

THE GROTESQUE ELEMENTS AS PRESENTED IN TONI MORRISON'S
SULA AND BELOVED

MASTER'S PROJECT
BY
YUPIN KHAMMATIT

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
for the Master of Arts Degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University
May 2010

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การศึกษารองศ์ประกอบที่ผิดแปลกธรรมชาติในงานเขียนของโทนี่ มอร์ริสัน เรื่อง ซูล่าและบีเลฟว้ด

บทคัดย่อ
ของ
ยุพิน คามทิตยั

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

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งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อวิเคราะห์ร่องรอยที่ผิดแปลกธรรมดาในงานเขียนของโทนี่ มอร์ริสัน เรื่อง ชูล่า และปีเลฟเว็ด ในการศึกษาได้นำร่องรอยที่ผิดแปลกธรรมดาและสารสำคัญที่ซ่อนอยู่ในเนื้อเรื่องมาอธิบายของร่องรอยที่ปรากฏในเนื้อเรื่อง

จากผลของการศึกษาพบว่าร่องรอยที่ผิดแปลกธรรมดาได้แก่ ตัวละครที่มีลักษณะผิดแปลก ภูตผี สถานที่ที่มีวิญญาณสิงอยู่ เหตุการณ์ที่ผ่านไปในอดีต เหตุการณ์รุนแรงสะเทือนอารมณ์ และเหตุการณ์ที่ไม่น่าเชื่อ นอกจากประเด็นที่ผิดธรรมดาเหล่านี้แล้วในเนื้อเรื่องยังมีสารสำคัญที่ซ่อนอยู่เช่น การเหยียดเชื้อชาติและความเป็นทาสในสังคมอเมริกัน รวมถึงการพูดถึงบทบาทความเป็นแม่และความภูมิใจในตนเอง นักเขียนใช้ร่องรอยที่ผิดแปลกธรรมดาเพื่อกระตุ้นและปลุกเร้าความรู้สึกของผู้อ่านผ่านเรื่องราวของความรุนแรง น่าขยะแขยง ปรากฏการณ์เหนือธรรมชาติ และความโหดร้ายของผู้คน นอกจากนี้ร่องรอยที่ผิดแปลกธรรมดายังเป็นเครื่องมือที่มีประสิทธิภาพที่จะอธิบายเรื่องราวความแตกต่างทางเชื้อชาติและการเป็นทาสต่อผู้อ่านเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านและสังคมได้ตระหนักถึงปัญหาเหล่านี้

THE GROTESQUE ELEMENTS AS PRESENTED IN TONI MORRISON'S
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AN ABSTRACT
BY
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This study analysed grotesque elements that presented in *Sula* and *Beloved*, the novels by Toni Morrison. The grotesque elements and the subsurface messages were used to analyze the grotesque in the stories.

The findings of the study are strange characters, ghosts, haunted place, situations in the past, violence scenes and unbelievable situation. Apart from these elements there are subsurface message which hidden in the stories such as racism and slavery issues in American society and also motherhood and self-identity. The writer used the grotesque elements to provoke and arouse the feeling of the readers through the violence, nastiness, supernatural events and cruelty people. Besides, the grotesque elements are the powerful tools to use for tell the racial difference and slavery story to the readers. The writer wants to awake the society to look after these issues.

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Yupin Khammatit

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Fiction has been popular among readers all over the world. It fascinates readers and provokes emotional appeal in many subject matters. One of the fiction styles that attracted the readers is grotesque fiction. The elements that contained in grotesque fiction make this fiction more interesting. The grotesque elements are often presented through literature for very long time. The grotesque fiction first had shown up and very popular since medieval period. Although this is the millennium, people still believe in supernatural, fantasy, and unnatural events. According to Sigmund Freud, man has natural instinct about death and violence called Thanatos, which is the death-instinct or a natural desire to “re-establish a state of being that was disturbed by the emergence of life” (Yankelovich and Barrett, online). This idea could be the reason why man likes violent stories. The grotesque elements are not only employed in grotesque fiction but they also appear in others kind of fiction such as romantic fiction, detective fiction, or even in comedy fiction. The examples of the famous grotesque stories are Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, J.R.R Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, Karl Freund’s *The Mummy*. Besides, there are grotesque elements presented in children literature such as Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, L. Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Roald Dahl’s *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and J.K Rowling’s *Harry Potter*.

The term “grotesque” means strangely distorted so as to arouse fear or laughter, fantastic, bizarre or ugly (Oxford English Dictionary, 2006). The characteristic of grotesque writing style always arouse the emotion, imagination of the readers. Grotesque’s meaning is the same as the word “gothic”. In literature field, the word “gothic” always refers to Western

literature but “Grotesque” is often used in American literature. As stated by William Van O’Conner, “Grotesque” is an American genre merging tragedy and comedy” (1). There are many social issues in the South of America that related to grotesque such as the old agriculture system depleted, the land and poverty, breeds abnormality, and unjust treatment of the Negro. Moreover, grotesque has been seen everywhere in American life. In most of the grotesque stories, the protagonists suffer from an inability or affection from the poverty. There are many American writers who employ the grotesque elements to their fiction for example; Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allen Poe. They were usually considered to be the major American grotesque writers of the mid nineteenth century. Mostly, Poe’s stories present the irony in the stories and they always associate with life and death. *The Black Cat* (1843) is an example of his great works. Hawthorne’s *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) is the famous grotesque novel. Besides, William Faulkner was the great writer of Southern grotesque fiction because his works usually presents the tragedy of people in the South. Many of Faulkner’s short stories so clearly belong within a grotesque traditional. One of those short stories is *A Rose for Emily* (1930).

However, the great American grotesque writer in postcolonial period is Toni Morrison (Punter 55). Morrison’s novels concern black community and culture. Her novels also relate to racism and slavery. She tries to express racial oppression, violation issues in black community across the United States. The violation is located in all her novels and it is not only the violation between black and white but it is the violation between black communities also. The example of violation in her novel as Cholly’s rape his own daughter in *The Bluest Eyes*, Eva’s cremation her still-living son in *Sula*, Sethe’s infanticide in *Beloved*. All her novel is like the testimony to the trauma of racism and slavery. She wants to speak out the unspeakable secret of black community. That is the reason why all her novels present

the violence, pain, and tragedy. Morrison aims readers to fear the destructive of racism and slavery and after reading the story they should be sympathized to black people.

Morrison first shows the grotesque elements in *Sula*, which is a story of a woman who shows the devil like. Morrison embodies goodness and badness in one character. The story also presented violence and madness through many characters apart from Sula Peace, the protagonist character. These characters are Shadrack who is a shell-shock veteran from World War I, and Eva Peace who ends the life of her drug addicted son. This story is full of blood and unpleasant scenes.

In *Beloved*, Morrison presents African- American families concerning slavery. She portrays the impact of slavery through the grotesquely. She shows violence, and tragedy of black people. Sethe, the main character, has to murder her daughter to free her from slavery. But, that baby does not understand Sethe's intension so baby came back to her for revenge. Seth and Denver, her youngest daughter has to endure the power of the dead baby's spirit in the house. There are many grotesque scenes that are presented the strangely things in the house. Not only ghost but also the supernatural is shown in the story.

These selected stories obviously employ grotesque elements to present the history and culture of colonized nations. Morrison portrays the destructive of colonization through American slave life and African American society. She uses grotesque elements to show their tragic life through crime, breeding, rape, suicide, and limitation of their power. When readers read her stories, they experience fear, abhorrence, sympathize, and understand black people.

Because of outstanding grotesque elements presented in these two stories, the researcher would like to explore the grotesque elements that Morrison employs to present the tragedy of black people to readers. The researcher focuses only on the grotesque elements in the text of these two stories.

Purpose of the study

The purposes of this study are the following:

1. To specify what the grotesque elements are presented in the Toni Morrison's novels *Sula* and *Beloved*.
2. To explain how grotesque elements as presented in two novels.

