

SLAVERY AS FORCED IMMIGRATION IN TONI MORRISON'S *BELOVED*

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Abstract

Immigrated by force in the States, African Americans have suffered from slavery. In Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Sethe and Sweet Home's slaves have also paid a heavy price for freedom. Black Africans were torn from their land and taken to foreign lands. With Postmodernism as literary theory, we will reveal the atrocities, the sufferings of slavery on black Africans and the methods of resilience of these oppressed of that forced immigration. Disoriented and tortured, they struggled to get freedom. Toni Morrison, an African American woman writer, is one of the leading figures of black American literature, advocating for the freedom of black people in the United States of America.

Key words: Immigrants- Resilience-Slavery-African American-Freedom.

L'esclavage comme immigration force dans *Beloved* de Toni Morrison

Résumé

Immigrés de force aux Etats Unis, les Afro Américains ont souffert de l'esclavage. Sethe et les esclaves de Sweet Home dans *Beloved* de Toni Morrison, ont aussi payé un lourd tribut pour la liberté. Les noirs Africains sont arrachés de force de leur terre pour des espaces qui leur sont étrangers. Avec le Postmodernisme comme théorie littéraire, nous révélerons les atrocités, les souffrances des Afro Américains et les méthodes de résilience chez ces opprimés de l'immigration forcée. Désorientés et torturés, ils luttèrent pour la liberté. Toni Morrison, une écrivaine Afro-américaine, est une figure de proue de la littérature noire américaine pronant la liberté des noirs aux Etats Unis.

Mots clés: Immigrés-Résilience-Esclavage-Afro Américain-Liberté

*La esclavitud como inmigración forzada en *Beloved* de Toni Morrison*

Resumen

Traídos a la fuerza como inmigrantes a los Estados Unidos, los afroamericanos sufrieron bajo la esclavitud. Sethe y los esclavos de Sweet Home en *Beloved* de Toni Morrison, también pagaron un alto precio por la libertad. Los africanos negros son arrancados por la fuerza de sus tierras y llevados a lugares ajenos a ellos. Con el Posmodernismo como teoría literaria, revelaremos las atrocidades y el sufrimiento de los afroamericanos y los métodos de resiliencia entre quienes sufren la opresión de la migración forzada. Desorientados y torturados, lucharon por la libertad. Toni Morrison, escritora afroamericana, es una figura destacada de la literatura afroamericana que abogó por la libertad de la población negra en Estados Unidos.

Palabras claves: Inmigrantes-Resiliencia-Esclavo-Afroamericano-Libertad

Introduction

In her essay «*A foreigner's Home*», Toni Morrison not only evokes a situation of resilience but also thinks that the foreigner is also a builder of his host land. For T. Morrison (1998, p. 70), Strangers:

are only versions of ourselves, many of which we have not embraced, most of which we wish to protect ourselves from. For the stranger is not foreign, she is random, not alien but remembered: and it is the randomness of the encounter with our already known selves that summons a ripple of alarm. Bergman's radiant portraits of strangers provoked this meditation.

So, before any analysis we can do, let's define the notion of immigration. What means, immigrant? "Immigrant" is used to qualify someone who moves from one country to another; with the intent to live there permanently. The host country is the country of residence of the immigrant.

Migration, a general concept, comprises two fundamental notions: Emigration and immigration. Those who leave their native country, are some emigrants. However, the new comers in a host country are called immigrants. Here, we will focus on immigration, or the immigrants. The immigrants live in the host countries. Why some people decide to leave their country of origin? Many reasons justify this movement. It can be done freely or under constraint. Immigrants are classified in several groups. The source of immigration is most often linked to the economic need. The people leave sometimes their countries of origin, in search of better living conditions. The search for well-being is a key factor of immigration. The refugees of wars or asylum seekers, flee conflicts zones for peaceful areas. For example, some millions of people leave Tehran for rural zones, because of war. (<https://news.un.org> consulté le 14/03/2026). The brain drain is also another plague of immigration. The elite flee their own countries for better salaries abroad. The loss of skilled labor is a serious obstacle to the sustainable development of poor countries. As a result, host countries are often overwhelmed by waves of immigrants, necessitating international aid efforts.

