

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Iconic Dimension as a Product of Metaphonymy in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula* and *Beloved*.

The chapter aims at exploring the sub-types of iconic signs in Morrison's three texts as adopted by Hiraga's model namely, imagic, diagrammatic and metaphoric as products of metaphor and metonymy. Since some iconic signs can be imagic and diagrammatic simultaneously, the differences among icon sub-types in Morrison's text will not be elaborated. Instead, this chapter outlines how Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula* and *Beloved* gain iconic interpretation as a result of linguistic processes (metaphor & metonymy). The chapter is an attempt to scrutinise the concept of iconicity based on the Lacanian theory, treating literary texts as a product of the unconscious that is constructed out of metaphor and metonymy and interrelated with iconicity.

5.1.1 Metaphor and Metonymy in Depicting Iconic Perspective in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

The section theorises that Morrison's literary text is iconic because it is metaphonymically oriented. The term, metaphonymy, is coined by Goosens (1990) who discussed the interaction of metaphor and metonymy in the construction of figurative language, providing rich insights into how literary text is constructed and functions. Talmantaite (2008) states that in literary language, metaphor can interact in

a complex manner with composite metonymies to produce dense composites of a unified interpretation.

By focusing on the following texts from Morrison's, *The Bluest Eye*, metaphors via metonymic relations and the metaphorical texts that lead to iconicity can be illustrated. In the following text, Claudia views innocence as something great because it is associated with planting marigold seeds but being innocent is not fruitful as it leads to an emotional void because of persecution. Here, Claudia reveals that innocence and faith do not heal Pecola's sense of loss because the community accepts discrimination as normal. The characters, Pecola and Claudia, are metaphorically constructed where their behaviour map unto African Americans. Simultaneously, they are metonyms attributed to African-American people. The text also contains ontological metaphors, for instance, *seeds, the earth, Black dirt* and *unyielding* as seen in the following extract:

It never occurred to either of us that the earth itself might have been unyielding. We had dropped our seeds in our own little plot of Black dirt just as Pecola's father had dropped his seeds in his own plot of Black dirt. Our innocence and faith were no more productive than his lust or despair (Morrison, 1970, the second Prologue).

Ontological metaphor is defined by Lakoff and Johnson (2003) as the experiencing of selves as being substantial where things without boundaries can be framed within boundaries and conceptualised as entities and containers. *Black dirt* stands in for Pecola who represents metonymically African-American women while *seeds* represent metonymically her father's seeds when he rapes her that is comparable to the seeds of marigolds, which would not yield. Such a deed by the father construes

the expressions of despair and inhumane lust. The mapping of two images may imply imagic iconicity because of the similarity from mimicry. The second part of the text expresses innocence and faith as no more productive than orientational metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) define this type of metaphor as a conceptualisation of emotional, spatial and perceptual experiences in terms of what humans physically do with their bodies or how human emotions can be defined in terms of other concepts. The mapping between earth and Pecola, seeds of marigold and father's seeds maps form and content, indicating imagic and diagrammatic iconicity. It is also a product of mapping between two images that simultaneously mapping between two linguistic structures. Additionally, Pecola and her father metonymically stand in for the whole African American society where discrimination destroys their psyche making them lose faith and innocence.

Furthermore, the following extract refers to the ideology of White authority via structural metaphor which can entwine with iconicity to produce a text with a deeper level of meaning. Structural metaphor provides detailed information about the source and target domains, providing more elaboration compared to orientational and ontological metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Pecola's eyes are expressed via structural metaphor, which may be interrelated with metaphoric iconicity as a result of the analogy between structures and represents parallelism. The text shows that Pecola's wish can end her sufferings. The structural metaphor is a combination of ontological metaphors, such as, *'those eyes, ... , held in the pictures'*; and orientational metaphor for instance, *'if those eyes of hers were different, ... , herself would be different'* which map unto the impact of White ideology on African Americans. Metonymically, having blue eyes is associated with White ideology and can end the plights of all African Americans.

This text selection describes Pecola's belief of this ideology:

It had occurred to Pecola some time ago that if her eyes, those eyes that held the pictures, and knew the sights—if those eyes of hers were different, that is to say, beautiful, she herself would be different. (1.3.18).

A main theme introduced by Morrison in her works is the status of women in the Black community. The following text describes the persecution of African-American women, delineating the structural metaphor in which Pecola is used by her community as a dumping ground for negative emotions. *The birdlike gestures, the tire rims and the sunflowers, between Coke bottles and milkweed* are ontological metaphors while *All of our waste,...*, *absorbed* and *All of our beauty* are orientational metaphors. The extract shows how the Lorain people use Pecola and her family as a target for their internal racism. Through the metonymy attributed to Pecola, the status of her community increases her pain and suffering through socio-cultural pressures. These metaphors may entail diagrammatic iconicity because it is produced out of the analogy between two structures: beauty and waste, motivating multi-levelled interpretations about African-American communities, whose pain does not only result from the White community but are also inflicted by African Americans themselves. Through structural metaphor, African Americans refer to Pecola's obsession with gaining White beauty through her desire for blue eyes. Pecola is described through two alternatives: 1) getting blue eyes to be beautiful and adhering to standardised beauty or 2) remaining ugly and being abhorred by her beauty. These alternatives indicate imagic iconicity because such metaphors create a mental image to show the protagonist as an icon of pain and depict the sufferings of African-American women.

The birdlike gestures are worn away to a mere picking and plucking her way between the tire rims and the sunflowers, between Coke bottles and milkweed,

among all the waste and beauty of the world—which is what she herself was. All of our waste which we dumped on her and which she absorbed. And all of our beauty, which was hers first and which she gave to us. (4.11.5).

The following text also contains orientational metaphors such as *love, wicked people violent people* which show that a sort of love that is attributed to a particular kind of personality. The term love is utilised as conceptual metaphors in the expression '*The loved one is shorn, neutralized, frozen in the glare of the lover's inward eye*', suggesting diagrammatic and metaphoric iconicities because Morrison refers to the similarity in quality where the analogy simultaneously represents a kind of association or parallelism between the love and the lover:

Love is never any better than the lover. Wicked people love wickedly, violent people love violently, weak people love weakly, stupid people love stupidly, but the love of a free man is never safe. There is no gift for the Beloved. The lover alone possesses his gift of love. The loved one is shorn, neutralized, frozen in the glare of the lover's inward eye (4.11.8)

The ontological metaphors in the following extract '*Adults, older girls, shops, magazines, newspapers*' and *window signs* serve as containers for White ideology and distinguish between White and Black women. These metaphors conceptualise negative emotions and perceptions toward African-American women reinforcing features of White identities via metonymies such as '*blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned*'. Unlike Black women, White women have high cultural standing, implying diagrammatic iconicity because it is a product of structural and relational analogy. Ideal beauty is as described as:

Adults, older girls, shops, magazines, newspapers, window signs – all the world had agreed that a blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned doll was what every girl child treasured. 'Here,' they said, 'this is beautiful, and if you are on this day "worthy" you may have it.' (1.1.38)