Significance of the study

The study of grotesque elements in Toni Morrison's *Sula* and *Beloved* will be important in many ways. First, it will help the readers understand the concept of grotesque elements and broaden their background knowledge of grotesque elements presented in the stories. Second, the readers will understand how grotesque elements affect related situations. Finally, the reader can make use of this knowledge to understand other stories. The researcher aimed that this study can make the readers appreciate the stories and understand the suffering of black people.

Scope of the study

An examination of the grotesque elements in this research will be based on Toni Morrison's *Sula* and *Beloved*.

Procedures

This study is a descriptive analysis focusing on grotesque elements in *Sula* and *Beloved* which illustrated of selected events.

The body of this investigation is divided into 5 chapters as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction inclusive of the following:

- Background

- Purpose of the study
- Significance of the study
- Scope of the study
- Definition of term
- Procedure

Chapter II: Review of Related Literature.

Part one: Grotesque Fiction

Part two: Movement of Grotesque Fiction

Part three: Grotesque Elements

Part four: Biography and summary of selected works

- Related biography of Toni Morrison

- Summary of *Sula*

- Summary of *Beloved*

Part five: Related researches

- Related researches on grotesque elements.

- Related research on *Sula*

- Related research on *Beloved*

Chapter III: Analysis of *Sula*.

Chapter IV: Analysis of *Beloved*.

Chapter V: Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestion for further studies

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on the related literature which is divided into five major parts. The first part concerns the concept of grotesque. The second part provides background information of grotesque fiction. The third part discusses grotesque elements presented in earlier works. The fourth part discusses related biography and summaries of selected works of Toni Morrison. The last part discusses the related research as the background for this study.

1. Grotesque Fiction

The word “grotesque” derives from the Italian words “grottesca” and “grottesco”, which refer to the decorative form of arabesques with strange animal figures. That design was created in the fifteenth century during the Roman Empire (Thomson online). Grotesque is not the term used in architecture only but it is also used in art and literature. The word “grotesque” is employed in various kinds of art but the meaning of this term is quite similar. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines the term “grotesque” that is strangely distorted so as to arouse fear or laughter, fantastic, combining human, animal and plant forms in fantastic design, ridiculously exaggerated or unreasonable and absurd. *BBC English Dictionary* (2007: online), grotesque is the concept characterized by ludicrous or incongruous distortion, as of appearance or manner; outlandish or bizarre, as in character or appearance. *The Wikipedia Encyclopedia* (2007: online) mentions that grotesque involves estrange, fantastic, ugly or bizarre. It also explains the manner of grotesque Literature that a character is usually considered a grotesque if he induces both empathy and disgust. The example of that character should include the physically deformed mind and the mentally deficiency. Besides, Friedrich

Schlegel, the literary philosopher of irony mysticism states that grotesque fiction is linked to the terms comedy, tragedy and irony (qtd. in Thomson 107). Moreover, Thomson states that grotesque writing style always arouses emotion, imagination of readers. Contents of grotesque literature are about supernatural events, monsters, ghosts. They are uncanny, ugly, horrible, strange, and fantastic. In addition, it presents comedy, irony and tragedy (online).

Furthermore, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theories* explains grotesque as:

...commonly employed to denote the ridiculous, bizarre, extravagant, freakish and unnatural; in short, aberrations from the desirable norm of harmony, balance and proportion...
In a comparable way the writer employs grotesque for comic and satiric purposes. In literature one is most likely to find grotesque elements in caricature, parody, satire, invective, burlesque, black comedy, the macabre and what is known as the Theatre of the Absurd (qq.v.). Grotesque is often a constituent of comic relief (q.v.), the sick joke, sick verse (q.v.) and pornography (q.v.).

Besides, there are some theorists explain the outstanding meaning of grotesque with some other words. Sigmund Freud (122), he explains that grotesque is uncanny. He expresses that the uncanny is the elements to arouse dread, creeping horror, and fear. Besides, it is the class of terrifying which leads people back to some thing long known to us, once very familiar. The uncanny object is something familiar and old established in mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression. According to Phillip Thomson, he points that grotesque is related to absurdness and macabre. Absurdness is something ridiculous, highly eccentric or stupid. The absurdness always presents through irony, or through philosophic argument. Macabre means pertaining to death, gruesome and it is a heightening of the horror. It presents through crime, blood and suicide.

2. The purposes of using grotesque elements in fiction

Thomson (online) divides the purposes of using grotesque elements in fiction to five items. There are; aggressiveness and alienation, the psychological effect, tension and unresolvability, playfulness and the unintentional grotesque.

2.1 Aggressiveness and Alienation

Grotesque fiction always uses aggressive weapons because they create a sudden shock to readers. The weapons could be found in satirical, parody, burlesque contexts and in pure invective. Another effect of grotesque elements is alienation. Alienation is something that looks familiar and trusting but suddenly made strange and disturbing.

2.2 The Psychological Effect

It is hard to specify the psychological effect of the reader because grotesque fiction contained many facets. Readers have different feelings such as exciting, afraid and scarring. The laughter at the grotesque is not free since the reader is in the amusement moment but suddenly will be replaced by the horrifying and disgusting aspects, the guffaw becomes grimace.

2.3 Tension and Unresolvability

The grotesque affects the psychological tension of the reader. According to the nature of conflicting elements in grotesque, readers are confused with the tone of the novel. The comic elements, hysteria and spontaneous reaction to the drastically grotesque can both free and defend the feeling of the laughter.

2.4 Playfulness

The grotesque writers employ grotesque to their endless imagination. They can create things without frame of realism. The writers perform as the artists that do art works. At the same time, it looks like nonsense too. The purpose of the writer is only to entertain readers. The examples of the playfulness novels are *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*, *Harry Potter* and some of the fairly tales.

2.5 The Unintentional Grotesque

Sometimes, the grotesque may be purposeless. Some writers may not express anything in their writing but they do grotesque work because it is a popular style. Even, the reader may think that grotesque means nothing for them.

Kelly Hurley (39-52), expresses that the purposes of using grotesque elements in fiction are to shock, arouse and provoke feeling of readers, to make believe, and to play. Hurley explains that grotesque fiction can generate five symptoms to readers that are the uncanny, abjection, nausea, hysteria and pleasure. Because of the nature of conflicting elements in grotesque, readers are confused with the tone of the novel. The comic elements, hysteria and spontaneous reaction to the drastically grotesque can both free and defend the feeling of the laughter. Moreover, grotesque writers employ grotesque to their endless imagination. They can create the stories without frame of realism. The writers perform as the artists that do art works. At the same time, it can be considered as nonsense too because some situations are unreal. The purpose of the writer is only to entertain the reader. The examples of the playful novels are *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*, *Harry Potter* and fairly tales. In contrast, the grotesque may be purposeless. Some writers may not express anything in their

write but they do grotesque work because it is a popular style. Even, the reader may think that grotesque means nothing for them.

3. Grotesque Fiction Movement

Grotesque fiction began in the United Kingdom in 1764 when Horace Walpole mentioned this term to his novel *The Castle of Otranto*. Walpole set up his home at Strawberry Hill as the Gothic castle in the story. Walpole mixed the medieval romance and realism in the novel. There are many supernatural depicted in the novel such as the statue bleeds from the nose; a massive amour-clad foot appears in the gallery, and an arm on the stairs and an ancestor in a portrait hops out of the frame and walks away. The period of 1790s, can be called the decade of grotesque fiction because there are many great grotesque works. The most famous novel is *The Mysteries of Udolpho* written by Ann Radcliffe in 1794. Radcliffe presented a young woman as the heroine of the novel set in middle Ages. She set the landscape, and moods of the atmosphere to be fascinating and horrifying.

Charles Brockden Brown was the first American professional writer to transform the European grotesque to American grotesque tradition. Brown published four novels in between 1798 and 1800. These novels are concerned with precaution, murder, power, and terror of human's mind.

