

Vol 3 Issue 8 Sept 2013

ISSN No : 2230-7850

Monthly Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

*Indian Streams
Research Journal*

Executive Editor

Ashok Yakkaldevi

Editor-in-chief

H.N.Jagtap

Welcome to ISRJ

RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2230-7850

Indian Streams Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial Board readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

International Advisory Board

Flávio de São Pedro Filho Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Mohammad Hailat Dept. of Mathematical Sciences, University of South Carolina Aiken, Aiken SC 29801	Hasan Baktir English Language and Literature Department, Kayseri
Kamani Perera Regional Centre For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka	Abdullah Sabbagh Engineering Studies, Sydney	Ghayoor Abbas Chotana Department of Chemistry, Lahore University of Management Sciences [PK]
Janaki Sinnasamy Librarian, University of Malaya [Malaysia]	Catalina Neculai University of Coventry, UK	Anna Maria Constantinovici AL. I. Cuza University, Romania
Romona Mihaila Spiru Haret University, Romania	Ecaterina Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest	Horia Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania
Delia Serbescu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania	Loredana Bosca Spiru Haret University, Romania	Ilie Pinteau, Spiru Haret University, Romania
Anurag Misra DBS College, Kanpur	Fabricio Moraes de Almeida Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Xiaohua Yang PhD, USA Nawab Ali Khan College of Business Administration
Titus Pop	George - Calin SERITAN Postdoctoral Researcher	

Editorial Board

Pratap Vyamktrao Naikwade ASP College Devrukh,Ratnagiri,MS India	Iresh Swami Ex - VC. Solapur University, Solapur	Rajendra Shendge Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University, Solapur
R. R. Patil Head Geology Department Solapur University, Solapur	N.S. Dhaygude Ex. Prin. Dayanand College, Solapur	R. R. Yaliker Director Management Institute, Solapur
Rama Bhosale Prin. and Jt. Director Higher Education, Panvel	Narendra Kadu Jt. Director Higher Education, Pune	Umesh Rajderkar Head Humanities & Social Science YCMOU, Nashik
Salve R. N. Department of Sociology, Shivaji University, Kolhapur	K. M. Bhandarkar Praful Patel College of Education, Gondia	S. R. Pandya Head Education Dept. Mumbai University, Mumbai
Govind P. Shinde Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance Education Center, Navi Mumbai	Sonal Singh Vikram University, Ujjain	Alka Darshan Shrivastava Shaskiya Snatkottar Mahavidyalaya, Dhar
Chakane Sanjay Dnyaneshwar Arts, Science & Commerce College, Indapur, Pune	G. P. Patankar S. D. M. Degree College, Honavar, Karnataka	Rahul Shriram Sudke Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore
Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya Secretary, Play India Play (Trust),Meerut	Maj. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary Director,Hyderabad AP India.	S.KANNAN Ph.D , Annamalai University,TN
	S.Parvathi Devi Ph.D.-University of Allahabad	Satish Kumar Kalhotra
	Sonal Singh	

**Address:-Ashok Yakkaldevi 258/34, Raviwar Peth, Solapur - 413 005 Maharashtra, India
Cell : 9595 359 435, Ph No: 02172372010 Email: ayisrj@yahoo.in Website: www.isrj.net**



STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL IN TONI MORRISON'S TAR BABY



Anu Sheokand

Research Scholar, Department of English,
Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa (Haryana)

Abstract: Many writers who have come up to talk about the predicament of black people in America Toni Morrison's name is of great significance. In her fictional world, the black community attempts to compensate for the decision fracturing American society by carrying out various functions aimed at achieving survival. In *Tar Baby* ecological concerns are intricately woven into the story of survival showing different modes of survival in the racist and capitalistic system. She foregrounds the issue of black, man-woman relationship and under its aegis she continues to explore the issue of survival as a complex socio-economic and psychological phenomenon under centuries long white dominance. The paper explores how black accept subordination to whites for their economic survival and is a further exploration of survival through assimilation. Very openly she has raised the issue of survival of Nature besides the issue of survival of black culture. The paper is an analysis of issue of survival clearly in the backdrop of the insurgence of various movements of the 1960's and 1970s. *Tar Baby* can be clearly read as a response of various species/groups who survive in the light of 'women's liberation', 'Black is Beautiful' and eco-feminism.