Additionally, Morrison also offers insights into the negative impact of the Black patriarchal community on women. The following passage shows that the town's people blame Pecola, who is metonymically attributed to African-American women, for her rape because they cannot understand the shame and senselessness that occurs with the violation. The conceptual metaphors, '*Certain seeds* and *certain fruit*, are mapped via metonymical relations onto Pecola's father, Cholly. *Seeds*, a metaphor within metonymy, refer to Pecola's father and *fruits* represents Pecola's unborn baby. The expressions, *victim had no right to live* and *the land kills of its own volition* map unto Pecola's pregnancy and the abortion of her father's child. The metaphorical expressions explicate the complex difficulty and pain of Pecola's experience that can be metaphorically mapped unto the Black patriarchal oppression. This event insinuates that when Black individuals grow up, they face drudgery and calamity due to the bitter atmosphere of discrimination, impacting their social, economic and cultural status in contrast to White individuals who enjoy independence. Pecola's experience of a painful rape by her father shows the suffering African-Americans face from the people of their race, suggesting an interrelationship with metaphoric iconicity because it is a product of metaphorical transfer between two domains. Pecola's rape and the internal discrimination within Black communities contribute to the iconic note in Morrison's text.

Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruit it will not bear and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live.

(4.11.7)

Morrison implicitly indicates the economic status of African-Americans via ontological metaphors, 'Outdoors' and 'possibility of excess was curtailed' in the following text which maps the status of African Americans in the community. This text foreshadows their lives by showing how painful it is for someone who resides in Lorain and is akin to being homeless. This kind of metaphor suggests imagic and diagrammatic iconicity due to the sensual mapping between the people's lives and is formed via imitation. The economic status of African-Americans is described by Morrison as follows:

Outdoors, we knew, was the real terror of life. The threat of being outdoors surfaced frequently in those days. Every possibility of excess was curtailed with it. (1.1.28)

Language is also cleverly constructed by Morrison to reflect Pecola's desire. In the following text, the simplicity in language production entails beauty and innocence. The text contains orientational metaphors that Morrison uses to show that Pecola wants to live simply as a beautiful and innocent woman. The metaphor 'eats the candy' maps into Pecola's will to obtain the features of White women which entwine with both imagic and diagrammatic iconicity due to immediate mimicry and mapping between the form and the desired way of living:

She eats the candy, its sweetness is good. To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane. (1.3.33)

In an incident in the playground, some young boys insult Pecola for her dark skin where this may be perceived as the boys expressing their own self-hatred and internalised racism. This perception is achieved through orientational metaphor when emotional and perceptual experiences are conceptualised by associating them with concepts in the expressions: *cultivated ignorance self-hatred* and *designed hopelessness*. The ontological metaphor is manifested when emotions are conceptualised as containers or entities in the expressions: *burned for ages in the hollows of their minds* and *consuming whatever was in its path*. The following text combines ontological and orientational metaphors leading to structural metaphor and diagrammatic iconicity due to the relational analogy:

It was their contempt for their own Blackness that gave the first insult its teeth. They seemed to have taken all of their smoothly cultivated ignorance, their exquisitely learned self-hatred, their elaborately designed hopelessness and sucked it all up into a fiery cone of scorn that had burned for ages in the hollows of their minds – cooled – and spilled over lips of outrage, consuming whatever was in its path. (2.4.12)

Morrison refers to the members of the church in the Black community using orientational metaphors through the monk 'Soaphead', the light-skinned misanthrope, who sympathises with Pecola's request to have blue eyes. Although Soaphead is described as a hypocrite that hates humans, he feels pity for Pecola. He is projected metonymically as representing the church in an African American community where the conceptual metaphor, '*see the world with blue eyes*', suggest metaphoric iconicity due to similarities in quality and structure as shown below:

Here was an ugly little girl asking for beauty....A little Black girl who wanted to rise up out of the pit of her Blackness and see the world with blue eyes. His outrage grew and felt like power. For the first time he honestly wished he could work miracles. (3.9.21)

When Cholly was young, two White men found him having sex with a girl where they coerced him to continue while they watched. Cholly could not express his hatred towards them because they were more powerful than him in terms of socio-economic and legal aspects. As a reaction to what happened to him, Cholly channels his hatred towards women. Chapter Three gives an account of how brutally he treats his wife where the following text presents an image of Cholly's perceptual and emotional experiences toward 'the hunters'- which is a conceptual metaphor mapping White authority and the segregation of the African race in America. This metaphor interrelates with metaphoric iconicity while Cholly's experience is described through orientational metaphors such as 'emotion ... destroyed him' and 'hating ... consumed him', implying both imagic and diagrammatic metaphors because of its similarity in imitation and structural analogy.

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. (3.6.61)

The orientational metaphor in the following text refers to the emotional or perceptual experiences that African Americans faced as expressed via the word 'line' which also bear metonymic dimensions because it represents all African Americans. In

the text, Geraldine explains to Junior how to test Black people to filter the good from the bad. Metaphors such as, *subtle, signs threatened to erode it* imply both imagic and diagrammatic iconicity due to mimicry and similarity in quality.

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.

(2.5.14)

In the following extract, Morrison uses structural metaphor by referring to one of her characters 'Maureen Peal' who is excluded from racism because she possesses features that are attributed to the White community. Her skin hue is associated with beauty, making the African-American girls jealous of Maureen's beauty. 'Maureen' is a metaphor within metonymy, attributed to high-class African-Americans who judge people by their race which may entail metaphoric iconicity since it is a product of representational parallelism and association. Maureen Peal is described as:

This disrupter of seasons was a new girl in school named Maureen Peal. A high-yellow dream child with long brown hair braided into two lynch ropes that hung down her back. She was rich, at least by our standards, as rich as the richest of White girls, swaddled in comfort and care. The quality of her clothes threatened to derange Frieda and me. (2.4.3)

There is a reference to ontological metaphor in Hollywood *movies* which is considered as the main source of promoting standardised beauty. In the following text, 'The silver screen' is an ontological metaphor because it is conceptualised as a container and source of standardized beauty proposed by White authorities. In other words, 'movies' and 'The silver screen' are metaphors mapping White ideology and entail

imagic iconicity as it is a production of image for the readers, suggesting the similarity between two domains. The use of ontological metaphor can be observed in the excerpt below:

She was never able, after her education in the movies, to look at a face and not assign it some category in the scale of absolute beauty, and the scale was one she absorbed in full from the silver screen. (3.7.22)

The following text contains ontological metaphor through the use of simile as there is a reference to oneself as an entity. The metaphorical construction of the text via metonymical relations in describing Mrs Breedlove depicts how ugliness leads her to the notions where the simile reflects the sense of destruction and the violence by her husband Cholly. Both notions contribute to making meanings in her life and shape her character in terms of socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions. The mapping between Mrs Breedlove and the Victorian parody leads to the sensual mapping between two regions of the brain, creating a relational or structural similarity leading to diagrammatic iconicity. The text shows the effects of racism causing African-American women to abandon their identities. Black women view themselves as ugly triggering the erosion of their identity and their sense of self.

