performed by the proletariat, the bourgeoisie does not only make profit but also accumulates wealth, property and becomes the dominating social class in the capitalist system. Indeed, money and property are not the only resources that make the bourgeoisie dominate the society easier, they also control the society with their ideologies. Since the bourgeoisie has all media and private educational means, they can

set the agenda in terms of their dominant ideas and disseminate their ideologies among the proletariat fast and easily. The bourgeoisie also make these ideologies seem like they are how everything is meant to be; in other words, they are normal ideas and ideologies that society should have, although it is not really the case. With these domineering ideologies, the bourgeoisie make the proletariat accept capitalism and prevent them from revolting against the bourgeoisie. Marx and Engels believe that the proletariat's position in capitalist society is enslavement to the bourgeoisie and they call the proletarian workers to bring about a revolution against the bourgeoisie. They claim that the proletariat outnumber the bourgeoisie and constitute majority of the population; therefore, the proletariat's revolution will be successful if they unite. As Marx and Engels (1999) call the proletariat for revolution against the bourgeoisie, they passionately state: "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!" (p. 96).

3.4.1. Categorization of social classes

Hardy's novel lends itself to a Marxist interpretation and social class is a crucial factor in the novel. Thus, it is possible to analyze the novel based on Marx's ideas concerning social classes. Since ancient times, class divisions have existed and they surely existed in the Victorian era as well. However, their names were different than Marx's labeling, which consisted of only two classes; the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In this study, both Marx's definitions and other well-known definitions of social classes will be used to dictate the differences between social classes of Tess's, Alec's and Angel's and their families. At the end of the study, the reader will be able to see that despite different names, main features of corresponding social classes are the same.

As Köhler (2008) succinctly claims: "In general Victorians saw their society as divided into three classes. On top in the hierarchical order was the elite called the aristocrats, in the center the middle-class and below was the working class" (p. 5). She also adds some detailed information about each class and explains what makes a person an aristocrat. She claims that aristocrats were land-owners by birth and the source of their income was rents of their property. "The status of the aristocracy was determined

by birth and the land they owned” (Köhler, 2008, p. 5). In her book *Daily Life in Victorian England*, Sally Mitchell (2009) explains that aristocrats had titles based on their ranks. These titles are, from highest to lowest, “duke (his wife is a duchess), marquess (marchioness), earl (countess), viscount (viscountess), and baron (baroness)” (p. 22). An aristocrat does not work in order to acquire an aristocratic title, but they inherit it by birth (Mitchell, 2009, p. 22). Being an aristocrat did not only enable wealth, property and respectability in society but it also had other advantages:

The head of a titled family had certain responsibilities and privileges. He was automatically a member of the House of Lords. He could not be arrested for debt. And if he were charged with a criminal offense, he would be tried by a *jury of his peers*- a jury made up of other noblemen, in a special court held in Westminster Hall rather than in an ordinary criminal court (Mitchell, 2009, p. 22).

Köhler (2008) emphasizes that the middle class outnumbers the aristocracy (p. 6). J. F. Harrison (1991) mentions the qualifications required to be a member of the middle class as the following: “The determinants of membership of the middle class [...] were an income above a certain minimum, a particular occupation or calling, education beyond simple literacy, recognised religious affiliations, a certain style of home-in short, the wherewithal to lead a comfortable life (p. 50). Köhler (2008) adds another distinguishing aspect of being a member of the middle class, which is servant keeping (p. 6). Harrison (1991) claims that the aim of employing servants is to lead a comfortable life, as well as making oneself different from the working class who cannot afford to keep a servant (p. 50). As Köhler (2008) further adds, the middle class could be divided into two sub-categories, which are the upper middle class and the lower middle class. Not only money but also occupation played an important role in determining whether a person belong to the upper middle class or the lower middle class (p. 6). Köhler (2008) gives many detailed examples of different occupations belonging to the upper middle class, such as “bankers, city merchants, Church of England clergymen, military and naval officers, as well as men in the higher status of branches of law and medicine, those at the upper levels of government service, successful industrialists, university professors, and the headmasters of prestigious schools” (p. 7). Mitchell (2009) makes a more detailed analysis of the middle class and

adds more occupations belonging to the middle class, such as “large-scale merchants, manufacturers, and bankers.” “Farmers, who employed farm labours, accountants, local government workers, journalists, surveyors, insurance agents, or police inspectors belonged to the middle class as well” (p. 20). Köhler (2008) gives examples of occupations belonging to the lower class and states that it “included shop-keepers, clerical workers, small employers, and so forth” (p. 7). Mitchell (2009) adds that small shopkeepers and most clerical workers are regarded as the lower middle class, too (p. 20). Then, Mitchell (2009) makes one last significant comment about the lower class and highlights that the lower middle class were educated not to be more than literate, as they did not need any higher education to perform their work (p. 20), unlike the upper middle class.

The last social class staying in the bottom of the hierarchy is the working class. The working class is also subdivided into different categories, just like the middle class does. Köhler (2008) enumerates these categories as “skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled workers” (p. 7). Mitchell (2009) gives some examples of occupations that belong to the unskilled and semi-skilled working class: “agricultural labourers, domestic servants and factory hands” (p. 18). She also adds some other occupations such as miners, fishers, workers working in transportation and building, the garment industry and other manual trades” (Mitchell, 2009, p. 18). As Mitchell (2009) emphasizes, most people belonging to the working class only worked to make their ends meet and to survive. They could not focus on saving money or buy property, since they mostly worked on minimum wages, which are daily or weekly. Their children had to start working very young, as the only way for the family to survive was for the children to get a job and earn money (p. 19).

Although most Victorians and current scholars believe these categories to be a precise classification of social classes and it is true, it is still not the only way to categorize social classes in the Victorian era. As Mitchell (2009) rightly points out, “In the strictest legal sense, England had only two classes: aristocrats (who had inherited titles and land) and commoners (everyone else)” (p. 18). Similarly, Marx (1999) divides capitalist society into two classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. While the bourgeoisie is equal to aristocrats, the proletariat is equal to commoners, who are oppressed by the aristocrats controlling capitalist society with their wealth and also

dominant ideologies. With both of these different types of categorizations, Tess's, Angel's, Alec's and their families' social classes should be analyzed in order to understand how Tess has become a literal victim of Alec, but not of Angel's, because of her social class.

3.4.2. The characters' and their families' social classes

Considering three categories of social classes in Victorian England, Tess and her family definitely belong to the unskilled working class, which is equal to the proletariat, when their economic conditions and occupations are taken into account. The narrator describes them as people living in poverty, more specifically people "in dreadful difficulty" financially (Hardy, 2018, p. 392). Tess's father does not have a stable job and most of the time he does not even want to work. To help her family financially, Tess always feels like she must have a job. "She had hoped to be a teacher at the school, but the fates seemed to decide otherwise" (Hardy, 2018, p. 74), as the narrator explains. Indeed, Tess could not become a teacher, since she had to work to help her family get by. She does not have any proper education, except a few years of schooling, and she works as a dairymaid or on a farm, just to earn money and help her family. Similar to Tess, her mother Joan also has had to work throughout her life. She even says "[...] I've got to teave and slave," (Hardy, 2018, p. 126) meaning that she still has to work like a slave. As Harrison rightly points out, working class women had to work throughout their lives, unlike middle class women who were dependent on their husbands' income (Harrison, 1991, p. 81), as their husbands earned more than enough money. Tess and her mother's experiences are certainly what Marx and Engel criticize in their work *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). They emphasize that proletarian workers work through their whole lives only to get by with minimum wages or wages that are not in proportion to their labor, but the bourgeoisie get wealthier by exploiting the proletariat's hard work. In a capitalist society like this, Tess and her family remain as the proletariat and live in poverty.

Unlike Tess and her family, Angel and his family belong to the middle class. The narrator describes Angel as "the youngest son of his father, a poor parson at the other end of the country" (Hardy, 2018, p. 172). Although one may expect Angel to belong to a lower class than the middle class, it is not the case; as how much money is

not the factor that determines one's social class, according to Mitchell (2009). Their occupations, birth and family connections also determine one's social class. "Class was revealed in manners, speech, clothing, education and values" (Mitchell, 2009, p. 17). As Angel's father, a parson named the Reverend James Clare, is educated, well-mannered and has enough wealth and vision to let her elder sons go to Cambridge University, he and his family belong to the middle class, even if they do not have a lot of money. Considering Marxist categorization of classes, it is obvious that Angel and his family belong to the proletariat, since they cannot be bourgeoisie with their limited capital and no political power.

Contrary to Tess and her family, Alec and his family belong to the class of bourgeoisie, since they are wealthy, have lots of property and also provide employment for workers. Mitchell (2009) depicts the house that an aristocrat lives as: "The manor or hall in which the landowner lived was a comfortable country house with a staff of servants" (p. 21). In the novel, the narrator describes Mrs. d'Urberville's house extending on an immense size of property as the following:

It [the house] was of recent erection –indeed almost new—and of the same rich red colour that formed such a contrast with the evergreens of the lodge. Far behind the corner of the house –which rose like a geranium bloom against the subdued colours around –stretched the soft azure landscape of the Chase –a truly venerable tract of forest land, one of the few remaining woodlands in England of undoubted primaeval date [...] Everything on this snug property was bright, thriving, and well-kept; acres of glasshouses stretched down the inclines to the copses at their feet. Everything looked like money [...] (Hardy, 2018, p. 60).

The previous paragraph indicates the immense wealth of Alec and his family and makes it obvious that they belong to the class of aristocracy. Although their noble surname "d'Urberville" is not their real surname and they are not aristocrats by birth, they become almost like real aristocrats with wealth and property they have and with the surname "d'Urberville," which is taken by their ancestors after their original surname, one that is not of aristocrats by birth. Indeed, since almost nobody knows that "d'Urbervilles" is not their original surname, except Tess, nobody knows that they are not aristocrats by birth. The class of aristocracy is equal to the class of bourgeoisie, based on Marx's categorization of social classes. Alec and his family are privileged and

powerful in capitalist society and do not have any difficulties of making ends meet, like Tess and her family. In fact, Alec is so confident because of his family's wealth and lands that he insists on helping Tess and her family financially. Even when Tess does not accept his money because of her pride, he mentions Tess's brothers and sisters to manipulate her. He says: "About the children – your brothers and sisters [...] I've been thinking of them" (Hardy, 2018, p. 499). The narrator depicts Tess's emotional response as: "Tess's heart quivered – he was touching her in a weak place. He had divined her chief anxiety" (Hardy, 2018, p. 499). With Alec's pushy and manipulative attitude, Tess becomes his mistress at the end of novel, since she knows that it will be really hard for her family to survive without Alec's financial help. With her self-sacrifice to help her family, Tess becomes their rescuer; but endures a life that she does not really enthusiastically live and becomes Alec's victim, since he does not kindly persuade her to become his mistress but rather uses her family's financial difficulties to convince Tess. Tess also knows this and tells Alec: "And you had used your cruel persuasion upon me....you did not stop using it – no – you did not stop! My little sisters and brothers and my mother's needs – they were the things you moved me by [...]" (Hardy, 2018, p. 544). As the scene signifies, Tess is victimized and controlled by Alec, just as the proletariat are dominated and oppressed by the bourgeoisie. In fact, she could have been victimized by Angel, too but the reason why she has not been is that Angel is not manipulative and cruel, like Alec and he and his family do not have as much money as Alec and his family do. These circumstances and also Angel's personality cause him not to be a persecutor to Tess.

3.4.3. Tess as an exploited and alienated worker

Tess is not only a victim of Alec, who represents the bourgeoisie but she is also a victim of capitalist society in Victorian England. The reasons why she becomes a victim in capitalist society are definitely tough working conditions and alienation that she and also other workers experience. In fact, alienation is a broad concept that is used in many different fields. In this part of the research, it will be used in a Marxist and psychological perspective and how it appears in the novel will be discussed through Tess's selected experiences in capitalist Victorian society. Alienation in Marxist context is actually the theory of alienation that Karl Marx (1981) developed in *The*

Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844. Before analyzing *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the origin of alienation and definition of alienation in Marxist context should be explained. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1977), one of the significant philosophers of history, was the first scholar to give a systematic account of alienation in his influential work *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). His definition of alienation is not the same with Marx's theory of alienation, even though Marx developed his theory of alienation based on Hegel's. With his theory of alienation, Marx describes estranging and dehumanizing effects of working within a capitalist system of production. In his prominent work *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (1932), he explains alienation thoroughly and in detail. According to Marx, alienation occurs when workers are estranged from their true selves, desires, and the pursuit of happiness, as they are caught up in the process of labor. Marxist alienation has a similar connotation with alienation in psychological sense, which could be described as "an individual feeling or state of dissociation" (Twining, 1980, p. 417). In other words, it could be defined as a person's being inaccessible to oneself and mostly being unable to know themselves. Alienation is not only limited to the worker's estranging from their true selves and desire, but may also result in estranging from fellow human beings and co-workers. In capitalist society, employers exploit workers more to gain more wealth and hire the ones who can work for the least wages. This causes competition between many workers, as they need a job to make a living and look after their families. Through this competition, workers are alienated from other workers and this prevents them from realizing and understanding their shared experiences and problems. It also creates a false consciousness and prevents the development of a class consciousness, through which workers may object to capitalists' exploitative attitude and tough working conditions.

In the novel, Tess is an exploited female worker by capitalist society and she experiences alienation not only from her own self and her dreams, but also from other workers. In fact, Tess's first and second employers, who are respectively Mrs. d'Urberville and Mr. Crick are not exploitative people, unlike her last employer Farmer Groby. Although Tess does not experience alienation from herself and other workers when she works under the employment of Mrs. D'urberville and Mr. Crick, she still experiences alienation from her dreams and exploited by capitalist system. Indeed, Tess could not become a school teacher like she has always wanted to, since she had to start

working at a young age to help her family financially and this is how she could not pursue her dream career. Instead, she has become a dairymaid or worked on farms, just to make money. However, her wages have never been in proportion to her labor, it has always been less, which is a clear epitome of employers' exploitation of workers in capitalist society. Although all workers are exploited in capitalist society, female workers are exploited more compared to male ones, since male labor is more expensive, which means male workers get higher wages than their female counterparts. As the narrator describes "Female field-labour was seldom offered now, and its cheapness made it profitable for tasks which women could perform as readily as men" (Hardy, 2018, p. 406-7). Therefore, employers employed female workers for jobs that could be performed by males, so that they could pay less to female workers and gained more profit themselves, which actually sums up employers' attitude in capitalist society. Even though the reader does not know whether Tess's wages are paid regularly or not, most females' workers were not paid regularly in the Victorian era. As August (1999) succinctly points out: "Jobs open to women paid lower and more irregular wages, were considered less skilled than men's jobs, and manifested and reinforced sexual hierarchies" (p. 75). Considering these patriarchal and capitalist attitudes in Victorian England, Tess experiences double discrimination: She is exploited in capitalist society as an unskilled worker in the working class and therefore, she makes less money than she deserves, and also as a woman, she is paid less than a male worker doing the same job, which is the result of gender hierarchies in patriarchal society.

Besides alienation from her dreams and exploitation, Tess experiences alienation from herself and from other workers. Indeed, it is not only what Tess experiences but all other workers working on Flintcomb-Ash farm do. With Farmer Groby, who is a greedy employer, all workers have to work extensively and almost non-stop. The narrator depicts the workers' ceaseless working as the following:

They [the workers] worked on hour after hour, unconscious of the forlorn aspect they bore in the landscape, not thinking of the justice or injustice of their lot. Even in such a position as theirs it was possible to exist in a dream. In the afternoon the rain came on again, and Marian said that they need not work any more. But if they did not work they would not be paid; so they worked on (Hardy, 2018, p. 408- 9).

As the paragraph suggests, the workers work a lot more than it is healthy and they do not really enjoy their work and do not talk to each other during their labor. Similarly, another paragraph signifies hard working conditions and extensive hours of working that Tess and her co-workers have to deal with:

In the afternoon the farmer [Farmer Groby] made it known that the rick was to be finished that night, since there was a moon by which they could see to work, and the man with the engine was engaged for another farm on the morrow. Hence the twanging and humming and rustling proceeded with even less intermission than usual (Hardy, 2018, p. 474).

Because of these tough working conditions and exploitation that the workers go through, they always work like slaves and cannot get enough rest, have hobbies or follow their dreams, which makes it obvious that they are alienated from their own selves. They are also alienated from their co-workers, since they do not have deep conversations with each other, do not become friends and cannot realize their collective force against their employer or, in broader terms, against the bourgeoisie. That is why, they cannot bring about a revolution against the bourgeoisie or at least form a union to demand better working conditions and fair wages. Indeed, these workers' condition is only a small picture of all the proletariat in capitalist society.

3.5. Angel, Loving Too Much and Strict Norms of Victorian England

Contrary to Alec's manipulative attitude and rude behaviors, Angel is a gentleman and Tess's rescuer at the beginning of the novel. He is a kind and individualistic man, who does not follow his father's wish for him to be a parson, but rather decides to be a farmer himself and pursues his dreams. In addition, he is not a macho and not rude towards anyone. Even though he is from a better social class than all the workers working under the employment of Mr. Crick, he does not look down on them, but actually loves them like a family. One of Tess's friends who works in the dairy with Tess, describes Angel as: "quite the gentleman-born" and "too much taken up wi' his own thoughts to notice girls" (Hardy, 2018, p. 171). As this description suggests, Angel is not flirtatious and promiscuous like Alec, but respectful and considerate towards women. In fact, in terms of their treatment of women, the only

common feature that Alec and Angel have is their infatuation with Tess. Angel was smitten with Tess from the moment that he saw her. However, despite his deep infatuation with Tess, Angel is respectful to Tess's boundaries and considerate and tender when he wants to be intimate with Tess, unlike Alec. For instance, when he almost kisses Tess, he decides not to as he has not gotten Tess's permission to kiss her. He says: "Forgive me, Tess dear! [...] I ought to have asked. I – did not know what I was doing. I do not mean it as a liberty. I am devoted to you, Tessy, dearest, in all sincerity" (Hardy, 2018, p. 222- 3). In the subsequent parts of the novel, he never stops proposing to Tess and makes sure that Tess knows that he truly loves her.

