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Men in the Novels of Toni Morrison: Sleeping With the Anima

A Thesis

presented to the

Department of English

Lakehead University

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of the requirements for the

degree of Master of Arts.

by

Charles H. Bishop ©

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ABSTRACT

The novels of Toni Morrison have long held images of strength and courage for many women in feminist groups and women's studies courses, and deservedly so. The female characters of Morrison's fictional world are some of the most memorable in literature. However, Morrison contends her novels are written for her people, African Americans, and has assured males of her race that her novels are intended for them too. The purpose of my study is to discover what Morrison's fictional world has to offer the African American male. My study examines those male characters whom I feel have admirable qualities and attempts to understand how these qualities were engendered. By such analysis I attempt to uncover the messages Morrison intends for the males of her race.

The approach I have used in my analysis is from the perspective of archetypal psychology. With roots in Jungian and depth psychology the formulation of archetypal psychology has largely been the work of James Hillman. Essentially, it recognizes an individual's behaviour as responses to his or her soul and attempts to understand the communications of soul, to illuminate the behaviour, by recognizing, paying attention to, and respecting images that are important in the individual's life. I have attempted to understand the behaviours of male characters' in Morrison's fictional world as they relate, or fail to relate to the unconscious, or soul.

By considering the characters of Son in *Tar Baby*, Milkman in *Song of Solomon*, and Paul D in *Beloved*, I realize a trend in Morrison's fiction that advocates the importance of the incorporation of the unconscious into consciousness. This becoming conscious is the method of individuation or becoming whole. Morrison seems to be acutely aware of the process involved in developing a consciousness that gives value to soul. These three male characters depict the three stages of consciousness development that have been established by Carl Jung and reveal many of the difficulties inherent in such development. In all cases, a relationship with an anima figure, the ego's counterpart in the unconscious, leads to successful or unsuccessful development of a particular phase of consciousness development.

Because Morrison realizes the psychological processes in becoming conscious, she understands that while a person may become static at a certain point in his or her life, there is always hope. Nel realizes the significance of Sula in her life twenty-five years after Sula's death. Those static characters who occupy Morrison's fictional world are there to provide hope for her people. Ultimately, my thesis is not about only men. It examines men, but the conditions and the results are the same for both men and women. Morrison intends for her people to relate to each other as people, beyond sex or gender. I think many of Morrison's messages can be considered beyond race, but it is up to white people to see that.

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I would most especially like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Bill Heath, without whom this thesis would not be possible. Over the years I have been the benefactor of his guidance, his helpful comments, his willingness to listen, his sharing of ideas, his endless patience, many of his inspiring courses, but most importantly, his friendship.

DEDICATION

This thesis was always more than an academic exercise; it was a cry from within and is therefore dedicated to those whom I love.

To my late mother, Edna Klemecky, a truly ensouling person whose beauty and selflessness I am only beginning to understand.

To my late father, Charles A. Bishop, whose willingness and courage to face and endure his many pains allowed me to formulate the questions and search for the answers.

To my children, C.J. and Charlene, whose joyous spirits give meaning and importance to each and every step.

To my dearest friend, Susan, "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".

Your destination and your destiny's
A brook that was the water of the house,
Cold as a spring as yet so near its source,
Too lofty and original to rage.
(We know the valley streams that when aroused
Will leave their tatters hung on barb and thorn.)
I have kept hidden in the instep arch
Of an old cedar at the waterside
A broken drinking goblet like the Grail
Under a spell so the wrong ones can't find it,
So can't get saved, as Saint Mark says they mustn't.
(I stole the goblet from the children's playhouse.)
Here are your waters and your watering place.
Drink and be whole again beyond confusion.

Robert Frost, from "Directive"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Fictional World of Toni Morrison:

"It really is about stretching."

It is necessary to be guided by what is
common to all although many a man lives
as if he followed his own private reason.

HERACLITUS

INTRODUCTION

The Fictional World of Toni Morrison: "It really is about stretching."

> The street was choked full with males who had found the whole business of being black and men at the same time too difficult and so they dumped it. They had snipped off their testicles and pasted them to their chests (*Tar Baby*, 186).

Toni Morrison has become a widely studied and highly regarded writer and spokesperson in women's studies courses and among feminist supporters. Her novels champion the consciousness-raising efforts of those people traditionally marginalized because of race and gender. Women and African Americans have been trumpeting the brilliance of Toni Morrison's novels since *The Bluest Eye*, published in 1970. It did not take long for the rest of the world to feel the evocative tug of her fictional world. However, in an interview with Tom LeClair, Morrison made it clear for whom her books were intended:

> I write . . . village literature, fiction that is really for the village, for the tribe. Peasant literature for my people, which is necessary and legitimate but which also allows me to get in touch with all sorts of people. I think long and carefully about what my novels ought to do. They should clarify roles that have become obscured; they ought to identify those things in the past that are useful and

> those that are not; and they ought to give nourishment (253).

The didactic intent of her novels is, as she later states in the same interview, to bear witness, "to do what the music used to do. The music kept us alive, but it's not enough anymore. My people are being devoured" (254). Her celebrated status within women's organizations has, however, caused some confusion as to the gender of Morrison's intended audience. On the PBS interview show "Charlie Rose," Rose related a story in which Morrison had assured a questioning male creative writing student in her class at Princeton that her novels were indeed for him, too. Thus, while Morrison has been particularly endorsed by women's groups, her intent has been, through her novels, to provide meaningful nuturance to African American women *and* men.

I first encountered Morrison's work when I read *Song of Solomon* in 1990. The writing style was what first caught my interest, especially the language. I vividly recall page eleven and the passage about the importance, to Ruth, of the water mark on the dining room table. The passage was made more beautiful because it evoked something in me. I could not understand exactly what the scene meant, at the time, but I could feel its importance to Ruth, just from the language. This evocative quality of Morrison's writing remained with every subsequent novel I read and while I could not fully explain it, I found myself identifying with many of Morrison's characters, through this almost shared

feeling. Her characters are some of the most memorable in literature and I found myself empathetically admiring their struggles as they faced their many flaws and limitations and learned about themselves and the world. I was swept away by the realizations of Claudia MacTeer, the honesty of Sula Peace, the wisdom of Pilate Dead, the fear of Jadine Childs, the resilience of Sethe Suggs, and the forgiveness of Violet Trace. These women all reminded me of qualities I had encountered in the three generations of women who nurtured and cared for me in my youth. But I was particularly drawn to the men, and especially how they interacted with women and the community. Something about what it meant to be a man was contained in these pages and it spoke to me.

Joseph Campbell believes "[n]ovels - great novels - can be wonderfully instructive. . . . James Joyce and Thomas Mann were my teachers. I read everything they wrote" (2). I think Toni Morrison has this ability as well, which is her intent, but which is proven by the vast number of people who study and have studied Morrison's novels. It seemed to be worthwhile to combine my burgeoning interest in gender issues, from a male perspective, and my fascination with the male characters in Morrison's novels. This study has allowed me to do that. Not only has Morrison become one of my teachers, I think she offers real, honest solutions to problems facing the postmodern man.

However, if Toni Morrison's novels are intended for

African Americans, to provide nurturance, assurance, to do what music used to do, why would I, a thirty-something, white male, from Northwestern Ontario develop such a personal attachment? Certainly the many dilemmas facing Morrison's characters, especially those of a political, social, or economic nature, are the result of race and/or gender and are far removed from my comfortable situation. I found little in the criticism with which I could identify. If I was going to understand Morrison's teachings, to make sense of those stirrings I felt within me, a method that could include and relate to Morrison's fictional world and my life would be needed. It seemed the men of Morrison's fictional world had something for me to learn, and maybe not just me, but all men.

In the passage from *Tar Baby* at the beginning of this section Morrison has implicitly encapsulated the polarized dilemma of the postmodern male. On the one hand, as the passage describes, many black males find the whole problem of being male and black so difficult, they dump it, they stop trying to be male. Instead they feminize themselves to the point where they act and look like women, taking those things essentially masculine, their testicles, and displaying them in a place of feminine prominence, as breasts. On the other hand, the passage could also be read to suggest that all men feel so threatened by the dynamic times that they present their inherent masculinity in a

prominent outward display, in lieu of any other expression. They are the fearless, macho, death-defying men of many American inner cities.

Both interpretations suggest that even though masculinity is biologically rendered, the men in Morrison's description think it is possible to construct their masculine identity, a damaging, socially-contrived fallacy. In either case the postmodern male is well-removed from his actual self, and is, in fact, denying those very things that could afford him a healthy, well-functioning personality, able to adjust to these ever-changing times. The concentration on the constructed outward display of masculinity denies and betrays a healthy understanding of masculinity, the basis of which is inner. If Morrison's concern is that her people are being devoured, and if her books are also intended for the men of her race, the quote from *Tar Baby* suggests that her fictional world must reveal some ways to be masculine without either masquerading the fact or flaunting it.

Morrison's world has a wide array of characters, from rapists and murderers to abusers and victimizers. While Morrison always includes a story for each person that humanizes them and gains them the reader's sympathy, they are not usually likeable, but we understand their flaws and see how those flaws got the better of them. All of Morrison's characters are flawed and limited in some ways,

but we admire those who struggle to overcome their debilities. In coming to understand how these characters triumph, we can gain an understanding of those who fail, and formulate, not only the qualities of an admirable personality, but the manner in which these qualities are engendered. By concentrating on the male characters we can gain some insight into Morrison's solution for the dilemma of the postmodern male.

I knew there were characters in the novels I had read whom I admired, particularly, William "Son" Green, Macon "Milkman" Dead, and Paul D. But I was not sure how to express my admiration, nor was I able to understand exactly what happened to them during their trials and struggles. I found myself reading books that dealt with masculine and feminine identity, written by Robert Bly and Clarissa Pinkola Estes. I quickly discovered I was in the world of Jungian psychology and read books by and about Carl Jung. Unfortunately, many of these were too encumbered with a contrasexual bias that limited their effectiveness and was something I could not accept. I turned to contemporary writers again and found myself reading Thomas Moore. Throughout all of this reading, one name kept coming up, someone I had not heard of before, James Hillman. It was natural to explore his works. Everything I read of his seemed to be just what I was looking for, not only for the purposes of this study, but in my life as well. The idea of

an unconscious, of a soul, that guided us, placed us at odds with society, that could provide us with a faith, was exactly the connection between myself and the men of Morrison's fictional world for which I was seeking.