Keywords: Women's Liberation, Black is Beautiful, Eco-feminism.

INTRODUCTION:

Paper

On February 18, 1931 in the midst of Great Depression, Toni Morrison, a black American was born as a Chloe Anthony Wofford, in Lorain, Ohio. She graduated with honors from Lorain High School and went on to Howard University, where she studied English and Classics. In 1955 she received a master's degree in English from Cornell University. In 1958 she married Harold Morrison, a young architect from Jamaica, and their marriage ended in 1964. She always wanted to be a dancer but fate compelled her to say the following words to Nellie McKay, "All my work has to do with books. I teach books, write books, edit books, or talk about books. It is all one thing" (Bloom 51). In all she has written seven novels and has edited many books. For her unforgettable contribution in literature, she became the eighth woman and the first black woman to win the Nobel Prize in literature. She has also won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the American Academy and Institute of Art and Letters Award.

Toni Morrison's novel though written in the 1970s and afterward, depict the complexities of the Negro life from the slavery period itself. As an artist, she confronts the truth in its wholeness and objectivity as she says, "My vulnerability would be in romanticizing blackness rather than demonizing it, vilifying whiteness rather than reifying it" (Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* 2). So, the black community in Toni Morrison's fiction is depicted as struggling to survive by

overcoming racial barriers erected by the dominant group. In fact the problem of survival is at the core in the fiction of Toni Morrison. By showing different entangles of relationships between man and woman, blacks and whites, and by using and revising myths, rituals and folk lore, by reviving Afro-American history and reaffirming the cultural strength of black culture, she shapes her narratives and makes it entirely black in characteristics, as she tells in an interview:

I am not experimental. I am simply trying to recreate something out of an old art form in my books...the something that defines what makes a book "black". And that has nothing to do with whether the people in the books are black or not. (McKay 427)

A deep study of her works shows that a powerful catalyst in Toni Morrison's works which cannot escape notice is the "pervasive crisis of race" facing the contemporary U.S. During slavery, whites maintained virtually complete control over the behaviour of blacks through the use of aversive control [i.e. punishment] but with the abolition of slavery, mechanism of economic control were instructed. *Tar Baby* is an appropriate example of how black accept subordination to whites for their economic survival. *Tar Baby* is a further exploration of survival through assimilation. Assimilation as against assertion is often a low esteem mode of survival in which the minority accepts the value pattern of the dominant group as standard. Clearly she is questioning the assimilation theory of survival by working out a mode of holistic survival. The major achievement of Morrison in *Tar Baby* is to explore the

Struggle For Survival In Toni Morrison's Tar Baby

possibilities of a fulfilling man-woman relationship while examining the race and cultural aspects involved. By placing her novel in the context of two almost simultaneous movements of 'Black is Beautiful' and 'Woman Liberation Movement', Morrison continues exploring the issue of a meaningful survival and coexistence. Very openly she has raised the issue of survival of Nature besides the issue of survival of black culture. And to study these is to study culture of both the white and the black. In consonance with it Toni Morrison tells to Charlie Rose in an interview, "If you study the culture and art of African-Americans, you are not studying a regional or minor culture. What you are studying is America" (Tate 90). That is why her gamut includes vivid range of subjects.