The need to acquire scientific and intellectual skills, create the massive influx of immigrants into developed countries. Some students and researchers in the medical field

or in electronics undertake these journeys in order to acquire this expertise. After that overview of factors leading to immigration, one type of immigration often seems to be forgotten or even ignored. The slavery. In this article, we consider slavery as a forced immigration and we have to reveal the impact of slavery on African Americans. We will structure this article in three main parts: the first one is Slavery, a forced immigration. Secondly, what are space and transgression, and the third part is memory as resilience. With *Beloved* as a corpus, through postmodernism, a literary theory approach, we will try to deconstruct all the main clichés linked to immigration. Immigration is characterized by severe trauma and the destruction of selfhood. In that forced immigration, African culture was also brought. That forced immigration from Africa has been a deep, difficult wound to heal, where some blunders still constitute visible scars of this scourge, which is slavery. We need to show how Toni Morrison, in *Beloved*, exposes the atrocities, the sufferings, and the different strategies of resilience in that work. Now we will delve deeper into the issues of immigration and slavery that are the memories as resilience.

1. Slavery, a forced immigration

Slavery of African Americans, that forced immigration, aimed at enriching the enslavers and being the leading continent all over the world. The objective was great and laborious. The ambition of the work was noble but painful. However, Toni Morrison reveals the hidden part of iceberg through her masterpiece, her fifth novel, *Beloved*, that deconstructs the vision of settlers. What is that?

1.1 Disintegration of black African's families units

Disintegration is the decomposition of a block in different parts. Black Africans who have been deported to America have carried with them their identity. Identity is made up of spirituality and culture. Identity is a foundation of a person. According to Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, black Africans in America, have their conception of spirituality. In *Beloved*, the phenomenon of the ghost and Christianity, intermingle and plunge us into religious syncretism. Slavery has made a real disintegration in Black African identity. That fragmentation of that unit, has created several dislocations.

I.2 Dislocation of black Africans' units

According to *Longman Dictionary, of Contemporary English* (1978, p. 271), the term of African culture is defined as “the particular system of art, thought and customs of African societies; the arts, customs, beliefs and all the other products of human thought made by African people at a particular time.” The settlers have begun to dislocation the identity origin of slaves. In *Beloved*, from the earliest days of American slavery, the first task of slave owners, was to strip the slaves of their true names. In *Beloved*, we have the case of the slaves of Sweet Home. They all bear Christian names. Black social and political organizations of slaves, which valued Black African culture, were repressed in order to prevent some eventual rebellions arising from insubordination to slave masters. All slaves in Garners' plantation, have their names changed. The change of the names of slaves could be seen by some people as purification followed by brainwashing. That form of immigration, from original name identity to a state of acculturation or uprooting, is a cultural forced immigration. The form evoked in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, made headlines in world history: the slavery. Indeed, unlike voluntary immigration, *Beloved* is a restrictive immigration. Against their will, some Black people in Africa have been deported to America by force. The break with their past was so consumed. Black Africans were torn from their genuine nature to another system of life.

I.3 Separation of black African families in America

The forced displacements of black African families have contributed to a real disintegration of black African society in America. Sethe, has suffered from it. An internal immigration has separated for example Halle family. Sethe fled Sweet Home to 124 houses for freedom. She left her husband by force. The hard living conditions at Sweet Home, constrained Sethe to go to 124. Ipsa Arun, in his article, *Impact of Slavery in Toni Morrison's Beloved*, said: “It is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven”, (Abstract). In Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987, pp. 10-15.), Sethe's sons, Howard and Buglar, have run away from 124 Bluestone Road. They ran away, to escape from the ghost that haunted this house. These people are also some victims of forced immigration. They left their usual place of residence, for an unknown destination. They move from one place to another, under the effect of a constraint. Sethe's family was disintegrated. Black Africans' families' disintegration has known two phases. In Africa, black Africans lived in their native

families before being deported. The “*Sixty Million and more*” (Dedication), refers to the African millions of people, and their descendants, who suffered, died with their bloodlines completely erased by the transatlantic slave trade. Under the effect of that forced immigration, many Black African families were deeply disintegrated. In the States, African Americans’ living conditions in the host country, were far from easy. They were separated by force. It is so forced immigration due to slavery. The eight children of Baby Suggs were far from her in the hands of slaveowners. She gave birth to these kids and was systematically separated from all of them. The families were dislocated.