I, therefore, followed the advice of Joseph Campbell:

> When you find an author who really grabs you, read everything he has done. . . . and don't bother with the best seller list. Just read what this one author has to give you. And then you can go read what he had read. And the world opens in a way that is consistent with a certain point of view (122).

The world, mine and the fictional world of Morrison's, had opened up for me in a point of view that is consistent with what Hillman calls archetypal psychology.

Archetypal psychology is a rather amorphous term that, by its very nature, is difficult to define. According to Hillman archetypal psychology began in 1966 (*Inter Views*, 140), with its roots in Jungian and depth psychology. It is more than simply a psychology of archetypes, however. Hillman suggests that the term archetypal points to value. "By attaching *archetypal* to an image, we ennoble or empower the image with the widest, richest, and deepest possible significance" (*Blue Fire*, 26). Psychology, to Hillman, means: "'logos of psyche', the speech or telling of the soul. . . . And the logic of psychology is necessarily the method of understanding which tells of the soul and speaks to the soul in its own language (*Suicide*, 51). Thus, archetypal psychology "is aimed to restore psychology to its

widest, richest, and deepest volume so that it would resonate with soul in its descriptions as unfathomable, multiple, prior, generative, and necessary" (*Blue Fire*, 26). Simply put, archetypal psychology considers those deep, rich, significant images as language of the soul, with which our souls communicate. Understanding the significance of these communications in conscious terms is the study of archetypal psychology. Anima, in one of its capacities, as mediatrix, interprets the needs of soul and presents them to us in such a way that we may address the needs. Because we have lost touch with the soul, we either miss anima's signs or we ignore them. Archetypal psychology aims to restore our relationship with soul and our ability to respond to anima. This is not to suggest that such an accomplishment would make life perfect because anima intentionally leads us astray, intending us to make so-called mistakes, with the goal of developing our consciousness. Mistakes are evidence of learning taking place.

The field of study cannot even be effectively explained without using a terminology, that while jargonistic, is meaning-specific. The model for archetypal psychology is, of course, Carl Jung's, and a brief explanation of the model and the terminology is necessary to facilitate as clear an understanding of the processes as possible. My primary source for this information is Jolande Jacobi's *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, unless otherwise noted.

Essentially, our total self consists of two spheres of knowledge, one conscious and one unconscious. At the center of our sphere of consciousness is the ego. Jung states that "[a]ll of our experience of the inner world must pass through our ego in order to be perceived. . . . insofar as they are not sensed by the ego, [they] are unconscious" (*Psychology of C.G. Jung*, 7,8). Our outer world is our conscious sphere and our inner world is our unconscious. The unconscious is similarly represented with the soul, or anima, as its inner attitude, the inner personality that displays the unconscious. Hillman refers to our ego consciousness as our animus and our soul unconsciousness as anima.

Jung maintains that those inner forces must eventually become part of our consciousness for us to become a fully individuated or whole person; that is, psychologically healthy. Such a process is natural, but we concentrate so much on our conscious processes and give them such value that we often repress our unconscious processes as inferior and thereby suffer a psychological imbalance. This has to be rectified or the imbalance can manifest itself in various behaviours, often harmful to ourselves or others. Because this inner world cannot be tangibly reproduced, Jung feels it is described in such forms as myths, archetypes, mandalas, works of art, novels, and especially our dreams. Thus, our understanding of these representations would allow

us to gain insight into the soul and this unconscious world. Whenever there was a need for some aspect of our unconscious to become conscious, our dreams were a likely source for that information or our out-of-character behaviours could inform us. For Jung, then, these behaviours became clues from the unconscious about the soul. Often the behaviours could be identified with some god from mythology, so that what once had been the stuff of myth, now became something that had to be cured. For Jung, quoted by Hillman in "On the Necessity of Abnormal Psychology," the gods became diseases (2) and psychology sought to cure these pathologies by rendering the inner world conscious.

In order to achieve this psychologically healthy state, an individual goes through three stages of development, occurring mostly in the middle years. The first is the encounter with the shadow, whereby, an individual consciously realizes those qualities he or she has repressed or set aside because they were of little or no value to the individual's ego. Thus, a person's shadow is developed as the ego is developed. Because ego, and therefore shadow, is forever changing, the shadow cannot ever be raised totally to consciousness. But recognition of the shadow's most prominent features provides "strength and vigour" and allows us "to feel more firmly anchored in our sexual nature" (Jacobi, 107). When we encounter Son and Jadine in the first section of this study, we encounter two people

battling with their shadow, struggling to pass through this first phase of development, to understand themselves and their place in the world. Successful completion of this stage culminates in a highly critical attitude toward one's own nature, and while Son is close to achieving such insight, he is entrapped and prevented from continuing.

The second stage in becoming conscious, or individuation, is characterized by the encounter with the soul image or anima. Jung's model is contrasexual and limited by the historical period in which he writes. This is where Hillman is extremely important, especially his book, *Anima: An Anatomy of a Personified Notion,* in which he frees the work of Jung on anima from its contrasexual biases. Since anima is the seat of the unconscious world, it is extremely important in the process of becoming conscious. Generally personified as feminine, it is not intended in sex or gender terms. Nonetheless, in this stage of development, we become attached to someone who represents qualities of our inner life or anima. Jung states that the first anima figure is the mother, but she is replaced by someone who arouses our feelings. Because this person represents qualities of our inner life, it is a projection of our "other" qualities for which this person is the vessel. We are beyond the stage of shadow and so these are not rejected ego conscious qualities, but qualities of our soul, which may be expressed in feminine terms, but do not necessarily

have to be feminine. For example, it seems to me Son can easily be identified as an anima figure, simply because of his trust in the unconscious. In the second section of this study, we see a spoiled, irresponsible, unlikeable Milkman Dead, in *Song of Solomon*, consciously incorporate those qualities of his aunt Pilate into his personality. As he passes through this second stage of development he has achieved "inward freedom . . . . a love relation can no longer fetter us . . . for we no longer lose ourselves in someone else, but we shall be capable of a deeper love, a conscious devotion to the other" (119). This deeper love is the next logical step for Milkman and anticipates the struggles of Paul D in *Beloved* as he encounters the third phase of becoming conscious.

This third stage of the individuation process is the last station to self-realization. As Jacobi warns, the path is not devoid of crises, for "the time has come to throw light upon the most secret recesses of the individual's own being . . . " (121). In this phase we realize the dual nature of our existence, the fact that our conscious and our unconscious meet at a midpoint called self and that we are of both realms. While the unconscious can never be made fully conscious we do realize its equal validity in our interaction with the world. Jung states that in this final stage of development "they [anima and animus] form a divine pair. . . . the divine syzygy" (*Anima*, 168). Hillman

further explains that this divinity takes place not only within the individual, but in the individual's relationship with a loved one. Thus, in the third section of this study we encounter Paul D's struggle with his deep, inner, recesses to come to a profound self-realization that enables him to enjoy a conscious, loving relationship with Sethe. His duality is recognized when he realizes that he is at once individual and a member of a community.

These phases of becoming conscious are not static, nor are they restricited to any limitations imposed by definition. That is not the intent of archetypal psychology, nor of soul. The idea is one of amplification; "to approach [psychic data] from many sides until its meaning becomes stronger and fuller . . . not to reduce psychic data to its simplest element or single meaning" (*Loose Ends*, 176). Thus, the goal of this study is to present men who are admirable because of their struggle to incorporate their unconscious anima callings into their conscious understanding of themselves and to suggest that this is the message Morrison wants her people to understand.

The fact that Morrison's characters display, so dramatically, the phases of consciousness development reinforced the use of archetypal psychology in helping me to understand the struggles of the men in Morrison's fictional world. While I would never condone acts of rape and murder, such as those committed by Cholly Breedlove and Joe Trace, I

could understand the conditions of soul and the misreading of those conditions that could instigate the undertaking of such horrendous acts. I understood how we all are to blame, in part, for similar acts in our society.

By examining Morrison's fictional world from the perspective of archetypal psychology, it can be realized that men who are struggling with their masculinity are likely stuck in a certain stage of development, or have not correctly read the signs of their unconscious. To play on the term, they are unconscious, meaning insensitive or numb. The dilemma of the young men in the passage from *Tar Baby*, who give up trying to meet some expectations of masculinity, will not be resolved by any outward action, but instead by an movement inward. The image of testicles mounted on chests can reveal any number of meanings, but within Morrison's fictional world, the expression is one that is harmful to men and to Afro-Americans. I have tried to remain consistent in my approach to all of Morrison's novels and archetypal psychology has allowed me to do so.

It can certainly be argued that what has happened here is that I have taken something that is essentially white and Euro-centric and foisted it upon novels that have nothing to gain by such an explication, nor any desire to be considered from such a perspective. Such an exercise simply endorses a white psychology at the expense of novels intended as nurturance for a suffering Afro-American race. My only

response to such an accusation is to admit my concern over such an issue, until I read Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s *The Signifying Monkey*. I sensed a similarity between my understanding of anima and Gates' recognition of the repeated theme in black cultures that is represented by the figure Esu-Elegbara, known by various names throughout Africa and the Caribbean, including Esu and Legba. The figure of Esu-Legbara possesses many characteristics, from messenger of the gods, to interpreter of the signs, "plus a plethora of others which, taken together, only begin to present an idea of the complexity of this classic figure of mediation and of the unity of opposed forces" (Gates, 6). Anima, as the entity which helps make our unconscious sphere conscious, so that we may experience the divine syzygy, works as mediatrix and appears in our lives in various forms so that we may interpret the signs of our unconscious. While Esu-Legbara is often described as masculine, Gates reports he is actually a Janus figure. Anima is also represented by the wise old man archetype and is not necessarily feminine, as mentioned earlier. Although the figures may be represented differently, there can be no doubt that their appearance indicates a similar significance. The implications of such a connection, however, extend far beyond the scope of this study, and is likely a study in itself.