Tar Baby is Morrison's first novel to be located outside Ohio and to feature white characters. It is an attempt to survive under oppression in Tar Baby, Morrison reinvisions the African origins of the southern folk tale of Br'er Rabbit. According to the tale a farmer sets out to catch a cabbage-stealing rabbit by building a baby-shaped scarecrow out of tar. When the clever rabbit knows that the baby is fake, the rabbit gets angry and starts to hit it, only to get caught in the tarry surface. Here, in this novel, Morrison examines and reconstructs and explores what it means to be a tar baby according to the westernized plantation version of the story and what it may mean to be a tar baby according to the original myth. The myth of the "tar baby" reveals black women's spiritual power and moral wisdom to "hold things" together:

For me, the tar baby come to mean the black woman who can hold things together. The story was a point by departure of history and prophecy. That's what I mean by dusting off the myth, looking closely at it to see what it might conceal... (Beaulieu 347)

The tar baby in Morrison's title is Jade, an intelligent black woman, orphaned and Paris-educated, who at twenty-five stands poised between two worlds, the world into which she was born is that of her aunt and uncle, Sydney and Ondine Childs, servants to the affluent Streets. Impressed by Jade's unique abilities, the Streets have provided the wherewithal for her to study art history at the Sorbonne. Jade functions socially both in the world of the Streets and the world of the Childs. Valerian Street, a capitalist and his wife, Margaret, a former beauty queen, two decades his junior, came to the island from Philadelphia. Valerian had retired from his lucrative candy manufacturing business. There faithful servants, Sydney and Ondine Childs, accompanied them to Isle des Chevaliers, Sydney as butler, Ondine as cook. Into this harmonious setting comes Son, the protagonist, street-savvy black who has fled the United States after murdering a woman. Son, homesick and disheartened, sneaks off his ship shortly before Christmas and is borne by the currents to Isle des Chevaliers. He steals food from the Streets' kitchen. When Son is caught, Valerian rather than having him arrested, invites Son to eat at his table, where Jade and Son interact uncertainly. Their mutual attraction, however, prevails, and soon the two are openly enamored of each other. Jade perceives her primitive roots in Son. Jade is to Son the fulfillment of his dreams, the tar baby that attracts him hypnotically but that can trap and destroy

him utterly shortly, after Christmas, Son and Jade go to New York, where they cohabit for several months. They then journey to Florida, where Son was reared. During this trip, Jade realizes that she cannot be Son's "woman" in the dominating way he demands. Son pursues Jade when she returns to Isle des Chevaliers. In the novel's epilogue, however, Son is on the far side of the island, stumbling in the overgrown foliage, seeking the blind horsemen, the distant progeny of the original black settlers, who will help him renew his roots and escape the charms of the tar baby who has nearly robbed him of his manhood and ethnicity. In the end, Valerian Street's way of life is eroded when he learns that his wife has abused their child, a secret Ondine has kept from Valerian and Sydney for many years, Sydney and Ondine essentially take control of L'Arbe de la Croix, Valerian's ironically named, idyllic estate, upon which the unrelenting tropical jungle encroaches steadily. In this story of Tar Baby, the central conflict is the conflict of the main characters, it is the conflict of the race traitor conflict of a woman who has discarded her heritage and culture and adopted another in order to reconcile herself to the existing society and thus finding a way to survive in their society through unquestioning assimilation.

Toni Morrison in Tar Baby explores many themes and in which survival of nature and femininity is most dominant. Historically and culturally women and nature have been equated through a simplistic essentialism of their reproductive and nurturing powers. Since the last phase of the Renaissance, however, this equation has rested mainly on the issue of exploitation under mercantile patriarchal capitalism and consumerism. Both considered 'wild' and 'untamed' needed the patriarchal control for the development of culture and civilization. Many texts demonstrate that nature has been and continues to be a place of feminist possibility. Toni Morrison not only raises the issue of taming exploitation of Nature by capitalistic man, thereby raising a vital question about ecological unbalancing by man but also transforms nature into a hospitable space for feminism. Clearly in the wake of eco-feministic concerns of 1970's, Morrison's literary preoccupation for the issue of survival envelops all subaltern including nature. In Tar Baby, Toni Morrison shows the struggle between nature and civilization. Right in the first chapter there is a threat of survival to flora and fauna as can be seen in the lines:

The men had already folded the earth where there had been no fold and hollowed here where there had been no hollow, which explains what happened to river. It crested, then lost its course, and finally its head. Evicted from the place it had lived, and forced into unknown turf, it could not form its pools or waterfalls, and ran every which way. (Morrison, Tar Baby 9)