In 19th Century, grotesque was considered to be a genre that re-emerges with the particular force during the cultural crisis (Punter 39). The contents of grotesque novels in this period were related to sciences, crimes, desire and romantic grotesque. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* shows the growing fear about national, social and psychic decay. *Frankenstein* (1818) is Mary Shelly's novel. It is the modern style of the monster character. Frankenstein is the artificial creature. Shelly wanted to point out the danger of science. Readers should notice that science, materialism and civilization are not only in their life. Besides, Arthur Conan

Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* a detective story, shows the mysteries, terrors and horrors. It is explained by the penetrating mind, endower with a rationality that seems more than rational, and deviously criminal, the fantastic, spectral and diabolical (Botting 154). Moreover, Edgar Allen Poe is referred to as the father of the American grotesque because most of his fiction is grotesquely. His fictions arouse the emotion of readers. Most of them look strange because they consist of both comedy and tragedy in the same story. In addition, his works are connected with grotesque fiction and detective fiction. Besides, Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) is the well known story. It contains many grotesque elements and the story like the European grotesque. Hawthorne considers himself primarily a producer of romances, or fantastic tales, in opposition to the dominant trend of realist stories of contemporary life (Martin 129). In Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847), there are grotesque modes in the story such as the preternatural laughter sound and a madwoman who is imprisoned in the red room in the third storey of Mr. Rochester's house.

In 20th Century, the grotesque theme is very popular and influential everywhere. The grotesque novels, films and songs are available in the society. William Faulkner's grotesque work is most referred to by readers and critics. Faulkner is known as the symbol of Southern grotesque, his fiction belongs to the traditional grotesque. Southern grotesque fiction presents the madness, violence, macabre, and the continuing pressures of the past upon the present. Moreover it is the continuance of racial hostility (Punter and Byron 56). *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) is his famous novel. Besides, Emily Bronte is referred to as the grotesque woman writer in this period. She writes *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and makes her story interesting by using grotesque elements such as the ghost of Catherine and supernatural events.

Toni Morrison is also the one of the famous writer in this time. Her works present modern grotesque because they perform a recent and very significant revision and extension

of the American grotesque traditional. *Beloved* (1987) describes the haunted house, and the ghostly reminder of transgression which inhabits it. She provides the scene for narrative that moves between past and present to uncover the story. In the interweaving, she points out repressed individual history with a suppressed cultural history, the external and internal effect of racial oppression (Botting.161)

4. Grotesque Elements

Grotesque aspects could be employed to be the elements in the grotesque fiction. Elements are; strange, distorted, the characteristics of abnormal human, monsters, ghosts, ridiculously, exaggerated, supernatural, magic, uncanny, ugly, horrible, absurd, estrange, fantastic, ugly and bizarre. Toni Morrison presented grotesque elements through literary tools which are character, plot, setting, atmosphere, and symbols. Grotesque elements that mostly employed in literature can be seen from the following:

4.1 Characterization

4.1.1 Abnormal Human

Kelly Hurley (12), states that abnormal human is not quite human. It is something that loss the human being or becoming not itself. It is outcast. The abnormal human characterizes could present through the physical and mental. The abnormal physical human are presented as monster creatures for example snake woman, vampire, dog man. Besides, the abnormal mental human are presented through strange behaviors such as madness, crazy, drunk and addicted. The abnormal human is the creature of frightening, fantastic and horror.

4.1.2 Ghosts

According to Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle (199), ghost is fundamental to our thinking about the human, to be human is to have a spirit, a soul. But the common sense of ghost involves the idea of specter, an apparition of dead, and revenant. Ghosts disturbs our sense of the separation of the living from the dead that why they can be so frightening and uncanny.

4.2 Setting

4.2.1 Place

Frequently, place is the first element that leads readers to feel grotesque of the story. They are cathedral, castle, building, and house. The places might be ruined or intact, haunted or not. Besides, the dungeons, underground passages, crypts, and catacombs which, in modern houses, become spooky basements or attics. Ruined buildings which are sinister or which arouse a pleasing melancholy. Moreover, the grotesque presents through the extreme landscapes for instance, rugged mountains, thick forests, icy wastes and extreme weather for example, the castle called Wuthering Height in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. The castle was the main place in the novel. It was very large and full of the grotesque carving decoration but desolate.

4.2.2 Time

Many grotesque fictions relates to the story of the past. The horror is always presented through place's history or people's history. Besides, night time is the favorite time to show in the story.

4.2.3 Atmosphere

Atmosphere can arouse readers' feeling such as shadows, a beam of moonlight in the darkness, a flickering candle, or the only source of light failing such as a candle blown

out, or electric failure. Light displays its duty to raise the readers' interest. Light is the medium of supernatural performance. Color differences are employed to describe the feeling and mood of the story. Odour and sound are also present the grotesquely atmosphere for instance, screaming displays madness or horror.

4.3 Event

Writers illustrate the events in their grotesque writing with many kinds of event. Supernatural event is the most popular to event. Supernatural is presented through many aspects such as omens, ancestral curses, magic and supernatural manifestations. Besides, some stories show horrifying or terrifying events.

In this study, the grotesque elements presented in the selected novels were analyzed by giving examples. In addition, the researcher analyzed these elements to understand the message that Morrison tried to express to her readers.

5. Biography and Summary of selected works

5.1 Biography of Toni Morrison

Toni Morrison is a famous American novelist and is the first African-American writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993. She is one of the greatest American writers in this period. Morrison's novels are both popular and provoking critical attention for their constructions of realism and fantasy.

The writers that influenced Morrison's works are William Faulkner, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Bronte and others. Among of them all, Faulkner and Woolf have great impacts on her works (Ryan 3). However, the characteristic of Morrison's work is more similar to Faulkner's. The similar aspects are the use of race and the racial relations; the history of slavery; the black manhood and fatherhood; and the grotesque

technique in their fiction (123-165). Their novels associate Southern Grotesque. Besides, some grotesque aspects of Hawthorne and Poe affect Morrison's novel too. Morrison combines these aspects into her novels and they make them unique.

Morrison began to write fiction and revised a short story that she had written when she was a student at Howard University. This story is *Bluest Eye* (1970), and it is her first novel. It is the novel of Pecola, the African American girl who was destroyed by the white beauty standard. The second novel is *Sula* (1973) presents the friendship between Sula and Nel and opposition between good and bad. *Song of Solomon* (1977), the story of Milkman searches for his identity. *Tar Baby* (1981) states the conflicts of race, class and sex. *Beloved* (1987) reveals the history of slavery in the United States which is based on true story. *Jazz* (1992) is a story of violence and passion in New York City's Harlem. *Paradise* (1998) is portrait of a black utopian community in Oklahoma. Her latest novel is *Love* (2003), the family story that reveals facets of love.

5.2 Summary of *Sula*

Sula, the second novel of Toni Morrison, was written in 1973. The story portrays the friendship between Sula and Nel. Morrison presented the concept of goodness and badness through these two characters. Morrison starts her story through the black society in Bottom, the city of black people in Ohio, America. After the end of World War II, Shadrack, a black veteran is released from the military hospital. He is treated for battle stress. He returns to his home in the Bottom and stays alone. He creates National Suicide Day which is a day for people to commit suicide. This day is set up only once a year that is January 3.

Helene Sabat is the daughter of a New Orleans prostitute. She marries Wiley Wright and has a daughter, Nel. During a journey by train back to New Orleans to visit,

Helene and Nel take a train for white people by accident. Helene is humiliated by white conductor.

Eva Peace lives with her daughter, Hannah and Sula, Hannah's child. They live in a large house with friends. This house is bought by Eva. Her son, Plum returns from World War I with emotionally wrecked and sadness. He turns into alcoholic and drug addiction. Eva kills him by dousing his bed with kerosene and lighting it.