The similarity between what I have been describing as

anima and the African recurring theme represented by Esu-Legbara are present in the writing of Toni Morrison. Gary Wilentz states that in *Song of Solomon* "Pilate takes on the characteristics of Legba, the African deity worshipped throughout the Caribbean and parts of the South" (67). The fact that Milkman must acquire what Morrison describes as, feminine qualities, which he learns from Pilate, makes the connection between anima and Esu-Legbara more apparent. As I mentioned earlier, Son has many qualities that align him with anima, but he also could be easily identified with Esu-Legbara. The connection between anima and Esu-Legbara seems all the more plausible considering James Hillman's explanation of his residence in *Inter Views*:

> . . . we live in a black section, old-fashioned, with wonderful talk. Everything happens on the porches, out in the street: phoning, music, visiting, shouting. . . . I get all kinds of images from my neighbours, all kinds of feelings. You know it was from the blacks that we got the word "soul" back into our language. So there's a good reason I like living in Dallas (128).

It seems to me there is a very strong connection between archetypal psychology and African American literature, especially the works of Toni Morrison. This perspective, undoubtedly, affords me an understanding of Morrison's fictional world that is, at once, personal and revealing, but also contains implications for further relevance.

The following sections of this study examine the men in Morrison's fictional world. I find that those men whom I

admire, whom critics, and Morrison herself, hold up as examples of well-balanced, responsible, stable men, learn to become such through struggle. This struggle ensues as the men try to incorporate the messages of anima, in her various forms, into their conscious understanding of themselves. Sleeping with the anima, then, is not just a metaphor describing how the men in Morrison's fictional world remain masculine and vital; it is also the method that allows them to stretch their consciousness.

CHAPTER ONE

William "Son' Green: *Far Baby*'s Little Prince

So we are grasped by what we cannot grasp;
it has its inner light, even from a distance -

and changes us, even if we do not reach it,
into something else, which, hardly sensing it,
we already are;

Rilke, "A Walk"

CHAPTER ONE

William "Son" Green: *Tar Baby*'s Little Prince

The first role men come to play in life, from which they obtain many impressions of masculinity, is that of son. Many of the scars and afflictions men spend the rest of their lives trying to heal or overcome have their genesis in the years when "son" was their major role and function in life. The implications of these woundings become evident as men pass into the next phase of their psychological development.

Toni Morrison's novels provide several enlightening examples of characters in this role, notably Macon "Milkman" Dead of *Song of Solomon* and William "Son" Green of *Tar Baby*. The fact that William Green is referred to as "Son" throughout *Tar Baby* (the reader only learns of his real name nearly halfway through the book, with two other references thereafter) would justify his status as the exemplary "son." However, Morrison substantiates this depiction herself in an interview with Nellie McKay wherein she identifies Son as being representative of some aspects of "black culture, the black community that seems lost to our modern ways of life" (423). Son is, therefore, a worthy depiction of this phase of male life, endowed with many of the pressures that many

sons feel obligated to bear.

If *Tar Baby* is a cautionary tale, as Marilyn Sanders Mobley (286) and Karen Carmean (70) contend, then what is an effective way to determine the extent of that caution, especially as it relates to sons? Fortunately, Morrison provides a clue within the text of *Tar Baby*. Not only does she develop a character with the name "Son" and all its implications and suggestions, she makes an oblique reference to the story by Antoine de Saint-Exupery titled *The Little Prince*. Valerian, the rich, white, candy empire magnate is explaining about his son, Michael, to Jadine Childs, the African-American, international, jet-setting model and socialite. Valerian complains that while Jadine has grown, Michael has not; "his mind . . . is still in the grip of that quisling *Little Prince*" (73). Valerian tells Jadine he is referring to the book by Saint-Exupery and urges Jadine to read it and to "pay attention not to what it says, but what it means" (73). "What it means" forms the basis of *Puer Aeternus*, Marie Louise von Franz's study of the *puer aeternus* archetype, of which *The Little Prince*, and Saint-Exupery himself, are representative. Clearly, Valerian's attitude toward the archetype is negative, and this has undoubtedly affected his relationship with Michael.

Dr. von Franz establishes that a person identified by the archetype of *puer aeternus* has an unresolved mother complex and "remains too long in adolescent psychology; that

is, all those characteristics that are normal in a youth . . . are continued into later life" (1). The pathology is identified mythologically with "its Ikaros-Ganymede propensity of flying and falling" (Hillman, "Puer and Senex," 24). These qualities may be found in many youths of mythology and religion, from Narcissus to Christ. James Hillman has tried to re-establish the pathology of *puer aeternus* as a necessary and positive phase of psychological development, apart from its negative connotations. He states in *Inter Views*:

> Anyway, my passion was to write a defense of the puer because I felt insulted by what Jungians were saying about this archetype. I had swallowed the Jungian view that puer meant mother complex, weakness, fancy, aestheticism, not in touch with reality, up-in-the-air, donjuanism . . . about fifteen negative words used about *puer aeternus*. Having lived my life, or part of my life, within that mythical structure, it seemed to me it was being abused. It really hit, it angered me. . . . It meant that we were attacking our own creative possibility (146-47).

Hillman believes that while these identifying characteristics are often viewed negatively, they are nevertheless essential to a process that is often creative. Within Hillman's regard for the *puer* lies the caution of Morrison's novel.

An examination of *Tar Baby* from the perspective of the *puer aeternus* archetype affords an understanding of the role of son within the lives, not only of men but of society as well. Once Son's *puer aeternus* status is recognized and

understood, his relationship with Jadine becomes clear: as the means to the first stage of consciousness development. Furthermore, Morrison's inclusion of the tar baby myth is understood in the context she intended, something other criticism has failed to acknowledge. The novel illustrates the need for harmony to sustain and develop, not only individuals, within a society, but cultures as well. Toward that end, those forces that can deny the harmony, or make harmony difficult, are identified.

Tar Baby is essentially the story of Jadine Childs, an international model and covergirl, who flees Paris to give further thought to a marriage proposal. She goes to spend Christmas with her guardians, an aunt and uncle, who have cared for Jadine since her mother's death. Her Aunt Ondine and Uncle Sydney are the domestic help of Valerian and Margaret Street, formerly of Philadelphia, now staying at their vacation villa on a Caribbean island known as Isle des Chevaliers. Island residents, Therese and Gideon, known to the Street household as Mary and Yardman, come on an occasional basis to do laundry and yardwork. Valerian has paid for Jadine's Sorbonne education and many of her expenses. Margaret is trying to get the home ready for the Christmas arrival of their son, Michael, who never does make an appearance. Complications arise and hidden secrets are revealed once a man, Son, is discovered hiding in Margaret's bedroom closet.

Up until this point the reader receives much background information about the setting, the history, the various characters and the power structure, all the while knowing that there is this man looming in the shadows of the house (almost a literal representation of Morrison's thesis of the presence of the Afro-American in American literature, which she establishes in *Playing in the Dark* [4-7, 17]). Once detected, Son assumes a variety of masks for the different people. For example, he tells Valerian how to get rid of the ants in the greenhouse without using insecticide: "[t]hey won't come near a mirror" (148). Son also demonstrates gardening prowess when he treats Valerian's cyclamen to help make them bloom, by flicking "the stems hard as though they were naughty students." "'They just need jacking up,'" Son explains (148). Valerian is very pleased with Son's assistance, promising him a new suit.

Son continues his pleasing ways by apologizing to Ondine for frightening the family and by prescribing a cure for her aching feet. "'You should put banana leaves in your shoes. Better'n Dr. Scholl's'" (161). He also convinces Sydney that he is simply interested in Valerian's generous offer of help to obtain a visa to return to the States. Son even asks for lesser accomodations and permission to eat in the kitchen with Sydney and Ondine, rather than have them wait on him as Valerian's guest.

Jadine, however, poses a problem for Son. "He had managed a face for everybody but her. The others were seduced by the Hickey Freeman suit and the haircut, but she was not and neither was he. Not seduced at all" (165). This, in itself, suggests Son and Jadine are removed or split off from the rest of the people in the Street household, perhaps simply because of their generational status. However, it also indicates that there are some differences between Jadine and Son.

Terry Otten, in his essay, "The Crime of Innocence in Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*," states, "Suggestively, Valerian compares [Son] with Michael, his own alienated son" (104). Since Valerian has clearly established that Jadine and Michael are different, in his aforementioned comments, it could be concluded that Jadine and Son are also different. The real irony in this, further complicating things, is that if anyone can be identified with the quisling *Little Prince*, it is Jadine.

Valerian finds that in comparison to Michael, Jadine has grown, a stance that Jadine seems to endorse. Her growth, however, has taken the form of Eurocentric thinking at the expense of her Afro American roots. "'Picasso *is* better than an Itumba mask. The fact that he is intrigued by them is proof of *his* genius, not the mask-makers'. I wish it weren't so, but . . . '" (74). She is even embarrassed by the black art shows in the States. Her

attitude is ego-driven, fanciful, up-in-the-air, aesthetic: many of those negative *puer* qualities mentioned earlier. She essentially is representative of the traditional, white, masculine world. Moreover, it is Jadine who refuses to acknowledge her role as daughter to her aunt Ondine and who refuses to acknowledge her role as female in her cultural heritage: "'I don't want to be that kind of woman'" (282). Therese advises Son: "'Forget her. . . . She has forgotten her ancient properties'" (305). Because she seems to uphold the traditional white American middle-class values, Valerian views her positively, failing to see, or show concern for, the cost involved.

Although Jadine and Son are clearly on the periphery of the people and the relationships in the Street home, they are anything but friendly toward each other, at least initially. They are established as opposites in a variety of categories: home, education, goals, dreams, cultural identity, occupation, wealth. It could be stated that each represents the shadow of the other. Marie Louise von Franz establishes the significance of such a relationship:

> When you are identical with the *puer aeternus* archetype, the shadow must be faced in order to come down to earth. But when you are identified with the shadow, the archetype of the *puer* must be faced in order to connect with it, for facing the other side is what leads to the next step (165).