This change in the course of the river along with other ecological changes clearly shows the threat to the survival of nature. This threat to survival can also be seen in the following lines:

THE END of the world, as it turned out, was nothing more than a collection of magnificent winter houses on Isle des Chevaliers. When laborers imported from Haiti came to clear the land, clouds and fish were convinced that the world was over, that the sea green green of the sea and the

Struggle For Survival In Toni Morrison's Tar Baby

sky blue sky of the sky were no longer permanent. (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 9)

In the story of Valerian Street, the Candy King, after his retirement bought a tropical island and built a house preparing for those later years. White American Valerian Street's mansion-becomes symbolic of the dominant socioeconomic and commodifying cultural space from which the black characters seek routes of escape. This character is the representation of the Frontier Man who immigrated to fetch riches and contentment through subjugation of the aboriginals by capitalizing on the land available. He is a representation of survival as well as experimentation in survival. Through this character Morrison also questions the survival of nature in its original form. Through this character we can see how white man, the Frontier Man can be seen as a patriarch, capitalist, a master of the entire world. Nature is at his mercy. At the start of the novel Valerian civilizes the natural world by making northern flowers grow in a southern climate. "He hauls everybody down to the equator to grow Northern flowers?" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 13) This shows survival of nature under the mercy of white patriarch. Valerian transforms Isle de Chevaliers from a natural paradise into a ravaged colonial habitat. Again Valerian's love for a non-native plant, the hydrangea, displays a desire to be in charge and control nature. He grows them with the help of classical music, "...all their kind had heard forty or fifty minutes of music which nourished them" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 12).

Valerian as a white patriarch also holds women under his control. The novel's male characters tend to see the women as stupid or inferior, simply because they are women. Valerian ignores Margaret's desire to leave the island. He says, "And I prefer she should stay because her husband's here, not because a boat is" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 17). The words of Margaret also shows how even white characters especially women struggled for meaningful survival under patriarchy. She tells Valerian, "If I want to live with you. I have to do it your way-" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 28). This shows that even the relations between white couple is not cordial and is affected by patriarchal dominance. "During the two months she'd been there, Valerian and Margaret frequently baited one another and each had a dictionary of complaints against the other, entries in which, from time to time, they showed her" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 67). Patriarchal dominance in the novel can also be seen in the words from the text, when there was a question of the future of the family of Valerians. "Their mother (Valerian's grandmother) had four sons each of whom had married a woman who had only girls. Except Valerian's mother who delivered one girl and one boy, who was the future of the family" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 50). In the novel not only white male characters dominate females but the black also do the same as is in the case of Son when he says, "I know all about plants. They like women, you have to jack them up every once in a while. Make them act nice, like they're supposed to" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 148). Son's patriarchal outlook also gets reflected in his desire to get a 'son' from Jadine. Therefore, in the novel not only nature and black characters but white females too struggled for survival. As we know that meaningful survival is not only reaffirmation, it is also a continuous effort against forces that

challenge survival. In the prologue itself this can be seen. The protagonist struggling against the ocean currents for survival at last reaches a stage of resignation to nature whence he is lifted up and saved. These lines from the text clearly show his struggle for survival. "His strength was leaving him and he knew he should not waste it fighting the current. He decided to let it carry him for a while" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 4). And further inside water, the Son's movement is itself a technique which he opted for survival inside water, "Quickly he brought his knees to his chest and shot forward" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 1). 'Knees to the chest' is the embryonic position. Clearly Morrison perceives the oceanic whirlpool as the womb from where only nature gives you the deliverance. Thus, we see that the prologue emphasizes a major theme in *Tar Baby*: the conflict between nature and civilization. Morrison establishes this conflict by personifying nature. She describes the strength of the water in the harbor as the assertive push of a women's hand. In *Tar Baby*, nature is not just an abstract, impersonal force; it possesses personality and desires, which it then acts to fulfill. In the prologue, the man's desire to swim to the island, and nature's insistence that he cannot shows conflict between nature and civilization and through it the struggle for survival of the protagonist.