With all of his considerate and honest behavior, Angel presents himself like an epitome of a perfect lover. Due to his loving nature and kindness, Tess falls in love with him and he actually rescues Tess from the boundaries of her painful past, even though Tess promised herself never to love anyone and get married. Yet, when Tess tells him about the rape she experienced, Angel's love for Tess suddenly disappears and he starts judging her cruelly. The reasons behind this are definitely Angel's idealization of Tess in his mind and the Victorian society's strict norms about women. Indeed, Angel has fallen in love with an idealized version of Tess that he believes she is. Since the moment that he saw her, he believed that she was a virgin and even said: "What a fresh and virginal daughter of Nature that milkmaid is!" (Hardy, 2018, p. 182). Similarly, he saw her as "no longer the milkmaid, but a visionary essence of woman – a whole sex condensed into one typical form. He called her Artemis, Demeter, and other fanciful names [...]" (Hardy, 2018, p. 196). As Angel's thoughts and these names of female Greek goddesses suggest, Angel sees Tess like a goddess of nature and certainly more than human: "She was a sort of celestial person, who owed her being to poetry – one of those classical divinities Clare was accustomed to talk to her about when they took their walks together" (Hardy, 2018, p. 309). Although Tess is connected to nature and naïve as person, it is a really idealized version of Tess; indeed, a version that Angel believes unconditionally until Tess tells him about her past.

Angel's non-questioning idealization of Tess causes him to feel very disappointed and to become Tess's persecutor by his constant judging and eventually leaving her. He blames Tess constantly and acts like she has presented herself to him differently and deceived him on purpose, even though it is never the case. He tells Tess

“[...] forgiveness does not apply to the case! You were one person; now you are another. My God – how can forgiveness meet such a grotesque – prestidigitation as that!” (Hardy, 2018, p. 330). Although Tess begs Angel to forgive her and show her mercy, he never does so and says “[...] the woman I have been loving is not you [...] Another woman in your shape” (Hardy, 2018, p. 332). After his hurtful remarks, Angel eventually leaves Tess to go to Brazil and is never there for her when she most needs him.

Angel's actions are not only reflections of his disappointment due to his extreme idealization of Tess but they are also outcomes of the Victorian society's strict norms concerning women and female virginity. Compared to modern times, female virginity and chastity were really important in the Victorian era and social norms required women to be virgins before getting married. As Murdoch (2013) succinctly describes, “The Victorian ideal of womanhood envisioned [...] Anglo-Saxon woman as chaste, pure, innocent, and uncorrupted by worldly and material desires” (p. 164). Women who engaged in premarital and extramarital sexual acts “always remained in danger of public censure and social ostracism for sexual acts or desires that challenged their status within the home and family,” while it almost never happened for heterosexual men (Murdoch, 2013, p. 164). Indeed, Murdoch's illuminating statement concretely reflects what Tess goes through because of the rape she has experienced. Although Tess does not engage in any premarital sexual acts willingly and it is not her fault that she has been raped, she still experiences Victorian society's ostracism and criticism. People living in Tess's village know about her pregnancy and son and condemn Tess and her family not always verbally but sometimes insidiously and with their actions. For instance, the Vicar refuses to give a Christian burial to Tess's son Sorrow, but does not explicitly say that it is because he is an illegitimate child (Hardy, 2018, p. 147). It is clear that the Vicar's behavior is an implicit condemnation of both Tess, who is an unmarried mother and Sorrow, her illegitimate son. Unlike the Vicar's non-verbal condemnation of Tess, Mr. Groby, who later happens to be Tess's employer in Flintcomb-Ash farm, sees Tess when she is shopping for Christmas with Angel and insults her because of her past, which results in Angel's striking him “on the chin with the full force of his fist” (Hardy, 2018, p. 302). In fact, this kind of behavior is not particular to Victorian society but actually reflects general misogynist and criticizing attitude towards women in patriarchal societies. Irigaray (1985) rightly points out that

there are three social roles imposed on women in patriarchal society, which are mother, virgin and prostitute. “The characteristics of (so-called) feminine sexuality derive from them” (p. 186). As her illuminating statement suggests, a woman who is not a ‘virgin’ before marriage is made to fall into the category of ‘prostitute’ by society. In Victorian society, this patriarchal view is even stronger than in contemporary patriarchal societies. Thus, Tess is considered to be a fallen woman by Victorian society, regardless of whether they say it out loud or make it obvious implicitly, which makes it clear that Tess is not only a victim of Angel but also a victim of patriarchal Victorian society. Growing up in this society, Angel internalizes these patriarchal and misogynist views and indeed, his reaction to Tess’s past is a result of this. As the narrator describes, Angel is not as liberal as he seems, but he is rather a man internalizing patriarchal upbringing and customs: “With all his [Angel’s] attempted independence of judgement this advanced and well-meaning young man, a sample product of the last five-and-twenty years, was yet the slave to custom and conventionality” (Hardy, 2018, p. 381).

Angel is not Tess’s only persecutor in this matter, yet Tess is also her own persecutor, as she victimizes herself with her unconditional love for and dependency on Angel. In fact, Angel is not the only one who has an idealized image of love in his mind, since Tess also goes through the same experience. She loves Angel unconditionally and idealizes him to a great deal without even realizing it. Although Angel condemns her and decides to leave her, she still begs him not to do so and apologizes to him for her past, even though it is not her fault. When Angel asks Tess what will happen if he orders her to do something, she even says “I will obey you like your wretched slave, even if it is to lie down and die” (Hardy, 2018, p. 333). As her reply signifies, Tess is so submissive to Angel that she does not get even a little angry with him because of his unfair reaction to her past but rather feels that she is guilty for not telling everything to Angel before and even for marrying him. In the following parts of the novel, Tess still acts like she could do anything that Angel asks her to do so, since she loves him unconditionally and does not really become aware of Angel’s insulting and hurtful behavior towards her: “The firmness of her devotion to him was indeed almost pitiful; quick-tempered as she naturally was, nothing that he could say made her unseemly; she sought not her own; was not provoked; thought no evil of his treatment of her” (Hardy, 2018, pp. 348- 9).

In her bestselling work *Women Who Love Too Much*, Robin Norwood (1985) tries to give a definition of “loving a partner too much”. Although it is impossible to give a concrete definition for the concept, since behaviors and outcomes coming along with it may change for everyone, Norwood enumerates a few specific behaviors signifying a woman who loves her male partner too much. Having most conversations are “about him, his problems, his thoughts, his feelings,” excusing “his moodiness, bad temper, indifference, or put-downs as problems due to an unhappy childhood,” “trying to become his therapist,” and “jeopardizing [...] [their] emotional well-being and [...] their physical health and safety” are only some examples of loving too much (pp. 9-10). Although Tess does not perform all these behaviors, it is certain that her love for Angel is mentally and emotionally unhealthy, even sometimes unhealthy for her physical well-being. The reader can see how she neglects her self-respect when she begs Angel to come home or to let her be with Angel in her letter and even writes: “I would be content, ay, glad to live with you as your servant, if I may not as your wife; so that I could only be near you, and get glimpses of you, and I think of you as mine” (Hardy, 2018, p. 482). In addition, a significant example of how Tess’s unconditional dependence on Angel threatens her physical safety is her almost being drowned, when Angel takes her to the river, sleepwalking. Both of them could have drowned but Tess did not feel afraid at all, but rather found the plight “consoling,” since the narrator states “he [Angel] really recognised her now as his wife Tess” (Hardy, 2018, p. 357). According to the narrative, Tess wants Angel to accept her as his wife and not condemn her due to her past so much that she does not even care that she could die because of Angel, as long as he does not reject her. This example surely indicates the extremity of Tess’s love for Angel and makes it clear that it is not healthy and sometimes even dangerous for her physical well-being.

In her work, Norwood (1985) explains specific characteristics that women who love too much have in common. Based on her research, it is possible to understand why Tess subconsciously chooses to love Angel more than most people ever would. Even though Tess does not manifest every characteristic that Norwood enumerates, she certainly manifests some of them. One of these characteristics is coming from a dysfunctional home in which one’s emotional needs were not met (p. 36). As this study has stated this before, Tess’s parents have never been able to meet her emotional needs, since her mother is not emotionally mature enough and her father is mostly drunk and

certainly irresponsible. Besides this, Norwood (1985) refers to another characteristic, which is “Almost nothing is too much trouble, takes too much time, or is too expensive if it will ‘help’ the man you are involved with” (p. 42). To explain this characteristic, Norwood (1985) gives a number of examples, and two of them certainly reflect what Tess is doing for Angel. One of them is “going through disruptive geographic relocations” because of his unhappiness in where he is now (Norwood, 1985, p. 43). Indeed, Tess wants to go to Brazil, after Angel leaves, just to get back together with Angel and save her marriage, even though she knows nothing about life and economic conditions in Brazil. Another example of doing anything for one’s man is “allowing him to abuse [...] [her] emotionally” (Norwood, 1985, p. 43). Although Tess never becomes aware of the fact that she lets Angel abuse her emotionally after she tells him about her painful past, Angel actually does it, by rejecting Tess as his wife and deciding to move to Brazil without her, as well as with his hurtful remarks to Tess. Despite Angel’s behaviors, Tess is ready to take all the blame, even though nothing is her fault. Norwood (1985) explains Tess’s self-blaming attitude as one of the other characteristics that women who love too much share. She calls this characteristic “You are willing to take far more than 50 percent of the responsibility, guilt and blame in any relationship” (Norwood, 1985, p. 44). She further analyzes this characteristic and succinctly explains the reason behind it as:

Often those of us [women who love too much] from dysfunctional homes had parents who were irresponsible, childish, and weak. We grew up fast and became pseudo-adults long before we were ready for the burdens that role carried. But we were also pleased with the power that was conferred upon us by our families and others. Now as adults we believe it is up to us to make our relationships work (Norwood, 1985, p. 44).

As her words rightly point out, Tess believes that almost everything, including her role as the caretaker at home, her providing financial help for her family and also making her marriage work with Angel are her responsibilities. That is why, she tries to make everything right and takes up a self-blaming attitude and does not see herself worthy of happiness and marriage with Angel. Her attitude is actually another characteristic that Norwood (1985) explains: “Your self-esteem is critically low, and deep inside you do not believe you deserve to be happy” (p. 44). Indeed, Tess does not

find herself worthy enough to be happy and marry Angel. She tells Angel “[...] it is for your good, [...] only for your sake” (Hardy, 2018, p. 257), when she rejects his proposal. The reason behind Tess’s refusal of Angel’s proposal is not only her finding herself unworthy of happiness but also internalizing Victorian values about women and virginity, which most people in Victorian society, including Angel, either consciously or subconsciously believe in. Considering that period and Tess’s dysfunctional family, her behaviors seem understandable but with a modern and feminist interpretation, she certainly victimizes herself and neglects her self-respect and value.

3.6. Tess’s Rebellion Against Unjust Systems

At the end of the novel, Alec becomes a literal victim of Tess, since she murders him. Her murder of Alec does not only mean his literal death but also symbolizes Tess’s rebellion against inequalities created by different and unjust systems, which are patriarchy and capitalism, and her subconscious wish to murder all the injustice that these systems bring. First of all, Alec symbolizes general patriarchal views restricting female freedom and sexuality, such as expectations of women to be submissive, chaste and passive, and toxic masculinity, such as a common man’s ungrounded confidence to react to women who say no to his demands. Indeed, Alec actually represents all patriarchal Victorian society that oppresses and blames Tess. Even though Tess is not aware of Victorian society’s problematic patriarchal and misogynistic views, she is fully aware of how Alec victimizes her and enjoys this. As she rightly and resentfully exclaims to Alec: “You and those like you take your fill of pleasure on earth by making the life of such as me bitter and black with sorrow; and then it is a fine thing” (Hardy, 2018, p. 442). Thus, by killing Alec, Tess symbolically rebels against her past experience of rape, and also against Alec’s and Victorian society’s constraining and patriarchal views harshly criticizing Tess because of the rape although nothing is her fault. This is definitely reminiscent of Simone de Beauvoir’s meaningful quote: “Her wings are cut, and then she is blamed for not knowing how to fly” (2011, p. 793). Similarly, Tess is blamed for the rape that she had to go through and was never guilty of.

Tess’s murder of Alec is, in fact, a rebellious act towards Alec’s victimization of Tess through his social class and wealth. Tess knows that he has used Tess’s family’s

poor financial situation to persuade her to become his mistress and blames him strongly for that. Alec's death represents not only Tess's rebellion to him personally but also symbolizes the proletariat's revolution against the bourgeoisie's unjust life standards, wealth and exploitation of the proletariat. Even though this revolution has not happened in reality, Tess's murder of Alec signifies that someone from the proletariat may rebel against the bourgeoisie. Similarly, someone who has been subjected to unfair treatment could rebel against unjust systems generating unequal standards. As these systems, including patriarchy and capitalism, create inequalities between people, they also cause the superior one to be the persecutor and the inferior one to be the victim. The rescuer may be anyone who feels sorry for this inequality or anyone who wants to be needed by the victim and feel good about it. Therefore, Tess's murder of Alec is more than just a personal act, but a symbol of rebellion against the unjust treatment she has gone through and any victim may experience.

3.7. Conclusion

Even though the drama triangle is a modern concept, *Tess of d'Urbervilles*, a novel that was written in the late 1800s, reflects the drama triangle, through the characters' emotions and actions. As a narrative that vividly portrays the characters and experiences they have, it also depicts the Switch, which is the fact that the characters subconsciously choose to perform one role within the triangle and then change the role and embrace another one. With their subconscious choices, each main character at least once becomes the victim, the rescuer or the persecutor. The reasons why each character embraces each role have been explained thoroughly and with examples in this study. Yet, these reasons could be summed up as their dysfunctional families, their addictions, dependencies, and their position in the patriarchal and capitalist society. While Tess's position as a woman causes her to be both Alec's and patriarchal Victorian society's victim, her financial position in capitalist society also makes her Alec's victim, as well as capitalist society's, which have respectively been analyzed based on feminist and Marxist theories. With these evaluations, this study suggests that injustices and inequalities do not end easily, as long as there are strong and unjust systems like patriarchy and capitalism, which label one person as the superior and the other one as

the inferior based on a conditional factor a person could simply have or not, such as gender and wealth, or any other factor in any unjust system.



CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF *THE BLUEST EYE* BY TONI MORRISON

4.1. Introduction

The drama triangle manifests itself noticeably and thoroughly in *The Bluest Eye* (1970) by Toni Morrison, even though the concept was recently discovered at that time and was not even very popular in the field of psychology and was not even known in the field of literature. Written with different points of view in separate chapters, the novel is narrated by Claudia's first person narrative, third person omniscient narrative, Mrs. Breedlove's first person narrative and a dialogue between Pecola and her imaginary friend. The last two of these narrative styles constitute only small parts of the novel, while Claudia's first person narrative and third person omniscient narrative predominate the novel, as the two main points of view. In the novel, specific characters and the Black community enact the drama triangle with their actions and feelings. Some characters switch their roles by time, while some others usually remain as victims. There are particular reasons why each character embraces their role in the drama triangle, which are their dysfunctional families, past traumatic experiences, their addictions, dependencies, and their position in racist and patriarchal Black community in Lorain, Ohio. The last concepts will be explained based on the theories of postcolonialism and feminism, whilst the other concepts will be analyzed based on distinguished psychologists' and scholars' works and definitions. This study will eventually demonstrate why certain characters subconsciously embrace their role or roles in the drama triangle and will also indicate that black women are discriminated and victimized twice, both because of their race and gender in patriarchal Black society. All these analyses will also prove that not only white people embrace racism and express racist remarks but also black people themselves internalize racism and believe in white beauty standards, which they associate with virtue and turn their non-conformity with these standards into self-hatred and self-contempt. Because of these, they aggressively abuse and oppress one another in the black community and end up being both the victim and the persecutor.

In the novel, most characters switch their roles from the victim to the persecutor or vice versa, or sometimes from the victim to the rescuer; but there is only one character who remains as the ultimate victim: Pecola Breedlove. Pecola is victimized

because of her dysfunctional family, race, physical appearance, rape and pregnancy, while the black community does not feel any compassion or remorse for her tragic fate, but rather feels like they are superior to her, as she goes through many traumas and loses her mind. Even though Karpman's definition of the role victim involves the person's feeling like a victim, rather than being an actual victim, Pecola and some other characters do not only feel like a victim but become literal victims due to their dysfunctional families, internalization of racism and white beauty standards and the black community's oppression. What is significant here is that most of the time, Pecola is not even aware of the fact that she is a victim; thus, she cannot say that she feels like a victim. It is also true for the other characters that are oppressed and go through strong feelings like self-hatred and self-contempt because of their internalization of racism and white beauty standards. Therefore, it is important for the reader to be aware of the difference between being a literal victim and feeling like a victim although one is not. In this study, the characters embracing the role of the victim are literal victims, because of the enumerated reasons.