Sula and Nel begin a friendship. One day, on the river bank, Sula is swinging a little boy named Chicken Little around in circles when he accidentally slips from her hands and downs in the river. Sula and Nel tell no one what happen. After Chicken Little's death, Hannah catches her dress on fire while she is lighting a cooking fire in the yard. Eva sees her daughter burning. She flings herself from second floor and hopping to reach Hannah and smother the flame. Hannah dies on the way to the hospital. Eva hurt by her fall and recovers in the hospital. She remembers that Sula standing on the boardinghouse's porch and do nothing except just watching her mother burn to death.

When Nel marries Jude Greene, Sula leaves the Bottom. Ten years later Sula returns. She quarrels with Eva and places her in nursing home. Nel discovers that Sula and Jude naked together so she severs friendship with her childhood best friend. Jude leaves Nel and move to Dayton, Ohio. Sula begins a relationship with Ajax but he ends the affair when Sula begins acting more like a wife than a lover.

A few years later, Sula lies on her deathbed and Nel visits her. Sula wants to tell Nel about her experience. Before dying, she realizes that death is painless. At National Suicide Day parade, the tunnel collapses and kills many people who join the parade but Shadrack can escape.

Twenty five years later, Nel mourns the deterioration of the Bottom and visits Eva at the nursing home. Eva's mind is disoriented and she accuses Nel of complicity with Sula in

Chicken Little's death. On the way home Nel senses Sula's presence and realizes that her real loss is friendship not her husband.

5.3 Summary of *Beloved*

Beloved based on true story of a slave, Margaret Garner. It is Morrison's fifth novel, which she wrote in 1987. The story discloses the heritage of African Americans. The novel is set after the Civil War whereas the characters struggle with pain while they reconstruct themselves and families after the devastation of slavery. The narrative style of this novel is similar to patchwork quilts. Readers have to piece them together.

The story begins in 1873 in Cincinnati, Ohio. At 124 Bluestone Road, Sethe who was a former slave lives with her eighteen years old daughter, Denver. Sethe's mother in law, Baby Suggs lives with them until her death. Just before Baby Suggs's death, Sethe's two sons, Howard and Buglar run away. Sethe believes that they fled because of the malevolent presence of an abusive ghost that haunts their house. However, Denver likes the ghost which everyone believes that the spirit is her death sister.

Paul D stops by Sethe's house. They do not see each other for very long time since they worked together on Mr. Garner's Sweet Home. His presence makes Sethe think about the past. Sethe was born in the South. When she was thirteen, she was sold to the Garners, who own Sweet Home. There are men slaves interested. They are Sixo, Paul D, Paul A, Paul F, and Halle. Sethe chooses to marry Halle because he but his mother freedom by hiring himself out on weekend. They have two sons, Howard and Buglar and a baby daughter. After the death of Mr. Garner, schoolteacher helps Mrs. Garner to run the farm. He oppresses all the slaves. Slaves decide to run away. Sethe was also run away and at that time She pregnant a fourth child. Schoolteacher and his nephews anticipate the slaves' escape. Schoolteacher kills Sixo and Paul D back to Sweet Home. Paul D sees Sethe running to send her children to

her mother in law's house. Schoolteacher's nephews seize Sethe in the barn and violate her. They steal her milk which is storing for her infant daughter. Halle is watching the event from a loft above her, where he lies frozen with horror. Paul D sees him goes mad. Halle sitting by a churn with butter slathered all over his face. Paul D is forced to suffer the indignity of wearing an iron bit in his mouth. Finally, Sethe can run away and her baby born in the boat by helping of Amy Denver. Seethe names her second daughter Denver after Amy Denver. Stamp Paid helps Sethe by rows her across the Ohio River to Baby Suggs's house. Sethe spends wonderful time in Cincinnati until schoolteacher came. Schoolteacher comes to take Sethe and her children back to Sweet Home. Sethe tries to flee her children from slavery by killing them. Only her older daughter dies, her throat having been cut with handsaw. Sethe arranges for baby's headstone to be carved with the word "beloved". The sheriff takes Sethe and Denver to jail but the Bodwins fights for her release. They return to the house. The community shuns the house and the family continues to live in isolation.

Paul D and Sethe plan to have future together. One day, on their way home from a carnival, they meet a strange young woman sleeping near the steps of the house. She calls herself Beloved. She is the embodied spirit of Sethe's daughter. Paul D and Beloved hate each other. Beloved controls Paul D by moving him around the house and sleep with him. Paul D leaves Sethe after he learns that Sethe kills her child. Denver leaves home in order to seek help from her teacher. The community provides the family with food and help Sethe to escape from Beloved. Beloved disappears from the house. Paul D comes back to Sethe.

6. Related Research

This related research concerns two areas, one with grotesque elements, and the other is related to the two works: *Sula* and *Beloved*.

6.1 Related Research on Grotesque Element

There are numerous studies on grotesque. For example, Andrew Bennet and Nicolas Royle (1999) studied about ghosts. They portrayed the meaning of ghost as a soul or spirit as the principle of life and a person. Ghost has a history because it always haunts a place. Besides, they also studied the ghost's role in fiction, poems and plays. They found that ghosts represent religion as in Hamlet.

Coral Ann Howells (146-150), examined the technique employed in Radcliffe's *Udolpho*. Howells learned that Radcliffe employed the internal and external methods. The internal methods included the characters' feeling and the point of view. The external method was the mountain landscape. These methods aroused the reader's emotion.

Besides, Ellen Moers (90-110), observed the female grotesques and their works such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. Moers presented her study by showing the grotesque elements such as the monster character. The monster created by the classic Victorian device that is the crossing of species, animals with humans as we can see in Lewis Carroll's *Alice Adventure in Wonderland*.

Moreover, Elaine Showalter (127-144), observed American female grotesques. She showed the grotesque fiction that represents the confrontation of heroine with maternity, reproduction of mothering and problems of femininity in the story such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*, that woman has to do house works and never get any freedom so she free from that issue by staying in the room and gone crazy.

According to *The Study of the Deeply Aesthetics and Social Contexts in Thai Ghost Films* in 1977-2004 (101-183), Kamjorn Luiyapong and Somsuk Hinwiman pointed out that grotesque films were not nonsense films but they are the devices to present the social context. They grouped the social context that presented through grotesque films to seven aspects.

They are; the belief about ghosts, women and ghosts, city and rural areas, racial difference, institutional criticism, world of teenage, and world of love.

6.2 Related Research on two selected works

6.2.1 *Sula*

Barbara Smith (3-30) focused on the aspect of black feminist through the two main characters. She pointed out the feminist aspect in *Sula* which can be assumed that it was lesbian aspect as stated in the novel. She analyzed feminist characters of Sula and Nel. Her analysis showed that Sula's character is similar lesbian because it accorded with the definition of female character and the way the politics of heterosexuality was portrayed.

On the other hand, Cynthia A. Davis (1998) examined the feminist aspect and found that in *Sula*. Sula was the free character because she could bear and ignored the prejudice of the townpeople. She was the active character who is the symbol of a new world woman because she could maintain her own identity.

Nevertheless, Jill Matus (1998) emphasized on the trauma that showed in the story. He divided the cause of trauma of black people into two causes. First cause was the trauma from World War I which influenced to Shadrack and Plum as the African American soldiers. They have been suffering from war. They lost their mind, life and future. The second cause was racism. Although, there was no war in America, black people are still suffering from their trauma because they are black. They had to face with racial prejudice and injustice in the society.

6.2.2 *Beloved*

In *Beloved*, the topic on the racism is the popular topic among the researchers.

For example; Kristin Boudreau (1995) is the one who focused on the violence and crucial racism presented in *Beloved*. He pinpointed that violence and the pain of the African American slave destroyed their selfhood as it already happen in Sethe's life.

Apart from Boudreau, Sam Durrant (2004) studied the racial memory that passed on the Africa American's history to the reader. He revealed the violence of black people in the family and the community. The racial memory presented through Sethe's experience. Besides, he mentioned the violence of black people in *Sula* too.