In the novel the story of the slaves, also highlights this conflict of nature and civilization, who arrived three hundred years before, and have transformed Isle de Chevaliers from a natural paradise into a despoiled colonial habitat, although in the end we see culture as the ultimate victor, when we see that weather has become unpredictable and remains uncontrollable. Valerian's greenhouse symbolizes the running conflict between nature and civilization. The greenhouse represents the human attempt to control nature and to shape it to its own ends. On the other hand his inability to control the ants in the greenhouse, and his need for pesticide, suggests that nature is not totally under his rule. Jadine's coat which is made of dead animals, also symbolizes the domestication of nature. Jadine's sexual relationship to the coat, and the way that sexual allure makes it fearful to her, indicates denaturalization of sexual institutes. Jadine's struggle in the tar pit represents the island's strength over civilization. The scene also implies that even though Jadine does not know how to survive outside a less civilized environment she is still able to fight to escape it, since woman's body makes her more involved with "natural" biological activities such as giving birth and nurturance. Jadine comes neither like to mother a baby nor nurture her foster parents. Her repulsion to the hanging breasts of 'women' in the forest is indicative of her refusal to be associated to nature in any way. Instead of being a slave to species, she opts for the masculine path of culture that would give her a sense of power and control over nature and others. Morrison's treatment of Jadine clearly shows her rejection that woman association to nature makes her inferior or woman is inferior because nature has made her so. Here we see that women in their very closeness to nature are presented as necessary for the culture that erects itself upon them.

Morrison also highlights that the more the character avoid their original culture and identity, the more they create problems and hurdles in their way of surviving meaningfully in a society that is highly racist. It is visible especially in the

Struggle For Survival In Toni Morrison's Tar Baby

character of Jadine, a black fashion model. Jadine Childs is beautiful because the evidence lies in the cover of Elle flaunting her face. As a fashion model she has subscribed to aesthetics of commodification: as a student of art history, she has become properly Eurocentric. She is the niece of Sydney and Ondine Childs, servants of a retired white millionaire named Valerian Street. Valerian has paid for Jadine's French education and he treats her with great respect. Jadine is happy having been successful in a white world, and is planning to marry a white European. Whitening her behaviour not fully satisfying her, she intends to whiten her identity in order to survive in a white world. Jadine feels alienated from her race and also feels at odds with the traditional roles for women. She longs to discover a way of living her life and it is this longing which takes her away from her true identity. Not only she is different from black characters but she is also different from women in the novel in the sense that she rejects the maternal role. And towards the end of the novel we get an implication that motherhood is a woman's most natural state. When Jadine rejects this role of motherhood, she is also by implication rejecting her blackness. Her survival is through unquestioning assimilation. In her case it is blind acceptance of the value pattern of white culture by negating the value pattern of the black. As such it is seeking a new identity through the negation of the primary identity. Therefore Morrison's major concerns are cultural and psychological survival though physical survival too is dealt as a theme in the background.

Like in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* there is an identity crisis which is suffered by different characters in the novel, *Tar Baby*. In the prologue itself man's identity is not revealed but his blackness is emphasized, showing survival crisis in a world dominated by white people. There are other instances in the novel which show Toni Morrison's racial concerns, like when Jadine was in love with Ryk, white man from Europe. She was worried that he did not want her for who she really is, because she thinks white men only fetishize her blackness. And Jadine did not want to be like certain "black" things, like primitive art works or jazz; she prefers forms of European high culture. Contrary to Jadine we have Sydney who is attached to his own culture so much so that he dreams same dream every night: of red brick Baltimore. Although he left more than fifty years ago he always dreams of his roots. So, his survival was survival in a white society without moving away from his roots. Jadine's and Sydney's memories display divisions between black diasporas and suggests that there are different definitions of blackness.