4.2. Pecola's Dysfunctional Family

As also mentioned in the previous paragraph, Pecola is a victim because of many different factors. However, the one that needs to be analyzed before the other factors is her dysfunctional family, which causes her to feel unloved, unworthy and internalize racism and embrace white beauty standards and thereby, ask for blue eyes. Therefore, it is more beneficial to analyze how her mother and father become her persecutors, instead of being supportive, caring and loving parents. In fact, Pecola's parents Pauline Breedlove and Cholly Breedlove could be defined in two words: Toxic parents. In their outstanding work *Toxic Parents: Overcoming Their Hurtful Legacy and Reclaiming Your Life*, Forward and Buck (1989) give detailed explanations of toxic parents and categorize them. Although it is really hard to define a toxic parent with a few sentences, it could be summed up as a parent who contribute to a family's being dysfunctional. According to Forward and Buck (1989), toxic parents are "parents who inflict ongoing trauma, abuse and denigration on their children" and "the emotional damage inflicted by these parents spreads throughout a child's being" (p. 14). For Pecola, it is obvious that both Pauline and Cholly cause her undeniable emotional damage, which eventually

causes her to lose her sanity. This study will firstly show how Pauline is not a good mother to Pecola and how she emotionally and physically abuses her and becomes Pecola's persecutor with her words and actions, besides her emotional neglect. In the following parts of this analysis, Cholly's actions, his addiction to alcohol, rape of Pecola and Pauline and Cholly's marriage will be examined, as well as racism and white beauty standards that are embraced by many characters in the novel, including Pauline and Cholly.

4.2.1. Pauline Breedlove as a dysfunctional mother

In her prominent work *The Emotionally Absent Mother: How to Recognize and Heal the Invisible Effects of Childhood Emotional Neglect*, Jasmin Lee Cori (2010) gives a touching metaphor for a good mother: "A tree of life. A tree providing shelter, home, protection" (p. 14). Her metaphor certainly alludes to a supportive, caring, loving and emotionally available mother, who is unlike Pecola's mother Pauline Breedlove. Mrs. Breedlove does not manifest any of these characteristics but rather neglects Pecola emotionally and abuses her both emotionally and physically. Instead of loving and supporting her, she displays a strong affection for the white family that she is working for. With her current actions, she takes up the role of Pecola's persecutor and her past traumatic experiences and present beliefs are illuminating to understand why she subconsciously chooses to victimize Pecola and plays a substantial role in turning her into the ultimate victim.

Before analyzing how Mrs. Breedlove emotionally neglects and abuses Pecola both emotionally and physically, it is important to make a distinction between emotional neglect and emotional abuse and also define physical abuse. It is obvious that neglect and abuse do not have the same meaning and do not involve the same behavior pattern. In her book *Drama Free: A Guide to Managing Unhealthy Family Relationships*, Tawwab (2023) explains emotional neglect, emotional and verbal abuse and physical abuse. She describes emotional neglect as "The absence of enough emotional nurturing, care and attention." She adds "Often, it is unintentional and yet very impactful" (p. 50). Considering Mrs. Breedlove's behavior towards Pecola, the reader could understand that she emotionally neglects Pecola by not giving her enough love and attention. The reason behind it is her long hours of working for the white

family and giving their daughter a lot of attention and love, which are, in fact, required for her own daughter. Although it is a subconscious choice rather than an intentional one, it is still really wounding for Pecola.

Tawwab (2023) elucidates forms of emotional and verbal abuse as “Name-calling, demeaning, bullying, and threatening” (p. 56). She also claims that “Using profanity to talk down to children is also verbally abusive” (p. 56). She describes physical abuse simply as “Hitting and slapping children” (p. 55). Contemplating her explanations, the reader could see that Mrs. Breedlove’s behavior toward Pecola involves all these three categories of mistreatment. As an example, her not being at home most of the time, because of the immense amount of time she spends working for the white family, and a lack of communication between her and Pecola could be given as examples to prove that Pecola is emotionally neglected. Besides this, a vividly described scene, in which Pecola drops the hot berry cobbler by mistake, indicates that Mrs. Breedlove abuses Pecola emotionally, verbally and physically, while she gives affection to and soothes the daughter of the white family she works for. As Claudia narrates:

Most of the juice splashed on Pecola’s legs, and the burn must have been painful, for she cried out and began hopping about just as Mrs. Breedlove entered with a tightly packed laundry bag. In one gallop she was on Pecola, and with the back of her hand knocked her to the floor. [...] Mrs. Breedlove yanked her up by the arm, slapped her again, and in a voice thin with anger, abused Pecola directly and Frieda and me by implication (Morrison, 1994, p. 107).

As this depiction indicates, Mrs. Breedlove is nothing like a loving and caring mother. While a good mother should be concerned about whether her daughter is burned and hurt because of the hot berry cobbler, Mrs. Breedlove is extremely angry with Pecola and her friends Claudia and Frieda. She does not only insult them, in other words, abuse them verbally, but she also physically abuses Pecola by hitting her. While she is hitting Pecola, and insulting Pecola, Claudia and Frieda, the little white girl, who is the white family’s daughter, sees them and starts to cry. Mrs. Breedlove shows her affection and soothes her (Morrison, 1994, p. 107), which is the exact opposite of how she has acted towards her own daughter. Although Mrs. Breedlove’s fondness for her white employers and her extreme frustration with Pecola make her behavior to Pecola

seem more unacceptable and hurtful; regardless of her affection and love for the white family, her general behavior towards her children is still insupportable and cruel. As she narrates, “I loved them [Pecola and Sammy] and all, I guess, but maybe it was having no money, or maybe it was Cholly, but they sure worried the life out of me. Sometimes I’d catch myself hollering at them and beating them, and I’d feel sorry for them, but I couldn’t seem to stop” (Morrison, 1994, p. 122). As her narrative demonstrates, Mrs. Breedlove emotionally and physically abuses both Pecola and Sammy and does not really know why. This causes both Pecola and Sammy to be the victims of Mrs. Breedlove and generates Pecola’s huge problems, such as her lack of confidence and self-love, and strong feelings of unworthiness. As Cori (2010) defines in her book, Pecola is an “undermothered” child, meaning that she “received enough mothering to survive, but not enough for the kind of foundation that supports healthy self-confidence, initiative, resilience, trust, healthy entitlement, self-esteem, and the many other qualities we need to thrive in this challenging world” (p. 20).

In fact, there are a lot of different reasons why Mrs. Breedlove is a persecutor to both of her children. Some of these reasons are her being in the drama triangle when she is younger, in other words, long before marrying Cholly and also her dysfunctional marriage with him, which causes her to project her anger onto her children. But there are more reasons that are underlying in her subconscious; yet these are really effective, which makes her become an unloving and enraged mother to her children. These are her self-hatred and self-contempt, which is a result of her internalization of racism and embracement of white beauty standards, which are imposed by not only white society but also by the black community that she lives in. In fact, these concepts affect almost all characters in the novel, except Claudia, who subconsciously rejects self-hatred and self-contempt, which are caused by internalized racism, and tries to defy white beauty standards. These concepts will be explained and the characters’ responses to these concepts will be analyzed in the following chapter of this study, along with how they make the characters both persecutors to Pecola and to one another and how they turn the characters into victims and Pecola into the eventual victim at the end of the novel.

Before analyzing how Mrs. Breedlove internalizes racism and tries to conform with white beauty standards, her past involvement with the roles in the drama triangle should be taken into consideration. Although she is a persecutor to her children, she

was not always the persecutor when she was younger. In fact, she was a rescuer to her family, although she never defined herself that way. She was the one who took care of the household when her parents were off to work and she also raised her younger siblings Chicken and Pie. As the third person omniscient narrator depicts:

Mrs. Williams [Mrs. Breedlove's mother] got a job cleaning and cooking for a white minister on the other side of town, and Pauline, now the oldest girl at home, took over the care of the house. She kept the fence in repair, pulling the pointed stakes erect, securing them with bits of wire, collected eggs, swept, cooked, washed, and minded the two younger children—a pair of twins called Chicken and Pie, who were still in school (Morrison, 1994, p. 110).

As the narrative indicates, Mrs. Breedlove provided a lot of help for her family when she was younger. However, she never felt like she was needed and appreciated. In fact, she felt like a victim subconsciously, because of several reasons, even though she never admitted it. One these reasons that caused Mrs. Breedlove to feel like a victim when she was younger is her disabled foot. Because of her foot, she was treated differently than her siblings. As it is described in the novel:

Slight as it was, this deformity explained for her many things that would have been otherwise incomprehensible: why she alone of all the children had no nickname; why there were no funny jokes and anecdotes about funny things she had done; why no one ever remarked on her food preferences—no saving of the wing or neck for her—no cooking of the peas in a separate pot without rice because she did not like rice; why nobody teased her; why she never felt at home anywhere, or that she belonged anyplace. Her general feeling of separateness and unworthiness she blamed on her foot (Morrison, 1994, p. 109).

As this description suggests, her family members sometimes treated Mrs. Breedlove in a more privileged way than her siblings and thereby, did not tease her or make fun of her. However, it, in fact, did not have a positive outcome but resulted in reinforcing her feelings of non-belonging and isolation. On the other hand, her family's carelessness about her food preferences indicates that they did not give her enough attention and love that she needed. With their attitude and actions towards Mrs. Breedlove, it is obvious that her family emotionally neglected her, just as she neglects Pecola later in her life. Because of her family's emotional neglect, and her belief that

her disabled foot was responsible for their neglect and her implicit discrimination, she subconsciously considered herself a victim, although she never said it explicitly. Due to her subconscious belief, she fantasized about a man, who could come unexpectedly and rescue her. The third person omniscient narrator depicts this unknown and imaginary rescuer and Mrs. Breedlove's responses to him, as the following:

[...] she [Mrs. Breedlove] was usually idling by the river bank, or gathering berries in a field when a someone appeared, with gentle and penetrating eyes, who—with no exchange of words—understood; and before whose glance her foot straightened and her eyes dropped. The someone had no face, no form, no voice, no odor. He was a simple Presence, an all-embracing tenderness with strength and a promise of rest. It did not matter that she had no idea of what to do or say to the Presence—after the wordless knowing and the soundless touching, her dreams disintegrated. But the Presence would know what to do. She had only to lay her head on his chest and he would lead her away to the sea, to the city, to the woods...forever (Morrison, 1994, p. 111).

The reader could see in this part of the narrative that Mrs. Breedlove dreams about a man who could heal her disabled foot, understand her and take her to another place, where she would feel peaceful with him. This so-called "Presence," who is actually a man, could be anyone, since he does not have a face, form, voice or odor. In other words, Mrs. Breedlove is waiting for any man to save her and take her to another place, where she could feel she belongs to. Her waiting for a man to rescue her is, in fact, a cultural construction of patriarchal society and a result of the patriarchal way of upbringing, in which young girls are taught to embrace subconsciously. This way of thinking reinforces a 'happily ever after' that fairytales, popular culture and means of media production create and impose on young girls raised in patriarchal society. Although there is no explicit indication of Pauline's family's patriarchal attitude or behavior, it is obvious that the way she waited for a male rescuer when she was younger is a strong proof that she adopted the patriarchal way of thinking reinforced by fairytales, popular culture, means of media production and many other means of communication in patriarchal society. To understand more about Mrs. Breedlove's belief in the male rescuer, it is crucial to give more information about the structure of

fairytale and how they reinforce gender stereotypes and put females in the position of the victim and males in the position of the rescuer.

In a regular fairytale such as *Cinderella*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Rapunzel* and *The Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, there is always a strong and handsome prince and a young and beautiful female protagonist, who does not do anything really active but only meets the prince and is rescued from the danger and her unhappy life. In other words, the prince provides her with her purpose and happy ending, which is not only the female characters in fairytales hope but so did Mrs. Breedlove when she was fifteen. In fact, as Chakraborty (2019) succinctly sums up, “we hardly remember any heroine or female character who was not supported and rescued by some male” (p. 25). Chakraborty’s claim certainly refers to patriarchal structure of many fairytales. Fairytales do not only reflect patriarchy but also display and reinforce gender stereotypes by representing female heroines as “beautiful” “involved with domestic chores,” “passive,” and “submissive,” while representing male characters as “strong,” “assertive,” “brave,” and mainly as “the male-rescuer archetype.” This representation certainly causes most females to take up the role of the victim and wait for their rescuer, while it puts pressure on men to have these masculine traits and take up the role of the rescuer. Although there is no reference to fairytales in *The Bluest Eye*, the main and subconscious logic behind Mrs. Breedlove’s waiting for a male rescuer is a reflection of the patriarchal way of thinking generated by fairytales and other types of media production, which are effective and popular in patriarchal society. As Beauvoir (2011) rightly points out, “How could the Cinderella myth not retain its validity? Everything still encourages the girl to expect fortune and happiness from a ‘Prince Charming’ instead of attempting the difficult and uncertain conquest alone” (p. 205). With these patriarchal ideas that she embraced, Mrs. Breedlove believed that Cholly was her rescuer when she first met him. She even thought about the berries she picked up as a child, her mother’s lemonade and june bugs in her hometown Kentucky, which indicates that meeting Cholly makes her feel like home and generates a sense of belonging and happiness. As she narrated “So when Cholly come up and tickled my foot, it was like them berries, that lemonade, them streaks of green the june bugs made, all come together” (Morrison, 1994, p. 113). However, Cholly was not even close to being a source of joy and rescuer to Mrs. Breedlove. Indeed, he ended up being the persecutor to Mrs. Breedlove, Sammy and most damagingly to Pecola.

4.2.2. Cholly Breedlove as a dysfunctional father

4.2.2.1. Cholly's addiction to alcohol

Cholly Breedlove is the persecutor to his family, who is constituted of his wife Mrs. Breedlove, his son Sammy and his daughter Pecola. He persecutes each one of them by not meeting their material and emotional needs and beating them up regularly. The reasons behind his taking up the role of the persecutor are his addiction to alcohol and his traumatic past experiences, in which he was a pathetic victim. Before elucidating the strong effect of his traumas on his personality, his addiction to alcohol, the reasons why he cannot give up alcohol and how it makes him both a persecutor and a victim should be explained. In their book *Living with Alcoholism and Drug Addiction*, Lessa and Gilbert (2009) first explain what an addiction is and then elaborates on symptoms of alcoholism. As they point out, "Addiction is a physical, mental, and emotional dependence on chemicals known as psychoactive drugs" (p. 3). In fact, addiction could exist in a broader sense, such as addiction to food, sex or gambling, etc. However, Lessa and Gilbert's definition only concerns addiction to substance use. According to these scholars, addiction "includes the following four symptoms:

Craving—a strong and often overpowering urge to use a psychoactive drug

Loss of control—not being able to stop using once a drug has been introduced to the body

Physical dependence—the need to maintain the level of drugs in the body order to avoid withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety

Tolerance—the need to use increasingly large quantities of a drug to get the same sensation" (Lessa & Gilbert, 2019, p. 4).

Although these symptoms do not refer to alcohol addiction explicitly, they are observable in alcohol addiction, since alcohol is a kind of psychoactive drug. As Cholly is a regular alcoholic, he experiences these symptoms and suffers from his addiction to alcohol although he never acknowledges it. The reader could see that Cholly has always craved for alcohol fiercely and drank "himself into a silly helplessness" (Morrison, 1994, p. 157) when he was younger. As Mrs. Breedlove narrates, he is so drunk at home that she "can't even be next to his stinking drunk self" (Morrison, 1994, p. 129). These

statements also indicate his loss of control and physical dependence on alcohol. Even though the narrative does not refer to tolerance, which is one of these symptoms, the fact that Cholly was not always very drunk or less drunk than he usually is clearly demonstrates that his tolerance to alcohol has increased by time. As Mrs. Breedlove narrates: “But it wasn’t all bad. Sometimes things wasn’t all bad. He [Cholly] used to come easing into bed sometimes, not too drunk” (Morrison, 1994, p. 127). Based on Mrs. Breedlove’s narrative, it is possible to claim that Cholly has started to consume more alcohol to get the same sensations, compared to his younger self, which is a concrete proof that tolerance is a symptom that he has experienced.

Cholly’s addiction to alcohol does not only make himself a victim of alcoholism but also makes his family victims of him, since they are emotionally and verbally abused and both their material and emotional needs are not satisfied. His beating up his wife and children is a form of his emotional and physical abuse, which causes anxiety, unhappiness, trust issues and lack of connection among the family. As it is narrated in the novel, “Cholly had come home drunk. Unfortunately he had been too drunk to quarrel” (Morrison, 1994, p. 38). Although Cholly’s not being able to quarrel seems to have a positive meaning, it actually does not. It signifies that Cholly is so drunk that he cannot defend himself and make reasonable explanations about anything. When Mrs. Breedlove told Cholly that she needed some coal, he did not even move. Mrs. Breedlove shouted at him again and poked his foot. Cholly yelled “Awwwwww, woman!” and told Mrs. Breedlove to leave him alone. She told him: “Not until you get me some coal. If working like a mule don’t give me the right to be warm, what am I doing it for? You sure ain’t bringing in nothing. If it was left up to you, we’d all be dead...” (Morrison, 1994, p. 39). As the narrative and Mrs. Breedlove’s angry remarks indicate, Cholly is usually very drunk and he does not work to support his family financially, he is unemployed and does nothing productive all day. Mrs. Breedlove is the breadwinner of the family; however, Cholly should also work and help her instead of getting drunk and staying at home. Cholly’s addiction to alcohol and his and Mrs. Breedlove’s anger with each other cause them to fight and thereby, physical abuse to happen. For instance, after Cholly did not bring the coal that Mrs. Breedlove asked for, she initiated a fight with him that is both emotionally and physically destructive:

She [Mrs. Breedlove] ran into the bedroom with a dishpan full of cold water and threw it in Cholly's face. He sat up, choking and spitting. Naked and ashen, he leaped from the bed, and with a flying tackle, grabbed his wife around the waist, and they hit the floor. Cholly picked her up and knocked her down with the back of his hand. She fell in a sitting position, her back supported by Sammy's bed frame. She had not let go of the dishpan, and began to hit at Cholly's thighs and groin with it. He [Cholly] put his foot in her chest, and she dropped the pan. [...] Sammy, who had watched in silence their struggling at his bedside, suddenly began to hit his father about the head with both fists, shouting "You naked fuck!" over and over and over (Morrison, 1994, p. 42).