I.4 Dislocation of black African society in *Beloved*

T. Morrison (1987, pp. 262-265), no possibility for slaves to get married except Halle Suggs, Sethe’s husband. In *Beloved*, all attempts to escape from ‘Sweet Home’, were fiercely repressed. Sixo, a slave of Sweet Home, would like to escape. However, he has been captured and then burned. Sethe was doubly victimized by disintegration. The death of Sethe’s daughter, Beloved, and the escape of her two sons from 124 on Bluestone Road, constitute a forced separation. That brutal and constraining rupture with the family cell, is a form of social destabilization. It is also a forced immigration. Slaves were also stripped of African names. They were given some derogatory and mundane names. The adoption of Christian names was the first step of the destruction of the field of spiritual identity of Black African society. Baby Suggs’ original identity’s sons’ names were changed into the Christian names that are Paul. (Paul D, Paul F, etc.) It is a spiritual forced immigration that is in *Beloved*. The goal for settlers was precise. Knowing that, identity, is at first, a physical appearance. Failing to change their skin color, they tried to lead them to hate themselves. After it, the change of identity begins with the change of names. Like this, the uprooting was so skillfully carried out for a real transformation. This forced displacement from one area (Africa), to another land (America), beliefs and myths have also known a forced immigration. ‘Sweet Home’ slaves are some slaves in captivity. In T. Morrison’s *Beloved*, (1987, p. 10), they left Africa and found ‘Sweet Home’ as drop-off point, Garner’s plantation. ‘Sweet Home’, beyond being an agricultural production farm, is more like a real open-air prison. In Patricia Hill Collins (2000, p. 150), *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, she uses Sethe to show how slavery, that form of forced immigration and oppression, has inhibited to make prevail

love. They try to change the unacceptable into the acceptable. On the one hand, they want to make us believe that in slavery there is love. On the other hand, we know that slavery, seems to be the most cruel form, in term of disintegration. In *Beloved*, before the end of slavery, slaves in the host land were considered as some subhumans. Specifically, black slaves, on that land of forced immigration, faced with dehumanization, rapes or sexual abuses, violence and killings. In the quest for freedom, there was a dislocation. Unity of Sweet Home began to scatter. The escape of Sethe and Sixo are some strong signs of unity dislocation. Their status as human beings, was rejected and denied. They were viewed as “others” and were deprived of the love of their families. Some people, disoriented, were in quest for identity and spirituality. Another dislocation, and not the least, is the cultural dislocation. What is black Americans’ culture?

I.5 African Americans’ cultural disintegration in *Beloved*

The issue of preserving one’s identity in a context of forced immigration has long been a constant concern for the Black slaves in the United States. What makes or creates an odious character of immigrants to the United States, lies in the challenge of preserving one’s cultural identity. Considered as some subhumans, black Africans in America, should be tamed. In Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, the spiritual culture of Black Americans must be buried in aid of Christianity. All Baby Suggs’s sons, bear Christian names. The demonstration of Christian hegemony is shown again. When Sethe was haunted by the ghost, these are the women of the Black community who freed her from the spell or the ghost. Through *Beloved*, Morrison sheds light on the force or the true God. According to her writings, the exorcism, the true, comes from Christianity and not from beliefs, myths, and ghosts. The dreadful conditions of Black Americans, linked to slavery, are a type of immigration that has destroyed many black people cultural identity. So, slavery destroys cultural identity. The physical identity destruction, resides in what Paul D, in *Beloved*, doubted on his own person. He wonders he was a real person. It is a sign of disintegration of people with their own identity. However, W.E. B. Dubois (1903, p. 5), thinks differently, in *The Souls of Black Folk*, by saying that the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line. Slave immigrants, were confronted to physical, emotional, spiritual and verbal problems. Sethe’s crime reveals the dangerous power of slavery. Slavery raises some criminal emotions which lead to kill. Slavery can push a mother to

express vividly her love for her kids by murdering them. Immigration and slavery are two entities diametrically opposed. But that type of immigration which denatures culturally, creates a dislocation with oneself. In *Beloved*, Sethe tried to escape her past, but failed. Her past was present, surrounding her like the air around her. Beliefs and myths are a side of African Americans' culture and spirituality.

The novel *Beloved*, shows the dehumanization side of slavery. Because, when the foundations of a culture that are some values, competencies, prosperity and experiences of one people are shaken, that people is lost, reduced to the status of animals. Their quality of humans was removed from them and was created to be submitted. Such is the final objective of a people without culture. The Hunt for the City of Gold became a Hell for these slave immigrants.

In the same vein as Toni Morrison's standpoint in *Beloved*, Janice Mirikitani (1987, p. 273) in *Shedding Silence: Poetry and Prose* considers that form of immigration that is slavery, as *Prisons of Silence*. Mirikitani has written:

"From this cell of history, this mute grave
we birth our rage.
We heal our tongues.
We listen to ourselves".