Further in the novel the struggle for survival of blacks is highlighted through objectification of blacks in white society when Margaret, the white mistress describes that she has seen something black in her room, showing that negroes are referred to as "something" she does not say that a man is hidden in the closet. This point of view of white women employs that she is scared as much of the colour of the man in her closet as she is of the fact that he is a man. Her reactions reflects the stereotype of black male as a rapist, are the historical fear of white men and women of his virility. Not only the whites are hostile towards blacks but even the blacks maintain an attitude of antagonism towards the white. In *Tar Baby* this can be seen when Ondine and Sydney resent

Valerian for treating Son, the black man. They see themselves as superior to Son, which is why they do not want to see him treated as a guest in the house. Sydney's remarks twice on how he is "a genuine Philadelphia Negro mentioned in the book of that name," (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 284) reveals his sense of superiority. The Dominique black are to them "swam women" or "horsemen", depersonalized figures. Ondine even thinks blackman as thief. "There you go again. Nothing's going to happen, I told you. He will be out of here by tonight" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 88). Sydney and Ondine lump him into the same group as Gideon and Therese-local blacks whom they regard as being far beneath them. Jadine a black character, feels uncomfortable around the man imply her own struggle with race and racial identity. In case of Ondine and Sydney, their struggle is the struggle for economic survival. They were economically dependent on Valerian for their survival. And their economic dependence has taken them away from their own race, culture as well as from black identity.

Jadine struggling for her identity as well as her nickname "the copper Venus" indicates her problematic relationship with race. Her nick name, Jade insists that she is black and also that she is not black enough to be threatening. Thus, Jadine in order to survive amidst alien race natures herself in their colour. Further in the novel Jadine, who alternately calls herself Jade shows her hatred of her own race when she tells Valerian, "Picasso is better than Itumba mask. The fact that he was intrigued by them is proof of this genius, not the mask – makers..." (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 74). About Jadine's cultural assimilation Karin Luisa Badt says, "Jadine has so willingly embraced white culture that she has become literally, its cover model" (Beaulieu 347). Jadine has assimilated herself so much in white values that she least realizes that there is nothing pretty about being objectified on the cover of a fashion magazine, nothing positive about confronting to the dehumanizing creed of high capitalism, nothing valuable in being educated to forget where she comes from, nothing humane about her if she disowns her indebtedness to her aunt and uncle. She least cares about the views of her aunt and uncle, as the lines form the text reveals, "And it was not like she needed their views on anything" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 49) "Nanadine and Sydney mattered a lot to her but what they thought did not". (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 49)

And this Jadine coloured in whiteness of the western country takes Son in her trap. He becomes so much absorbed in Jadine that even when Gideon warns Son against the possibility that Jadine might be "out of race", he ignores the advice and instead tells Gideon. "She's not a yalla". "Just a little light". "He didn't what any discussion about shades of black folk" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 155). Heedless of the warning and desperately in love, Son wants to "rescue" Jadine from the white world, in which she is wholly entrapped, and bring her back to Eloë and the history it stands for. He attempts "to breathe into her the smell of tar and its shiny consistency" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 102). He tries it through an argument over Valerian and education. Son tells Jadine that Valerian owed her education considering that he had "shit all over your uncle" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 263). Still refusing to see the truth, Jadine defends Valerian. Son finally

Struggle For Survival In Toni Morrison's Tar Baby

renounces Jadine's Eurocentric, or Euro American education:

The truth is that whatever you learned in those colleges that didn't include me ain't shit. . . . If they didn't teach you that, then they didn't teach you nothing, because until you know about me, you don't know anything about yourself. And you don't know anything, anything at all about your children and your papa. (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 227-228)