As the narrative suggests, Cholly's addiction to alcohol immensely affects all his family members and while Mrs. Breedlove and Sammy get physically involved in the fight, Pecola wishes to escape and wants these abusive fights to be over, either with one of her parents' death or with her own death: "She struggled between an overwhelming desire that one would kill the other, and a profound wish that she herself could die" (Morrison, 1994, p. 41). Despite his greatest contribution to his family's dysfunction, Cholly never realizes his addiction's adverse consequences and never quits drinking alcohol. The reason why he cannot give up drinking could be explained with the subconscious dynamic behind addictions based on the drama triangle and also with a more detailed psychological and physiological explanation made by William Porter (2015) in his book *Alcohol Explained*.

As also explained in one of the previous parts of this study, addictions are the enactment of the drama triangle within a person's subconscious, rather than a person's enacting the drama triangle with other people. As Weinhold and Weinhold (2013) claim, a person's inner child is the victim in the drama triangle and their rescuer part provides the person with their favorite addictive substance or activity (p. 31). Although the person's addiction seems like their rescuer, it actually is not. It, in fact, turns out to be their persecutor in the long run, as the person cannot get over their addiction and lead a healthy life. This explanation is appropriate for Cholly's addiction of alcohol and illuminating in the way that it is his ostensible rescuer but actual persecutor. In fact, the more Cholly feels like a victim in his subconscious, he needs alcohol and the more he consumes he believes that he will feel better. According to the narrative, "When he had

met Pauline in Kentucky, she was hanging over a fence scratching herself with a broken foot. The neatness, the charm, the joy he awakened in her made him want to nest with her. He had yet to discover what destroyed that desire. But he did not dwell on it. He thought rather of whatever had happened to the curiosity he used to feel. Nothing, nothing interested him now. Not himself, not other people. Only in drink was there some break, some floodlight, and when that closed, there was oblivion” (Morrison, 1994, p. 158). As the narrative indicates, Cholly’s lack of interest in himself and life, in other words, his depression and loss of motivation cause him to find solace in drinking alcohol. His feeling better or at least feeling numb with the effect of alcohol results in his permanency of consuming it and eventually ending up an alcoholic. As Porter (2015) further explains:

The alcoholic wakes up (or more accurately comes to) in the morning (or any other time of the day). How does he feel? Absolutely awful. The poisonous effects of the drink are making him feel ill, which has the knock-on effects of making him feel weak and vulnerable, and unable to cope. [...] Our drinker is also feeling depressed, firstly from the chemical depression caused by the after-effects of his drinking, and also most certainly because by this stage his drinking will have substantially impacted his life. He will have relationship problems, health problems, employment problems, and housing problems. These things on their own would cause a healthy, confident human being to be depressed, but in his physically debilitated and chemically depressed state these things are magnified tenfold. Added to this is the separate feeling of anxiety that alcohol creates when its initial anaesthetising effects have worn off, leaving increased anxiety (p. 96).

Porter (2015) further explains how this process turns into the vicious cycle of addiction. As the initial anaesthetizing effects of alcohol fade away, the alcoholic starts to feel worse and wants to drink more in order to feel better: “Alcohol is an anaesthetic and a depressant, and it will anaesthetise the pain and curb the depression. This triggers the craving process [...]” (p. 97). According to Porter’s explanations, alcoholism is not only reinforced with the psychological belief that alcohol will make the alcoholic feel better or numb enough to make them forget about their problems but also with the physiological need of getting rid of the anxiety caused by the fading of the anesthetizing

effect of alcohol. These are, indeed, the reasons why any alcoholic, including Cholly, becomes more addictive and this vicious cycle of being a victim to alcoholism never ends.

4.2.2.2. Cholly's past traumatic experiences

As also emphasized before, Cholly is a persecutor, who hurts and traumatizes his family greatly. One of the reasons why he has a destructive and bullying personality are his past traumatic experiences, such as his being abandoned by his mother and rejected by his father when he was younger. His mother's abandonment, his being raised by his aunt, who cannot be a sufficiently good mother figure and surely not a male role model, his idealization of his father and his disappointment when he met him, all force him to take up the role of the victim in his youth and persecute his wife and children as an adult, since he does not have a stable and responsible personality and does not know how to act towards his children and be a good father.

According to Cori (2010), a good mother should provide both physical and emotional nurturing for her child (p. 11). Cori (2010) claims that a good mother should first respond to her child's basic physiological needs, in other words, she should feed the baby, keep it warm, change their diapers, dress the baby or do anything necessary to keep the baby alive (p. 14). Cori (2010) also claims that besides these basic needs, a good mother should have many characteristics, which sufficiently manifest themselves as "many faces" of a mother providing emotional support for her child (p. 21). Cori (2010) firstly explains "Mother as Source" and claims that the mother is "what we come from and what we are made of. [...] Just as life is thought to have evolved from the ocean, human life evolves from the mother and, more specifically, the womb" (p. 22). It is important to notice that only spending enough time to be born in the mother's womb is not sufficient to have a positive experience of the mother as a source. What happens after the baby is born is also important. For example, Cori (2010) refers to "the experience of children put up for adoption whose source has, at least on a subjective level, rejected them" (p. 23). Even though Cholly was not put up for adoption, it is obvious that he has been rejected by his mother only a few days after he was born: "When Cholly was four days old, his mother wrapped him in two blankets and one newspaper and placed him on a junk heap by the railroad. His Great Aunt Jimmy, who

had seen her niece carrying a bundle out of the back door, rescued him” (Morrison, 1994, p. 130). This definitely causes Cholly to have a negative experience of his mother as his source and results in his lack of a sense of belonging.

Cori (2010) refers to other characteristics of a good mother and defines the mother as “our first connection to the world” (p. 24). As she rightly claims, “attachment is not created just through body contact, but also through the mother’s attunement and responsiveness to needs” (2010, p. 24). She describes attachment as a sense of belonging for the young child: “Attachment for the young child brings the feeling I belong to you. And because I belong to you, I have a place. Without this, we are untethered, adrift well into our adult years. [...] This can result in a profound sense of aloneness, alienation, and not belonging” (Cori, 2010, p. 24-5). Cori’s explanation about attachment is illuminating to understand why Cholly feels lost and “dangerously free” (Morrison, 1994, p. 157) without a sense of belonging to anything and anyone. As Cholly never securely attached to his mother, since she left him when he was only four days old, he attached to his aunt Jimmy, since she is the only caretaker that Cholly has and thereby is a surrogate mother. Although she was a nice woman, Aunt Jimmy was unable to provide sufficient emotional care for Cholly and his non-attachment to his mother and insecure attachment to Aunt Jimmy result in Cholly’s lack of a sense of belonging, feeling adrift and aimless, which has affected him for the rest of his life.

Cholly never knew his father when he was a child. As Aunt Jimmy told Cholly “he [Cholly’s father] taken off pretty quick before you was born” (Morrison, 1994, p. 131). Therefore, Cholly never got any love and emotional support from his father and did not have a male role model until he met Blue Jack, since Aunt Jimmy was the only surrogate parent that Cholly ever had. Without growing up with a father, Cholly never had a chance to experience positive assets that a father provides for his son. In her enlightening work *My Father, My Self: Understanding Dad's Influence on Your Life, a Guide to Reconciliation and Healing for Sons and Daughters*, Masa Aiba Goetz (1998) refers to positive assets that a father gives to his child. According to Goetz (1998), some of these important assets are self-esteem, self-confidence, success in relationships and marriage and being a good parent to one’s children (p. 7-8). Raised by Aunt Jimmy, without knowing his father, Cholly did not encounter any of these values. It is obvious that he did not have any self-esteem and self-confidence, since he did not show any

actions proving that he had and ended up being a useless drunk. In fact, his lack of self-esteem was so strong that he thought how Pecola could love him and what he could do about it: “How dare she [Pecola] love him? Hadn’t she any sense at all? What was he supposed to do about that? Return it? How?” (Morrison, 1994, p. 159).

The reader can easily notice that Cholly does not have any successful relationships, neither with his wife nor with his children, which is also the result of his growing up without a father. As Goetz (1998) claims, “Commitment to a deeply fulfilling relationship is one of the main satisfactions in life. Role modeling and relationship skills learned during childhood are major factors in making relationships work. Seeing your father’s love, respect and appreciation for your mother leads to a desire to seek the same kind of relationship” (p. 7). Cholly who has never seen his father treating his mother with love and respect, certainly does not know how to maintain a healthy relationship. Although he did not leave Mrs. Breedlove and end their marriage, it is obvious he left her emotionally and does not understand why she should be committed to her or any woman. As it is narrated: “To be required to sleep with the same woman forever was a curious and unnatural idea to him” (Morrison, 1994, p. 158).

Cholly’s lack of a father does not only have deteriorating impacts on his marriage but also on his relationships with his children. It is perceivable that Cholly’s growing up without a father causes him to be a bad father, since he does not know how to respond to his children’s needs and how to communicate with them. According to the narrative:

“But the aspect of married life that dumbfounded him and rendered him totally disfunctional was the appearance of children. Having no idea of how to raise children, and having never watched any parent raise himself, he could not even comprehend what such a relationship should be. [...] Had he not been alone in the world since he was thirteen, knowing only a dying old woman who felt responsible for him, but whose age, sex, and interests were so remote from his own, he might have felt a stable connection between himself and the children. As it was, he reacted to them, and his reactions were based on what he felt at the moment” (Morrison, 1994, p. 158-9).

As the narrative suggests, Cholly’s being abandoned by his mother and father have great damaging impacts on his psychology, which turns him into a persecutor to

his family, although he feels like a victim inside. Even though Cholly was not really curious about his mother, he was determined to find his father. Before meeting him, he idealized his father and “had always thought of his father as a giant of a man, so when he was very close it was with a shock that he discovered that he was taller than his father” (Morrison, 1998, p. 153). Their meeting did not go as Cholly expected and he was harshly rejected, which brought about extreme disappointment for Cholly and also resulted in his lack of self-love and feeling lost in his adult life.

4.2.3. Mrs. Breedlove and Cholly’s codependent marriage

As also emphasized before, Mrs. Breedlove is a persecutor to her children; however, she sometimes embraces the role of a victim and at other times, takes up the role of a persecutor to Cholly. Cholly’s mistreatment and abuse of Mrs. Breedlove demonstrates that he is her persecutor, while Mrs. Breedlove’s responding to Cholly’s physical abuse with her own hitting and fights and insulting remarks to Cholly indicate that she is not always a victim but sometimes a strong persecutor to Cholly. What is unexpected here is not their switch of these roles but their marriage which makes them codependent on each other and generates an endless circle of their switch of these roles. In other words, their codependent marriage and toxic relationship bring about the drama triangle they enact and cannot get out of. In this endless cycle, Mrs. Breedlove considers herself a rescuer to her family and a martyr because of Cholly’s sins, while Cholly chooses to project his anger onto Mrs. Breedlove and hurt her, which reflects his deviant nature and subconscious fury that he wishes to lash out.

Even though most of Zimmeroff’s descriptions and explanations have been used in the previous chapters of this study, there is one that needs to be emphasized again. This aspect of the drama triangle is called “co-dependency” and this is how it occurs: “Most rescuers actually encourage the victim to remain dependent on them. So there is a mutually dependent relationship based on the victim roles. This codependency is the foundation of dysfunctional families and unhealthy relationships” (Zimmeroff, 2011, p. 14). Although Mrs. Breedlove victimizes Cholly and her children, she does not actively encourage them to be dependent on her but wishes them to stay dependent on her by emphasizing her role as the rescuer, which is actually her way of victimizing Cholly and her children, in addition to her beating them and hurtful remarks targeting them. In

fact, Mrs. Breedlove believes that she is a great rescuer to her family, since she is the one who enables her family to get by, while Cholly cannot make any money, since he is always drunk and unemployed. She says this to insult and victimize Cholly but her remarks also serve to make her feel good about herself. Claiming the role of the rescuer of her family, she feels purposeful and confident. Cholly's being a useless drunk and his destructive attitude make her feel like a martyr, who goes through terrible experiences but still survives with the help of God and her strong belief in Christianity. As it is narrated in the novel, "Mr. Breedlove considered herself an upright and Christian woman, burdened with a no-count man, whom God wanted her to punish. (Cholly was beyond redemption, of course, [...]) If Cholly had stopped drinking, she would never have forgiven Jesus. She needed Cholly's sins desperately. The lower he sank, the wilder and more irresponsible he became, the more splendid she and her task became. In the name of Jesus." (Morrison, 1994, p. 40). As the narrative suggests, Cholly's alcoholism and immoral behavior give Mrs. Breedlove a lot of subconscious satisfaction, since they meet her need to be the rescuer and martyr. Zimmeroff (2011) explains how a rescuer chooses to play the martyr subconsciously. As she rightly points out, martyrs do not let go of their pain and suffering. The reason behind this is martyrs' subconscious belief that their purpose in life is suffering (p. 52). This certainly makes them secret victims but they are not aware of it and still define themselves as rescuers, who deal with a lot of problems and overcome hurt and pain. Mrs. Breedlove also subconsciously believes this and this makes her feel more useful and motivated in life. As it is narrated: "Holding Cholly as a model of sin and failure, she bore him like a crown of thorns, and her children like a cross" (Morrison, 1994, p. 124-5). The narrative demonstrates that Mrs. Breedlove is subconsciously proud of enduring Cholly's alcoholism and raising her children and also suffering in her life, since all these make her feel like a rescuer or more precisely a hero.

While Mrs. Breedlove extremely needs Cholly to feel like a martyr, since it satisfies her wish to be needed and appreciated, Cholly needs Mrs. Breedlove to lash out his anger, which otherwise he could not. As the narrative describes: "No less did Cholly need her. She was one of the few things abhorrent to him that he could touch and therefore hurt. He poured out on her the sum of all his inarticulate fury and aborted desires. Hating her, he could leave himself intact" (Morrison, 1994, p. 40). Based on the narrative, it is obvious that Cholly does not end his marriage with Mrs. Breedlove,

since he considers her a way of pouring out his rage and feeling better this way. She is also the symbolic embodiment of his hate for women, which will also be analyzed with the traumatic experience that Cholly had with the two white men and Darlene, in one of the following parts of this study. As these analyses demonstrate, despite everything Mrs. Breedlove and Cholly maintain their toxic marriage, through which they both satisfy their different needs. While Mrs. Breedlove satisfies her need to be the rescuer, feel useful and confident, Cholly fulfills his need to pour out his anger that he feels towards all women because of his traumas, by projecting his rage onto Mrs. Breedlove, which reinforces his role as the persecutor. Grown up with their toxic parents, Sammy and Pecola are surely victims.

In their book *Poisonous Parenting: Toxic Relationships Between Parents and Their Adult Children*, Dunham et al. (2011), refer to the positive psychological outcomes that good parents create for their children: “Parents are the ultimate teachers. They teach their children what to think about the world, what is important or unimportant, and about their own self-worth. Whether overtly or covertly, children learn from their parents about who to love, how to love, how to be loved, and how (or even if) they should love themselves” (p. 1). As Dunham et al.’s quote emphasizes, parents are the most effective people in a child’s idea of love, self-love and self-worth. Pecola, who has not been raised in a loving and supportive family does not even know the true meaning of love, because of Mrs. Breedlove and Cholly’s insufficient parenting and toxic relationship. Therefore, she thinks about what love is like and tries to find an answer on her own. As it is narrated in the novel:

She [Pecola] thought of Dewey Prince and how he loved Miss Marie. What did love feel like? she wondered. How do grown-ups act when they love each other? Eat fish together. Into her eyes came the picture of Cholly and Mrs. Breedlove in bed. He making sounds as though he were in pain, as though something had him by the throat and wouldn’t let go. Terrible as his noises were, they were not nearly as bad as the no noise at all from her mother. It was as though she was not even there. Maybe that was love. Choking sounds and silence (Morrison, 1994, p. 55).

As the narrative demonstrates, Pecola does not have a clear and healthy idea of love and she associates it with her parents’ having sex. Since she is not old and mature

enough to differentiate between love and sex, she cannot understand that what her parents experience is not love. Pecola's growing up in a toxic family, which displays unhealthy love and emotional and physical abuse not only brings about her ignorance about the meaning of love but also causes her to embrace self-hate and self-contempt and thereby she becomes a victim. In fact, she is not turned into a victim, just because of her dysfunctional family but also because of her and the black community's internalization of racism and embracement of white beauty standards, while some of the other characters are also turned into victims and persecutors because of these.

4. 3.Internalized Racism and White Beauty Standards

Mrs. Breedlove is one of the main characters who plays a huge role in turning Pecola into a victim, not only because of her dysfunctional mothering but also due to her internalization of racism and embracement of white beauty standards. In fact, Mrs. Breedlove is not the only character who subconsciously accepts racism and tries to conform to white beauty standards. Many characters in the novel are subconscious racists and believe in white beauty standards so strongly that they find anyone who does not comply with these, ugly. They also associate being close to whiteness and white beauty standards with virtue. With their attitude, they victimize other characters in the novel and become persecutors but some of them are also victimized by some other characters and become victims, as well. In short, it can be argued that many characters switch their roles from victims to persecutors or vice versa. They are not victims only because of other characters' discriminative attitude, they are also victimized because of their self-hate and self-contempt that they deeply feel, since they are not white, cannot comply with values related to whiteness and they are not considered beautiful and virtuous according to white beauty standards. Before explaining more about Mrs. Breedlove and other characters' roles in the drama triangle based on racism and white beauty standards, it is important to elucidate racism and its destructive effects in society.

4.3.1.Racism, internalized racism and binary oppositions

In the novel, racism, binary oppositions and internalized racism are all predominant themes, which are observable in the characters' actions and remarks.