The poet shows us that, African Americans were conscious about that forced immigration, disguised in slavery. It was a fatal blow to cultural identity. But in regarding the goals linked to immigration, which is the pursuit of some objectives, Lolita K. Buckner Innis (1999, p. 85), in *Tricky Magic: Black as Immigrants and the Paradox of Foreignness*, says: "...The Black American experience is an immigrant American..." We see so, the cultural destruction that Toni Morrison exposes to humanity. Identity rhymes with culture. The phenomenon of ghost in *Beloved* is an African reality. Exorcism is a form of purification. Faced with the cultural disintegration, Christianity and black Africans' beliefs and myths seem to struggle to mitigate the harmful effects of cultural disintegration. The American people is a gathering of identities compelled to cohabit. How to escape from slavery, enjoy self-ownership and to affirm one's own identity, were their greatest dreams. The affirmation of one's own identity, is to be in tune with one's culture foundation of an identity. The will of 'Sweet Home' slaves, was the acquisition of the ownership of self and the claim of humanity. Such were their deep wishes.

2. Space and Transgression

Spaces obey some orders of commandments and are also some havens of peace. They are sometimes some venues of transition to access a better being. The house at 124 Bluestone Road was the promised land, for Sethe to reach somehow to get freedom. Under the impact of a forced immigration in a transition place that is Sweet Home, where life is hard, an escape to 124 seemed a panacea. From one painful past to another, Sweet Home and 124 revealed themselves to be some venues of torments for Sethe and the members of the household of 124.

2.1 Spaces of transition

Following the example of all places of landing of slaves, in the United States of America, during that forced immigration, the house 124 Bluestone Road and Sweet Home, in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, constitute some atypical points. These places are some venues of transition of slaves.

In Garners' plantation, Sweet Home is the starting point of the truthful struggle for a real freedom. These places of landing of slaves were also for meditation, for dreams, for freedom, and for better wellbeing. Those thoughts intermingle, interweave and clash. A deep will to escape became a haunting fear to be satisfied at all costs. In Garners' plantation, slaves were submitted to hard labor, sufferings, canings, rapes, and flogging and used as some beasts of burden. Beyond flagellations and imprisonment, some slave women were raped. They were mistreated before being killed. They endured in silence some hard living conditions. They were in a quest for freedom lost since they left their own identity, their true nature. In 'Sweet Home', so as to escape from slavery endured in that place, 124 Bluestone Road, where she hopes to realize her dreams, like all immigrants, Sethe, in her attempt to escape, has lived a real nightmare. She killed her own daughter to avoid falling into slavery. The first dreams in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, were focused on their humanity, safety, and personal identity rather, to pursue wealth. Slaves claimed their own bodies, to possess them. They wanted their memories, and families. They need to be free from the traumas, brutal exactions and exploitation. The sufferings in the course of the transatlantic journey of no return, has been a painful past. The hard living conditions during that trip in Sweet Home, these sufferings were awoken.

In 124 Bluestone Road, another place of transition, there, life was unlivable. Under the effect of the ghost, it has been mandatory for Howard and Buglar to leave that house in order to get freedom. Sethe killed her two-year-old daughter when she escaped. It has also been a painful past for her. That tragic past is awakened with the appearance or the return of the ghost in 124. The return of Sethe to the house 124 on Bluestone Road may be seen as another vision of heaven that is freedom. Why? Because it was released from the constraints of Sweet Home, Mircea Eliade (1974, p. 147), in his book *Cosmos and History. The Myth of the Eternal Return*, says: "Eternal return were above all appreciated (by)...and especially consoled those who directly suffered the pressure of history." In the 124, we have another character, Baby Suggs. Sethe's mother in-law, Halle mother, is a woman who loses all her children and was deprived of all information.

2.2 Transgression

The forced immigration of black Africans to the United States of America, has been a transgression of borders. The evocation of that tragedy in the States by Toni Morrison, in her book *Beloved*, is the awakening of a painful past. The departure from Africa by leaving the African coasts to Virginia, is a transgression or a violation of African spatial and physical integrity. It is not only a violation of African territorial, but also an infringement on African spatial and physical sovereignty. That transgression, which is the forced immigration, has contributed to identity, spiritual, and cultural disintegration. These fundamental values in terms of norms in Africa, were what have undergone a real transgression.