In *Modern Man in Search of a Soul,* Carl Jung establishes three phases of consciousness, the first being youth, "which

consists of recognizing or 'knowing' in an anarchic or chaotic state" (100). This phase "extends roughly from the years just after puberty to middle life . . . between the thirty-fifth and fortieth year" (100). Also referred to as *puer,* this phase is polar to the third phase of consciousness, *senex,* which Jung describes as consisting of the awareness of our duality. Thus, it would seem the relationship between Jadine and Son is necessary for each to proceed into the next phase of consciousness; that is, to move through the pathology of the *puer aeternus* archetype, by confronting their respective shadows.

Such a relationship appears in Morrison's *Song of Solomon* between Guitar and Milkman and is supported by other works of literature, including, James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake.* Thomas Cowan's essay, "On *Finnegan's Wake,*" deals with the battling puers, Shaun and Shem.

> Shaun is . . . following in his father's footsteps but unconsciously preparing for his father's destruction. Shem, mother's boy and conscious rebel and iconoclast, unconsciously works to preserve his father's cultural values (233).

These battling opponents very much describe the relationship of Son and Jadine to this point in the novel and establish the ground for understanding what happens next and why.

As von Franz notes, it is important that the puer attach itself to its shadow, which is essentially its conscious opposite. Nevertheless, the shadow is still a puer, albeit not the "conventionally recognized counterpart

of senex" (Cowan 232-3). Jadine and Son are thus paired as the two opposing sides of the puer constellation. But, as Hillman recognizes in "Senex and Puer," "the puer problem is no easy one":

> The single archetype tends to merge in one: the Hero, the Divine Child, the figure of Eros, the King's Son, the Son of the Great Mother, the Psycho-pompos, Mercury-Hermes, Trickster, and the Messiah. In him we see a mercurial range of these 'personalities': narcissistic, inspired, effeminate, phallic, inquisitive, inventive, pensive, passive, fiery, and capricious (23).

Certainly, the many-masked Son can be identified with several of these figures throughout the novel (James Coleman notes a paper by Philip Royster in which Son's Christ-like qualities are analyzed). It is, therefore, difficult to grasp his character, or understand the significance of events and the extent of the caution, unless Son's character is understood within the parameters of the *puer aeternus* archetype and the constellation of its opposites.

Furthermore, Son's puerility supports many of Morrison's desired achievements in the writing of *Tar Baby*. Morrison has used the tar baby myth to frame her novel and Son becomes, partly, the trickster figure of Brer Rabbit as Morrison informs Tom LeClair:

> I use that old story because, despite its happy ending, it used to frighten me. The story has a tar baby in it which is used by a white man to catch a rabbit. . . . I found that there is a tar lady in African mythology. . . . For me tar baby came to mean the black woman who can hold things together. The story was a point of depar-

ture to history and prophecy (255).

Craig H. Werner explores Morrison's adaptation of the tar baby story in his essay, "The Briar Patch as Modernist Myth: Morrison, Barthes and Tar Baby As-Is," and reinforces Son in the role of Brer Rabbit: "Son is in many respects the classic trickster; gauging all actions for survival" (164).

Inherent in the tar baby myth, and one of the themes Morrison wished to explore in *Tar Baby,* is masks, as she informed Tom LeClair: "[t]hey almost say to a man that you never tell a white person the truth. He doesn't want to hear it. This helps explain why the theme of the mask is so important in black literature and why I worked so heavily with it in *Tar Baby*" (261). The *puer aeternus* archetype allows Morrison to work with the mask theme and also remain within the structure of the tar baby myth. As Werner points out, and as befits Morrison's genius as a writer, "any element of experience can become a snare . . . [a] fixed conception of masking, a total rejection of contact with whites, a romantic myth of the briar patch home: all can become traps" (157). Thus in *Tar Baby,* as in real life, dependence on one belief, one way of doing things, one way of acting, can become a trap. There are no easy answers, nothing is clearly identifiable, nothing constant, thus mirroring the flux of everyday life. Such dynamism is concomitant with the *puer aeternus* archetype, with its mercurial range of personalities, as established earlier by

Hillman. The only way to understand these traps is through the experience gained from encountering one's shadow.

Tar Baby presents the importance of a confrontation with one's shadow. While Son is certainly identifiable as the honourable upholder of his culture, his puerility allows the reader to see the trap inherent in such a stance. Son is naive and thinks all the answers can be obtained from his culture, which is the opposite of Jadine's attitude, as expressed earlier concerning art. Son is shocked upon his arrival in New York City at the people he sees and their behaviour. "If those were the black folks he was carrying around in his heart all those years, who on earth was he?" His attempt to check into his hotel is made difficult by a young clerk Son had specifically gone to because he thought he saw a friendly face. "Son was surprised at himself. He seldom misjudged people" (216-7). The harsh reality of the city was an aspect of life with which Son had no experience. His ways of knowing, as presented on the Isle des Chevaliers, make him almost a country bumpkin in the city. His naivete is in keeping with the *puer aeternus* archetype as von Franz describes it: "a tendency to be believing, naive, and idealistic . . . attracts people who will deceive and cheat" (37). Son's encounter with Nommo, whom he befriends, only to have her run off with his money, affirms this.

Son, however, attributes his confusion, not to a possible flaw or an inadequacy in himself, but to the fact that he is in love (217). He is sure that his basis for understanding the world is far superior to any other and all-sufficient:

> The truth is that whatever you learned in those colleges that didn't include me ain't shit. What did they teach you about me? What tests did they give? Did they tell you what I was like, did they tell you what was on my mind? Did they describe me to you? Did they tell you what was in my heart? If they didn't teach you that, then they didn't teach you nothing, because until you know about me, you don't nothing about yourself (264).

This know-it-all attitude is in keeping with Son's status as carrier of the culture, but von Franz notes the trap: "[e]very cultural condition contains a secret poison which consists of the pretension of knowing all the answers" (219). While it is truly unwise and psychologically unhealthy to abandon one's culture, as Jadine appears to have done, it is equally unwise to think the answers to all the world's questions lie buried in that same culture. Both attitudes are traps and both Jadine and Son are at risk of becoming entrapped and not developing their consciousness.

While Jadine and Son differ in almost every category, except age, the main difference between them is their source of knowing. Son's knowledge comes from within. He has a close relationship with anima and a strong, rooted connection to the mythical knowledge of his culture,

identifying very strongly with people like him, such as Gideon and Therese. His escape from his ship and swim to safety is testament:

> 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. . . . He knew . . . very soon he might be zooming toward the horizon in a pitch-black sea. . . . Still the water-lady cupped him in the palm of her hand, and nudged him out to sea. Suddenly he saw new lights . . . aboard a small craft. Just as suddenly the water-lady removed her hand and the man swam toward the boat anchored in blue water (5).

Jadine, on the other hand, is more career-oriented. She is accused of being a "yalla" by Gideon: "Yallas don't come to being black natural-like. They have to choose it and most don't choose it" (155). Her education is in art history from the Sorbonne and she is attracted to aesthetic beauty. Her baby sealskin coat, for example, becomes the instrument of erotic pleasure:

> THE SKIN of the baby seals sucked up the dampness of her own. Jadine closed her eyes and imagined the blackness she was sinking into. She lay spread-eagled on the fur, nestling herself into it. It made her tremble. She opened her lips and licked the fur. It made her tremble more. Ondine was right; there was something a little fearful about the coat. No, not fearful, seductive (112).

Jadine's source of information is outer. She is aesthetic, superficial, interested in power, and aroused by wealth and the things it can provide. If Son has a trust of anima, Jadine is animus-guided. The discord that exists within the

relationship is understandable given these parameters. But if the facing of one's shadow is necessary for the development of consciousness, how can Jadine and Son offer each other anything except discord?

Tar Baby reveals that through love the polar opposites, Jadine and Son, can unite and provide each other with the balance necessary to withstand the tension. When Son recognizes he is out of focus in New York his solution is Jadine. "He wanted her in that room with him giving him the balance he was losing, the ballast and counterweight to the stone of sorrow New York City had given him" (217). When they go to visit Son's hometown of Eloe, Florida, Jadine is completely out of her comfort zone and cannot bear Eloe alone. When Son cannot be by her all the time, she insists on going back to New York. She cannot bear the succubi, the breast-baring women of her dreams without Son closely holding her. "And he [held her]. Till morning. Even while he slept and she didn't and the women finally went away - sighing - he did not let her go" (259).

However, while the union of the polar opposites was initiated by love, love cannot sustain it. A greater force is needed to endure the tension. Morrison mentions in her interview with Nellie McKay, in reference to Milkman in *Song of Solomon*, the importance of holding disparate sources of knowledge in balance. "And that kind of harmony is what makes it possible for him to do what he does toward the end

of the book, and to do something important" (429). However, the necessary ingredient for harmony, according to Hillman in "Peaks and Vales," is soul. Morrison's description of the tar lady as, "the black woman who can hold things together," is very similar to Hillman's description of a function of soul. In "Peaks and Vales" Hillman states that "the soul holds polarities in harmony" (14). And one of the necessary criteria for soul-making is a "single-minded commitment to discord and cacophony" ("Peaks and Vales," 69). Thus, the tar woman aspect of the myth cannot be invoked unless there is an acceptance of discord. The only way out of this catch twenty-two situation and the pathology of the *puer aeternus* archetype is to embrace the situation and honour the discord for the benefits it has the potential of providing. Acceptance of this discord, however, is hardly the example of *Tar Baby*.