She, like a Victorian parody, learned from her husband all that was worth learning – to separate herself in body, mind, and spirit from all that suggested Africa. (3.9.7)

Morrison utilises various types of metaphors to convey certain themes on racism and its negative impact on African-Americans. The metaphorical construction of her text via metonymic relations have a significant role in producing text with iconic

perspectives based on the interrelationship between metaphor and iconicity as well as between metonymic relations and partial iconicity. Fairness is an icon of hatred among African Americans due to its attribution to standardised ideal beauty, conveying the notion that Blackness is inferior, subsequently compelling them to internalise hatred. This hatred is manifested in Cholly's loathing for his wife and his family and Pecola's hatred for herself. The sense of superiority that Maureen Peal has conveys the strong message of internal racism. These characters are constructed metaphorically to be icons of martyrdom, reinforcing the idea of African-Americans' inferiority complex. Thus, one of the prerequisite of the study is to prove how Morrison's works are an attempt to achieve socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions.

5.1.2 Metaphorical Conversion from Lacanian Symbolic Order to Imaginary Order as Sources of Iconicity

In Chapter One of *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola's excessive consumption of milk from the Shirley Temple (which is used in the novel as an icon of standardized beauty) cup demonstrate her urge to gain blue eyes. However, Claudia's perception towards Shirley Temple is different from Frieda and Pecola, demonstrating their internalised racism. "*Frieda and she had a long conversation about how cu-ute Shirley Temple was. I couldn't join them in their adoration because I hated Shirley*" (1.1.35). Claudia hates White people and their culture. Pecola's desire shows her incomplete mental and emotional maturity that leads to her failure. The following text shows Pecola's ruined status at the end of the novel. "*..., her head jerking to the beat of a drummer so distant only she could hear. Elbows bent, hands on shoulders, she flailed her arms like a bird in an eternal, grotesquely futile effort to fly*" (p. 202). The metaphors such as '*beat of a drummer* and '*futile effort to fly*' emphasise her failed desire for blue eyes and indirectly

love, respect and independence. For this reason, Pecola is ascribed to an Imaginary World rather than a Symbolic Order, which is characterised as persecutory based on White superiority in socio-cultural and socio-economic levels.

5.1.3 Iconic Notes in Morrison's *Sula*: The Analysis of Metaphor and Metonymy as Sources of Motivation

Generally, motivation is the relationship between form and concept (iconicity) or form with another form (metaphor). It is a patent in the figurative language of literary works where its structure is based on metaphor and metonymy.

The following extract explains Hannah's dream as a symbol of metaphors where the expressions '*wedding*' and '*a red bridal gown*' are conceptual metaphors, referring to Lakoff's (2014) ontological metaphor: '*She dreamt of a wedding in a red bridal gown_ until Sula came in and work her*' (p. 71). The metaphorical expressions foreshadow the catastrophic event that will befall Hannah and interrelate with imagic iconicity. The event is elaborated in the following extract via structural metaphor to give deeper insight into Hannah's death:

She rolled up the window and it was then she saw Hannah burning. The flames from the yard fire were licking the blue dress, making her dance ... cut and bleeding she clawed the air trying to aim her body toward the flaming, dancing figure (Morrison, 1973, p. 76).

The verbs '*licking*', '*clawing*' and '*make her dancing*' are exploited as ontological metaphors to trigger readers' memory and illustrate the agonizing death which Hannah faced. In the above extract, motivation occurs via metaphors when the target domain '*fire*' is mapped onto the source domain '*red gown*', and '*death*' is mapped onto

'wedding' creating analogies. Moreover, dance is mentioned as metaphorically referring to a painful death in association with the phrase dance of death in the Western culture. Furthermore, death is also expressed as sleep where, in the following extract, the word '*sleep*' is exploited orientationally to create a metaphor for the concept of death. "*Dying was ok because it was sleep and there wasn't no grey ball in the death, was there? Was there?*" (p.110). Death as a target domain is mapped onto sleep as a source domain and via the convention frame, death is sleep. The event of Hanna's death is projected via diagrammatic iconicity because there is an analogy or similarity between the structure of form and the structure of meaning

Morrison also employs cultural symbols and archetypes to produce cultural metaphoric thoughts via metonymy, contextualising African-American issues of racism, associated with the lack of socio-cultural and socio-economic independence. Talmantaite (2008) argues that some original metaphors display dynamic features in the context where they often reoccur in different places in Morrison's works featuring different or additional archetypal/cultural symbols. The following extract demonstrates how metaphors reflect archetypal and cultural symbols. "*Sula was a heavy brown with large quiet eyes, one of which featured a birth mark that spread from the middle of the lid toward the eyebrow, shaped something like a stemmed rose*" (Morrison, 1973, p. 50). Here, readers are motivated by the metaphor of '*a birth mark*' which is culturally bound with archetypal reference. The activation of this metaphor occurs at a meta-linguistic level and can be interrelated with iconicity. A birthmark is an icon of stigma in *Sula's* community. Additionally, Morrison employs another metaphor articulated via metonymy, "*Birth mark is rose*" which motivates cultural symbols as it serves as a metaphor within metonymy by which Morrison refers to part to represent the whole (*Sula*). A rose is a prototype for a flower with a wide range of cultural conceptual

symbolic meanings ascribed to Sula in the cognitive process of decoding (Talmantaite, 2008). When Morrison adopts the use of metaphors, she intends to convey an important social, cultural or archetypal message, or to deepen the discussion of a crucial issue concerning the theme of the work. On this basis, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) theorises that metaphor does not occur haphazardly but is bound by frames manifested via social, cultural and archetypal contexts. The following extract shows how metaphors within metonymy '*the Black rose*' echo cultural and archetypal symbols to be a source of motivation for readers "*She would be facing the Black rose that Jude has kissed and look at the nostrils of the woman ...*" (p.183). The motivation occurs when metaphor and metonymy co-occur where the phrase '*the Black rose that Jude has kissed.*' is an ontological metaphor within metonymy, suggesting imagic iconicity. The above extract shows that Sula's bad behaviour, causes '*The birthmark*' to turn into a black rose as an ontological metaphor, referring to the violation of morals and values through the metaphors of love and death which deconstruct the binary opposition as a single dimensioned concept. Rodriguez (2009) argues that love and death metaphors in Morrison's *Sula* dissolve and intersect, build and destroy each other implying the complex relationship between these concepts. The black rose is also an archetypal symbol, that creates motivation on the part of the reader. In Hawthorn's *Scarlet Letter*, black roses are attributed to those who sinned in terms of adultery, indicating the negative connotations of the black rose in Western culture.