Treated as a livestock, slaves were subjected to all kinds of drudgery. We see so, a transgression of Black Africans' dignity. Sethe was reduced to an animalistic state, which is a transgression of the human being's integrity. She is dehumanized. So, slaves worked in Sweet Home and didn't have any rights. Exploited and mistreated, any attempt of escape from Sweet Home, was seriously repressed. Sexual violence and its corollary of rape and gender discrimination are an attack on physical integrity. It is a transgression of ethics and black Africans moral norms. That forced immigration that is slavery has led Toni Morrison to describe the physical and mental sufferings, such as the sufferings of Sethe, Paul D, and other Sweet Home slaves, as why Marsha Darling (1994, p. 248), has said: "There is a necessity for remembering the horror, but of course, there's a necessity

for remembering it in a manner in which the memory is not destructive. The act of writing the book, in a way, is a way of confronting it and making it possible to remember". Sethe has suffered from slavery. Slavery is a transgression of fundamental freedoms. Torn by the brambles and running in a state of pregnancy. Her pain, added to the painful past, was more horrible.

Raped and aggressed by the schoolteacher's nephews while enslaved at Sweet Home plantation. By exploring the trauma of sexual violence and its impact on black women trapped in slavery has disintegrated ethics and African decency. Born in Virginia land, like some people left on the sidelines. Some forced Black immigrants were hopeless and disintegrated from their roots. They were considered as some subhumans. That is why, Toni Morrison (1981, p. 294), has well illustrated in Ondine Childs, the black housekeeper, in *Tar Baby* when he says: "White folks and black folks should not sit down and eat together or do any of those personal things in life." Ondine Childs added and insisted a lot on the sufferings of Black immigrants. The writing of Toni Morrison can be seen as research of one's identity and freedom. Toni Morrison (1987, p. 95), says "Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another". The most critical event in the novel is the killing of the infant Beloved by her own mother, Sethe.

Sethe has killed Beloved to appease her consciousness and to be free internally. That crime is the sign of the painful past and a violation of Earth. That form of procedure is also a form of countenance of that forced immigration, which is actually, slavery. Toni Morrison (1987, p. 200), asserts again by saying "If I hadn't killed her, she would have died and that is something I could not bear to happen to her". Faced with this despicable contempt for humanity, an awareness took hold of those forced people to immigrate, leading them to positions of resilience or resistance, in the face of that painful past. Strategies or methods of resilience were put in place to preserve the gains. Resilience for black Africans, is to free themselves from the yoke of the oppressor, and to counter also, the transgression of psychological balance of Black men.

Slavery has been an institution so awful that Sethe kills her own daughter and attempts to eliminate physically all her kids. That abomination is the transgression of the inviolability of earthly sacredness. The intent was merely to save them from slavery or to avoid them falling back again into it. Some laws linked to slavery were horrible and justify

the crime of Sethe. Holt & Brown (2000, p. 89). wrote and said that in 1664, some officials of Maryland ordered: "That all Negroes or other Slaves...shall serve Durante Vita and all children born of any Negro or other slaves shall be slaves as their fathers were for the term of their lives". With that law, it is clearly demonstrated that the status of human being was completely denied to the Black man. Laws, atrocities, brutalities, and inhumane acts are countless. Slavery was such a tragedy. Now let's look at the methods and resilience strategies used by slaves to counter slavery.

3. Memories

Memories are the painful past. African Americans have suffered from wounds of the past. What are these wounds born from slavery? What is a resilience?

3.1 Definition of Resilience

Before defining resilience, let's see something. Faced with oppression, the oppressed had two options: either they capitulate or they demonstrate resilience. If they surrender, they remain subjugated and enslaved for life. As a result, resilience imposes itself naturally. The option of resilience signifies leading a struggle to get freedom from slavery and achieve liberation. Therefore, through Toni Morrison *Beloved*, the option of resilience was chosen. But what we call a resilience? A resilience can be defined as the capacity to come with a difficulty or a crisis. It is the way used to cope with a situation of adversity. It is also to be able to overcome a challenge. All resilience requires some ways of doing. Faced with the context of the forced immigration of black slaves to America, methods of resilience became necessary for black American slaves in the United States of America.

The forced immigration is a journey in the traumatic past. Memories are a resilience. Memory is a form of resilience because it is reinscribed in recollection. Toni Morrison awakens the collective consciousness to the necessity of seeing the problem of slavery in the States otherly. Memory is resilience because the claim of justice is legitimate and lawful.