Before analyzing how the characters reflect these concepts in their actions and remarks, it is important to explain these terms and the main reason why racism exists. Just as any unjust system, racism emerged in a relation to the concepts “the self” and “the other.” Jesse (2021) asks the significant question “Who is the other?” in his book *European Societies, Migration and The Law: ‘The Others’ Amongst ‘Us’* (p. 19). Staszak (2009) defines “otherness” as: “the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group (‘Us’, the Self) constructs one or many dominated out-groups (‘Them’, Other) by stigmatizing a difference – real or imagined – presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination” (p. 43). As this definition highlights, “otherness” results from a differentiation that might probably cause discrimination. Jesse (2021) explains the possible reasons of this differentiation with these words: “the differentiation between in- and out-group often relies on categories, such as race, origin, religion, culture, nationality, or wealth” (p. 20). As these explanations point out, differentiation because of race, especially due to ethnic identities and skin color causes the predominant race in society, which is the white, to show a prejudiced and discriminating attitude to the other race, which is the black, either covertly or overtly or directly and actively discriminate against them.

Although it is very hard to give a concrete definition of racism, Miles and Brown (2004) define racism succinctly in their illuminating book *Racism*: “Racism postulates the existence of discrete ‘races’ and attributes a negative evaluation to one or some of these putative ‘races’ (usually, though not always, the ‘race’ or ‘races’ to which the person articulating the racist ideology does not regard himself or herself as belonging)” (p. 8). Wheeler (2020) gives another clear definition of racism in her astounding book *The Racism Virus: What Every Person Should Know About This Viral “Disease.” Understand Racial Education, Discrimination, Black Dignity, and How to Solve This Problem in America and Around the World*: “Racism is the conviction that a particular race is preferred or below average over another, that a person’s social and acceptable characteristics are fated by their regular natural traits” (p. 9). According to this definition, one race, which is, in reality, the white race, is seen superior to the black and the black are treated differently and have less privileges in society compared to the white. As Wheeler (2020) rightly argues, regarding the black as the inferior race has been justified by believing that they are less human than the white (p. 9). Although almost nobody claims this explicitly nowadays, this view was strongly believed by

many people in the 1800s and 1900s. This is also certainly reminiscent of what Frantz Fanon (1967) argues in his remarkable book *Black Skin, White Masks*, which makes the reader think about binary oppositions that are associated with being white and black. In fact, Fanon (1967) refers to values associated with being white or black but does not explicitly call them “binary oppositions.” In his book *Racisms: An Introduction*, Steve Garner (2010) explains Fanon’s theory concerning binary oppositions and how the idea of considering the black inferior emerged, thoroughly and with details:

Fanon’s theory was that in the binary world of European thought, the development of which ran contemporaneously with colonisation, blackness came to embody bad and whiteness good. This process of psychological (as well as material and social) domination creates the categories ‘coloniser’ and ‘colonised’, and people who are identified (and come to identify themselves) as ‘black’ and ‘white’. As part of this relational process, he [Fanon] argues, the European created the ‘negro’ as a category of degraded humanity: a weak, irrational barbarian, incapable of self-government. For Fanon, this psychological process, in the context of physical domination and oppression, was tantamount to dehumanising the oppressed. His understanding of racialisation was that it comprised the effects of a process instigated to relieve Europeans of guilt and to make the colonised responsible for their own oppression, because in this world view, they are too weak to rule themselves (pp. 20-1).

As Garner’s explanation suggests, adjectives having positive connotations are attributed to the white race, while adjectives having negative connotations are used to define the black race. As a result of this, the white are considered to be clean, educated, civilized, good, rich, beautiful and tidy but the black are regarded as dirty, uneducated, uncivilized, bad, poor, ugly and messy. These adjectives are, of course, not limited and other ones could be proposed to define the white and the black based on the theory that Fanon emphasizes. Considering these binary oppositions, which are indeed, an aspect of racism that reinforces and justifies it, it can be argued that positive adjectives could be regarded as values concerning whiteness, while negative ones could be reckoned values concerning blackness. The characters who internalize racism also internalize

these binary oppositions and subconsciously and also sometimes actively try very hard to comply with the values concerning whiteness.

4.3.1.1. Mrs. Breedlove

One of these characters is Mrs. Breedlove, who tries very hard to become a part of the white family that she works for. The reason why she is acting like this is her subconscious belief that the white family, named the Fishers, are embodiment of values related to being white. For instance, Mrs. Breedlove regards them as “a well-to-do family whose members were affectionate, appreciative, and generous” (Morrison, 1994, p. 125). According to this narrative, Mrs. Breedlove does not even mention one negative adjective about the white family, which is reminiscent of binary oppositions and attribution of only positive adjectives to white people. Mrs. Breedlove does not only find her employers good and wealthy but also admires their prosperous house and belongings: “She [Mrs. Breedlove] looked at their houses, smelled their linen, touched their silk draperies, and loved all of it. The child’s pink nightie, the stacks of white pillow slips edged with embroidery, the sheets with top hems picked out with blue cornflowers” (Morrison, 1994, p. 125). As the narrative demonstrates, Mrs. Breedlove subconsciously envies the house and belongings of the white family, since their house and belongings are the exact opposite of the small and ramshackle storefront that she and her family live in and their aged furniture and belongings.

Idealizing the white family, their house and belongings so much that she starts to spend most of her time working in their house and finds what she cannot find in her own family and house. As it is narrated in the novel:

She [Mrs. Breedlove] became what is known as an ideal servant, for such a role filled practically all of her needs. When she bathed the little Fisher girl, it was in a porcelain tub with silvery taps running infinite quantities of hot, clear water. She dried her in fluffy white towels and put her in cuddly night clothes. Then she brushed the yellow hair, enjoying the roll and slip of it between her fingers. No zinc tub, no buckets of stove-heated water, no flaky, stiff, grayish towels washed in a kitchen sink, dried in a dusty backyard, no tangled black puffs of rough wool to comb. Soon she stopped trying to keep her own house. The things

she could afford to buy did not last, had no beauty or style, and were absorbed by the dingy storefront. More and more she neglected her house, her children, her man—they were like the afterthoughts one has just before sleep, the early-morning and late-evening edges of her day, the dark edges that made the daily life with the Fishers lighter, more delicate, more lovely. [...] Here she found beauty, order, cleanliness, and even praise. [...] Power, praise, and luxury were hers in this household. They even gave her what she had never had—a nickname—Polly (Morrison, 1994, p. 125-6).

As the narrative suggests, Mrs. Breedlove's wish to be a part of the white family has been so strong that she has been really happy with her nickname Polly, although her own children were not allowed to call her by her name, instead she makes them call her "Mrs. Breedlove" (Morrison, 1994, p. 106). Her aged and worn-out belongings, lack of luxury and even the wool-like black hair of her children make the Fishers and their house more desirable to Mrs. Breedlove. With her subconscious wish to be like white people, the more she works for the Fishers, the more she starts ignoring her own family and starts seeing them as burden to herself, which she carries in order to become a good Christian woman, which justifies to her that she is a rescuer and a martyr, who goes through every kind of pain to look after her family financially and endure her marriage with Cholly. Meanwhile, the Fishers turn into a comfort to Mrs. Breedlove, since spending time with them causes her not to deal with the reality of her own blackness, her poor and black family and her responsibilities at home. Her unwillingness to accept her blackness, family and responsibilities are all results of her internalization of racism, which brings about her self-hatred and self-contempt. Because of all, she turns into a persecutor to her own family, especially to Pecola and plays an inevitable role in Pecola's ending up an ultimate victim at the end of the novel.

As racism is "a social construction" (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 36) rather than a biological one, binary oppositions that reinforce racism involve social class and financial power, as well. As DiAngelo (2018) concisely explains, "Because race is a product of social forces, it has also manifested itself along class lines; poor and working-class people were not always perceived as fully white. In a society that grants fewer opportunities to those not seen as white, economic and racial forces are inseparable (p. 37). DiAngelo's words refer to the fact that being a part of the poor and

working class is not attributed to being white, even if the skin color of the person is white. With the same logic, it is understandable that being a part of the middle class or upper class and having wealth are associated with being white, although the person may be black. Clear epitomes of this logic are observable in the novel.

4.3.1.2. Geraldine and Junior

Geraldine is one of the characters who subconsciously hates being African American and what the concept of blackness brings about, which are negative values attributed to being black. To eliminate these negative values and to be close to being white and thereby to have all the positive values concerning whiteness, Geraldine tries to comply with some principles. She subconsciously believes that these principles will make her different from a stereotypical black woman and make her less black. Indeed, she creates her own principles to differentiate herself and her family from regular black people.

In the novel, she and girls like her are depicted as “brown girls” and “sugar-brown Mobile girls” (Morrison, 1994, p. 80), instead of “black girls.” According to the narrative, these girls “are not like some of their sisters. They are not fretful, nervous, or shrill [...] They are as sweet and plain as butter-cake. [...]” (Morrison, 1994, p. 80). As the description suggests, these women, including Geraldine, have positive personal traits, which contrast with the stereotypical image of the angry black woman. As Walley-Jean (2009) rightly points out, the stereotype of the angry black woman “has permeated and continued to influence society’s view of African American women” (p. 68). Therefore, anyone, including a black woman, may consider any black woman angry, irritated, yelling and grumpy. However, the narrative depicts Geraldine and women like her very differently, which reflects Geraldine’s principles that she tries to comply with, in order to be more like a white woman.

The stereotypical image of the angry black woman does not only represent negative personal traits but also displays an image of a woman, who is ignorant, immoral and has bad habits, such as drinking and smoking. This is exactly the image of a regular black woman living in a ghetto, not in a middle-class suburb. Nonetheless, Geraldine and women like her are described to be educated and living in nice

neighborhoods involving gardens decorated with plants, which demonstrate their better economic condition, compared to a regular black woman. As it is narrated: “Such girls live in quiet black neighborhoods where everybody is gainfully employed. Where there are porch swings hanging from chains. Where the grass is cut with a scythe, where rooster combs and sunflowers grow in the yards [...] They go to land-grant colleges, normal schools and learn how to do the white man’s work with refinement [...]” (Morrison, 1994, p. 84).

These women including Geraldine are also depicted as highly moral. “They do not drink, smoke, or swear” (Morrison, 1994, p. 80) and they learn “the careful development of thrift, patience, high morals, and good manners. In short, how to get rid of the funkiness. The dreadful funkiness of passion, the funkiness of nature, the funkiness of the wide range of human emotions” (Morrison, 1994, p. 81). Although not feeling one’s emotions is not a positive personal trait, Geraldine and women like her believe that it is and that is why, they try not to feel their emotions deeply. They care more about how they appear rather than how they actually are and more about their manners rather than their feelings. With their self-restrictions of feeling deeply, this kind of women believe that they are respectable and moral, which make them unlike regular black women, who are seen as wild and mannerless.

The stereotype of the angry woman is not the only stereotype about black people. Most people must have heard the insult “dirty nigger.” Although it is very derogating and racist, it is still used by some people. What is important to notice about this stereotype is that it defines black people as “not clean.” Based on this logic, the negative adjective “dirty” is associated with the black, while positive adjective “clean” is associated with the white. To be more like a white person, Geraldine and her female friends keep their houses really clean and tidy, they also care about decorative and beautiful ornaments. As the narrative goes, “[...] a beautiful house. There was a big red-and-gold Bible on the dining-room table. Little lace doilies were everywhere—on arms and backs of chairs, in the center of a large dining table, on little tables. Potted plants were on all the windowsills. A color picture of Jesus Christ hung on a wall with the prettiest paper flowers fastened on the frame” (Morrison, 1994, p. 87).

Geraldine does not see all black people as the same and makes a differentiation between “colored people” and “niggers.” She does not define herself as a black woman

and a “nigger” but as a “colored person.” As it is narrated: “She [Geraldine] had explained to him [Junior] the difference between colored people and niggers. They were easily identifiable. Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud. He [Junior] belonged to the former group” (Morrison, 1994, p. 85). As the narrative indicates, positive values are associated with colored people and negative ones are attributed to niggers, just as positive values are used to define white people and negative ones are believed to describe black people. Therefore, the narrative definitely reminds the reader of binary oppositions concerning racism.

Even though Geraldine is proud to fit into her principles and the woman that she is, her distant behavior towards her son Junior, not allowing him to cry and not showing him any affection cause Junior to be an unloving child and a violent bully. Since Junior has not grown up by a loving and attentive mother, he does not show any love and amiability to his peers. While he is a victim because of his distant and dysfunctional mother, he becomes a persecutor to his peers and especially to black girls, since he subconsciously embraces his mother’s opinions about black people. By time he stops being friends with black boys that his mother considers “niggers:” “Bay Boy and P.L. had at one time been his idols. Gradually he came to agree with his mother that neither Bay Boy nor P.L. was good enough for him” (Morrison, 1994, p. 85). Even though Geraldine does not impose any misogynist and patriarchal views on Junior, Junior adopts them. As it is narrated: “More and more Junior enjoyed bullying girls. It was easy making them scream and run. How he laughed when they fell down and their bloomers showed. When they got up, their faces red and crinkled, it made him feel good” (Morrison, 1994, p. 85). Although the exact reason why Junior chooses to become black girls’ persecutor is not explicitly narrated in the novel, it is most probably because these girls resemble black people, who his mother consider dirty, poor and messy. His bullying black girls also makes him feel better and less victimized to his mother, since the more he shows his power on girls, who cannot fight him, he feels stronger, which is definitely not what he feels at home living with an unloving and strict mother.

One of the black girls that Junior bullied was Pecola, who also ended up being persecuted by Geraldine. Junior, who was determined to bully Pecola invited her to his house by deceiving her into showing her his kittens. However, his real purpose was to

throw his mother's cat at Pecola's face and lock her up in a room. Meanwhile Pecola was really sad and afraid. Based on the narrative: "[...] he threw a big black cat right in her face. She sucked in her breath in fear and surprise and felt fur in her mouth. The cat clawed her face and chest in an effort to right itself, then leaped nimbly to the floor. Junior was laughing and running around the room clutching his stomach delightedly. Pecola touched the scratched place on her face and felt tears coming" (Morrison, 1994, p. 88). Although Pecola was at first afraid of the cat, but then she started to like it: "The cat rubbed up against her knee. [...] Pecola rubbed the cat's head; he whined, his tongue flicking with pleasure. The blue eyes in the black face held her" (Morrison, 1994, p. 88). Seeing this, Junior got furious and "snatched the cat by one of its hind legs and began to swing it around his head in a circle" (Morrison, 1994, p. 88). While Pecola was trying to stop Junior hurting the cat, they started pushing each other and Junior released the cat in motion. The cat "was thrown full force against the window [...] and fell on the radiator behind the sofa" (Morrison, 1994, p. 89), which is how it died. Coming to her house just after her cat died, Geraldine saw the grotesque scene and Junior blamed Pecola fallaciously. It was expected that Geraldine believed in his son's words, but the real reason that she was so enraged with Pecola was that Pecola embodied all the negative values associated with being black. As it is narrated in the novel:

She [Geraldine] looked at Pecola. Saw the dirty torn dress, the plaits sticking out on her head, hair matted where the plaits had come undone, the muddy shoes with the wad of gum peeping out from between the cheap soles, the soiled socks, one of which had been walked down into the heel of the shoe. She saw the safety pin holding the hem of the dress up. [...] She had seen this little girl all of her life. [...] Hair uncombed, dresses falling apart, shoes untied and caked with dirt. They had stared at her with great uncomprehending eyes. Eyes that questioned nothing and asked everything. Unblinking and unabashed, they stared up at her. The end of the world lay in their eyes, and the beginning, and all the waste in between. They were everywhere. They slept six in a bed, all their pee mixing together in the night as they wet their beds [...] They sat in little rows on street curbs, crowded into pews at church, taking space from the nice, neat, colored children [...] Grass wouldn't grow where they lived. Flowers died (Morrison, 1994, p. 89-90).

As the narrative demonstrates, Geraldine regards black girls like Pecola as dirty, messy, disheveled, unintelligent, living with their crowded families in poor neighborhoods, which are not well-kept. Her loathing of Pecola and contempt for black girls like Pecola are so strong that she even believes that they do not have any right to take place of colored children in the church. It is obvious that she considers Pecola and black girls like her “niggers,” which she extremely despises. In fact, Geraldine’s extreme rage with Pecola and abhorrence of her surely reflect Geraldine’s internalized racial prejudice against the black, thereby her subconscious self-hatred and self-contempt, which she is not even aware of.

4.3.2. White beauty standards

One of the most common binary oppositions that racism reinforce is the adjective “beautiful.” It surely does not connote spiritual beauty but rather refers to physical appearance. Since “beautiful” is an adjective with a positive meaning, it is attributed to the white and thereby, being beautiful requires being white or at least being closer to white, based on this logic. The characters embracing this logic, which is a clear reflection of their internalized racism, love white actresses, dolls and try really hard to look white and look down on anyone, including themselves, that they consider black and thereby ugly. They also associate white beauty standards and physical beauty with virtue and admire black people who can fit into white beauty standards to some degree. Because of these non-realistic and illogical standards, some characters idealize and victimize some others, and become both persecutors and victims in different incidents and also suffer. Unlike other characters who sometimes persecute others, Pecola stays as the victim throughout the novel, since she strongly and subconsciously believes that she is ugly, which signifies that she is different from Claudia, who feels more confident, has self-esteem and can defy white beauty standards.

Before explaining the characters’ experiences with white beauty standards and their roles in the drama triangle based on their reactions to white beauty standards, it is more beneficial to have more information about white beauty standards and how they are reinforced by society and means of media production. Even though it is not possible to know when the idea of white beauty standards was originated, it is obvious that they

were predominant even in fairytales, which are one of the oldest verbal literary productions of society. As Chakraborty (2019) rightly claims about fairytales:

The concept of physical vanity, beauty [...] has also resulted in numerous and quite blameworthy racist features in the twenty-first century world. The idea of 'blue-eyes', 'red cheeks', blushing of a female character, [...] alabaster-white skin, perfect, svelte body index and structure all have led to the racial discrimination in the oriental and foreign countries regarding the status of women [...] (p. 65).