In *Sula*, Morrison describes the way African-Americans live within death, rendering the concept of death as crucial in the construction of metaphotonymy which is ontological, suggesting imagic iconicity. Shadrack's talks about his painful experience of the war in the ontological metaphor '*soup bowl of his helmet*' which occurs

under the umbrella of metonymy '*his foot*' and '*soldier's head*'. Such metaphors suggest leads to imagic iconicity as depicted in the following text:

“Wincing at the pain of his foot, he turned his head a little to the right and saw the face of a 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 (Morrison, 1973, p. 8).

Morrison uses the metaphors of *death* which is very familiar in the life of African-Americans who live desperately, and viewing life from negative perspectives. Shadrack is one of Morrison's symbols who participated in WWI and as a result of what he experienced in the war, becomes traumatised by unexpected deaths. He suffers from a syndrome known as post-traumatic stress disorder where his eccentricity led him to urge the community at the Bottom to commit suicide or kill one another. He is exploited metaphorically to manifest the deteriorations and fragmentation of the Black community. In the following text, the word '*death*' is an ontological metaphor and the expressions such as, '*the smell of death*', '*terrified of it*', '*dying that frightened*' are orientational metaphors. These types of metaphors constitute structural metaphors illustrating Shadrack's feelings where his suicide may be a response to the terror that African Americans have experienced. Shadrack can be a diagrammatic icon for African Americans who participated in the war and sacrificed their sanity and lives for a country which does not recognise them as normal citizens. This text describes Shadrack's feelings of terror:

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 unexpectedness of both (Morrison, 1973, p. 14).

Morrison further describes the traditional norms of African Americans using conceptual metaphor, represented by the statue of the Virgin Mary and the structural metaphor of death. Both metaphors show the collapse of the African-American psyche when it comes to death. The conversation occurs in 1920 when Cecile raised her granddaughter Helene in a house with the statue of the Virgin Mary, implying the traditional conventions of Nel's family. Such conventions are commonly realised in all African-American residents in the Bottom via metaphorical expressions such as '*sombre house*' (which is an ontological metaphor), '*death sighed*', '*canary-yellow dress*' and '*funeral atmosphere*'. These metaphorical expressions are orientational metaphors. The selected extract describes death and the misleading practices of the Black community. The use of the statue maps into the moral convention of the Black community, suggesting imagic iconicity, while the concept of death maps into the social structure of the community leading to diagrammatic iconicity. A description of Sombre House is as follows:

In that sombre house that held four Virgin Marys, where death sighed in every corner and candles sputtered, the gardenia smell and canary-yellow dress emphasized the funeral atmosphere surrounding them (Morrison, 1973, p. 25).

The following text gives an insight into Chicken Little's death that is achieved via orientational metaphor, '*the hands unfolded*' which reflects the status of the boy's death through a combination of metaphors and similes such as, '*like pairs of raven's wings*'. The expression '*the hands of the women*' is a metaphor within a metonymy mapping a woman's deeds, which has caused the boy's death. The extract discusses the attendance of Sula and Nel during the sermon at the church consoling each other over the death of

the boy who was killed unintentionally by Sula. It explains how the boy slipped out of Sula's grip and fell into the river, implying image iconicity because it indicates the mapping between two images, which are Sula's open hands and the raven's wings.

"As Reverend Deal moved into his sermon, the hands of the women unfolded like pairs of raven's wings and flew high above their hats in the air" (Morrison, 1973, p. 65).

Morrison also adopts the use of structural metaphor to correlate death with the experience of Black people. The following extract expresses Sula and Nel's feelings towards death during Chicken's funeral procession. Nel is silent and feels guilty over the boy's death while Sula cries without any sense of guilt. The expression *'their emotions are swayed for rivulets of grief and ecstasy'* is illustrated via the ontological metaphor on how they conceptualise death with pain and sadness. *Life and death* are also expressed metaphorically within the metonymic use of *'coffin'* and *'the Hand of God'* which map onto the concept of death where such a murder would greatly impact Sula and Nel. The metaphorical description of the concept of death suggests diagrammatic iconicity because the structure of the text imitates its meaning via analogy.

They swayed, for the rivulets of grief or of ecstasy must be rocked. And when they thought of all that life and death locked into that little closed coffin they danced and screamed not to protest God's will but to acknowledge it and confirm once more their conviction that the only way to avoid the Hand of God is to get in it (Morrison, 1973, p. 66).

Oriental metaphors are also employed to represent Hannah's fate. These metaphors are manifested through the metonymic relation of *dreams*, attributed to Hannah's fate. The symbols that she experienced in her dreams foretell her dramatic and painful end. There is a mapping between 'wedding' and 'disaster of painful death' and, between 'red bridal gown' and 'fire that will burn her'. These mappings generate both imagic and diagrammatic iconicity. "*She dreamed of a wedding in a red bridal gown until Sula came in and woke her*" (Morrison, 1973, p. 71).

'Red dress' metaphorically stands for blood and pain whilst the word 'dream' is a metaphor within metonymy. This metaphor is classified as structural because it provides a richer elaboration than orientational and ontological metaphors. They create a mental mapping between the target domains, the catastrophic death and the source domain, 'wedding dress', indicating a diagrammatic iconicity:

... she mentioned her dream of the wedding in the red dress...Neither one bothered to look it up for they both knew the number was 522 [p 74...] "She had thought it odd then, but the red in the dream confused her (Morrison, 1973, p. 74).

The structural metaphor also shows Hannah's burning which metaphorically represents the status of African Americans, demonstrating their pain where burning is a product of racism. The event of burning is projected metaphorically via metonymy because Hannah represents the African-American community and the burning of the physical body maps the burning of feelings that African-Americans experienced throughout-history. The burning may also reflect the status of the Black community under White authority. While the word 'dance' literally expresses happiness, it conveys the excruciating pain felt by Hannah in her death whose pain metonymically stands for

the pain of African Americans. The phrase '*clawed the air*' is a feature attributed to wild and violent animals which is another orientational metaphor via metonymy representing the agony of the metaphorical burning. Fire also maps the fire of racism which kills the essence of humanity. The metaphorical expression '*she clawed the air*' and '*dancing figure*' mapped onto the profound suffering and dilemma of living, suggesting imagic and diagrammatic iconicity. Below is a description of what Sula witnessed, as Hannah is burnt alive:

She rolled up to the window and it was then she saw Hannah burning. The flames from the yard fire were licking the blue cotton dress, making her dance. [...] Cut and bleeding she clawed the air trying to aim her body toward the flaming, dancing figure (Morrison, 1973, p. 76).

When Sula returns home is accompanied by the death of robins, this metaphorically stands for an impending disaster. The following extract contains rhetorical questions conceptualising death as a good thing. The extract contains the ontological metaphor through metonymy *dying* which represents African-Americans undergoing persecution of the White authority. "*Dying was OK because it was sleep and there wasn't no gray ball in death, was there? Was there?*" (Morrison, 1973, p. 110).