3.2 Memory of transgression of invisible borders

The painful past that is slavery, has made a fateful decision. The disintegration of the social middle, and the families, has broken the social balance. When Toni Morrison was

writing *Beloved*, slavery was already abolished. What remains as a vivid memory, is the painful past. The transgressor of Black identity. It is a journey in the traumatic past that transgresses the invisible borders. These invisible borders are nothing more than what were the foundations of black Africans cultural and identity values. But in the States, these values do not exist again. Slavery has disintegrated them all.

3.3 A painful past stemming from a traumatic trip

At Sweet Home, enslaved people were treated as livestock. Family cells, don't exist again. Not only were children sold away, but the parents had no legal rights over their own offspring. Another border was crossed in America. At Sweet Home, families were torn apart. Sethe's children were not with her. Faced with the respectful people of black Africa, the enslavers at Sweet Home, were stripped away from their crucial values, and were dehumanized. In *Beloved*, Sethe was raped by Schoolteacher's nephews, and Sixo was burnt like an animal. The appearance of the ghost in 124, reminds Sethe, of a painful past. The murder of her daughter.

3.4 The traumatic past and the future

In Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, the black women's community is shown as a complex vessel of both immense trauma and ultimate salvation. They release Sethe from moral condemnation. How, from that traumatic past, a new memory can be created? Should we truncate history, distort it, or engage in syncretism? From my perspective, the interfaith dialogue or the religious syncretism leads us towards an America of compromise. Of course, some previous struggles have been led. Under the effect of the painful and traumatic past, the journey in memory, torments people minds. Some African Americans, such as M. L. K. Junior (1963) in his Letter from Birmingham Jail, said: "Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed". Some African Americans, like King Jr, had previously called on their peers to rise up in popular uprisings. In September 18, 1895 at the Cotton States and International Exposition, Booker T. Washington delivered the famous "Atlanta Compromise" speech and said: "cast down your bucket where you are". This is a call for resilience in the face of forced immigration. Faced with this resurgence of calls for uprisings and revolts, the Nobel Prize-Winning author, T. Morrison, declared: "The function of freedom is to free someone else." The vision of Toni Morrison, is to sensitize the American people to free oneself mutually.

It means that, after the forced immigration, and its corollary of traumatic and painful recollections, the anger against the slavery was real. Therefore, Toni Morrison tells us that, we rather need to go to peace and cohesion. Despite the aftereffects of slavery, Toni Morrison calls to a collective responsibility. She wants a collective memory.

3.5 Memory as resilience

By writing *Beloved*, the warning shot had just been fired as a sign of resilience towards the oppressor. Memory is a deconstruction of what was a norm for the slave masters: the keeping in slavery of black people. Black American Immigrants, struggled to keep their freedom and their spiritual identity following the disintegration of black Africans' identity. Memory that was the painful past, evoked by Toni Morrison, shows it vividly through *Beloved* as resilience. *Beloved* throws off the yoke to attest to the American people and the world that the host American people are mistaken in thinking that he is the ultimate of divine creatures. *Beloved* challenges the American people on the seriousness, of slavery and urges them to shake off the yoke and adopt resilience strategies. As we already said it, what were the methods of resilience through the writing of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.

The journey in the traumatic past is a forced immigration. It has transgressed the invisible, present and future borders. These frontiers were the foundations of black Africans' identity. They were also the cultural and spiritual foundations. Toni Morrison recalls the grave mistake of settlers, not to take into account black Africans' identity. The evocation of this traumatic and painful past is a resilience in the face of that forced emigration. These memories which remind the American people of the horrors of slavery, clearly underscore the search for collective awareness. Memory, therefore, is a form of resilience. This resilience transcends the invisible boundaries of the present and the future. Their methods of resilience were not only the psychological reconstruction. It is the mutual assistance, so as to overcome the traumas, failures, and exactions perpetrated on them. Some examples are seen in *Beloved*. The capitulation of Schoolteacher to catch Sethe, seems to be an awareness. In the face of atrocity of killing, he went backwards. Far from remorse, it is an awareness. Toni Morrison advocates like this, a common ground for an American society of peace. Another fact in her novel is the submission of Sethe to be exorcised by the Black women's community. Sethe's exorcism by the black women

community, leads us to a compromise society and a religious syncretism. Toni Morrison wants a peaceful way to resilience.

3.6 Spiritual transgression

Beyond of what is physical transgression, immigrants were also spiritually victims. Christianity was a change of mind. It was a kind of brainwash to turn them away from their original beliefs. Black Africans' myths and beliefs were considered some false gods for some uncivilized beings. Christianity was the only way for settlers to be saved from the sin. That conception was a transgression of black Africans' identity.