But all these make no difference to Jadine. He even tells Jadine about who put her through school, about Ondine's feet. He reminds Jadine of her responsibility towards them and how appalled he was when Jadine deserted them after the Christmas Eve fight. Son sees Jadine's rejection of her culture and, her family and is filled with a desperate rage. He rapes her while telling her the story of the tar baby. He's shamed afterwards by Jadine who gives him "his original dime". He leaves and upon his return finds the apartment empty. Here, we see that Morrison has given us a hint of physical torture to which Son clings as his means of survival. Morrison explains that in the western tar baby story, the tar baby is made by a white man and similarly Jadine has been almost moulded into by the white western value system and is grateful to it. And as Jadine leaves with Son, Ondine and Sydney doubt that she will even bury them. Jadine proves how little she has learned when she considers the new help "the mulatto with a leer" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 225). She is truly a traitor of all. Therese knows that Jadine is lost, a descendant of the blind race, she also knows how to detach Br'er Rabbit (Son) from Jadine the 'tar baby'. She leaves Son on the far side of Isle des Chevaliers, where he has a choice, where he can be free. Therefore, we see that, through her heroes and heroines, Morrison forces the readers to see the value of the life that is pure and authentic. Her characters despite all the negative factors hovering over their lives and identities, confront their fate bravely, struggle patiently and eventually discover a way to survive, whether physical or psychological.

Tar Baby also narrates the survival of black women when she strikes a note of feminism in the novel. The novel valorizes the strength, the "exceptional femaleness" of peasant woman cultural traditions:

The women hanging from the trees were arrogant – mindful as they were of their value, their exceptional femaleness; knowing as they did that the first world of the world was built with their sacred properties; that they alone could hold together the stones of pyramids and the rushes of Mases's crib. (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 183)

These women with ancient properties are symbolic of having the ability to held the community together like tar and do not consider themselves weak. On the other hand Jadine does not want "to settle for wifely competence when she could be almighty, to settle for fertility rather than originality, nurturing instead of building" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 269). But Morrison uses Son's point of view to draw attention to black women's struggling for survival, "She kept barking at him about equality, sexual equality, as though he thought women were inferior. He couldn't understand that" (Morrison, *Tar Baby* 268). We find that the rural black women have no need for the gains of a liberal feminism, whose ideal of equality Jadine defends. The struggles of

these black women have to do with poverty and physical hardship, a history Jadine cannot comprehend. Thus we see that the meaning of survival also changes with the social, economic and political circumstances. Toni Morrison has explored the issue of survival clearly in the backdrop of the insurgence of various movements of the 1960's and 1970s. *Tar Baby* can be clearly read as a response of various species/groups who survive in the light of 'women's liberation', 'Black is Beautiful' and eco-feminism.

WORKS CITED

- Asante, Molefi Kete. *Erasing Racism: The Survival of the American Nation*. New York: Prometheus, 2003. Print.
- Beaulieu, Elizabeth Ann ed. *The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia*. London: Greenwood, 2003. Print.
- Bloom, Harold. *Introduction to Contemporary Black American Fiction Writers*. New York: Chelsea, 1995. Print.
- Clair, Thomas Le. "The Language Must Not Sweat." *The New Republic* 21.1 (March 1981): 26-27. Print.
- Lasch, Christopher. *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times*. New York: W.W.Norton, 1984. Print.
- Mckay, Nellie. "An Interview With Toni Morrison's Contemporary Literature." 1983. Print.
- Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. London : Harvard Uni.,1992. Print.
- . *Tar Baby*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993. Print.
- Tate, Claudia. *Interview With Toni Morrison: Black Women Writers at Work*. New York : Continuum, 1983. Print.
- W. Bell, Bernard. *The Afro-American Novel and Its Tradition*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts, 1987. Print.

Publish Research Article International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished research paper.Summary of Research Project,Theses,Books and Books Review of publication,you will be pleased to know that our journals are

Associated and Indexed,India

- ✍ International Scientific Journal Consortium Scientific
- ✍ OPEN J-GATE

Associated and Indexed,USA

- ✍ Google Scholar
- ✍ EBSCO
- ✍ DOAJ
- ✍ Index Copernicus
- ✍ Publication Index
- ✍ Academic Journal Database
- ✍ Contemporary Research Index
- ✍ Academic Paper Databse
- ✍ Digital Journals Database
- ✍ Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- ✍ Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- ✍ Directory Of Academic Resources
- ✍ Scholar Journal Index
- ✍ Recent Science Index
- ✍ Scientific Resources Database

Indian Streams Research Journal
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005,Maharashtra
Contact-9595359435
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com
Website : www.isrj.net