Obviously, many studies focused on the same aspects of both stories. Carolyn M. Jones (1993) compared the images of Cain as presented in *Sula* and *Beloved*. Jones showed the different meaning of the mark that appeared in Sethe's and Sula's body even they present the Cain in their lives. According to the Bible, Cain was the first son of Adam and Eve, who had killed his brother and referred to the murder. Jones stated that Sethe's mark was her limitation because it was a sign of her slavery and it will remind her of the community of African slave and boundaries of oppression. But Sula's mark was the sign of self and it absolutely unbound and free. Both Sethe and Sula commit Cain's act but for a different reason. Sethe killed her child because of desperation but Sula killed Chicken Little because of accidentally.

Similarly, Katy Ryan (2000) brought the suicide aspect to analyze. He focused on the revolutionary suicide in *Beloved*, *Sula* and *Song of Solomon*. He divided the suicide operated on two revolutionary levels. First level was in the story and its functions as a politic form of resistance. The second level was in the narrative structure. He found that suicide presented in Morrison was different from the traditional suicide. For example, the new style of suicide deals with black power rather than powerlessness.

To sum up, many researchers studied *Sula* and *Beloved* in various aspects such as racism, feminism, violence and suicide. Since nobody has studied the grotesque elements of these two novels, the researcher will focus on the grotesque elements as presented in these two stories.

CHAPTER THREE

GROTESQUE ELEMENTS IN *SULA*

This chapter analyses the grotesque elements presented in *Sula*. The study is divided into two main sections. The first section will be the examination of grotesque elements in the story. The second one will be the examination of subsurface messages that Morrison wants to imply through the story.

1. Grotesque Elements

1.1 Characterizations

Most characters in this story are strange in their behaviors. The first is Shadrack. He is a mentally abnormal veteran. He faces violence from the war and the capture of police on the way back to Medallion. He is fascinated with death so, he generated the National Suicide Day. This day is promoted to people's interest in committing suicide or killing the others. Shadrack's madness and the idea to create the National Suicide Day are presented in the following:

...He knew the smell of death and was terrified of it, for he could not anticipate it. It was not death or dying that frightened him, but the expectedness of both. In sorting it all out, he hit on the notion that if one day a year were devote to it, everybody could get it out of the way and the rest of the year would be safe and free. In this manner he instituted National Suicide Day.

On the third day of the new year, he walked through the Bottom down Carpenter's Road with a cowbell and a hangman's rope calling the people together. Telling them that this was their only chance to kill themselves or each other. (p.14)

From the quoted paragraphs, Morrison presented grotesque through Shadrack's character. He was strange from normal people as we can see that he can smell death. There is only evil that satisfy of death and can smell it. Death is familiar to him but it is unfamiliar to normal people. Death is very normal for him. Everybody can enjoy this situation. On the

other hand, his idea is very interesting and good for our world. He intended to set this day which is only one day in the year for killing. For the rest of the year, people should stay in peace. This implies that violence, crime and even death will be joyful if they occur only in one day a year. But in real life people all over the world has trouble with crime, violence and death everyday, especially in the war time the armed forces never leave out from death even one time. But if the National Suicide Day was agreed by all people especially the Head of the countries, the armed forces would be happy with only one day war. The suffering would never occur in this world.

The second and third examples are Tar Baby and Plum. These two characters present the drunk and addicted character. Their lives are different from normal people. They have their own world. The character of Tar Baby and Plum orderly are shown below:

...He was a mountain boy who stayed to himself, bothering no one, intent solely on drinking himself to death. At first time he worked in a poultry market, and after wringing the neck of chickens all day, he came home and drank until he slept.

...He habits were much like Tar Baby's but there no bottles, and Plum was sometime cheerful and animated. Hannah watched and Eva waited. Then he began to steal from them, take trip to Cincinnati and sleep for days in his room with the record player going. He got even thinner, since he ate only snatches of things at the beginnings or ending of meals. It was Hannah who found the bent spoon black from steady cooking. (45)

From the above citations, loneliness, and hopelessness were clearly presented. They got drunk and addicted because they wanted to escape from the real world full of nastiness. It implies that they are too good or weak for this world. So, they stay peaceful in their own place on their own and do not trouble others.

1.2 Events

There are a lot of violent events happen in this story. Most of them relate to sex and crime. Crime first shows in World War II event. Morrison portrays the war that full of

shellfire, explosions, dirtiness and smoke. She shows the picture when a soldier was killed as in the following quoted.

...Winced at the pain in his foot, he turned his head a little to the right and saw the face of the soldier near him fly off. Before he could register shock, the rest of the soldier's head disappeared under the inverted soup bowl of his helmet. But stubbornly, taking no direction from the brain, the body of the headless soldier ran on, with energy and grace, ignoring altogether the drip and slide of brain tissue down its back. (8)

This scene shocks the readers with clear picture how the soldier was destroyed. The readers nauseate with exploded head and sympathize with soldier's headless body still running. This scene expressed the violence of the war and its effect to the people.

The second crime scene happens in Eva's house when she kills her own son as presented in the text below.

Eva stepped back from the bed and let the crutches rest under her arms. She rolled a bit of newspaper into a tight stick about six inches long, lit it and threw it onto the bed where the kerosene-soaked Plum lay in snug delight. Quickly, as the whoosh of flames engulfed him, she shut the door and made her slow and painful journey back to the top of the house (47).

Eva kills her son. It shocks readers because Eva burned her son by herself. It is beyond reader's expectation. She loves him but chooses to kill him. She has to do something to help him from his addiction. To her, death is the best way for him because death can free him from drug addiction. According to the nature of the grotesque novel every thing can be happen even the unbelievable thing. Besides, it can bring the readers various emotions such as happiness, sorrow, pleasure, and horror.

The third crime scene presented through Hannah's burning. There is omen happen with Hannah. There is color red in her dream. After that she got fire while she is cooking in the yard.

...The water did put out the flames, but it also made steam, which seared to sealing all that was left of the beautiful Hannah Peace. She lay there on the wooden sidewalk planks, twitching lightly among the smashed tomatoes, her face a mask of agony so intense that for years the people who gathered 'round would shake their heads at the recollection of it. (76)

According by Hannah's burning, could represent execution. Because of her against the Christianity, she has to get the punishment. Her character is illustrated in the in the following paragraph:

...Hannah simply refused to live without the attentions of man, and after Rekus' death had a steady sequence of lovers, mostly the husband of her friends and neighbors...She could break up a marriage before it had even become one-she would make love to the new groom and wash his wife's dishes all in an afternoon. What she wanted, after Rekus died, and what she succeeded in having more often than not, was some touching everyday (42).

Hannah exasperated the women in the town-the "good" woman, who said, "One thing I can't stand is a nasty woman"; the whores, who were hard put to find trade among black men anyway and who resented Hannah's generosity; the middling women, who had both husbands and affairs, because Hannah seem too unlike them (44).

The protestant Christian believe that whoever disrupts the societal institutions, especially marriage they are the witchcrafts (*Wikipedia* online). The punishment for witchcraft is burning. Hannah is the woman who disrupts the marriage so, she should get burning too.

The important event that show the grotesquely idea is the National Suicide day. This day was created by Shadrak. This day is created for celebrate the criminal. It is only one day that everybody can kill themselves or each other.

2. Subsurface Message

On the surface this novel is the grotesque novel but the underneath is full of the message that Morrison wants to explain the social issues. This part will discuss in four aspects related to Motherhood, Racism, Liberation, and Education.

2.1 Motherhood

Motherhood is presented through four characters. They are Helene Wright, Nel Wright, Eva Peace, and Hannah. The first two are the conventional characters. They are the archetype of womanhood. According to the Victorian period, the women will achieve the ideal womanhood, by maintaining three aspects; virtuous, chaste, and sexual. Black women are tamed to be oppressed and live in order to support men' position (Jarurakss 31).