The novel *Beloved*, through the phenomenon of the ghost, is a clear response to the oppressors of their flawed form of evangelization. When Toni Morrison writes about the mysteries and the ghost of 124 Bluestone Road, she immerses us back into the Black African spiritual. Faced with the imposition of Christianity, *Beloved* reveals the real side of black African spirituality. T. Morrison (1987, pp. 3-4), evokes the mythical phenomena such as the presence of a spirit in the house¹²⁴. The spirit, physically attacks the dog and made move the furniture in this house, throwing the dog, Boy, against the wall.

A spirit that manifests itself by its impact on the elements of the house, but is invisible physically is a form of resilience in *Beloved*. By starting to read *Beloved*, we are stricken by a 'spiteful' and 'full of a baby's venom'. The revelation of these mythical things is a form of resilience in the face of spiritual traumas that is Christianity. Toni Morrison, with this aspect of spirituality, shows the slave masters that Black Africans possess some spiritual values, which are some signs of resistance. Sethe was in trouble with the ghost's spirit. She left her house 124, and went to the Black women's community to be exorcised. Through *Beloved*, we note the advocacy of religious coexistence or interfaith dialogue. The religious syncretism is a sign of resistance against the victims of forced immigration. The community exorcism is the foundation of the religious syncretism token of good cohabitation. Religious interfaith is a form of resilience. We don't see a spiritual victory of Christianity on the black people. In the course of worship, African identity is present. The dances, the calls and responses, and the trances, are spiritual resilience.

The methods of resilience of black African immigrants in the States, are multifaceted and varied. Paul D's escape from a Georgia chain gang during a flood is a form of migration

in order to get life. We have Sethe's escape from Sweet Home and also the flight of her surrogate mother (Nan). Halle, Sethe's husband, has paid for her mother freedom. In T. Morrison's *Beloved* (1987, p. 199), Sethe's sons, who fled 124 Bluestone Road, scared away by the ghost, which was so present in the house 124. After Garner's death, Paul D and some other members of Sweet Home attempted to escape, but have been severely repressed.

Residences were of two categories: we have slaves of the household and those of field hands. The forms of resiliences depended on the categories. According to the house 124, "Sethe's decision to take Beloved's life is examined as an act of resistance against the forces that dominated her existence and family", (2025, p. 2). In that context of slavery, we see love and sacrifice meet each other. Suffering and pain were the lot of forced immigrants in the host country that is the United States of America. The crime committed by Sethe is the expression of a deep love for her daughter. But beyond it, sometimes, resilience leads to crime. As if to say, resilience that leads to freedom, has a price. Beloved has been immortalized on the altar of resilience, (1987, p. 63). As we said it, the methods of resilience can lead to crime.

From the physical struggle, the resilience of immigrants is also linked to some strong emotions. Black African immigrants in the States, got great fortitude as resilience methods. Hardiness, coping and adaptability have led to what is social resilience. Living the same difficulties and confronted with the same problems, has made the formation of close relationships such as the common escape from Sweet Home and the Black women's community that has exorcised Sethe from the haunting of Beloved in 124 Bluestone Road (1987, p. 257). Ella contributes to protecting Sethe from the bad influence of Beloved. The collective action of voices and prayers, brings us back again in a context of social resilience.

3.7 Memories

The writing of *Beloved* by Toni Morrison and beyond her, all African American writers, have outlined some ways and means for identity conservation as a method of resilience. The effects of resilience are palpable today in the States. Slavery is abolished. The fight of Sethe, a Sweet Home slave, in *Beloved*, against oppression and the mistreatment of slaves seems to have borne fruit. In Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, The slaves, working on Sweet

Home, know violence, tortures, brutality and were considered animals. But in that novel, who has endured the most and was severely affected by slavery's bad effects is Sethe, Halle's wife. Sethe gets tortured, raped, and mistreated physically and spiritually by the permanent haunting of the ghost. Thanks to the women of community, she has been saved. The women exorcised her, and chased away the ghost from 124 Bluestone Road.

3.8 Black African Americans' writers' resilience against slavery

Uprooted and without original foundation, disoriented and weakened culturally, the Black Africans in the States were searching for their landmark because of slavery. They found themselves on land of forced immigration. They were so slaves. In this context, their struggle for survival, and freedom, became the appropriate solutions for moving forward. The resilience then became the lifeline. Resilience is led physically, or it is the search for an awareness. The pen is therefore often used to appeal to intellectuals. The key writers for resilience that must lead to freedom, and against slavery are numerous. However, some writers as Frederick Douglass, W.E.B Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, James Baldwin, Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, and so on. They were some protagonists in the resilience against slavery.