In fact, not only fairytales but also means of media production, such as TV shows, serials, movies and social media reinforce the prevalence of white beauty standards. Growing up with these in the twenty first century, any person who is not aware of racism and white beauty standards most probably visualizes a white skinned, fit and tall person when someone asks them to think of someone beautiful. Most people would not choose to visualize a plump and black person with curly hair. This certainly proves that means of media production does not only strengthen traditional beauty standards, such as being fit, tall and having smooth skin, but also impose white beauty standards, such as having a white or light skin, fair hair and colorful eyes. In her article "Image Slavery and Mass-Media Pollution: Popular Media, Beauty, and the Lives of Black Women, Richardson-Stovall (2012) illuminates how popular media, including TV shows and social media, shape beauty perceptions of black women. Many black women participate in her research and most of them claim that means of media production shape their perception of beauty negatively and make them feel inferior to white people. As one of the participants states: "Right along with Barbie and all the other white and light skinned people we'd see on television and on billboards...magazines we weren't supposed to be looking at [...] we knew they deserved special treatment" (Richardson-Stovall, 2012, p. 85). Similarly, another participant claims how seeing white actresses and models on TV or on covers of magazines make her feel inadequate in her physical appearance: "I know that the more I watch television or even sit and flip through magazines, the more I.. .well, I don't want to say hate.. .the more I become dissatisfied with myself" (Richardson-Stovall, 2012, p. 86)

The biggest problem with the characters in the novel is not only their embracement of white beauty standards and looking down on the characters who cannot comply with them, but also their association of physical appearance with virtue. In fact, this idea is not new and was prevalent even in ancient times. In his article “Racism and Appearance in *The Bluest Eye*: A Template for An Ethical Emotive Criticism,” Bump (2010) refers to “the assumption that the outside of a person reflects the inside” (p. 154). Even in the twenty first century, most people believe in this assumption and associate physical beauty with virtue and goodness, and physical unattractiveness with vice and wickedness. As Bump (2010) rightly points out, “This equation of physical beauty with virtue is embedded in fairy tales as well as religious texts” (p. 154). Being imposed on people with these means of literature and religion, this assumption surely dominates many people’s psyche and affect human relationships negatively, since it causes people to be prejudiced against other people, whom they only see for once or a few times and decide whether they are beautiful or ugly, thereby virtuous or not; without getting to know them. In the novel, this assumption is perceivable, even though it is not narrated explicitly. In the characters’ actions and remarks, it is obvious that light-skinned characters Maureen Peal and Soaphead Church are considered to be better than the other black characters and admired, while Mrs. Breedlove, Pecola and Claudia are persecuted and excluded, as they are believed to be ugly because of their non-conformity with white beauty standards.

4.3.2.1. Maureen Peal

Maureen Peal is one of the characters who fits into white beauty standards and adored by many black children, since she is considered to be cute. She is described as “A high-yellow dream child with long brown hair braided into two lynch ropes that hung down her back” (Morrison, 1994, p. 60) and with “green eyes” (Morrison, 1994, p. 60). As the description indicates, she has light brown skin, brown hair, and green eyes, which demonstrates that she complies with white beauty standards, since she is closer to being white, compared to other black children. In fact, the children’s and the teachers’ admiration of her is not only because of her compliance with white beauty standards but also because of her wealth, which is one of the values that is associated with being white. As also explained in the previous part of this study, regardless of

whether it is related to appearance or economic condition, positive adjectives are attributed to describe the white. Therefore, one could argue that not only compliance with white beauty standards but also combination of other positive characteristics with light skin makes a character lovable and nice to others. With this unreasonable logic, which clearly reflects internalized racism of the black characters, many children and teachers at Claudia's school like and admire Maureen, want to be her friend and believe her to be a good person. As it is narrated in the novel:

She was rich, at least by our standards, as rich as the richest of the white girls, swaddled in comfort and care. The quality of her clothes threatened to derange Frieda and me. [...] There was a hint of spring in her sloe green eyes, something summery in her complexion, and a rich autumn ripeness in her walk. She enchanted the entire school. When teachers called on her, they smiled encouragingly. Black boys didn't trip her in the halls; white boys didn't stone her, white girls didn't suck their teeth when she was assigned to be their work partners; black girls stepped aside when she wanted to use the sink in the girls' toilet, and their eyes genuflected under sliding lids. She never had to search for anybody to eat with in the cafeteria—they flocked to the table of her choice, where she opened fastidious lunches, shaming our jelly-stained bread with egg-salad sandwiches cut into four dainty squares, pink-frosted cupcakes, stocks of celery and carrots, proud, dark apples. She even bought and liked white milk (Morrison, 1994, p. 60-1).

As the narrative suggests, Maureen is treated with amiability by many students, motivated by teachers, and certainly envied by Claudia, who is a black girl and the narrator of this passage. What is significant here is not only Maureen's being loved because of her compliance with white beauty standards and values concerning being white, which is being rich in her case, but also Claudia's feeling inferior to her, since she is not treated as well as Maureen is. This demonstrates that white beauty standards and values related to being white are so embedded in the black community that the characters who do not fit into them or do not have them, feel victimized, inferior and unhappy.

Maureen is not only adored by other people because of her conformity with white beauty standards but she is also aware of her physical appearance and being seen

as “cute” by other people. In other words, she strongly embraces white beauty standards even though she is not aware of this. Her embracement of white beauty standards is noticeable in her actions of remarks. Once she tells Pecola about a movie named *Imitation of Life*, which she has seen and wants to see again. Her interpretation of the movie is interesting: “The picture show, you know. Where this mulatto girl hates her mother cause she is black and ugly but then cries at the funeral” (Morrison, 1994, p. 65). Her depiction of the movie demonstrates that she internalizes racism and believes in white beauty standards so strongly that she interprets the mother’s ugliness as a result of her being black. Similarly, her claiming that she is cute but telling Claudia, Frieda and Pecola that they are black and ugly (Morrison, 1994, p. 71) indicate how deeply she has internalized racism and is affected by white beauty standards.

4.3.2.2. Soaphead Church and his family

Soaphead Church and his family are some of the characters who really cares about having light skin and adopt values concerning being white, such as being educated, having prestigious jobs, being respected, which are results of their embracement of white beauty standards and internalized racism. Soaphead Church is depicted as “A cinnamon-eyed West Indian with lightly browned skin” (Morrison, 1994, p. 165). According to the description, he is not very black, unlike Pecola and her family, but rather has light skin, which benefits him in his reputation and career. As most people in the black community in Lorain, Ohio see Soaphead Church, who is different from a usual African American person with his browned skin, subconsciously believe that he is wise and respectable. However, if he had a messy and dirty appearance and darker skin, most people would most probably not accept him as “Reader, Adviser, and Interpreter of Dreams” (Morrison, 1994, p. 163) and “supernatural rather than unnatural” (Morrison, 1994, p. 169) and certainly would not respect him. Even though Soaphead Church is not aware of how his light skin benefits him in his profession and makes him respectable in the black community, he subconsciously internalizes racism and believes in white beauty standards. Especially, his ideas about Pecola prove his strong embracement of white beauty standards. When Pecola comes to ask Soaphead Church for blue eyes, the first thought that he has about her is “pitifully unattractive”

(Morrison, 1994, p. 171). He also considers her “an ugly little girl asking for beauty” (Morrison, 1994, p. 172).

In fact, Soaphead Church’s family is the reason why he deeply internalizes racism and make judgments about people’s appearance based on white beauty standards. As it is narrated in the novel:

He [Soaphead Church] had been reared in a family proud of its academic accomplishments and its mixed blood—in fact, they believed the former was based on the latter. A Sir Whitcomb, some decaying British nobleman, who chose to disintegrate under a sun more easeful than England’s, had introduced the white strain into the family in the early 1800’s. [...] He bestowed his favors on a fifteen-year-old girl of similar parentage. She, like a good Victorian parody, learned from her husband all that was worth learning—to separate herself in body, mind, and spirit from all that suggested Africa; to cultivate the habits, tastes, preferences that her absent father-in-law and foolish mother-in-law would have approved. They transferred this Anglophilia to their six children and sixteen grandchildren. Except for an occasional and unaccountable insurgent who chose a restive black, they married “up,” lightening the family complexion and thinning out the family features. With the confidence born of a conviction of superiority, they performed well at schools. They were industrious, orderly, and energetic, hoping to prove beyond a doubt De Gobineau’s hypothesis that “all civilizations derive from the white race, that none can exist without its help, and that a society is great and brilliant only so far as it preserves the blood of the noble group that created it.” [...] The men studied medicine, law, theology, and emerged repeatedly in the powerless government offices available to the native population (Morrison, 1994, p. 165-6).

As the narrative suggests, one of Soaphead Church’s ancestors was married to a British man and this is how the white parentage was originated in Soaphead Church’s family. His female ancestor internalized racism and decided to ignore about her own heritage related to Africa. Her descendants also embraced her values and almost everyone in the family aimed to marry someone with lighter skin than themselves, which caused the new generation to have lighter skin that is closer to white, compared to their ancestors. Soaphead Church’s family did not only care about their light skinned

appearance but also wants to accomplish other values concerning whiteness, such as being studious, intelligent, meticulous and full of spirit. Having these values and their light-colored skin, they subconsciously consider themselves white and special, since they believe that the British blood existing in the family's lineage is noble. With their values and internalized racism, Soaphead Church and his family have never accepted their true heritage and have tried so hard to become like white people, which is actually a reflection of their self-hatred and self-contempt that they are not even aware of.

4.3.2.3. *Geraldine and Junior*

Geraldine is one of the characters who strongly internalizes racism and lives according to white beauty standards. Apart from her opinions about “colored people” and “niggers” and the way she keeps her house tidy and clean and living in a middle-class neighborhood, which all reflect white values and have been analyzed in the previous part of this study, Geraldine also makes efforts for his son Junior to look like white people. According to the narrative,

[...] his [Junior's] hair was cut as close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool, the part was etched into his hair by the barber. In winter his mother put Jergens Lotion on his face to keep the skin from becoming ashen. Even though he was light-skinned, it was possible to ash. The line between colored and nigger was not always clear; subtle and telltale signs threatened to erode it, and the watch had to be constant (Morrison, 1994, p. 85).

As the narrative indicates, Geraldine is really meticulous about Junior's appearance so that he will look less like a black person and will fit into whiteness that Geraldine craves for herself and her son. Based on the narrative, it is obvious that wool-like hair is a physical aspect of most African American. Indeed, it is not even wool-like, it is only not straight, it is usually curly or frizzy. However, people embracing white beauty standards, including Geraldine, regard it as ‘wool-like.’ Geraldine is also careful about how Junior's skin looks like. Even though skin's getting ‘ashen’ is not an aspect of being black and anyone's skin may get ashen, it is easier to notice when a dark person's skin gets ashen, compared to the skin of a white person. Therefore, some people might easily believe that having ashen skin is a characteristic of black people's

appearance, although it is not. For Junior to look less like a black child, Geraldine always uses a lotion for his skin. To sum up, she does not only follow values concerning whiteness, as enumerated in the previous chapter of this study, but she is also obsessed with the white look and how to obtain it for her son.

Growing up with his mother and her values, Junior undoubtedly has embraced white beauty standards and evaluates people's appearances based on these standards. For instance, when he first sees Pecola, his first idea about her is "a very black girl" (Morrison, 1994, p. 86). According to the narrative, "He [Junior] had seen her many times before, standing alone, always alone, at recess. Nobody ever played with her. Probably, he thought, because she was ugly" (Morrison, 1994, p. 86). As the narrative suggests, Junior does not even think about any reasons concerning Pecola's personality to explain why nobody plays with her at recess, he directly believes that the reason must be her physical unattractiveness, which is the result of her being 'very black.' Junior's way of thinking is definitely a reflection of his internalized racism and strong reliance on white beauty standards, which his mother has resolutely imposed on him.

4.3.2.4. Mrs. Breedlove

Mrs. Breedlove started to internalize racism and embrace white beauty standards after she moved to the north with her husband Cholly. In the north, most black people have racist attitudes, just like white people, which indicate that they strongly internalize racism. As Mrs. Breedlove narrates, "Northern colored folk was different too. Dicky-like. No better than whites for meanness. They could make you feel just as no-count, 'cept I didn't except it from them. That was the loneliest time of my life" (Morrison, 1994, p. 115). As the narrative demonstrates, Northern black people's racist stance causes Mrs. Breedlove to feel worthless and lonely, just as white people made her feel when she lived in the South. As a result of the Northern people's internalized racism, they also make sure that their appearance fits into white beauty standards. According to the narrative:

The women in the town wore high-heeled shoes, and when Pauline tried to wear them, they aggravated her shuffle into a pronounced limp. [...] Pauline felt uncomfortable with the few black women she met. They were amused by her

because she did not straighten her hair. When she tried to make up her face as they did, it came off rather badly. Their goading glances and private snickers at her way of talking (saying “chil’re”) and dressing developed in her a desire for new clothes. [...] The sad thing was that Pauline did not really care for clothes and makeup. She merely wanted other women to cast favorable glances her way (Morrison, 1994, p. 115-6).

Based on the narrative, it is obvious that the black women in town care about traditional ideas of beauty, such as wearing high-heeled shoes and make up and white beauty standards, such as straightening one’s hair, since it suggests less blackness as black people usually have curly hair. By being around these women, Mrs. Breedlove starts to embrace traditional ideas of beauty and white beauty standards. However, what she has really wanted is not only compliance with traditional ideas of beauty and white beauty standards but being accepted and approved by the Northern black women. Bump (2010) describes Mrs. Breedlove’s fear of being excluded from the group as “the instinctive, primordial fear that because we have a stigma, if we don’t look like ‘them,’ or do not belong for some other reason, we will be driven from the group, or worse” (p. 156). Therefore, what makes Mrs. Breedlove different from the other black characters in the novel is that she embraces white beauty standards, not only because they are imposed on her by the black community that she lives in, but also because she wants to be accepted into the group and feel a sense of belonging.

Spending time with these women and feeling lonely have caused Mrs. Breedlove to get an addiction of going to movies. Movies have intrigued and entertained her but they have had more negative effects than positive ones. They have certainly reinforced values concerning whiteness and effectively imposed traditional beauty standards and white beauty standards on Mrs. Breedlove. As she has narrated:

The onliest time I be happy seem like was when I was in the picture show. [...] They’d cut off the lights, and everything be black. Then the screen would light up, and I’d move right on in them pictures. White men taking such good care of they women, and they all dressed up in big clean houses with the bathtubs right in the same room with the toilet. Them pictures gave me a lot of pleasure, but it made coming home hard, and looking at Cholly hard. I don’t know. I ’member one time I went to see Clark Gable and Jean Harlow. I fixed my hair up like I’d

seen hers on a magazine. A part on the side, with one little curl on my forehead. It looked just like her. Well, almost just like. [...] I was sitting back in my seat, and I taken a big bite of that candy, and it pulled a tooth right out of my mouth. [...] There I was, five months pregnant, trying to look like Jean Harlow, and a front tooth gone. Everything went then. Look like I just didn't care no more after that. I let my hair go back, plaited it up, and settled down to just being ugly. I still went to the pictures, though, but the meanness got worse. I wanted my tooth back (Morrison, 1994, p. 121).

Considering Mrs. Breedlove's narrative, the reader could see that movies strengthen her embracement of values concerning whiteness and finding her own life and husband inferior to white people's. Her fixing her hair up just like Jean Harlow indicates that she subconsciously adopts white beauty standards and tries hard to look like white actresses. Accordingly, the loss of her tooth and sadness that it has provoked indicates that she is unhappy about not fitting into traditional ideas of beauty. In short, not only the black community but also patriarchy and its means of media production, such as movies and magazines, reinforce traditional ideas of beauty and white beauty standards. As Mrs. Breedlove does not see herself sufficient to fit into traditional ideas of beauty and white beauty standards, she feels less and less confident, which generates her self-hate and feelings of worthlessness. She surely does not know that traditional ideas of beauty and white beauty standards are socially constructed and reinforced by patriarchy. As Wolf (2002) rightly claims, "It's the beauty myth, an obsession with physical perfection that traps the modern woman in an endless spiral of hope, self-consciousness, and self-hatred as she tries to fulfill society's impossible definition of 'the flawless beauty'" (p. iv). Given (2020) also makes a similarly remarkable statement about beauty and how patriarchal society imposes on colored women to comply with white beauty standards: "women of colour are expected by society to perform "prettiness" to a further degree, in a world where whiteness has been positioned as the epitome of beauty and "femininity" (p. 30). Indeed, both of these remarks succinctly explain the plight and suffering of Mrs. Breedlove and most black women like her, who live in a patriarchal and racist society.

4.3.2.5. *Pecola*

Pecola is another character who suffers deeply because of her internalized racism and embracement of white beauty standards. What makes her different from the other characters is that she does not only cause her own suffering but also persecuted extremely by the other characters and turned into the ultimate victim of the novel. In fact, Pecola's persecution emerges on two levels, one of which is her being subjected to active discrimination and bullying, while the other one is her being ignored. Most of the characters in the novel actively show their discriminating attitudes to Pecola and persecute her, while only Mr. Yacobowski subconsciously ignores and refuses to see her. Before analyzing how other characters actively discriminate and bully her, Pecola's internalization of racism and her strong desire to fit into white beauty standards should be taken into account.

Wishing to look like a white girl, Pecola is fascinated when she first sees the Shirley Temple cup in Claudia and Frieda's house. As Claudia narrates, "Frieda brought her [Pecola] [...] some milk in a blue-and-white Shirley Temple cup. She was a long time with the milk, and gazed fondly at the silhouette of Shirley Temple's dimpled face. Frieda and she had a loving conversation about how cu-ute Shirley Temple was" (Morrison, 1994, p. 17). As the narrative demonstrates, Pecola admires Shirley Temple, an American actress with blonde hair and green eyes. Pecola's behavior indicates that her idea of beauty is embedded in whiteness, which clearly reflects her subconscious adoption of white beauty standards. Similarly, Pecola loves Mary Jane candies, on which there is a blonde-haired and blue-eyed girl. As it is narrated in the novel, "To Pecola they are simply pretty. She eats the candy, and its sweetness is good. To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane" (Morrison, 1994, p. 48). Contemplating the narrative, it is possible to argue that Pecola really wishes to look like Mary Jane and even be Mary Jane, in other words, she wants to be white, have blonde hair and blue eyes.