There is no doubt at the end of the novel that Jadine and Son have had a tremendous and positive impact upon each other. While Jadine's return to Paris with her baby sealskin coat is obviously a negative image, there is no doubt Jadine has been affected by Son. She will still be haunted by the night women and the woman in the yellow dress, the anima succubi, trying to ensoul her, and she admits that it would not be so easy to forget Son and the things they experienced together. Likewise Son has been affected by Jadine. When he sees the photos she took in

Eloe he realizes the romanticism with which he regarded his hometown and its people. "Out came the photos [Jadine] had taken in the middle of the road in Eloe. . . . They all looked stupid, backwoodsy, dumb, dead" (272-3). His perceptions may be a bit extreme; they are pictures, but his attitude does show a swing toward the other pole, and with it the necessary self-criticism, which is a requirement of the first stage of consciousness development. It certainly does demonstrate a move away from his all-knowing attitude. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* Nietzsche states: "And only if he turns away from himself will he jump over his own shadow - and jump, in truth, into *his own* sunlight" (140). Son is close to making that jump, but as befits *puer aeternus,* he is trapped by the conditions of the pathology.

These changes in attitude or consciousness are not recognized or even appreciated by those people from whom Son and Jadine receive support and guidance. Ondine and Sydney are outraged that Jadine ran off with Son, but are glad it is all over; "Oh, baby, baby, how could you run off with a . . . " (279). Ondine and Sydney show little concern about Jadine's return to Paris, except that she may not be around to care for them in their old age, thereby fulfilling her obligations as daughter. There is no indication to Ondine and Sydney that her relationship with Son has had any positive effects upon her. Her return to Paris can be viewed as flight from the very thing that Son represents and

as further reinforcement of the *puer aeternus* connection and its unresolved mother complex. Both of their mothers died while Jadine and Son were still children and each is affected differently by it. Son wants to keep in touch with those things that remind him of his mother, which is accomplished by his childish, romantic notion of his hometown and its people. Jadine refuses to allow herself to experience any emotion she cannot control, always reining in "the small dogs galloping on silver feet" (113), lest they get away, forcing her to experience all those withheld and repressed emotions, including those associated with the loss of her mother. Jadine's need to flee is in keeping with her *puer* status and will essentially keep her within the pathology. The work of von Franz states:

> Some *peuri aeterni* escape from the mother by means of actual airplanes; they fly from Mother-Earth and from reality in planes, while many others do the same thing in "thought airplanes" - going off into the air with some kind of philosophical theory or intellectual system (175).

Jadine has a history of fleeing anytime the elements of her polar opposite inflict themselves upon her, and her flight is always supported by Ondine and Sydney, thereby perpetuating her *puer* status and inhibiting her development of consciousness.

Son undergoes similar treatment when he returns to the Isle des Chevaliers and seeks help from Therese and Gideon. Gideon tries to convince Son to forget about Jadine and will

not take Son to L'Arbe de la Croix, the Streets' island residence. Therese, however, is more than willing to cooperate and despite Gideon's warning not to trust her, Son accepts her offer.

Therese is representative of the entrapping aspects of Son's side of the puer constellation. She has qualities that could identify her easily as the classic old crone; she is part of the blind race (152), yet senses things better than most people see, but she is part of Son's knowledge base and Son feels comfortable with her and trusts her. Some critics have described her as the earth mother. Certainly, Therese's disgust with Enfamil (154) and Alma Estee's description of Therese to Jadine, in the airport washroom, would support this view. "'Therese has magic breasts. They still give milk'" (289). Thus, in his attempt to follow his feelings and try to find Jadine, he trustingly allows nearly-blind Therese to take him, on a foggy night, by boat, to Isle des Chevaliers. She, of course, has no intention of taking Son to the Streets' home. Instead she takes him to the other side of the island where the mythical blind men of the island are waiting for him. "The mist lifted and the trees stepped back a bit as if to make the way easier for a certain kind of man. Then he ran. Lickety-split" (306).

For a son this cannot be viewed as a positive outcome, especially considered from the perspective of the *puer*

aeternus archetype. The mother complex, Son's blind faith in his culture and those women who seem to uphold it, is a situation that can prolong the pathology if it is not overcome. The thirteenth century poet Jelaluddin Rumi warns:

> Your old grandmother says,
> "Maybe you shouldn't go to school.
> You look a little pale."
> Run when you hear that (135).

The deceit of Son by Therese, this earth mother figure, further reinforces another *puer aeternus* connection and the ever-present danger of entrapment. One of the hazards the *puer aeternus* must face is the mother's attempt to prevent development of the consciousness needed to progress to the next phase. Whereas Jadine's flight to Paris will prolong her development of consciousness, the intervention of Therese was, quite possibly, the time when Son should have escaped from his Mother, at least her influence.

Robert Bly in *Iron John* states that for sons, mothers hold the key to soul, the Wild Man, but the son must steal it. "No mother worth her salt would give the key anyway. If a son can't steal it, he doesn't deserve it" (12). Son should have realized that Therese's offer to help was too good to be true, but Therese was a trusted aspect of his knowledge source and without his connection to his polar opposite Son was easily trapped. Son now is essentially enisled, immortalized in the myth of the blind horsemen of

the Isle des Chevaliers, and Therese believes she has saved one of her own. However, other than hope, there have been few changes achieved from this *puer* world of possibility and none likely, at least from Son.

Evidence that Son's condition should not be viewed positively is provided within the story itself. Lauren Lepow notes that when Son is left enisled by Therese his "situation also echoes that which he decried in the New York City men who 'were looking neither to the right nor to the left'. Then, in New York, Son was able to look 'first to the right and then to the left,' seeing polarities" (375). Son, running on Isle des Chevaliers, "[l]ooking neither to the left nor to the right" (306), could be considered as innocuous as the New York City men with their testicles pasted on their chests.

Reading *Tar Baby* from the perspective of the *puer aeternus* archetype reveals the novel's cautionary message, not only as it relates to sons, but to society as a whole. Sons and daughters, by virtue of their *puer* status, are imbued with the creative potential to renew, the ability to amplify, to expand the dimensions of their confines. This can only be accomplished by embracing the discord, inherent in working through the pathology. To successfully pass through the first stage of consciousness development much effort within the tension is required. To remove the tension only tightens the trap, as Morrison impies in *Sula*:

"The tension was gone and so was the reason for the effort they had made" (153). Such a commitment invokes Morrison's understanding of the tar baby myth. This holding together of things becomes the responsibility of the *senex* forces of society, which implies, essentially, recognizing the true meaning of the *puer aeternus* archetype. Failure to do so only perpetuates the pathology by entrapping the *puers*, and limiting society's development to the confining definitions of each culture. The result of such failure is represented in *Tar Baby* by the image of the bees: "Bees have no sting on the Isle des Chevaliers, nor honey" (81). Jadine is juxtaposed with the single-minded soldier ant and Son is no different than the sons of New York, no different from the bees, apathetic and inaffective. The implication is that society can never benefit from the *puer aeternus* archetype's ability to renew until society recognizes the importance of confrontation with the shadow, scathing self-criticism and then consciousness development.

Fortunately, Jadine and Son were able to steal a moment and live within the tensional force, so there is hope. In an interview with Bill Moyers, Morrison stated her hopes for Jadine and Son:

> I was eager for them to make it. You know, end up and get married and go to the sea-shore. . . . They didn't. They each had to learn something else, I think, before that could happen (270).

Those lessons, undoubtedly, include recognition of their shadow side to free themselves from "the grip of that quisling *Little Prince*." However, all may benefit once the tar baby myth is understood within the content of its African roots.

CHAPTER TWO

Song of Solomon's Macon "Milkman" Dead:

"The Ulysses Theme"

You could travel from your outer man into your inner man.
By a journey of that sort earth became a place where you find gold.

Rumi, from "That Journeys Are Good"

CHAPTER TWO

Song of Solomon's Macon "Milkman" Dead: "The Ulysses Theme"

Song of Solomon represents a pivotal point in the fictional world of Toni Morrison, especially regarding her depiction of men. The males of *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula*-- Cholly Breedlove, Soaphead Church, Boy Boy and Ajax-- are depicted as irresponsible, abusive, and manipulative. All are presented as having very little redeeming social value and, except for Cholly Breedlove, receive very little sympathy or compassion from the reader. In *Song of Solomon*, Morrison focuses on the main character, Macon "Milkman" Dead, who is very similar to the male characters encountered in Morrison's previous novels. In this novel, however, it is Milkman who comes to learn things as Claudia MacTeer and Nel Wright did in *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula*, respectively. Morrison reveals the reasons for her choice in an interview with Nellie McKay: "I chose a man to make that journey because I thought he had more to learn than a woman would have" (428). The journey presents Milkman's metamorphosis, described by Morrison as follows: "there is something called masculinity which has nothing to do with sex or gender. . . . And there is an idea of femininity. I think that

Milkman Dead is whole at the end of *Song of Solomon* because he achieves both; he surrenders and controls" (LeClair, 256). Milkman moves from an ego-centric world-view to one that is soul-based, and it is this movement, Milkman's learning, that is presented in *Song of Solomon*, as not only necessary for him, but for all men.

Essentially, Milkman is very much like Jadine Childs in *Tar Baby*, very much a *puer*, easily one of the young men of New York City encountered by Son, but Milkman learns. This pattern of learning, encapsulating both masculine and feminine qualities, becomes the defining pattern of Morrison's fictional world for becoming a responsible, fully conscious, functioning person. While her other novels depict the difficulty that exists in achieving this wholeness, or in doing something constructive with it, the achievements of Milkman Dead in *Song of Solomon* represent the ideal. Karla Holloway refers to the novel as "a beginning book":

> It places value, establishes identity, and unequivocally shows us point-of-origin. If later we suffer as Pecola suffers, or lose touch as Nel and Sula and Jadine did, then *Song of Solomon* is there to tell why and remind us of where we were before the destructiveness of Western civilization corrupted and displaced our African selves. This book is a whole and it fills in all gaps and all questions (103).

Certainly any judgements made by critics about characters in Morrison's fictional world have to be considered with *Song of Solomon* in mind.

Milkman comes to learn what he does as the result of a quest, which becomes more of a synchronistic meandering than an actual quest. At times resembling a heroic, mythological quest, Milkman's search is initially for the lost gold of his father's stories, which would allow Milkman to buy his freedom and cut loose from his family. Instead, his quest becomes a journey for self-knowledge. Referred to by Valerie Smith as "Milkman Dead's unwitting search for identity" (278), the quest is complete with rebirth, tests, initiations, and baptism, through all of which Milkman's freedom is gained, paradoxically, by his becoming more deeply entrenched in his family.