Detailed features of Sula I is also expressed through structural metaphor such as in the birthmark which tells of Sula's behaviour and future actions. The mark is presented in detail through similes, "*shaped something like a stemmed rose*' and '*blue-blade threat like the keloid scar of the razored man*". These descriptions map onto Sula's personality, characterised as spontaneous, rebellious and aggressive. In the selected excerpt, the research observes that Sula's acts is a violation to the traditional

conventions, set up by the African-American community. So, we can guess that Sula's behaviour might bear imagic and diagrammatic iconicity simultaneously because there is metal mapping between two concepts, and at the same time the image drawn of the birthmark is mapped into Sula's future behaviour.

Sula was a heavy brown with large quiet eyes, one of which featured a birthmark that spread from the middle of the lid toward the eyebrow, shaped something like a stemmed rose. It gave her otherwise plain face a broken excitement and blue-blade threat like the keloid scar of the razored man who (...) played checkers with her grandmother (Morrison, 1973, p. 52).

In time, Sula's behaviour worsens as she goes against the norms of her community and betrays the closest person to her, Nel, which is expressed metaphorically via the expression *'The birthmark was to grow darker'*. The birthmark is projected as an ontological metaphor, reflecting the painful experiences she goes through. Metaphorically, the darkening of the birthmark maps to Sula's increasing hostility and aggression toward the norms of her community, suggesting a diagrammatic iconicity due to metal mapping between two concepts, as evident in: *"The birthmark was to grow darker as the years passed, but now it was the same shade as her gold -flecked eyes"* (Morrison, 1973, p. 53).

The love affair between Jude and Sula is also expressed via structural metaphor with a mapping between the *'black rose'* and the *'birthmark'*. The metaphor *'black rose'* refer to the betrayal committed by Sula against her friend Nel and is metonymically attributed to Sula's behaviour. Moreover, the metaphor suggests that the illegal love affair also refers to the internal disruptive nature of the African-American community.

The kissing of the black rose by Jude is significant because it shows the fragmented nature of the community and Sula's behaviour is a reaction to it. The metaphorical structure of the text suggests diagrammatic iconicity.

She would be facing the black rose that Jude had kissed and looking at the nostrils of the woman who had twisted her love for her own children into something so thick and monstrous..." (Morrison, 1973, p. 138).

Ontological metaphor is also suggested when Jude refers to Sula's birthmark as snakehead. The sign '*a copperhead*' might refer to Sula's evil nature, which is intolerant to the norms of the African-American community. Metaphorically, Jude's look implies that he never had such feelings and can be interrelated with imagic iconicity- "*Jude [...] looked at this friend of his wife's, this slight woman, not exactly plain, but not fine either, with a copperhead over her eye" (Morrison, 1973, p. 103).*

Furthermore, Morrison also uses structural metaphor referring to the emotion after Sula and Jude succumbed to the temptation of the marital affair. The expression '*smashed her heart*' maps the ruin that occurs in Nel's marriage when she finds out that her husband betrayed her with her close friend. The other expressions like '*no thighs*', '*no heart*', '*just her brain raveling away*' refer to Nel's negative emotions upon realising the betrayal. The metonymic presentation of Nel and Jude convey some details about the fragmentary nature of the African-American community. This mental mapping suggests diagrammatic iconicity because it is a product analogy between structural form and meaning.

For now her thighs were truly empty and dead too, and it was Sula who had taken the life from them and Jude who smashed her heart and the

*both of them who left her with no thighs and no heart just her brain
raveling away (Morrison, 1973, p. 111).*

The ontological metaphors used in the following text: "*Except for a funny-shaped finger and that evil birthmark, she was free of any normal signs of vulnerability*" (p.115) to indicate Sula's two signs does not convey the idea of weakness where metaphorically, her '*funny-shaped finger*' maps onto her irregular behaviour of breaking the traditional norms set up by her community. In addition, the metaphorical expression '*evil birthmark*' shows her insolence and transgression towards her community and can be entwined with diagrammatic and metaphorical iconicity. Thus, the writer utilises these types of metaphors instead to convey Sula's strength against the patriarchal community. Sula is an icon of defiance to the practices of a racist community.

In "But thinking that Sula had an odd way of looking at things and that her wide smile took some of the sting from that rattlesnake over her eye" (p104), Sula's birth sign is described in the orientational metaphor 'rattlesnake', depicting her rebellion and suggesting imagic and diagrammatic iconicity because the mapping is a product of emotional/perceptual image and mental mapping.

Moreover, the following text describes Sula and Nel's reunion after ten years where the metaphorical expression, '*their meeting would be thick with birds*' indicates that their friendship is going to be strong and intimate as well as the death of birds accompanying Sula's arrival. In other words, their meeting maps between strong or intimate and the sudden appearance of birds, suggesting metaphorical iconicity at the same time. "*It would be ten years before they saw each other again and their meeting would be thick with birds*" (p.85).

The following text consists of the ontological metaphor, '*a plague of robins*' where the dying birds become an entity to Sula's death. The death of the robins is expressed metaphorically via the following saying: '*robins were flying and dying*', which is considered as a bad omen or of an impending disaster. Sula's existence in the African-American community is disturbing because of her behaviours. Thus, the death of plague birds implies the coming of the transgressor of social rules or death, suggesting imagic iconicity. "*Accompanied by a plague of robins, Sula came back to Medallion [...] It was hard [...] to just sit on the front porch when robins were flying and dying all around you" (p. 89).*

Morrison refers to evil metaphorically in the African-American life as a source of immunity and a starting point to a better way of life that is embodied in Sula's rejection of traditional values suggested. In the following text, two kinds of metaphors constituting the meaning of evil in African-American's experiences are employed: '*an oppressive oddity*', '*evil days*' are ontological metaphors while '*evil must be avoided*,' '*the purpose of evil*' are orientational metaphors. The structural metaphor of the text leads to a complex mapping between concepts via analogy that suggest diagrammatic iconicity.

In spite of their fear, they reacted to an oppressive oddity, or what they called evil days, with an acceptance that bordered on welcome. Such evil must be avoided, they felt, and precautions must naturally be taken to protect themselves from it. [...] The purpose of evil was to survive it
(Morrison, 1973, p. 90).

The following extract is taken from the last page of the novel, illustrating Nel's grief via a set of orientational metaphorical expressions such as '*long- but it had no*

bottom', and *'circles of sorrow'*. The word *'cry'* is used metonymically due to its attribution to death and sorrow. Moreover, the sentence also bears the structural metaphor in the expression *'fine cry'* referring to the mental mapping between Sula's death and the profound grief that accompanies it. This metaphor reflects that the rejection of the tradition and the norms set up by the community does not imply evilness but Sula's rejection for what might be considered an aspect of slavery. These types of metaphorical expressions interrelate with diagrammatic iconicity due to mapping structures of form and meaning. "*It was a fine cry- loud and long- but it had no bottom and it had no top, just circles and circles of sorrow" (P. 174). The metaphorical construction of *Sula's* text is aided by metonymic relations, focusing mainly on death, establishing the protagonist 'Sula' as an icon representing the failure of selfhood in African-American identity.*

5.1.4 The Iconic Perspective in Morrison's *Beloved*

In *Beloved*, Morrison uses metaphors that can be presented by the metonymic axis to create motivation. We observe that the use of metaphorical elements in Morrison's *Beloved* the harmful shadow of the trauma experienced by African-Americans. Inspired by Lacanian theory, the research observes that the work of Morrison's *Beloved* represents the unconscious of African-American race. The metaphors are manifested to repress and displays the fearful horror exercised against the black people during the time of slavery. The title of Morrison's *Beloved* is ironic since it is metaphorically mapping between the concept of love for African-American women and the deprivation of it. The title maps unto the desire of African-American women to be loved. And is ascribed to the orientational type suggesting interrelation with diagrammatic iconicity.