Although Pecola does not admit that she wants to have blonde hair, she is very aware of the fact that she really wants to have blue eyes, which she always prays for. Her wish does not only reflect her embracement of white beauty standards but also her desire to get positive reactions from other black people. She knows that she is seen as an ugly black girl and believes that blue eyes will make her beautiful not only in her own opinion but also in other people's opinions. According to the narrative, "Each

night, without fail, she [Pecola] prayed for blue eyes. Fervently, for a year she had prayed. Although somewhat discouraged, she was not without hope. To have something as wonderful as that happen would take a long, long time. Thrown, in this way, into the binding conviction that only a miracle could relieve her, she would never know her beauty. She would see only what there was to see: the eyes of other people” (Morrison, 1994, p. 44-5). As the narrative suggests, Pecola perceives herself through the eyes of other people. More precisely, she believes that she is ugly, since the characters impose this belief on her, as they evaluate people’s appearance based on white beauty standards. Pecola’s strong belief that she is ugly, which is mostly a result of other people’s responses to her appearance, is emphasized in the narrative: “Long hours she [Pecola] sat looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike” (Morrison, 1994, p. 43). As the narrative demonstrates, Pecola’s appearance does not only cause other people to make negative comments about her appearance but also results in their disliking and bullying her. Therefore, Pecola subconsciously thinks that her blue eyes will not only change people’s thoughts and remarks about her appearance but also their behavior towards her. For instance, she believes that her parents will stop fighting if she is granted blue eyes: “if those eyes of hers were different, that is to say, beautiful, she herself would be different. [...] 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.”” (Morrison, 1994, p. 44).

Besides Pecola’s own perception of her ugliness, which reflects her internalization of other characters’ negative comments, internalized racism and strong desire to comply with white beauty standards, some characters also consider her ugly and express their views with their hurtful remarks. As it has been mentioned before, Junior and Soaphead Church both consider Pecola ugly or, in other words, “pitifully unattractive,” (Morrison, 1994, p. 171). Geraldine also thinks negatively about Pecola’s appearance and expresses her discontentment with it through her wounding remarks: “You nasty little black bitch” (Morrison, 1994, p. 90). Besides these characters, the black boys and Maureen Peal also persecute Pecola by mocking her and calling her “black e mo” (Morrison, 1994, p. 63, 71). Similarly, her classmates always choose not to be friends with Pecola and bully her, and her teachers ignore her in the most possible

ways, which both victimize her and make her feel very lonely. Even the idea of loving Pecola turns into an insult for any boy in the class, which demonstrates the strong hatred and contempt that her classmates feel for Pecola, because of their internalized racism and strong belief in white beauty standards. As it is narrated:

She [Pecola] was the only member of her class who sat alone at a double desk. [...] Her teachers had always treated her this way. They tried never to glance at her, and called on her only when everyone was required to respond. She also knew that when one of the girls at school wanted to be particularly insulting to a boy, or wanted to get an immediate response from him, she could say. “Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove! Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove!” and never fail to get peals of laughter from those in earshot, and mock anger from the accused (Morrison, 1994, p. 43-4).

Just as she is ignored by her teachers, Pecola is also ignored and refused to be seen by Mr. Yacobowski, who does not persecute Pecola with any hurtful remarks but rather makes it obvious that he does not want to recognize her as a human being and disregard her. When Pecola is in Mr. Yacobowski’s store to buy Mary Jane candies and about to pay him three pennies for the candies, she realizes that he does not actually see her and interprets his look as contempt that she sees in white people’s eyes, which is again a clear indication of their and Mr. Yacobowski’s racist stance. According to the narrative:

At some fixed point in time and space he [Mr. Yacobowski] senses that he need not waste the effort of a glance. He does not see her [Pecola], because for him there is nothing to see. How can a fifty-two-year-old white immigrant storekeeper with the taste of potatoes and beer in his mouth, his mind honed on the doe-eyed Virgin Mary, his sensibilities blunted by a permanent awareness of loss, see a little black girl? Nothing in his life even suggested that the feat was possible, not to say desirable or necessary. [...] She [Pecola] looks up at him and sees the vacuum where curiosity ought to lodge. And something more. The total absence of human recognition—the glazed separateness. She does not know what keeps his glance suspended. Perhaps because he is grown, or a man, and she a little girl. But she has seen interest, disgust, even anger in grown male eyes. Yet this vacuum is not new to her. It has an edge; somewhere in the bottom

lid is the distaste. She has seen it lurking in the eyes of all white people. So. The distaste must be for her, her blackness. All things in her are flux and anticipation. But her blackness is static and dread. And it is the blackness that accounts for, that creates, the vacuum edged with distaste in white eyes (Morrison, 1994, p. 46-7).

As the narrative demonstrates, Pecola subconsciously believes that Mr. Yacobowski's not being able to recognize her as a human being and ignorance of her are results of her blackness, which she knows that it will not change over time. She has also experienced this kind of looks of other white people that show no acknowledgement and affection for her, which makes it obvious that she has been subjected to racism of white people, as well as of black ones. In fact, all these analyses conclude that regardless of whether they are white or black, many people that live in Lorain, Ohio show racist attitudes and express racist remarks. While some of them insult Pecola and overtly discriminate her, some others covertly discriminate her with their implicit behavior. However, in either case, Pecola is regarded as worthless and forced to become a victim.

4.3.2.6. Claudia

In the novel, Claudia is the only character who refuses to lead a life based on internalized racism and white beauty standards. In fact, she defies them strongly with her statements and actions. One of her actions that demonstrates that she rejects white beauty standards is her hatred of Shirley Temple, unlike Frieda and Pecola, who admire her and find her cute. As she narrates, "Younger than both Frieda and Pecola, I had not yet arrived at the turning point in the development of my psyche which would allow me to love her. What I felt at that time was unsullied hatred" (Morrison, 1994, p. 17). What frightens Claudia more than her hatred for Shirley Temple is her wish to dismember white dolls and white girls, which she both hate. She claims that she has "destroyed white baby dolls" (Morrison, 1994, p. 17) and the reason behind her action is to find out why she does not like them when other people adore them. However, by time she finds her violence repulsive and generated fraudulent love for white girls and dolls to hide her hatred. As she states:

The best hiding place was love. Thus the conversion from pristine sadism to fabricated hatred, to fraudulent love. It was a small step to Shirley Temple. I learned much later to worship her, just as I learned to delight in cleanliness, knowing, even as I learned, that the change was adjustment without improvement (Morrison, 1994, p. 21).

Even though Claudia never says it explicitly, what makes her fraudulently love white girls and dolls as she grows up is her being gradually exposed to black society's internalized racism and adoption of white beauty standards. As she claims, she has learned to love Shirley Temple by time and it has been "adjustment," which suggests that she has embraced black society's values subconsciously and gradually. However, as a child who was not exposed to these socially constructed and wrong views, she was determined to defy internalized racism and white beauty standards. She also had self-esteem, which proves that she loved herself and being black and did not wish to be white, contrary to the other black characters in the novel. Claudia narrated when she thought about how she and Frieda loved themselves and realized that she and Frieda were regarded as inferior to Maureen and wondered what made them less than Maureen and people like Maureen. As she narrated:

If she [Maureen] was cute—and if anything could be believed, she *was*—then we were not. And what did that mean? We were lesser. Nicer, brighter, but still lesser. Dolls we could destroy, but we could not destroy the honey voices of parents and aunts, the obedience in the eyes of our peers, the slippery light in the eyes of our teachers when they encountered the Maureen Peals of the world. What was the secret? What did we lack? Why was it important? And so what? Guileless and without vanity, we were still in love with ourselves then. We felt comfortable in our skins, enjoyed the news that our senses released to us, admired our dirt, cultivated our scars, and could not comprehend this unworthiness. Jealousy we understood and thought natural—a desire to have what somebody else had; but envy was a strange, new feeling for us. And all the time we knew that Maureen Peal was not the Enemy and not worthy of such intense hatred. The *Thing* to fear was the *Thing* that made *her* beautiful, and not us (Morrison, 1994, p. 72).

As the narrative suggests, Claudia feels that there is something undefinable that makes her feel inferior to Maureen and even though she can destroy all white dolls in the world, she cannot eliminate people's admiration of girls like Maureen. Contemplating Claudia's narrative, the reader can see that she refers to herself and Frieda, with her use of the subjective pronoun "we" in the narrow sense. Nonetheless, she refers to black people who do not comply with white beauty standards in the broad sense. Her narrative demonstrates that people who conform with white beauty standards are valued and admired more by other people, compared to others who do not. Despite these, Claudia is satisfied with herself, since she has never internalized racism and tried to fit into white beauty standards. However, she is still trying to figure out what makes Maureen Peal more beautiful and cuter compared to herself and Frieda and in the broad sense, many other black people who do not have light skin. Her statement about the *Thing* makes the reader try to come up with an answer to define it. It can be argued that the *Thing* that causes Claudia and Frieda to be less admired than Maureen is their non-compliance with white beauty standards. As another answer, Bump (2010) suggests that the *Thing* is "judging by appearance" (p. 152). Considering both of these as right suggestions to define the *Thing*, it is possible to claim that the *Thing* is judging one's appearance based on standards of white beauty. In the novel, almost all black characters, but especially black female characters, feel wounded and turn out to be victims because of this, while some others become other ones' persecutors. In his article, "White Beauty Standard in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*," Islam (2019) also refers to the idea of beauty, white beauty standards and how the female characters feel about it. He succinctly explains how *The Bluest Eye* portrays these concepts. As he states, the novel "challenges Western standards of beauty and demonstrates that the concept of beauty is socially constructed" (Islam, 2019, p. 189). He adds that the novel also "focuses on the damage that the black women characters suffer through the construction of white beauty standard in racialised society" (Islam, 2019, p. 189).

4. 4. Male Oppression

4.4.1. The description of male oppression and patriarchy

Male oppression is one of the most predominant and moving themes in the novel, since it has a great role in understanding how power dynamics between the

characters of the same or different genders affect them and cause some of them to be victims and other ones to be persecutors. Before explaining the source of male oppression and how it is noticeable in the novel, the word “oppression” should be elucidated. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines “oppression” as “unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power” (Merriam-Webster, n.d). As this definition and the word “male” suggest, male oppression could be defined as unjust power exercised by the male on people. The source of male oppression is obviously patriarchy. Kate Millet (1977), one of the most prominent feminists of the modern era, describes the principles of patriarchy as: “Men [...] dominate female and elder male [...] dominate younger” (p. 69). With her explanation, Millett describes patriarchy in the narrow sense. Lerner (1986) makes a similar description of patriarchy and points out that “patriarchy refers to the system historically derived from Greek and Roman law, in which the male head of household had absolute legal and economic power over his dependent female and male family members” (p. 217). Elucidating patriarchy in a different way, Akgül (2017) defines patriarchy in a broader sense and emphasizes “ruler-subject binary,” which is a concept that these previous authors do not mention. As she claims: “Patriarchy is a concept that refers to power and control between an object and subject [...] therefore the ruler-subject binary. Additionally, this relationship could be observed between a hegemonic state and a developing country. It can be observed between two women [...]” (Akgül, 2017, p. 44).

As these descriptions demonstrate, patriarchy does not only position the male as the ruler and dominator of the female but also enable them to control and have power over the younger male. However, patriarchy is not limited to these power dynamics. In fact, it is more than power dynamics between genders and between younger and older males but “ruler-subject binary” as Akgül (2017) emphasizes. “Ruler-subject binary” definitely refers to one’s dominance and oppression of another, while the other one is regarded to be weak and victimized, regardless of their genders. This argumentation is a perfect way to explain how male oppression occurs between two or more men and regardless of whether they are old or young. What is important in the argumentation is that one side of the conflict is more powerful than the other one and oppresses them with their power. Considering this logic, the reader could understand that a man could be subjected to male oppression because of different reasons, such as economic power,

position in society, profession, race, or ethnicity. Although other reasons may be added to these, the reason what causes men to oppress another man is race in the novel.

4.4.2. Cholly's past traumatic experience with the white men

Cholly's past traumatic experience with the white men is one of the most poignant parts of the novel, which enables the reader to understand how Cholly has been a victim and how he has turned into a misogynistic and violent man towards black women and eventually ended up being Pecola's greatest persecutor. Before analyzing the impacts of the trauma on Cholly's psychology, the reader needs to know about how the incident has occurred. On the day of Aunt Jimmy's funeral, Cholly and his cousin Jake went for a stroll with two girls named Darlene and Suky. Soon they came to an open field and "Jake and Suky were nowhere in sight" (Morrison, 1994, p. 143). Being alone with each other, Cholly and Darlene started having sex and during the act, they realized that two white men were standing close to them and watching them: "There stood two white men. One with a spirit lamp, the other with a flashlight. There was no mistake about their being white; he [Cholly] could smell it. Cholly jumped, trying to kneel, stand, and get his pants up all in one motion. The men had long guns" (Morrison, 1994, p. 145).

While the white men were watching Cholly and Darlene, they were also laughing. The one holding the flashlight told Cholly: "Get on wid it, nigger" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146). Cholly replied "Sir?" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146) when he was trying to pull up his pants. As his reply demonstrates, he was afraid of the white men and did not know what to do. He surely wanted to get dressed and leave but could not. One of the white men replied "I said, get on wid it. An' make it good, nigger, make it good" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146). Meanwhile, the man holding the flashlight "lifted his gun down from his shoulder, and Cholly heard the clonk of metal" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146). Feeling really afraid that he and Darlene could get shot, Cholly felt obliged to have sexual intercourse with Darlene. "With a violence born of total helplessness, he pulled her [Darlene's] dress up, lowered his trousers and underwear. [...] He [Cholly] could do no more than make-believe" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146). As this part of the narrative demonstrates, feeling humiliated and very afraid, Cholly was not able to have sex with Darlene in front of the white men. Realizing this, one of the white men said "Come on,

coon. Faster. You ain't doing nothing for her" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146). "Cholly, moving faster, looked at Darlene. He hated her" (Morrison, 1994, p. 146). Before Cholly was able to perform any sexual acts, the white men left and while they were leaving, they insulted Cholly. One of them said "the coon ain't comed yet" and the other responded "Good luck, coon baby" (Morrison, 1994, p. 147).

With their deviant behavior and derogatory remarks, the white men did not only sexually harass Cholly and Darlene but also persecuted them harshly by threatening them with their gun and also with their racist insults to Cholly. It is possible to argue that the trauma did not only invoke fear and feelings of humiliation for Cholly but also resulted in his anger with the white race, which he subconsciously projected on black women. As it is narrated in the novel:

Sullen, irritable, he cultivated his hatred of Darlene. Never did he once consider directing his hatred toward the hunters. Such an emotion would have destroyed him. They were big, white, armed men. He was small, black, helpless. His subconscious knew what his conscious mind did not guess—that hating them would have consumed him, burned him up like a piece of soft coal, leaving only flakes of ash and a question mark of smoke. He was, in time, to discover that hatred of white men—but not now. Not in impotence but later, when the hatred could find sweet expression. For now, he hated the one who had created the situation, the one who bore witness to his failure, his impotence. The one whom he had not been able to protect, to spare, to cover from the round moon glow of the flashlight (Morrison, 1994, p. 148-9).

As the narrative suggests, Cholly subconsciously felt so impotent against the white men that he could not even feel his extreme rage and abhorrence for them but instead projected his anger and hatred onto Darlene and black women, who had no fault in Cholly's traumatic experience. Later in his life, Cholly "killed three white men" (Morrison, 1994, p. 157). Although these murders were not narrated in detailed, it was obvious that they were clear reflections of his anger and hatred he felt for white men. Considering Cholly's trauma and his following feelings concerning it, one could infer that he has been through a strong form of male oppression because of his race. The trauma obviously victimized Cholly and had very damaging impacts on his psychology.

It most importantly caused his great hatred of black women and misogynistic attitude. In the following years of his life, these turned Cholly into a persecutor to his wife Mrs. Breedlove and his daughter Pecola.

4.4.3.Cholly's rape of Pecola

It is possible to claim that rape is one of the greatest forms of male oppression that a female could go through. Considering its damaging impacts, one could easily question why a man rapes a female. In her landmark work *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, Susan Brownmiller (1975) explains the main reason of rape with her following words: “[...] rape is the quintessential act by which a male demonstrates to a female that she is conquered—vanquished—by his superior strength and power” (p. 49). As her explanation suggests, men's rape of the female is the result of their wish to display their power and possess the woman. Although Brownmiller's explanation for the reason of rape is generally true for almost any case of rape, it does not elucidate all the reasons why Cholly has raped her daughter Pecola. In fact, the word “rape” does not even express how grotesque Cholly's action is, since it is not just rape but also a clear epitome of incest, which makes it more abhorrent than a rape performed by someone, who is not a member of the family. Before elaborating on the reasons why Cholly has become a persecutor to Pecola in such an unconscionable way, incest and its detrimental effects on children should be explained.

In his article “Incest,” David Lester (1972) defines incest in the narrow sense and claims that “Incestuous behavior primarily involves sexual intercourse between a father and his daughter, a mother and her son, or a brother and his sister” (p. 268). However, legal and psychological definitions of incest go beyond this. As Lester (1972) further explains, “incest is defined as adultery or fornication between persons of nearer kin by affinity than cousins” (p. 268). As Lester's description indicates, incestuous behavior is not limited to the nuclear family but it may also happen between relatives, who are not very close. However, incest between distant relatives is not very usual and indeed, father-daughter incest is one of the most common kinds of incest, as Rhinehart (1961) emphasizes (p. 340). What Cholly has done to Pecola is definitely a crystal-clear example of father-daughter incest and its detrimental effects on Pecola's psychology

cannot be denied. Considering its damaging impacts, Forward and Buck (1989) regard incest as “the cruelest, most baffling of human experiences. It is a betrayal of the most basic trust between child and parent. It is emotionally devastating” (p. 125). Forward and Buck (1989) elucidate why incest is emotionally destructive and claim that the reason behind is that victims, who are children, “are totally dependent on their aggressors, so they have nowhere to run, no one to run to. Protectors become persecutors” (p. 125). In fact, what hurts the victim the most is their ostensibly trustworthy parent’s turning into the child’s persecutor and betraying the child’s trust.