Prior to his quest, Milkman exhibits all the behaviours of a *puer aeternus.* He still lives at home with his parents, Macon and Ruth, despite being thirty-two years old, and he still is entirely dependent upon them for his well-being. His father has provided him with employment and an opportunity to continue the family business of property ownership, and his mother has protected him from all the world's harm, including his father, to the best of her ability. Because of his wealth, stylish clothes and good looks, Milkman is popular with many of the ladies, including his cousin Hagar, with whom he has had a relationship since

his teens, although he has never taken her very seriously. "[S]he was considered his private honey pot, not a real or legitimate girlfriend - not someone he might marry" (91). This lifestyle is dominated by superficiality, materialism and ego-centricity. As Macon informs the young Milkman, "'the one important thing you'll ever need to know: Own things. And let the things you own own other things. Then you'll own yourself and other people too'" (55). Macon thinks ownership of the self can be gained at the expense of others.

Milkman has a close friend, Guitar, who is, in all respects, the shadow of his consciousness, but who echoes Macon regarding ownership of the self. Ralph Story describes Milkman's and Guitar's relationship as tensional: "This dissonance, tension, or Yin-Yang polarity unfolds principally through the relationship between Guitar Bains . . . and his friend Milkman Dead" (150). The fact that many years earlier Milkman's father evicted Guitar's grandmother from one of his apartments, while she was raising her grandchildren, establishes the polarities between Milkman and Guitar. Guitar is a member of a secret, underground organization known as the Seven Days, whose sole purpose is to redress any death of a black person at the hands of a white person by similarly killing a white. The murder would take place on the same week day and in the same manner as the black person died, with the intention of

securing justice for blacks and maintaining the black-to-white ratio. The problem with Milkman's relationship with Guitar is that it is just as ego-centrically based as the relationship with his parents. Theodore O. Mason, Jr. explains: "Ruth's stories, along with Guitar's and Macon's . . . place its author at the center of a self-glorifying narrative either as heroine or victim" (575). Even when confronting his shadow Milkman still finds himself in the realm of ego-consciousness, but this is because Milkman does not uphold the values of the lifestyle he represents. In fact he just wants out:

> He just wanted to beat a path away from his parents' past, which was also his present as well. He hated the acridness in his mother's and father's relationship, the conviction of righteousness they each held on to with both hands. And his efforts to ignore it, transcend it, seemed to work only when he spent his day looking for whatever was light-hearted and without grave consequences. He avoided commitment and strong feelings, and shied away from decisions. He wanted to know as little as possible, to feel only enough to get through the day amiably and to be interesting enough to warrant the curiosity of other people. . . . He'd always believed his childhood was sterile, but the knowledge Macon and Ruth had given him wrapped his memory of it in septic sheets, heavy with odor of illness, misery, and unforgiving hearts (180-1).

This apathy, the result of a sheltered, protected, ego-conscious existence, is very much the symbolic intent of the bees on the Isle des Chevaliers; no sting, but no honey

either.

Milkman recognizes that there is something wrong with his life, but he does not know what to do about it, except escape.

> There had to be something better to look forward to. He couldn't get interested in money. No one had ever denied him any, so it had no exotic attraction. Politics - at least barbershop politics and Guitar's brand - put him to sleep. He was bored. Everybody bored him. The city was boring. The racial problems that consumed Guitar were the most boring of all. He wondered what they would do if they didn't have any black and white problems to talk about (107-8).

Nothing in or about his life interests him or excites him. He even refuses to experience fear when confronted by a knife-wielding Hagar seeking vengeance for the callous manner in which he broke off their relationship. Instead, he creates a scenario, God-like and prophetic, whereby if he is chosen to live, Hagar must die. He is so far removed from the feeling function, he cannot even simply choose to live and fear for that life, but instead places his life in the hands of some unknown force. This attitude causes Guitar some concern; he thinks Milkman is asking to die, but the reality is Milkman is asking not to have to choose. In *Suicide and the Soul*, James Hillman states: "Until we can choose death, we cannot choose life. Until we can say no to life, we have not really said yes to it, but have only been carried along by its collective stream" (63-4). Being

carried along has been the story of Milkman's life and that is why he is bored, because his life has no meaning. In *Man and His Symbols* Carl Jung describes the importance of meaning in life: "Man positively needs general ideas and convictions that will give a meaning to his life and enable him to find a place for himself in the universe. He can stand the most incredible hardships when he is convinced that they make sense" (89).

The poet Rainer Maria Rilke provides an idea to give life meaning when one is just being carried along. In his poem, "Just as the Winged Energy of Delight," Rilke offers a solution that supports Morrison's idea that Milkman achieves wholeness by balancing feminine and masculine attributes:

> being carried along is not enough.
>
> Take your well-disciplined strengths
> and stretch them between two
> opposing poles. Because inside human beings
> is where God learns (175).

Rilke suggests that experiencing the tension of polar opposites will provide an aspect of spiritual definition. If those poles are understood to be the poles of feminine and masculine qualities, as Morrison suggests, then Milkman has quite a way to go. He exists in a world of ego consciousness, characteristically masculine, and referred to by Hillman as the animus: "it seems that much of what psychology has been calling ego is the animus. . . " (*Anima*, 179). And it is this world Milkman wishes to leave. If Guitar and Milkman represent each other's shadow of

consciousness, then Milkman must have some other source of information about life of which he is aware, but perhaps not fully conscious.

This other world of information, of course, is the world represented by his aunt Pilate. While her lifestyle is less than desirable by material standards, and easily derided by people like her brother Macon ("Pilate can't teach you a thing you can use in this world. Maybe the next, but not this one" [55]), she has been the one source of information for which Milkman has felt any positive emotion. As a teen Milkman experiences his aunt's world with Guitar:

> Milkman was five feet seven then but it was the first time in his life that he remembered being completely happy. He was with his friend, an older boy - wise and kind of fearless. He was sitting comfortably in the notorious wine house; he was surrounded by women who seemed to enjoy him and who laughed out loud. And he was in love. No wonder his father was afraid of them (47).

It is a world to which he is continually drawn, without ever fully understanding that attraction, ever looking for escape possibilities from his ego-centric existence.

There can be no doubt as to the nature of his attraction to his aunt Pilate's world, nor the cosmology of that world. Pilate represents the opposite sphere of ego consciousness, the feminine world, psychologically represented by the anima. This quality is unconscious within Milkman, but is struggling to be recognized, and Pilate is the key in rendering it conscious. To this end

Pilate possesses many of the qualities of an anima figure. Carl Jung establishes the significance of shadow and anima in a person's life: "If the encounter with the shadow is the 'apprentice-piece' in the individual's development, then that with the anima is the "master-piece" (*Anima*, 2). Milkman's time spent with Guitar has allowed him to see his world needs changing.

Jan Stryz describes the role of Pilate in *Song of Solomon*:

> She functions as a female version of the mythic hero, a literary "original" embodying a maternal nature that goes against conventional conceptions of motherhood to include familiarity with violence, a decentered home life, personal physical strength, and individuality. But she goes beyond the role of mere character to function as a figure for the text, specifically an "original" text unrelated to the biblical text from which she derives her written existence (35-6).

That figure is the embodiment of the qualities of the feminine world made evident by her anima status. As previously stated, Morrison's use of feminine refers to neither sex nor gender, and Pilate's role in the novel fulfils this intention perfectly, in her sexual ambiguousness, as Stryz mentions above. Macon even tells Milkman: "If you ever have a doubt we from Africa, look at Pilate. She look just like Papa and he looked like all them pictures you ever see of Africans" (54). However, this ambiguous quality is also a characteristic of anima at the archetypal level, as Hillman states in *Anima*: "We are now at

the archetypal level of anima, . . . and an archetype as such cannot be attributed to or located within the psyche of either sex" (53).

Stryz further alludes to Pilate's most important functions in Milkman's life, first as guide, then as a mother figure. As a guide, Pilate has previously travelled the route of Milkman's journey, and it is her path he eventually follows. This role displaces her name from its biblical connotation and establishes it in its anima status. As pilot, one who guides through dangerous passages, Pilate effects the anima role, described by Jung, of mediatrix between the conscious and unconscious (*Anima*, 130). Being a pilot is easy enough for Pilate, but getting Milkman to make the journey is not so easy.

Trudier Harris affirms Pilate's role as guide and further substantiates her role as mother figure: "Pilate becomes a surrogate mother for Milkman - for he barely has a relationship with Ruth - and she also becomes his spiritual guide"(89). As previously established and as befitting her role as surrogate mother, Pilate provides Milkman with a world of knowledge that is polar to that of his father. Her telling the story of her father's murder by white people and her and Macon's escape, is in the tradition of the griot, a beautifully rendered tale of a family legacy. When told by Macon the story becomes one of greed, betrayal and gold. It is Macon's telling of the story that piques

Milkman's interest, not so much because of its telling, but because his father convinces Milkman that Pilate must still have the gold, which she has withheld from Macon. If Milkman could steal it from her, the riches would enable him to make his escape. Through the convincing of Macon and, later, Guitar, Milkman decides to undertake his quest. Yet, there can be no doubt as to Pilate's controlling of this situation. Milkman still functions in the ego-conscious, material world and he can only imagine his escape from this world in those terms. Thus, the gold could allow him to buy his freedom, or such is his rationale. Jung, in his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* offers an explanation for Macon's feelings regarding Pilate:

> The more a man lays stress on false possessions and the less sensitivity he has for what is essential, the less satisfying is his life. He feels limited because he has limited aims, and the result is envy and jealousy (325).

Macon believes the green sack hanging from the roof in Pilate's house, against which Milkman bumps his head, has to be the gold.