Hence, *Beloved* serves as an icon that rebels against the stereotypical image of African-American women during the times of servitude.

Sethe is the main character who killed her daughter to save her from the oppression of slavery under the White authority. In the novel, the killing is significant to demonstrate the cruelty of the slave system. The following passage accounts for the time when Sethe used to be a slave in a plantation 124 and killed her new-born daughter in an attempt to keep her out of the bondage of slavery that she had experienced:

124 was spiteful. Full of a baby's venom. The women in the house knew it and so did the children. For years each put up with the spite in his own way, but by 1873 Sethe and her daughters Denver were its only victims
(Morrison, 1987, p. 5).

The text describes the place where African-Americans lived through two types of metaphors: 1) ontological metaphor in '*124 was spiteful*' it is personified and addressed as a human rather than a house and 2) orientational metaphor in '*baby's venom*' because the venom is a concept used to express a particular emotional or perspective that African Americans have experienced. Moreover, the word '*victim*,' is also an ontological metaphor, mapping onto oppressed Africans in America. These metaphors are presented through the metonymic axis of '*the women in the house*' representing African-American women which are entwined with imagic iconicity.

Baby Suggs is a significant icon in Morrison's *Beloved*. Despite her legal name being Jenny Whitlow, she rejects it due to the association of the name with her painful experience of slavery. Metaphorically, when she abandons her legal original name, she breaks the bondage of horrible slavery, thereby, the orientational metaphor of Baby

Suggs makes her a diagrammatic icon. The following selected passage illustrates the occurrence of several metaphors:

Within two months, in the dead of winter, leaving their grandmother, Baby Suggs; Sethe, their mother; and their little sister, Denver, all by themselves in the gray and White house on Bluestone Road. It didn't have a number then, because Cincinnati didn't stretch that far. In fact, Ohio had been calling itself a state only seventy years when first one brother and then the next stuffed quilt packing into his hat, snatched up his shoes, and crept away from the lively spite the house felt for them (Morrison, 1987, 1.5).

The conceptual metaphor '*the dead of winter*' and '*124*' can be described as ontological metaphors as they are treated as an entity or a container accepting women rather than men. The metaphors offer a visualisation of the situation African-Americans faced through metonymic relations. This relationship creates a mapping between two sets of concepts, which is interrelated with imagic iconicity. The extract describes the period long after Sethe killed her baby daughter consequently leading to the house becoming haunted by the ghost of the baby. Through the structural metaphor, the following text expresses the harsh difficulty of the killing act that simultaneously reflect the way of living for African-Americans.

The combination of ontological metaphor in '*her years in a house palsied by the baby's fury*' in which the house is conceptualised as a container for the baby or Beloved's fury in response to the act of brutal killing committed by her mother. Another ontological metaphor '*her knees open wide...*' illustrated via the metonymy, '*her knees*', shows that Sethe's desire to have her daughter back in her womb to protect her from the

pain of slavery. The expression, '*the grave, were longer than life....*', is classified as an orientational metaphor due to the process of conceptualising perceptual experiences by relating them to other concepts. The combination of two types of metaphors via metonymic relations such as '*Sethe's knees*', '*her years*', '*the baby blood*' and '*baby's fury*' suggest both imagic and diagrammatic iconicity as they conjure images that portray African Americans' sorrowful history besides the analogy they construct between form and meaning. These metaphors are imagic because both types of metaphors, ontological and orientational, presents the readers with an image in their mind. Moreover, the combination of the two types of metaphors suggests that it is a structural metaphor, implying diagrammatic iconicity because the image painted through the text may require a mental mapping between two concepts or analogy between two structures.

Not only did she have to live out her years in a house palsied by the baby's fury at having its throat cut, but those ten minutes she spent pressed up against dawn-colored stone studded with star chips, her knees wide open as the grave, were longer than life, more alive, more pulsating than the baby blood that soaked her fingers like oil. (Morrison, 1987, 1. 5- 6).

The orientational metaphor in the following text explains the burial process of *Beloved*. The dead body of *Beloved* via the word '*funeral*' is mapped unto the death of African-American independence during that time. Furthermore, this is also insinuated when the dead baby girl does not have a name until she gets buried. The word '*preacher*' is a conceptual metaphor mapping unto the mourners who console the death of freedom

for African Americans. These metaphors can be mapped into the buried history of African-Americans that is interrelated with diagrammatic and imagic iconicities.

She had not thought to ask him and it bothered her still that it might have been possible—that for twenty minutes, heard the preacher say at the funeral (and all there was to say, surely) engraved on her baby's headstone: Dearly Beloved. But what she got, settled for, was the one word that mattered. (Morrison, 1987, 1.15).

The accommodation that houses African-Americans is weighed down with sorrow because the atmosphere is pregnant with the recollection of slavery. The following extract expresses the painful encounters when they used to live in 124, giving an account of the traumatic history experienced by African-Americans. The expressions '*its rafters*' and '*dead Negro's grief*' are conceptual metaphors that also serve as metonymic relation ascribed to African-Americans. The expression '*its rafters*' is a metonymy referring to the metaphorical part of the house, and at the same time, metaphorically mapping unto the helplessness of African-Americans to obtain independence on the socio-cultural and socio-economic levels. In this case, grief is a perceptual experience of the Black that is conceptualised as an entity. This kind of metaphor is ontologically presented through the metonymy attributed to African-Americans. The image that the extracted text produces suggests metaphorical and imagic iconicities as seen in:

We could move," she suggested once to her mother-in-law. "What'd be the point?" asked Baby Suggs. "Not a house in the country ain't packed to its rafters with some dead Negro's grief (Morrison, 1987, 1.17-18).