In patriarchal society, “the vast majority of incest perpetrators (uncles, older brothers, stepfathers, and fathers) are male, and [...] the majority of victims (nieces, younger sisters, and daughters) are female” (Herman & Hirschman, 2000, p. 3), just like in the case of Cholly and Pecola. Herman and Hirschman (2000) point out that the reason behind this data is “male supremacy and female oppression” (p. 3), which is also true for unequal power dynamics between a male and a female family member. Even though Herman and Hirschman are right in their claims, it can be argued that all child-adult relationships are unequal, since all children depend on their parents for survival and nurturing, regardless of the parent’s and the child’s genders. However, due to patriarchal society that enables superiority of male and persecution of female, “The relationship between father and daughter, adult male and female child, is one of the most unequal relationships imaginable. It is no accident that incest occurs most often precisely in the relationship where the female is most powerless” (Herman & Hirschman, 2000, p. 4). Considering Herman and Hirschman’s explanations about patriarchal order and how it enables a father-daughter incest, it is not very surprising that there are many victims of father-daughter incest, just like Pecola.

Contemplating on the reasons why Cholly has raped Pecola, it is possible to state that these reasons cannot be limited to a definite number and more reasons could be inferred and added by the reader. Nonetheless, there are obvious reasons that could enlighten the reader on Cholly’s psychology. As it is narrated in the novel, Cholly has a range of thoughts and feels a variety of strong emotions, just before he rapes Pecola:

Cholly saw her [Pecola] dimly and could not tell what he saw or what he felt. Then he became aware that he was uncomfortable; next he felt the discomfort dissolve into pleasure. The sequence of his emotions was revulsion, guilt, pity,

then love. His revulsion was a reaction to her young, helpless, hopeless presence. [...] He wanted to break her neck—but tenderly. Guilt and impotence rose in a bilious duet. What could he do for her—ever? What give her? What say to her? What could a burned-out black man say to the hunched back of his eleven-year-old daughter? If he looked into her face, he would see those haunted, loving eyes. The hauntedness would irritate him—the love would move him to fury. How dare she love him? Hadn't she any sense at all? What was he supposed to do about that? Return it? How? [...] His hatred of her slimed in his stomach and threatened to become vomit (Morrison, 1994, p. 159-160).

As the narrative demonstrates, Cholly has ambivalent feelings about Pecola; he loves her, pities her and hates her at the same time. One could infer that his feelings of strong hatred is the detrimental result of his past traumatic experience with the white men and his projection of his extreme anger on black women, including his daughter. Another reason, which plays an effective role in his rape of Pecola is his subconscious self-hatred and strong feelings of worthlessness. Having these feelings about himself, Cholly cannot comprehend why Pecola loves him as her father and he does not know how to love her properly. Although this actually causes deep feelings of self-hatred for himself, Cholly projects these feelings on Pecola and feels a deep sense of revulsion at her. Although there can never be a justifiable reason to rape one's own daughter, these feelings in Cholly's subconscious could be enumerated as the reasons behind his unhealthy mental state, which eventually have resulted in his rape of Pecola and made him her greatest persecutor, who has caused her extensive psychological damage.

After what she has gone through, it is expected that Pecola experiences many detrimental impacts of her trauma and loses her sanity. In her book *The Ultimate Betrayal: The Enabling Mother, Incest and Sexual Abuse*, Audrey Ricker (2006) claims that "The effects of childhood sexual abuse on survivors include: post-traumatic stress disorder [...]; depression and anxiety; [...] general behavior problems [...]; poor self-esteem [...]; and disruptive behavior" (p. 6). Although narrative of the novel does not describe how Pecola reflects all these damaging impacts, it can still be argued that she has experienced these and eventually lost her mental health. These detrimental effects of incest undoubtedly play significant roles in turning Pecola into the ultimate victim at the end of the other. Nonetheless, what makes her even more victimized is her

mother's disbelief in her and beating her when she told her about being raped by Cholly. Because of this, Pecola is not only persecuted by Cholly's rape but also deeply traumatized by Mrs. Breedlove's reaction to her. Pecola's traumatic experience resulting from her mother's response could be summed up in Forward and Glynn's wise statement: "Daughters pay an unfathomable price when their mothers are aware that they are being sexually abused and do nothing" (2013, p. 127). The authors also define Pecola's trauma as "the double betrayal of sexual abuse" (2013, p. 127), which is a succinct description of what she has been through.

4.4.4. The black community

People who have made Pecola an ultimate victim at the end of the novel are not only her mother and father but also the black community living in Lorain, Ohio. Living in patriarchal society and embracing patriarchal norms, some of these people believe that Pecola is the one to blame for being raped. One of them says "She [Pecola] carry some of the blame. [...] How come she didn't fight him [Cholly]? (Morrison, 1994, p. 187). These remarks undoubtedly demonstrate patriarchal attitude of blaming the victim of rape, instead of the perpetrator. In addition, these people never feel any compassion and show empathy for Pecola but rather feel aghast and revolted for her and her baby, who is the result of the incest. Most of them even wants the baby to die. One of them says "She [Pecola] be lucky if it don't live. Bound to be the ugliest thing walking" (Morrison, 1994, p. 187). This cruel remark certainly reflects the common belief that incest is immoral and a taboo in society. Although incest may be morally wrong, it is still inconsiderate for people of the black community to blame Pecola and treat her just like a male oppressor treats a female that he regards as weak. Considering Pecola's unjust and cruel treatment, one could deduce that Pecola is harshly oppressed by the black community that is hypocritical and ostensibly decent but actually judgmental.

In fact, the only ones who want Pecola's baby to live are Claudia and Frieda. Unlike the people of the black community, they feel deeply sad about Pecola's rape and her baby. As Claudia narrates:

And I believe our sorrow was the more intense because nobody else seemed to share it. They [the people of the black community] were disgusted, amused, shocked, outraged, or even excited by the story. But we listened for the one who would say, “Poor little girl,” or, “Poor baby,” but there was only head-wagging where those words should have been. We looked for eyes creased with concern, but saw only veils (Morrison, 1994, p. 188).

Reading Claudia’s narrative, the reader can deduce that the black community has a range of feelings about what has happened to Pecola but none of them, except Claudia and Frieda, feel sad for Pecola and show her sympathy, which emphasizes the black community’s insensitivity and superficial embracement of morality.

At the end of the novel, Claudia narrates how the black community persecutes Pecola and feels superior to her by turning her into a scapegoat:

All of our waste which we dumped on her [Pecola] and which she absorbed. And all of our beauty, which was hers first and which she gave to us. All of us—all who knew her—felt so wholesome after we cleaned ourselves on her. We were so beautiful when we stood astride her ugliness. Her simplicity decorated us, her guilt sanctified us, her pain made us glow with health, her awkwardness made us think we had a sense of humor. Her inarticulateness made us believe we were eloquent. Her poverty kept us generous. Even her waking dreams we used—to silence our own nightmares. And she let us, and thereby deserved our contempt. We honed our egos on her, padded our characters with her frailty, and yawned in the fantasy of our strength (Morrison, 1994, p. 203).

As Claudia’s narrative demonstrates, the black community feels empowered as Pecola gets weaker. They feed on binary oppositions, of which they are described with adjectives having positive meanings, while Pecola is defined with ones that have negative connotations. Blaming Pecola and projecting their self-hatred and self-contempt on her, they feel better about themselves. Indeed, their reactions to Pecola’s rape and pregnancy have a great impact on Pecola’s losing her sanity. As Claudia adds in her narrative: “She [Pecola] was sad to see. Grown people looked away; children, those who were not frightened by her, laughed outright. The damage done was total” (Morrison, 1994, p. 202). Based on this part of the narrative, one could infer that the

black community is also one of Pecola's persecutors and they are almost as guilty as her parents of turning her into the greatest victim in the novel.

4.5. "Double Jeopardy" (Double Discrimination of Black Women)

It is a well-known fact that the black is usually racially discriminated and persecuted in a society that values whiteness. Therefore, discrimination and oppression are what almost all black people go through. Even though both black men and women experience discrimination and oppression because of their race, black women are more discriminated and oppressed than black men because of their gender in patriarchal society. In their book *Double Burden: Black Women and Everyday Racism*, St. Jean and Feagin (1999) describe this kind of discrimination that black women go through as "'double- jeopardy" condition of having to deal with both racism and sexism" (p. 16). They further add that "Gendered racism separates the experiences of black women from black men" (p. 17). Bell Hooks (2015) makes a similarly illuminative statement about this issue in her landmark book *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* and emphasizes that both race and sex are inseparably determinant factors of black women's experience. As she claims:

I was disturbed by the white women's liberationists' insistence that race and sex were two separate issues. My life experience had shown me that the two issues were inseparable, that at the moment of my birth, two factors determined my destiny, my having been born black and my having been born female (p. 12).

In *The Bluest Eye*, although double discrimination is not a theme, which is as predominant as Pecola's being rape, internalized racism, and white beauty standards, it should not be overlooked, since it plays a great role in victimization of black women in society and also the black female characters. In the novel, Aunt Jimmy's friends are depicted as the black female characters who have experienced "double jeopardy." According to the narrative:

Everybody in the world was in a position to give them orders. White women said, "Do this." White children said, "Give me that." White men said, "Come here." Black men said, "Lay down." The only people they need not take orders from were black children and each other. [...] They ran the houses of white

people, and knew it. When white men beat their men, they cleaned up the blood and went home to receive abuse from the victim (Morrison, 1994, p. 136).

As the narrative indicates, these black female characters are oppressed and victimized by white men and women and also by black men. When their black men are persecuted by white men, they lash out their anger and hatred of white men on the black women and abuse them. Being victims to white men, these black men choose to persecute their wives in order to feel more powerful. These undeniably prove how the black female characters experience double discrimination because of their race and gender and become inevitable victims in patriarchal and racist society.

4.6. Conclusion

Proposed by Karpman in 1968, the drama triangle was barely known when *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison was published in 1970. Despite this, the concept manifests itself in the novel when it is analyzed in-depth, since the characters perform the drama triangle with their actions and feelings. The characters subconsciously take up the roles in the drama triangle and some of them switch their roles, while some others remain in one role. In fact, there are particular reasons why the characters subconsciously choose to engage in the drama triangle and change or keep their roles. These reasons could be enumerated as the characters' dysfunctional families, past traumatic experiences, their addictions, dependencies, and their inferior position in racist and patriarchal Black community in Lorain, Ohio. Why specific characters are victimized because of their race and patriarchal society has been explained based on the theories of postcolonialism and feminism. Other concepts have been elucidated based on prominent psychologists' and authors' descriptions and explanations. Ultimately, this study concludes that racial discrimination does not only occur because of white people but also due to black people's attitudes demonstrating that they have internalized racism. Embracing racism, values concerning whiteness and white beauty standards, the black characters persecute one another and also feel victimized as they cannot comply with these values and standards. Their non-conformity with these generates their self-hatred and self-contempt and their oppression of others and self-victimization never end. In this vicious cycle of persecution and victimization, the characters end up being both victims and persecutors. The only character who always remains as the victim is Pecola. She is

persecuted by different characters and due to a wide range of reasons, which are her dysfunctional family, physical appearance, rape and pregnancy. Knowing that Pecola's pregnancy is a result of her father's rape, the black community still does not feel any sympathy and consideration for her. Yet, they feel better and empowered by humiliating Pecola. While they believe that their actions demonstrate positive adjectives of binary oppositions, they treat Pecola in a way, which emphasizes that she is the embodiment of negative adjectives serving as antonyms of the positive ones. With these themes, references to unfair systems of patriarchy and racism and extensive depiction of how an innocent black little girl is turned into a victim of greatest oppression, *The Bluest Eye* is one of the landmark novels that thoroughly manifests the drama triangle and makes the reader contemplate unjust oppression and victimization.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

These analyses suggest that although these novels were written in different time periods and by authors who did not have much in common, they both reveal the drama triangle in detail. The reason behind this is surely unjust systems who enable the stronger one to persecute the other one, which brings about the oppression of the weaker. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Tess is generally oppressed and ends up the victim, because of Alec's misogynistic insults, rape and patriarchal Victorian society that she lived in. She is also oppressed because of capitalist Victorian society and could be considered an exploited worker, who makes less money than she deserves and also earns less money than her male counterparts. The unjust capitalist system and her family's consecutive poverty have also forced Tess to accept Alec's immoral proposal of becoming his mistress. While Tess's being a victim of Alec due to his patriarchal and misogynistic insults and rape has been analyzed through Feminist theory, Tess's exploitation as a worker and almost obligatory and unwilling decision to become Alec's mistress have been analyzed through Marxist theory. Social classes of the characters and their families have also been elucidated based on general categorization of classes in Victorian England, which constitutes of the aristocrats, the middle class and the upper class, and Marx's categorization of classes, which are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. At the end of the novel, Tess makes a courageous act by murdering Alec, which could be figuratively interpreted as her rebel against the unjust systems. Despite her rebellious act, she cannot destroy these unfair systems and ends up a victim and has to settle down for an ending that she has never deserved.

In *The Bluest Eye*, just like Tess, Pecola is generally a victim and ends up the ultimate victim at the end of the novel and has to accept a fate that she does not deserves, which is reminiscent of Tess's unjust ending. In a strikingly similar way to Tess, Pecola is also victimized by the greatest form of male oppression, which is rape. Both Tess and Pecola cannot articulate their unfortunate experiences and cannot stand up for themselves, which cause them to be even more victimized. This also demonstrates how the female are usually silenced in patriarchal society and end up victims, since they are regarded to be weaker than the male, because of patriarchal beliefs and upbringing of youth. It is apparent that Pecola is persecuted not only because of his father's rape of

her, but also due to unsympathetic and cruel attitudes of the black community that she lives in. As the black community embraces patriarchal beliefs, most of them blame Pecola for the rape and does not show any sympathy for her and her dead baby, which is really similar to the reaction that patriarchal Victorian society has given to Tess's rape and her illegitimate child. Both societies' responses to the protagonists clearly demonstrate that despite the different eras, both societies are patriarchal and the black community in Ohio has not become more modern and feminist, although *The Bluest Eye* was written more recently than *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

Pecola is also victimized because of internalized racism most characters in the novel embrace. In fact, they do not only victimize Pecola but also victimize one another with their racist stance. Therefore, although Pecola is the ultimate victim in the novel, she is not the only victim. Mrs. Breedlove, Soaphead Church and Geraldine are also victims, since they adopt values concerning whiteness—which a clear demonstration of their internalized racism—but cannot comply with them. Because of their embracement of binary oppositions concerning whiteness and blackness, these characters make a lot of pressure on themselves in order to conform to these values and feel like victims, as they are unable to comply with them. These characters and also many others embrace white beauty standards, which is an understandable result of their internalized racism, and persecute anyone, including themselves, who does not comply with these beauty standards. Therefore, Pecola is persecuted and sometimes ignored but eventually ends up the victim many times, just as Mrs. Breedlove also is. However, some characters who have light skin and can comply with white beauty standards to some degree, are admired and idealized by others. Although Pecola is not fully aware of these values, she is racially discriminated since she cannot comply with white beauty standards and considered to be ugly, which also affect the way people living in the black community treat her. Since she has a dark skin and cannot comply with white beauty standards, she is treated badly and subconsciously believes that her having blue eyes could change her own opinion about herself and also the other characters' demeaning attitudes towards her. Consequently, it can be argued that Pecola is the ultimate victim of the novel because of the black community's internalized racism and embracement of white beauty standards, as well as due to her dysfunctional family and her father's rape. Besides Pecola, other characters occasionally become victims and sometimes become persecutors because of these unrealistic standards that they adopt.

Considering these analyses, one could claim that what is common between these novels is definitely the protagonist's victimization and oppression because of unfair systems and the characters' embracement of these systems, which create the drama triangle. However, what is really different in these novels is the fact that the characters in *The Bluest Eye* become victims both because of the other characters' attitudes and also their own attitudes and beliefs. The same characters also become victims because of some others but also persecute some other characters, while "the Switch" happens less often in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. As another difference, the reader could see that although both Tess and Pecola are ultimate victims, the focus of the drama triangle is not only on Pecola when *The Bluest Eye* is analyzed based on the theories of feminism and postcolonialism. The focus is also on the other characters, since most of them become both victims and persecutors in different incidents, unlike Tess, who is generally the victim and unlike Alec, who is generally the persecutor.

At the times that both of these novels were published, the drama triangle was not known and research about its place in the field of literature had not been done yet. What is interesting here is that although the drama triangle was not known to exist in the field of literature at that time, it still manifested itself in the selected novels for the reader who knew the theory. The reason why the drama triangle is prevalent in these novels is the power dynamics between the characters, which enable some to be victims and other ones to be persecutors or rescuers. These power dynamics emerge because of any unjust system, which causes one to be "the superior" and the other one to be "the inferior." This study has aimed to analyze these power dynamics in both novels based on the theories of feminism, Marxism and postcolonialism. Besides these, concepts related to the drama triangle, which are dysfunctional families of the characters, 'the Switch,' addictions and dependencies have been explained based on distinguished psychologists and scholars' descriptions and how they emerge in the novels have been elucidated. As these analyses suggest, it is obvious that most of the time, the characters switch their roles in the drama triangle but sometimes a few of them subconsciously choose to remain in the same role. With these explanations and analyses, this study emphasizes that the drama triangle was existent long before it was proposed by Karpman and it should be paid more attention and used as a theoretical framework to analyze more literary works.

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