While the impetus for the journey is established by the gold fever, the key to the journey remains in the hands of Pilate. Being true to her mother status, Pilate undoubtedly realizes that Milkman's stealing from her is the key, in part echoing the similar situation in *Tar Baby* with Therese and Son. The key, of course, is that Pilate does not have the gold, nor did she ever have it, but she does not tell

Milkman this. Instead she tells Macon and the boys her story of what happened at the cave three years after her and Macon's separation, leaving the men to believe that the gold may still be in the cave. The possibility of gold is all that Milkman needs to begin his journey, and somehow Pilate knows this. While the journey is important to Milkman individually, it is exceedingly important for the resurrection of the "Dead" family, as Karla Holloway points out: "Both Macon and Pilate must go backwards in time and mythology to a community that remembers them as a part of it. Milkman accomplishes this journey for them" (107).

With only the information gleaned from the stories of Pilate to guide him, Milkman initially flies to Danville, Pennsylvania to find the location of the cave and search for the gold, his supposed ticket to freedom. His southward movement to freedom is ironic, since all his ancestors fled north to freedom, but the direction prefigures the circumstances of Sethe and Paul D in *Beloved*, who discover the real direction of true freedom. This prepares Milkman for the stretching and movement to the other pole, mentioned by Rilke. However, such movement necessiates erasure of the trappings of the material, ego-centric world and a cleansing of the self to fully appreciate the other world. Stephanie Demetrakopoulos states, "[f]or Milkman to become a whole person, he must undergo an ego death" (93), and this is just what happens. Through a series of trials and initiations

Milkman retraces the steps of Pilate's journey away from his world of ego to her world of soul. In *Man and his Symbols,* Joseph L. Henderson describes the archetypal nature of such a journey:

> . . . the theme of the lonely journey or pilgrimage, . . . somehow seems to be a spiritual pilgrimage in which the initiate becomes acquainted with the nature of death. But this is not death as a last judgement . . . it is a journey of release, renunciation, and atonement, presided over and fostered by some spirit of compassion. This spirit is more often represented by a . . . supreme feminine (*i.e.* anima) figure . . . (151-2).

Not only is Pilate important in Milkman's journey, but other woman are important, especially for the information they provide concerning Milkman's character flaws. He comes to understand this information more clearly as he becomes more deeply involved in his journey. The importance of women confirms the world in which Milkman is now functioning. Just before he leaves for Danville, his masculine, ego-conscious world is put into perspective for him by his sister Lena:

> You've never picked up anything heavier than your own feet . . . Where do you get the *right* to decide our lives? . . . I'll tell you where. From that hog's gut that hangs down between your legs. Well, let me tell you something, baby brother: you will need more than that. I don't know where you will get it or who will give it to you, but mark my words, you will need more than that (217).

Simply by virtue of his masculinity and name, Milkman has enjoyed the comforts of his life without having earned a

single one.

The importance of women in Milkman's life continues once he arrives in Danville, retracing Pilate's steps in search of the cave where his father and Pilate hid from their father's murderers. Danville is where Milkman's grandfather had farmed, and his father and aunt grew up. Milkman seeks help from the locals, who direct him to Circe, an extremely elderly woman, who was once midwife to all local births. She is the person who harboured Macon and Pilate from their father's murderers for a few days. Milkman is directed to the cave by Circe, and it is from there that Milkman's real transformation begins. However, Circe also offers Milkman some criticism of something she notices in the brief time they spend together. "'You don't listen to people. Your ear is on your head, but it's not connected to your brain'" (249). While Milkman has heard much of what has been said to him, his indifference has prevented him from understanding any of it. He must, therefore, experience it directly for himself.

Once Milkman has learned the location of the cave from Circe, he ventures off in search of it. On his way he attempts crossing a river, but falls in, completely submerging himself. This ritualistic cleansing or purification is a necessary precondition for Milkman's journey to the opposite pole. Wet, frustrated and completely removed from his comfort zone, Milkman finds the

cave. Gerry Brenner describes the scene: "and then in the cave, he soils himself on the bat-shit on its walls and the dirt on its floor, on which he must crawl in darkness, groping to find and feel all around the wide hole in which the gold allegedly waits" (17). Similar in description to Pilate's birth, where, with her mother dead, Pilate has to crawl into the world, Milkman is reborn, unwittingly, into the feminine world of his unconscious. The entry into the world is acknowledged when the one symbol he shared with his father, the love of fine shoes and thin socks, is removed: "whereupon the sole of his right shoe split away from the soft cordovan leather. The bats drove him out in a lopsided run, lifting his foot high to accommodate the flopping sole" (255). This comic emergence is not very dignified for a man of Milkman's stature, but fitting since Milkman's ego deflates at a rate commensurate with his loss of his material things. However, more trials are required.

Failure to find the gold in Pennsylvania leads him to believe that Pilate may have left it somewhere on her travels, and thus Milkman heads further south to Virginia. Although his conscious rationale is to search for the gold, he has been moved at an unconscious level by the stories Circe told him of his grandparents and their real names. The search for gold is now aligned with a puzzle concerning the real names of his grandparents, Jake and Sing. As he moves further away from the city, Milkman moves closer to

the past, closer to his unconscious and to a rural, close-to-the-earth, primitive lifestyle. Milkman remains blind to the true nature of his quest because of the still inherent trappings of his father's world, his ego. The tests he undergoes in Shalimar prepare him for the necessary death of his ego and further prove him worthy of the final outcome of his quest.

In Shalimar he faces the very real prospect of death in a knife fight, where his survival is achieved only when some instinctual force within him, close to animal, takes over. Previously in his life, everyone had been nice to him because of who he was. Life was different in Shalimar:

> Now he walked into a store and asked if somebody could fix his car and a nigger pulled a knife on him. And he still wasn't dead. Now what did these black Neanderthals think they were going to do? . . . He had thought this place, this Shalimar, was going to be home. His original home. His people had come from here, his grandfather and his grandmother. All the way down South people had been nice to him, generous, helpful. In Danville they had made him the object of hero worship. In his own home town his name spelled dread and grudging respect. But here, in his "home," he was unknown, unloved, and damn near killed (273).

What Milkman does not yet realize is that he has finally earned the respect of some people on his own, for something he has done. The older members of the community, out of respect for Milkman's survival in the fight, invite him to come on their hunting trip. This is important, as Genevieve Fabre indicates: "a black man with a white heart - is a

first offense, the tests and trials become necessary rites of passage. They further purify him and initiate him back into the tribe" (112-13).

In preparation for the hunting trip, Milkman is stripped of his usual wardrobe in favour of more functional hunting clothes. He finds himself deep in the forest at night and alone, the complete opposite of his city life experience. It is here where "his self - the cocoon that was 'personality' - gave way" (280). He begins to feel a "sudden rush of affection" (282) for all the people in his life, which comes from an appreciation for a completely different way of life than Milkman had ever known before; one in which the interconnectedness of all living things is understood. While sitting under a tree reflecting on his life and his surroundings, Milkman is attacked from above by Guitar, who attempts to garrotte him with piano wire. In the ensuing struggle Milkman sees an image of Hagar, and, with death a very real possibility, he is filled with sadness to be dying. Instead of resignedly accepting his death, as he had done with Hagar previously, Milkman chooses to live and fends off the attack of Guitar. Surely, to endure the hardships of his various trials Milkman must have found some conviction that has given his life meaning.

Milkman returns to his hunting companions, revealing his true feelings about being scared. This humbling is a far cry from having, prior to the hunt, bragged about being

the best shot around, when he had actually never fired a weapon before. With his ego relativized, Milkman experiences an epiphany:

> he found himself exhilarated by simply walking the earth. Walking it like he belonged on it; like his legs were stalks, tree trunks, a part of his body that extended down down down into the rock and soil, and were comfortable there - on the earth and on the place where he walked. And he did not limp (284).

The limp is significant because earlier it had been the one thing that prevented Milkman from being like his father, but now that he feels this connection to his "roots," the limp is gone. He and his father are different for other reasons now.

Milkman has stretched his well-disciplined strengths between two opposing poles: masculine and feminine, animus and anima, ego and soul, conscious and unconscious, and has found meaning in his life. He wants to find the answers to the puzzles of his ancestry. The hunters offering the heart of the killed bobcat to Milkman completes his initiation into his tribe. As Michael Meade notes, "initiation in the modern world often begins with a return rather than forging ahead" (147). Milkman's enthusiastic acceptance indicates his worthiness to complete his quest. The fact that Milkman has spanned both poles is apparent in his relationship with Sweet. His willing participation in equally shared activities indicates a changed Milkman:

> He soaped and rubbed her until her skin squeaked and glistened like onyx. She put salve on his face. He washed her hair. She sprinkled talcum on his feet. He straddled her behind and massaged her back. She put witch hazel on his swollen neck. He made up the bed. She gave him gumbo to eat. He washed the dishes. She washed his clothes and hung them out to dry. He scoured her tub. She ironed his shirt and pants. He gave her fifty dollars. She kissed his mouth. He touched her face. She said please come back. He said I'll see you tonight (289).

These duties and this sharing, something Milkman had never done before, exemplify his acceptance of his sister Lena's criticism, and the incorporation of his feminine side.

The solution to the puzzle of his ancestry is found in the lyrics of the song the children of Shalimar sing, which Milkman recognizes as one that Pilate sang as well. When he hears it he is forced to memorize it because he possesses nothing with which to record the words. This is important in many ways. First, it is a return to the oral tradition of his ancestors and the feminine world of story telling he has experienced through Pilate and Circe. Secondly, Circe had told him he did not know how to listen. If he has not acquired this ability in his transformation, he will not be able to complete his quest. However, with the help of Susan Byrd, Milkman is allowed to make sense of the words and his suspicions are clarified. He has discovered the real gold, his family's true heritage. He is related to the Flying Africans and his grandfather was not Macon Dead I, but

instead Jake, the son of Solomon.

His acceptance of his heritage is noted by the baptismal quality of his rejoicing. He goes to see Sweet to get her to go swimming with him because he is dirty and needs water. When Sweet suggests a bath Milkman's response is testament to the ritualistic nature of the moment: "Bath! You think I'd put myself in that tight little porcelain box? I need the sea! The whole goddam sea" (330)!