On the other hand, Hannah, as a woman, meets her failure because she can not maintain these ideal womanhood. She is too free to follow the conventional role. Moreover, she does not care about motherhood aspect either. In contrast, Eva is a free woman too but she still maintains her motherhood. She is single and very poor. She can do every thing even sacrifice her leg to get money for the survival of her children, as shown in the paragraph below:

...She would lie to bed with the baby boy, the two girls wrapped in quilts on the floor, thinking. The oldest child, Hannah was five and too young to take care of the baby alone, and any housework. Eva could find would keep her away from them from five thirty or earlier in the morning until dark-way past eight. She would have to scrounge around and beg through the winter until her baby was at least nine month, then she could plant and maybe hire herself out to valley farms to weed or saw or feed stock until something steadier came along at harvest time (33).

Somebody said Eva stuck it under a train and made them pay off. Another said she sold it to a hospital for \$ 10,000- at which Mr. Reed opened his eyes and asked, "Nigger gal legs goin" for \$ 1,000 a piece? As he could understand \$ 10,000 a *pair*- but *for* one? (31).

Eva is a very strong woman and never cares of any thing. The only one person that she cares for is her children life. She never has time to rest from taking care of her children. She looks after them when they are good or ill as clearly seen below.

...the baby, Plum, stopped having bowel movement. Eva massaged his stomach and gave him warm water... He seemed in great pain and his shrieks were pitched high in outrage and suffering. At one point he was strangling to death. Eva rushed to him and kicked over the earthen slop jar, washing a small area of the floor with the child's urine. She managed to sooth him, but when he took up the cry again late night, she resolved to end his misery once and for all... (34).

Eva is not the nurse but she has to save her children's lives. Not only when they are babies but also when they are adults, as seen below:

...She rolled up to the window and it was then she saw Hannah burning. The flame from the yard fire were licking the blue cotton dress, making her dance. Eva knew there was time for nothing in this world other than the time it took to get there and cover her daughter's body with her own. She lifted her heavy frame up on her good leg, and with fists and arms smashed the windowpane. Using her stump as a support on the window sill, her good leg as a lever, she threw herself out of the window. Cut and bleeding she clawed the air trying to aim her body toward the flaming, dancing figure. She missed and came crashing down some twelve feet from Hannah's smoke. Eva dragged herself toward her firstborn, but Hannah, he senses lost, went flying out of the yard gesturing and bobbing like a sprung jack-in-the box... (75).

When Eva, sees her daughter in fire, she tries to help her. It is very hard for her because she has only one leg. Her movement is very slow and she can not help much but she has to do her best to save her child from fire. This shows her maternal nature.

2.2 Racism

Another main theme of this novel is racism. Morrison presents it through every scene in the novel. Through Nigger Joke in the first section in part one the story, racial discrimination appears. Joke is the story before they set up their town in Bottom. The white

farmer promised to give freedom and a piece of bottom land to the slave after finishing work. When the slave completed that job, he asked for those things. There is no problem about freedom but for land, he did not want to give it to the slave. So, he said to the slave that he would give him the land in Bottom which is high up in the hill and very dry. The farmer expressed another reason that the Bottom is high up from us but it is close to God because it is the bottom of heaven (Morrison 5). It is the joke but full of pain.

When Helene Wright traveled back from her grand mother's funeral she faced with the racial issue. The conductor caught her because she took the white's only car:

The conductor looked at the bit of wax his fingernail had retrieved. "What was you donin' back in there? What was you doin' in that coach yonder?" Helen licked he lips. "Oh....I..." He glance moved beyond the white man's face to passengers seated behind him. Four or five black were watching, two belonging to soldiers still in their shit-colored uniforms and peaked caps. She saw their closed faces, their locked eyes, and turned for compassion to the gray eyes of the conductor. "We made a mistake, Sir. You see, there wasn't no sign. We just got in the wrong car, that all. Sir." "We don't 'low no mistake on this train. Now git your butt on in there (21)

From the above, it seems like there is no right place for the black people. The Black has to be separated from the white. They are the lower class in society. On the other hand, the racism not only appears among black and white but also among the black people themselves. Helene Wright is concerned over her daughter, Nel's physical features. She forces her daughter to pull her nose in order to make it narrower like white people. Besides, woman faced to the racial difference problem between man and woman too. Woman is the lowest class in the society especially the black woman, as expressed in the conversation between Nel and Sula.

"Why? I can do it all, why can't I have it all?"

“You *can't* do it all. You a woman and a colored woman at that. You can't act like a man. You can't be walking around all dependent-like a man, doing whatever you like, taking what you want, leaving what you don't.

“You repeating yourself.”

“How repeating myself?”

“You say I'm a woman and colored. Ain't that the same as being a man? (142).

Anyway, from this dialogue black or female are not the causes of the troubles at all if black people or women never care and ignore about that. They would stay happily with their own blackness and womanhood. Obviously, Sula never care about being black. She never accepts that but the only one thing she accepted is human being. In contrast, Nel accepted that she is a black woman who is never allowed to do anything what she likes.

2.3 Liberation

From the novel, freedom is the important thing that many characters search for. The ways to find freedom and the way to demonstrate it is different. People behave their own way. Shadrack presents his freedom through his madness. Tar Baby and Plum have freedom being in their room setting drunk and addicted. Another way for Plum to seeking freedom is reading Liberty Magazine in his room.

Hannah and Sula are two characters that fully present their freedom. Hannah has no rule and she is always free. She is concerned to have sex with men without any commitment as shown below:

Hannah was fastidious about whom she slept with. She would fuck practically anything, but sleep with someone implied for her a measure of trust and a definite commitment. (34).

Hannah does not want to have any special relationship with men because she will have no freedom to have sex with other men. Another idea is that she does not want to get married because marriage can obstruct freedom. Sula has the same idea as Hannah: free from

marriage. These characters search for liberation. Finally, they achieve their search through death. Death frees people from every thing such as feeling, relation, and all obligations.

2.4 Self-Identity

Sula presented her identity through her behavior. She maintain her blackness and tried to tell Nel to maintain the blackness too, as she indicated in this dialogue.

“You still going to know everything, ain’t you?”
 “I don’t know everything, I just do everything.”
 “Well, you don’t do what I do.”
 “You think I don’t know what your life is like just because I ain’t living it? I know what every colored woman in this country is doing.”
 “What’s that?”
 “Dying. Just like me. But the difference is they dying like a stump. Me, I’m going down like one of those redwoods. I sure did live in this world”
 “Really? What have you got to show for it?”
 “Show? To who? Girl, I got my mind. And what goes on in it. Which is to say, I got me.”
 “Lonely, ain’t it”
 “Yes. But my lonely is *mine*. Now your lonely is somebody else’s. Made by somebody else and handed to you. Ain’t that something? A secondhand lonely.
 (143)

Apart from self-identity presented in this novel *Education*, the community identity also indicated as, we can see from the situation that Hannah was burned. Every people in the Bottom gathered to cover her from flame. It presented in quoted text.

...Somebody covered her legs with a shirt. A woman unwrapped her head rag and placed it on Hannah’s shoulder. Somebody else ran to Dick’s Flesh Food and Sundries to call the ambulance. The rest stood there are helpless as a sunflower leaning on fence...Them somebody remembered to go and see about Eva (76).

On the story, Morrison shows how black people can restore their power. Community Identity is very important. And it represents the black community very well. Their community identity can help them to get more power.

2.5 Education

Education is the least indicated in this novel but it is important and powerful. Sula seeks for education and it drives her to be different from others. She has her identity and dare to do everything differently from others. She is powerful whereas Nel is the passive and conventional. She has no power because she conforms herself to social stereotypes.

All the grotesque elements in this novel include nastiness, uncanny, abjection and nausea. On the subsurface the grotesque novel reflects the social issues. In this novel, Morrison employed grotesque elements to show the African American community and their lives. She wants to underpin racism and the difficulties black people undergo to survive. It is hopeless to ask others to listen to it. Sula is the best example to the black people because she can maintain her blackness and archive her happiness of life even she is black.