As Black people were rejected and ignored, Ralph Ellison (1952) claimed to be seen. That is why in *Invisible Man*, he says: "I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe, nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids – and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me..."

The young man in *Invisible Man*, expresses his resilience by claiming the recognition of his existence. He wants to be seen. When you are seen, you can exist, and your life can get a sense. Ralph Ellison joins Frederick Douglass, who claims that existence, by struggling. That is why in his one of his quotes, he says: "without a struggle, there can be no progress." Ralph Ellison's fight is to be seen. But to be aware about your existence, you need to make noise. Sethe in *Beloved* has made a big noise, which is the killing of her own daughter. Stamp Paid took another name so as to claim his existence. Called formerly Joshua, his wife is forcibly taken from him. He so, renounced his birth name. He was frustrated and

humiliated. It is a resilience with himself. He wants to be in tune with himself. He considered himself free as Sethe was with her consciousness. That nickname, Stamp Paid is a sign of rebirth. Rebirth is also a resilience because it is an awareness. In Morrison's *Beloved*, awareness was common. These memories, as resilience, are seen to appease the cohabitation. Toni Morrison advocates rather a harmonious coexistence of African Americans in the country of forced immigration.

CONCLUSION

Memory is resilience. Methods of resilience have been the weapons used by many black Americans to counter slavery. Toni Morrison, in *Beloved*, illustrates it vividly. The atrocities made on one people, which has undergone the effect of forced immigration to the States. These forced immigrants, following the example of Sethe, Halle's wife, in *Beloved*, went so far as to murder her own daughter to express her resilience.

African Americans were doubly angry with the settlers. At first, the anger of being torn forcibly from his homeland, and secondly, the fact that the host country was not yet hospitable. Slavery has been compelled to be disintegrated. Toni Morrison makes the white American public understand that "the function of freedom is to free someone else". Morrison advocates equality between people. Amy Denver at the sides of Sethe is an example of union and coexistence. Morrison not only advocates resilience but also identity, or cultural values, by the phenomenon of beliefs and myths; it is also some methods of resilience of those who didn't land in this country willingly. Forced immigration and slavery go together. The practice of keeping slaves against their will in America is exemplified by the slaves of Sweet Home in *Beloved*. Escape attempts are fatally repressed, as with Sixo and Beloved, who knew the death whose perpetrator of these crimes is none other than Schoolteacher. Life at Sweet Home, was hell, and escapes were common back then.

This is why escapes, resilience, and struggles of all kinds constituted the lifelines in the shipwreck that is slavery. Today slavery is abolished in the States. The United States of America has ratified it in its Constitution. But, J. Baldwin, in one of his quotes, says: "to be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious, is to be in a rage almost all the time." Of course, the scars of slavery in the United States are still raw regarding the hard impact of disintegration. They are like a dormant volcano ready to erupt at any moment. The

recent unrest sparked by the murder of George Floyd in Indianapolis is a stark reminder of that ticking time bomb, always waiting to explode. Sometimes seen as transgenerational trauma, the forced immigration also called slavery, can be considered as a crime against humanity. Slaves, to a slave-owner like Schoolteacher in *Beloved*, are reduced to the status of an animal. The schoolteacher's nephew steals Sethe breast milk and treats her like a cow, (1987, pp. 19-20).

Destroying families' units makes Sethe not remember her own mother. Black Africans were not associated with the debate because they were some lesser beings. That is why in *Beloved*, T. Morrison (1987, p. 111), said: "we were seldom invited to participate in the discourse, even when we were its topic." In that context of deprivation of liberty and knowledge. Instruction was forbidden to Black Africans. Geoffroy C. Ward with Ric Burns and K. Burns (1991, p. 9), in their book *The Civil War*, they said: "we were no more than dogs. If they caught us with a piece of paper in our pockets, they'd whip us. They were afraid we'd learn to read and write, but I never got the chance"

Education was a privilege only for the settlers. The black people shouldn't know the truth, which would set them free. It must be hidden to the oppressed. In regarding of all these inequalities and iniquities, resilience then becomes essential and forces the oppressed to rebel and shake off the yoke. Slavery can be qualified as a condition of extreme physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual deprivation or a kind of hellish life. In her masterpiece *Beloved*, (1987), Toni Morrison was able to bring the entire American community to witness the tragedy of forced immigration, which is slavery.

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