Morrison's *Beloved* centres on the depiction of the treatment of African Americans as being subhuman. Their status is evident in the following selected text via the structural metaphor which also consists of ontological metaphors, "you cooked him" and "less than a chicken sitting in the sun on a tub". These metaphors demonstrate the inferiority of African Americans; 'a rooster' is an ontological metaphor while 'a chicken sitting' is an orientational metaphor. Paul D is deemed a metaphorical manifestation in Morrison's *Beloved* as he suffers from the brutal chastisement when the schoolteacher takes over the plantation. The novel makes references to his feelings via the ontological metaphor, 'rusted tobacco tin', mapping the suppressed unpleasant memories in Sweet Home. He explains to Sethe the horrible experience they endured after the death of Mr Garner where the metaphorical appearance of the schoolteacher maps metaphorically unto cruel White authority. In the text, the combination of these two metaphors results in the structural metaphor, which is interrelated with diagrammatic iconicity, associating between two different semantic fields. This linguistic style is apparent in the following passage:

Mister was allowed to be and stay what he was. But I wasn't allowed to be and stay what I was. Even if you cooked him you'd be cooking a rooster named Mister. 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 (Morrison, 1987, 8.102-103).

In Morrison's *Beloved* is Paul D plays very crucial. The pain and brutality that he has experienced during the time of the schoolteacher makes him one of the prominent icon reflecting the persecution of African-American males. The following expression,

"Paul D stopped and squeezed his left hand with his right..." is an orientational metaphor, offering insight into his pain and the pain African-Americans experience under the authority of White people which is metonymically attributed to the metaphorical manifestation of *the schoolteacher*, suggesting imagic iconicity:

"Mister, he looked so... free. Better than me. Stronger, tougher. Son a bitch couldn't even get out of the shell herself but he was still king and I was..." "Paul D stopped and squeezed his left hand with his right. He held it that way long enough for it and the world to quiet down and let him go on (Morrison, 1987, 8. 102- 103).

Furthermore, the following text describes the situation of 124 metaphorically in which Paul D does not feel comfortable in every room and decided to sleep outside to free himself from the restlessness he experiences at 124, which increase dramatically after *Beloved* asked him to have sex with her. He tries hard to resist her but failed to do so where this sense of feeling is explained via the conceptual metaphor, '*the glassy anger*', serving as a metonymy of anger ascribed to women. The extract contains a structural metaphor that provides more detailed information about emotional and perceptual experiences by combining two types of metaphors: ontological, '*a woman's house begins to bind them*' and orientational, '*house-fit there was no anger*'. These types of metaphors are entwined with diagrammatic iconicity due to mental mapping between two structures. Moreover, the text also contains metaphorical iconicity in the conceptual metaphor entwined with '*the glassy anger*'.

He believed he was having house-fits, the glassy anger men sometimes feel when a woman's house begins to bind them, when they want to yell and break something or at least run off. He knew all about that—felt it lots of

times—in the Delaware weaver's house, for instance. But always he associated the house-fit with the woman in it. This nervousness had nothing to do with the woman [...] Also in this house-fit there was no anger, no suffocation, no yearning to be elsewhere. He just could not, would not, sleep upstairs or in the rocker or, now, in Baby Suggs' bed. So, he went to the storeroom (Morrison, 1987, 11.14).

Additionally, *Sweet Home* is observed as metonymy within metaphor, attributed to the atmosphere of slavery. Morrison expresses how African-American men were treated by using ontological metaphors. Paul D wants to make Sethe pregnant, but he is unsure about his manhood due to the abuse he suffered during the time of the schoolteacher reign and the spell *Beloved* cast upon him when she ordered him to sleep with her. Paul D's proposal in making Sethe pregnant is an attempt to forget the past and look forward to the future. The construction of this kind of metaphor summons an image before the eyes of readers interrelating with image iconicity due to the mapping between the meaning and the image.

The men at Sweet Home are treated like men. But what's the point when you can't carry that feeling around past the property grounds? What kind of freedom is that? (Morrison, 1987, 13.1).

The extract below tells of the independence of the society and consists of two parts: the first part depicts the merits of African-Americans realised in the orientational metaphor, '*Deferring to his slaves' opinions...*'. This metaphor interrelates with diagrammatic iconicity due to the analogy between the two structures. On the other hand, the second part describes the status of African-American men at Sweet Home where this description is realised in the ontological metaphor through the simile '*like a*

scarecrow in rye". While men were treated in Sweet Home like men, Paul D has ambivalent feelings about how men can they be without freedom? This metaphor suggests imagic iconicity due to its mapping between the image conjured by the text and the meaning it conveys.

He thought what they said had merit, and what they felt was serious. Deferring to his slaves' opinions did not deprive him of authority or power. It was schoolteacher who taught them otherwise. A truth that waded like a scarecrow in rye: they were only Sweet Home men at Sweet Home. One step off that ground and they were trespassers among the human race (Morrison, 1987, 13.1).

In *Beloved*, the metaphorical manifestation of Sweet home is metonymically referred in *Lillian Garner's house* where there is no physical persecution, but they were tormented psychologically. The house is described as an orientational metaphor because it conceptualises the perspectives of African Americans in terms of relating them to other concepts. This kind of iconicity is identified as imagic because the metonymic relation of the house may refer to America where the orientational metaphor can create an image for the readers.

*In Lillian Garner's house, exempted from the field work that broke her hip and the exhaustion that drugged her mind; in Lillian Garner's house where nobody knocked her down (or up), she listened to the White woman humming at her work; watched her face light up when Mr Garner came in and thought, *It's better here, but I'm not** (Morrison, 1987, 15.22).

Oriental metaphor is also used to demonstrate the strange descriptions of their feelings. When Sethe locked the door of 124, the women inside feel a sense of freedom. Their thoughts are metaphorically expressible but undecipherable to Stamp Paid who metonymically stands for a majority of African-Americans that also metaphorically refer to the unspeakable history of African Americans. The metaphor portrays their suffering as profound and meaningful but unutterable and complex in terms of understanding since their voices are often silenced by White people. This kind of metaphor suggests diagrammatic iconicity due to the mapping between two structures as demonstrated in the following extract:

When Sethe locked the door, the women inside were free at last to be what they liked, see whatever they saw and say whatever was on their minds. Almost. Mixed in with the voices surrounding the house, recognizable but undecipherable to Stamp Paid, were the thoughts of the women of 124, unspeakable thoughts, unspoken (Morrison, 1987, 19.222-223).

The following text refers to the first-person monologue by *Beloved* which expresses a sense of loss and fragmentation when *Beloved* was first abandoned by her mother, Sethe. In the text, the expression 'join hot thing sun closes my eyes' stands for an ontological metaphor while 'smiling face' is an orientational metaphor. The combination of these two types of metaphors suggests a text of structural metaphor which relates to diagrammatic iconicity.

I sit the sun closes my eyes when I open them I see the face I lost Sethe's is the face that left me Sethe sees me see her and I see the smile her smiling face is the place for me it is the face I lost she is my face smiling at me

doing it at last a hot thing now we can join a hot thing (Morrison, 1987, 22.10).

Consider the following extract:

Suddenly he remembers Sixo trying to describe what he felt about the Thirty-Mile Woman. "She is a friend of my mind. She gather me, man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in all the right order. It's good, you know, when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind (Morrison, 1987, 27.96).