CHAPTER FOUR

GROTESQUE ELEMENTS IN *BELoved*

This chapter analyses the grotesque elements presented in *Beloved*. The study is divided into two main sections. The first section will be the examination of grotesque elements in the story. The second one will be the examination of subsurface messages that Morrison wants to imply through the story.

1. Grotesque elements

1.1 Characterizations

1.1.1 Ghosts

There are two kinds of ghosts in this novel. The first one is an invisible ghost which is the baby's spirit that haunted Sethe's house. There is no image of the baby but it appears in phenomena such as shaking the house, breaking things in the house, and moving things. Another kind of ghost is the human ghost which means the ghost disguised to be human. Beloved is the second kind of ghost, and Beloved is a reincarnate Sethe's child. She is Sethe's dead daughter because there are many things to confirm that she is that child. The first reason is she remembers the song that Sethe had sung to her, the crystal ears rings that Sethe had shown her when she was alive. The second reason is her behavior that was childlike. She can not walk steadily. She likes to listen to a story and sweet as children like. Her voice and the way she speaks sound like children too. Her skin looks fresh and not calloused. The third reason is that she has the scar around her neck which looks like the mark of a throat cut of that baby. The last reason is her name and a place she came from. Her name is Beloved which is the word at her headstone. She comes from a small and very dark place which means a grave. As, appeared the conversation between Denver and Beloved below:

“Why you call yourself Beloved?”

Beloved closed her eyes. “In the dark my name is Beloved.”

Denver scooted a little closer. “What’s it like over there, where you were before? Can you tell me?”

“Dark,” said Beloved. “I’m small in that place. I’m like this here.”

“Were you cold?”

Beloved curled tighter and shook her head “Hot. Nothing to breath down there and no room to move in” (92)

Beloved is the spirit of Seth’s daughter from the grave. She comes back because she wants to come to revenge Seth.

The main characters in this story believe that there are ghosts in the world such as Baby Suggs, Sethe, Denver and Paul D. Baby Suggs state that there are ghost every where when Sethe suggests that they move from this house. Baby Suggs’s words as shown in the following:

“What’d be the point?” asked Baby Suggs. “Not a house in the country aint’ pack to its refters with some dead Negro’s grief. We lucky this ghost is a baby. My husband’s spirit was to come back here? Or yours? (6)

From Baby Suggs’s point of view above, death is a normal thing for black people. Many black people are killed and their relatives have to face with this problem too. Some families lose their father, mother, son, and daughter. Slavery is a horrible experience to everybody.

1.2 Setting

1.2.1 Place

The first place that presents in the story is haunted house which is Sethe’s house. 124 is a house haunted by the spirit of Sethe’s daughter. She is killed by Sethe. The people in this house are the victims. Sethe’s two sons run away from 124 because they can

not stand the dreadful house. Besides, they face with the ghost's power as shown in the following:

124 WAS SPITEFUL. Full of a baby venom. The women in the house khew it and so did the children...Howard and Buglar, had run away by the time they were thirteen years old-as soon as merely looking in a mirror shattered it (that was the signal for Buglar); as soon as two tiny hand prints appeared in the cake (that was it for Howard). Neither boy wait to see more; another kettleful of chickpeas smoking in the heap on the floor; soda crackers crumbled and strewn in a line next to the doorsill. (1)

Morrison depicts the power of ghosts in the house. She states the baby ghost's power influence the people in the house. She illustrates the scene with two tiny hand prints on cake without doing by child and everything in the house are moving by themselves. From text, the ghost haunts the people in this house because it wants every body to leave Sethe. It wants to punish her. Another idea is the baby ghost wants everyone to remember it, so she often reappears in this house as Sethe expressed in the following:

Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do. But it's not. Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place- the memory of it – stays, and not just in my remomery but out there, in the world. (35)

The ghost can also imply the blackness, slavery or racism. It does not often appear but people know, and believe that it is still there. Besides, racism and slavery still haunt the society.

The second place that shows the grotesquely is Sweet Home. Sweet Home is Mr. Garner's house. It is the reminder of slave experience. Before Mr. Garner dies, sweet home is a peaceful place. Mr. Garner calls male slave "man" which is different from his neighbor that calls his male slave is "boy". He treats his slaves very well. After Mr. Garner died, Sweet Home is not sweet any more. Schoolteacher runs Sweet Home because Mrs. Garner is ill and

can not run it by herself. Schoolteacher treated the slaves like animal and abuses them. Sweet Home is not sweet any more. So, slaves want to escape from Sweet Home. Seth plans to escape too. She planned to see Halle, her husband somewhere. They miss the place and Sethe is captured by Schoolteacher and his nephews. They nurse her milk and punish her when they find out that Sethe tells this story to Mrs. Garner, as she tells to Paul D below:

“After I left you, those boys cam in there and took my milk. That’s what they came in there for. Held me down and took it. I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn’t speak but her eyes rolled out tears. Them boy found out I told on em. Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grow there still.”

“They used cowhide on you?”

“And they took my milk”

“They beat you and you was pregnant?”

“And they took my milk!”

(20)

The name Sweet Home is contrasted with its situation. When Sethe and Paul D talk about Sweet Home, they should talk about their happiness but the suffering instead.

Actually, Sweet Home is the haunted place too because that place is full of scary, horror, murder and blood. The memory of Sweet Home still haunts the slaves. The name of Sweet Home should be changed to the Bitter Home.

1.2.2 Time

Morrison employs the flashback technique to develop this story. So, there are two different period. First period shows the history of Sethe and the house. There were many important situations happen in the past such as Sethe’s life as a slave in Sweet Home, the violence in Sweet Home, and Sethe crime in her house. All those situations come back to haunt Sethe and others in the present period. Morrison portrayed the story in the past through

memorization or dream of Sethe and Paul D. Things in the past disclosed during the present time.

1.2.3 Atmosphere

The atmosphere in this story always present through color red. The color red can be implied to various things. For Amy Denver, the red velvet is an image of hope and brighter future. The red image refers to life and death too. For example, the red roses at the fence along the road to the carnival refer to Sethe, Denver and Paul D's new life together. In contrast, the red pool seen by Paul D represents death. Red pool is the symbol of blood of the children that were killed in this house as seen below:

Paul D tied his shoes together, hung them over his shoulder and followed her through the door straight into a pool of red and undulating light that locked him where he stood.
 "You got company?" he whispered, frowning.
 "Off and on," said Sethe.
 "Good God." He backed out the door onto the porch. "What kind of evil you got here?"
 "It's not evil, just sad. Come on. Just step through." (10)

According to the *Beloved* movie, this scene shows that while Paul D walking through the door, the picture of Seth fully of blood of her child is appearing to him and it appears together with red pool and red light. So, red pool is the blood of a child.

1.3 Event

There are two kinds of even shown in this story. The first kind of the even is supernatural event. The first example of the supernatural event is the appearing of hand prints on cake and the sudden happen of color red in the house. The second supernatural event

happens with Paul D when he realizes that Beloved is moving him around the house and is forced by Beloved's cursed.

The second kind of event in the story is the violence event. The violence events first happen with slaves in Sweet Home when they are abused by schoolteacher and his nephews as they are as animals. Sethe replies her story to Paul D as presented in following dialogue.

"After I left you, those boys came in there and took my milk. That's what they came in there for. Held me down and took it. I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn't speak but her eyes rolled out tears. Them boys found out I told on em. Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grows there stills."

"They use cow hide on you?"

"And they took my milk."

"They beat you and you was pregnant?"

"And they took my milk!"

(20)

Sethe is raped by schoolteacher's nephews. She is preoccupied with their theft of her breast milk. She privileges her children's needs over her own. Morrison also expresses the abnormal sex behavior of men slaves in Sweet Home. This behavior is same behavior as in Hamlet. It shows strange behavior of human. As shown in the following text: All in their twenties, minus women, fucking cows, dreaming of rape, thrashing on pallets, rubbing their things and waiting for the new girl (13).

Another violence event happens in 124, Sethe's house when schoolteacher comes to take Sethe and her children back to Sweet Home. Sethe resists schoolteacher's power by killing her children to let them free from slavery. The bloody and horror event presents through the following text.

...Inside, two boys bled in the sawdust and dirt at the feet of a nigger woman holding a blood-soaked child to her chest with one hand and an infant by the heels in the other. She did not look at them; she simply swung the baby toward the wall planks,

missed and tired to connect a second time,...Two were lying open-eyed in sawdust; a third pumped blood down the dress of the main one...Littele nigger-boy eyes open in sawdust; little nigger-girl eyes staring between the wet fingers that held her face so her head wouldn't fall off; little nigger- baby eyes crinkling up to cry in the arm of the old nigger whose own eyes were nothing but silvers looking down at his feet.(183-185)

This scene is the turning point and it shakes the readers' feeling most. It presents the power of love and liberation. Morrison portrays the violence of black people through Sethe's infanticide.

2. Subsurface Message

2.1 Slavery

Slavery is the main theme of this novel presented through Sethe, Paul D and others slaves at Sweet Home. Sethe's slave life was clearly presented in the following:

"After I left you, those boys cam in there and took my milk. That's what they came in there fore. Held me down and took it. I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn't speak but her eyes rolled out tears. Them boy found out I told on em. Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grow there still."
 "They used cowhide on you?"
 "And they took my milk"
 "They beat you and you was pregnant?"
 "And they took my milk!" (20)

Sethe is treated as an animal by Schoolteacher's nephews. After she is punished by Schoolteacher beating her and makes the scar look like the chokecherry tree at her back. Amy Denver explains its figure to her below:

"It's a tree, Lu. A chokecherry tree. See, here's the trunk-it's red and split wide open, full of sap, and this here's the parting for the branches. You got a mighty lot of branches. Leaves, too, look like, and dern if these ain't blossoms. ...(97)

From Amy Denver's explanation that figure looks very beautiful tree but it's not because it is the marks from beating in human body. From her experience she learns that slavery is terrible and destructive. So, she can not stand it if her children will have that memory like her. So, she has to kill her children to save them from being slaves when Schoolteacher came to take them. Because of her limitation as a black woman, she has no choice. Slavery is scarier than death. It is a destructive thing in their life. African American slave family never completed, some are motherless, fatherless and some lose their children. The slave is subhuman. They can not have any freedom or identity. They are the property of the white people. They are abused and sold by their masters who treated them badly:

Mister was allowed to be and stay what he was... But wasn't no way I'd ever be Paul D again, living or dead. Schoolteacher changed me. I was something else and that something was less than a chicken sitting in the sun on a tub. (72)

Morrison employs grotesque elements to present slavery and its inhuman. It is the clever idea to tell slavery through the violence, horror and supernatural. Readers are surprised and shocked with the situations in the story and are provoked by man's cruelty to one another

2.2 Liberation

Liberation is the supreme hope of slaves. However, it is hard to obtain because they do not have power. But, Sethe sees the short cut to maintain freedom for her children through death which is the best way to free them from slavery

1.3 Community Identity

The community of black people is very great as seen in the last part of the novel. The black people in the community gather again when they know that Beloved was the spirit of Sethe's daughter and Sethe was ill because of ghost venom. So, they parade to Sethe's

house to dislodge that spirit from the house. Every black woman holds the cross of Jesus Christ in their hands and prayed altogether in front of Sethe's house. The following citation reconfirms this agreement:

...When they caught up with each other, all thirty, and arrived at 124, the first thing they saw was not Denver sitting on the steps, but themselves. Younger, stronger, een aslitttle girls lying in the grass asleep. Catfish was poping grease in the pan and they saw themselves scoop German potato salad....The fence they had leaned on and climbed over was gone. The stump of the butternut had split like a fan. But there thry were, young and happy, playing in Baby Suggs' yard, not feeling the envy that surfaced the next day. Denver heard mumbling and looked to the left. She stood when she saw them. They grouped, murmuring and whispering... (317)

From this text, the community cross the boarder of the detesting which symbol by fence of Sethe's house. In the part, all of them used to join their activities with Baby Suggs in this place. But after Sethe murdered her child, people in the community abandon her because they thing that her behave look like animal and also the do not want to associate with the ghost spirit in the house. From this situation in the text rouse them to gather and come back her again for safe Sethe from the ghost. It shows that Black people have very strong community and they can achieve every thing if they group together.

Morrison makes use of grotesque elements to tell the story to provoke the readers' attention about how tensile slavery was to the back people, and why a black mother has to kill her own child to save her from being a slave, and get her punishment eventually. She shows that human is not the property of any body even they are their own children, father, mother, lover or even the slave. Everyone is "self" and equal.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This chapter presents the outcome of the study. A conclusion and discussion of the finding are presented. Besides, some interesting topics for further studies are also recommended.

Conclusion

According to the finding, the researcher is reassured that the grotesque elements are significantly employed by Morrison to provoke the horror, mystery, supernatural, satire, comedy and tragedy at the same time to make the readers understand the devastating impacts of slavery. Grotesque elements are various but they are related with the definitions provided. Moreover grotesque fiction is not a supernatural story. On the subsurface it is like a ghost story, but underneath is a serious message. The readers have to read the underlying meanings more carefully to find out. Since grotesque are powerful tools for to provoke the readers' awareness of some specific problems and makes changes.

Toni Morrison employ grotesque elements in her novel, The first novel, *Sula* is full of grotesque elements from the start until the end. The grotesque elements are presented through strange characters, conflict and symbols. Some characters in *Sula* are mad, abnormal mind, drunk, and addicted. These characters represent others who struggle for liberation to maintain their identities. They search for freedom in different ways. On their own way, they found real freedom which is death. Death is not too worse as it can free people from all social chains and prejudices. Besides, the conflict between love and responsibility is woven with social prejudice is shown in the story. The reader can learn the love of mother through Eva Peace and Sethe. The writer provokes our sympathy by making use of grotesque elements to portray

how the mother solve their children's problems concerning racism and slavery.. In the domestic life, they confront with racism in the family, community of black people itself. Moreover, when they associate with the white they are badly treated. Morrison points out that black or black people have to fight and educate themselves.

The second novel that employs grotesque elements is *Beloved*. The underlying meaning of this novel is slavery. Morrison shows the supernatural events through the ghost child who got the effect from slavery. Her slave narrative, underpin the story slavery and the white people. The ghost in the story is the reminder slavery and black people. They are invisible among white people in the society. Another element is a haunted house. The real haunted house is 124 that is Sethe's house. The house was haunted by a child's spirit. Another house is Sweet Home. It is the house to haunt Sethe's memory. Sethe and others slaves experience slavery in this place. The name "Sweet Home" is satirical and very contrast with the real situation. This house is full of blood, murder and slave abuse. The colors are severally presented in this novel. The most expressed is the red color. Red refers to blood and death, especially the red color in the perception of Sethe and Beloved.

There are some associated points in these two novels. The first point is love. Love is very important in black community. But the result of love presented in these two novels is death. It is the real element of grotesque because it expresses the tragedy and very powerfully arouses the reader's emotion. Another point is Motherhood; motherhood was presented through the novels as it is the important part of life. Morrison illustrates black mothers' sacrifices and endurance. The grotesque elements employed help reflect the power of black women in critical situations. The last point is community identity of black people. Black people community is very strong. They can achieve their goal if only they are united in the community.

Suggestion for further studies

In order to extend further studies of the novel, the following interesting topics are suggested

1. An analysis of psychological conflict in *Sula*.
2. An analysis of motherhood instinct presented in *Sula* and *Beloved*.
3. A Comparative Study of Thai grotesque fiction.

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VITAE

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