The expression "*She is a friend of my mind*" is an orientational metaphor where the expressions "*The pieces I am, she gather them and give... She gather me...*" are classified as ontological metaphors. These types of metaphors suggest three kinds of iconicities: imagic, diagrammatic and metaphoric. Imagic iconicity is a product of ontological metaphor because the meaning maps into the image that the metaphor creates in the readers' minds which is manifested in the example: '*a friend of my mind*'. Diagrammatic iconicity results from orientational metaphors because feelings are conceptualised in terms of relating these feelings or emotion to other concepts such as '*friend of my mind, ... gather me ...*'.

Through structural metaphor, the perceptual status of the Black community toward the existence of *Beloved* is also shown in the text. The metaphorical expression '*the chewing laughter to swallow her all away*' imply metaphorical iconicity due to the association it denotes between two different semantic fields. Additionally, the text gives an account of how the community view *Beloved* as a horrifying dream that represents the unforgettable since metaphorically, she stands for the heritage of African-Americans' memories. *Beloved* is also manifested metonymically, representing

African-American history, which has been silenced by White authority. In the African-American community, everybody attempts to forget the appalling history that is recollected in the memories and persona of *Beloved*. In a broader sense, the whole of African-American history is characterised as painful, impacting the psyche of African-Americans. This pain is also associated with the attempts of White authority to conceal the fact that they are to be blamed and to make the community forget. Morrison's attempt to bring back and consolidate the painful history of African-Americans enables them to stand on solid truth and be inspired again to seek independence on the socio-cultural and economic levels. The following extract illustrates the feeling of pity towards *Beloved* and that the pain that she has experienced cannot be forgotten. Since *Beloved* is a representation of the African-American past, remembering *Beloved* implies not forgetting African-American history.

Although she has claim, she is not claimed. In the place where long grass opens, the girl who waited to be loved and cry shame erupts into her separate parts, to make it easy for the chewing laughter to swallow her all away (Morrison, 1987, 28.2).

Morrison's *Beloved* contains prominent icons manifested in the construction of its characters and themes based on metaphors. The character *Beloved* is an icon exploring the history of painful slavery and represents the strong motive for African-Americans to move forward and seek further independence at the socio-cultural and socio-economic levels. The metaphorical reincarnation of *Beloved* is significant in the construction of the narrative within a semiotic system. The textual structure is elevated by the dramatisation of the idea of resurrection to create connections between the past and the present. Thus, the metaphorical manifestation of *Beloved* represents the past

whilst Sethe stands for African Americans in the present. Thus, *Beloved* is an icon that simulates the past or the history of slavery while Sethe stands for the African-American status quo in the present.

5.1.4.1 The Abandonment of Symbolic Order for Imaginary Order

In *Beloved*, Sethe killed her new-born daughter as a result of the loss and devastation she had to endure when she lost her eight children to slavery. The act of killing is metaphoric via the metonymy ascribed to the history of African-Americans. This killing is a negative reaction toward Symbolic Order, which is often characterised as appalling and is an attempt to send her daughter back to an imaginary world to keep her out of the Symbolic Order where slaver abounds. In Chapter Six, *Beloved* asks Sethe about her mother who was hanged which is a horrible reality to Sethe. She also does not remember the language spoken in Africa when *Beloved* reminds her. The following text metaphorically demonstrates that Sethe forgets the language spoken by the Africans in a bid to forget the painful events of her mother's killing: "*What Nan told her she had forgotten, along with the language she told it in. the same language her mother spoke, and which would never comeback*" (Morrison, 1987, p. 6-36). Through the metaphorical jungle of *Beloved*, Morrison uses her protagonist as a tool to restore the lost and hidden history of the African-American culture. The possible denial of the people in this restoration is evidently represented through the embodiment of the metonymy in Sethe who stands for the African-American community. In this sense, the act of killing and evil acts in Morrison's novels metaphorically map onto the attempt to resort to an imaginary world as suggested by the Lacanian theory. By leaving the symbolic order which is filled with bitter racism, ugliness and brutality, a temporary escape can be sought. The metaphors significantly convey the notion of independence at the socio-

cultural and socio-economic levels. One of the prime metaphors, Sethe, who had metaphorically killed her daughter to free her from the bondage of slavery, by virtue of metonymic relation is a representative of the African-Americans. As a reaction to her mother's horrible lynching, Sethe attempts metaphorically to substitute the world of senses or Symbolic Order with an imaginary world under the influence of her baby ghost *Beloved* who forces her to face the painful past of slavery. The resurrection of Sethe's baby ghost metaphorically represents the emergence of her horrible history while Sethe's daughter Denver is bound to the Symbolic World. Denver developed her independence by obtaining spiritual encouragement from Baby Suggs when she decides to leave 124 to get help from her former teacher Lady Johns for Sethe who is slowly wasting away due to *Beloved*. In a broader sense, the two characters are presented metaphorically via metonymic relations. The complete and partial motivation is a product of metaphor and metonymy respectively, which can be interrelated with iconic perspectives via mapping between meaning and concepts, making Morrison's characters icons reflecting the sufferings encountered by African-Americans.

Thus, *In the Bluest Eye*, Pecola attempts to escape the Symbolic Order, which could not help her to obtain blue eyes in a trial to gain love and independence on socio-cultural and socio-economic levels. Sula breaks with conventions attributed to symbolic order. In *Beloved*, the situation is different. Sethe and other African Americans view the ghost of *Beloved* as a real person to remind them about their painful history due to their indulgence in the imaginary order which serves as a ground for them to alleviate the horror of the past through manifestations of *Beloved* and to obtain a better future. Inspired by Lacanian theory, the protagonists in the three novels have a strong desire to escape the Symbolic Order, which is characterised by the victimisation of the people of their race in an attempt to live with the metaphorical world they have created in their

minds. This mental mapping conveys metaphoric iconicity. Metaphorically, these three texts are an attempt to abandon the Symbolic Order since it is a place where they cannot achieve their rights as human beings and is difficult to cope with. Thus, they replace the real world with the Imaginary Order in which socio-cultural and socio-economic independence can be achieved.

5.2 Conclusion

Morrison's unspeakable texts suggest a motivation that can manifest itself into various types of iconicity namely imagic, diagrammatic and metaphoric and subsequently ontological, orientational and structural metaphor. Morrison's characters serve as icons because they are constructed to convey the message concerning the issues faced by African-Americans. In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola is an icon for African-American women, reflecting dependence, pain and persecution. Metaphorically, she wants to change her appearance to gain respect and love. *Sula* is an icon of rebellion against the standard traditions of African Americans and the hegemony of the patriarchal Black community and White people. Finally, *Beloved* is an icon for rejecting slavery where the process of reminiscing that is involved is also iconically a starting point for African-Americans to move forward. Pecola, *Sula* and *Beloved* are metaphorically constructed via metonymic relations attributed to African-American women, who become Morrison's icons in reflecting the suffering that results from racism. The painful experience of the three protagonists is attributed to the entire African-American community during the various eras of racism starting from 1880s (pre- civil war era) to 1960s.