Milkman's quest is not complete, however. While he has succeeded in meeting the demands necessary to solve the puzzle of his family's legacy, he has yet to meet the responsibilities of his life at home. Kathleen O'Shaughnessy points out:

> Milkman returns home a changed person, but learns the world has not changed because of his new awareness. Although he cannot change the past, he attempts to interact with the community he had little part of before and persuades Pilate to return with him to Shalimar to bury her father's bones (131).

Before he can do this, however, he has to accept his responsibility in the death of Hagar, which he does before he is even positive she has in fact died. "What difference did it make? He had hurt her, left her, and now she was dead - he was certain of it. He had left her" (336). He accepts his responsibility by taking possession of a shoe box of Hagar's hair. When he and Pilate go to bury her father's bones, Pilate is shot by Guitar. Milkman then realizes the importance of Pilate in his life. "Now he knew why he loved

her so. Without ever leaving the ground she could fly. 'There must be another one like you,' he whispered to her. 'There's got to be at least one more woman like you'" (340). As the final proof of his new identity, verifying he had retraced the steps of Pilate and had achieved all she had, Milkman merges the qualities of the polar opposites by surrendering and controlling at the same time, vengefully flying out at Guitar. "For now he knew what Shalimar knew: If you surrendered to the air, you could *ride* it" (341).

The ability to fly is proof that Milkman has become a whole person and has fused his masculine and feminine sides. His trust in the myth of his ancestry is shown in his leap, which affords him the same realization his ancestors enjoyed. This represents true spiritual belief and acceptance of a world other than the physical, material one. Such a belief could not be possible without the acceptance and infusion of, supposed, incongruous characteristics; masculine and feminine, conscious and unconscious. Engendered by anima, the merging of opposites allows Milkman to consciously understand his spiritual heritage. He has succeeded in transcending the "Dead" existence of his family and has truly acquired freedom. The ability to fly is the ultimate freedom. Milkman proves that to be worthy of such a legacy requires much sacrifice and effort, as well as the knowledge of who you are. As Valerie Smith indicates: "Knowing oneself derives from learning to reach back into

history and horizontally in sympathetic relationship to others" (283). In anticipation of *Beloved*, Morrison indicates such learning requires a loving teacher and the ability to understand her lessons.

CHAPTER THREE

***Beloved's* Paul D:**

"And wouldn't you know he'd be a singing man."

But those in need have to step forward. . .
They have to sing; if they didn't sing everyone
would walk past, as if they were fences or trees.
That's where you can hear good singing.

Rilke, Title Poem from "The Voices"

CHAPTER THREE

Beloved's Paul D:

"And wouldn't you know he'd be a singing man."

While *Beloved* is certainly Sethe's story, there is more to the novel than simply the healing of one woman. The character of Paul D represents a powerful force within the novel. Moreover, the character of Paul D represents a culmination in Morrison's fiction, an example of what males are capable of becoming. This enthusiasm is not to diminish, in any manner, any of the other wonderful aspects of the novel, but Paul D. does stand out as one of the most admirable males, by contemporary standards, in American fiction. A.S. Byatt referred to him in *Passions of the Mind* as, " the generous and dignified Paul D" (230).

In the novel Paul D. overcomes, or comes to understand, many of the debilitations that limit him and plague some of Morrison's other male characters. With the help of Sethe, Denver, Beloved and Stamp Paid, Paul D deals admirably with his flaws and limitations and becomes a truly meritorious male character, the epitome of Morrison's fiction. It is this struggle, the willingness to improve, which is recognized as worthy. While Margaret Atwood may find the admiration for Paul D, given his personal history, a little

incongruous because with "his own limitations and flaws . . . he's a little too huggable, under the circumstances" (49), an examination and understanding of his struggle helps to clarify the incongruity.

Paul D transforms himself from a character much like Morrison's other, seemingly flawed characters (Cholly, Guitar, Ajax, Sula) into an admirable, free, loving and communal person. He does so when the life he has imagined and fantasized for himself as a free man is within reach but never materializes because the very foundation upon which his dream is based is revealed for the hollow, superficial, subversive substance it is. It is the struggle to rebuild his yearned-for existence on a new, solid foundation that engenders the reader's admiration for Paul D, and it is in this struggle that Morrison depicts her culmination of what a man may become if he is truly free and learns to trust in himself.

When Paul D first arrives on Sethe's doorstep at 124 Bluestone Road, he is essentially a *salt taster,* dangerously free, a type of person whom Morrison describes in an interview with Claudia Tate:

> The salt tasters. . . . They express either an effort of the will or a freedom of the will. It's all about choosing. Though granted there's an enormous amount of stuff one cannot choose. But if you own yourself, you can make some type of choices, take certain kinds of risks. They do and they're misunderstood. . . . There's a wildness they have, a nice wildness. It has bad effects in society such as the one in

> which we live. . . . When I see this wildness gone in a person it's sad (164-5).

Paul D is granted this status of being dangerously free when he and other slave-convicts escape from the chain gang while prisoners in Alfred, Georgia. The escape, in a deluge, from beneath the depths of a mudslide, is undoubtedly, as Wilfred D. Samuels and Clenora Hudson-Weems contend, the "resurrection and rebirth" (125) of Paul D:

> One by one, from Hi Man back on down the line, they dove. Down through the mud under the bars, blind groping. . . fighting up, reaching for air. . . and, Great God, they all came up. Like the unshriven dead, zombies on the loose. . . they trusted the rain and the dark (110).

After spending some time with a Cherokee tribe Paul D asks how to get North. Accepting the advice to "[f]ollow the tree flowers" (112), he first experiences his rebirth as "a walking man" (46).

Guided by the forces of nature and an inner sense, Paul D spends seven years walking alone, heading, unconsciously, toward Sethe. He has no ties, no family; all that he has known, his life as a slave, is behind him. Wandering is a soul-making activity as Sam Keen explains: "Walking is pure grace, an effortless art that produces surprising moments of spontaneous self-transcendence. . . . Walking reminds me that my being is becoming. I'm always going, never arriving. I am no static substance" (149). These inner qualities exhibited by Paul D are important to Morrison because they represent the black people whom she knew and loved, as she

establishes in an interview with Christina Davis:

> In addition to this very shrewd, down-to-earth, efficient way in which they did things and survived things, there was this other knowledge or perception, always discredited, but nevertheless there, which informed their sensibilities and clarified their activities (414).

It is this other knowledge, this inner sense, very much a sense of soul, which Morrison recognized in her people, that helps Paul D get to Sethe.

However, as Morrison mentioned in her description of the salt taster, there is something about such a person that does not fit in well with the expectations of society. While Samuels and Hudson-Weems contend that Paul D is not like Ajax or Milkman who abandon their lovers (123), the reality is that while he is in his wandering mode, Paul D is the same as these other salt tasters, as revealed by the following passages in *Beloved*. "She snapped him up. . . and he crawled into her bed crying. Eighteen months and he was looking out again for blossoms" (113). "He probably had children everywhere anyway. Eighteen years of roaming, he would have to have a dropped a few" (132). The point is that Paul D's life on the road hints at qualities that may be viewed negatively by society. While the details of Paul D's life on the road are never fully revealed, the fact is that he is guided by another knowledge, which will inform him when he has arrived. Trusting this, he keeps walking, stopping periodically here and there.

This trustful wandering is very similar to the story of the ugly duckling that Clarissa Pinkola Estes mentions in *Women Who Run With the Wolves.* The ugly duckling flies from pond to pond searching for the place where he belongs as a swan. Estes offers the following suggestion: "Generally a thing cannot freeze if it is moving. So keep moving" (185). "While the instinct about exactly where to go may not be fully developed, the instinct to rove until one finds what one needs is well intact. . . Hold out for the right medicine" (182-83). The salt taster follows his or her own instinct, which may often clash with the expectations of society. However, as Paul D demonstrates, it is not only important for him to keep following the tree flowers, but it is imperative for fostering further development. Paul D knows when he reaches 124 Bluestone Road his wandering days are over, "I knew it wasn't the place I was heading toward; it was you" (46). "And wouldn't you know he'd be a singing man" (39).

The one characteristic that separates Paul D from the other salt tasters is identified by the fact that he is a "singing man." Singing indicates a tie to community that is not developed in other salt tasters like Sula, Ajax or Guitar. Singing was something Paul D. and other members of his community did for survival as much as anything else. It was a way of sending coded messages for slaves, verifying escape routes and times:

> Then one midmorning, they hear it. Or Halle does and begins to sing it to the others: 'Hush, hush. Somebody's calling my name. Hush, hush. Somebody's calling my name. O my Lord, O my Lord, what shall I do' (224)?

Singing was also used by the prisoners in Alfred, Georgia as a therapy for making it through the pain of each day.

> They sang it out and beat it up, garbling the words so they could not be understood; tricking the words so their syllables yielded up other meanings. They sang the women they knew; the children they had been; the animals they had tamed themselves or seen others tame. They sang of bosses and masters and misses; of mules and sisters long gone. Of pork in the woods; meal in the pan; fish on the line; cane, rain and rocking chairs (108).

Not only a tool for survival, singing was also a sign of membership of a community, made intimate by knowing the subtext of the songs. Furthermore, in *Sula*, Morrison indicates that such singing represents security and unity:

> Others, who understood the Spirit's touch which made them dance, who understood whole families bending their backs in a field while singing as from one throat, who understood the ecstasy of river baptisms under suns just like this one, did not understand this curious disorder, this headless display and so refused also to go (160).

Seven years of walking had severed those ties for Paul D; he was free, but the sense of community was retained in his singing, and it is this communal feeling he wants to establish with Sethe. Walking had served its purpose and now as a free man Paul D would like to re-establish that sense of community he had known, with someone who could make his story bearable, in the one form denied to him as slave

and prisoner- family.

> Sethe, if I'm here with you, with Denver, you can go anywhere you want. Jump, if you want to, 'cause I'll catch you, girl. I'll catch you 'fore you fall. Go as far inside as need to, I'll hold your ankles. Make sure you get back out. I'm not saying this because I need a place to stay. That's the last thing I need. . . . We can make a life, girl. A life (46).

For Paul D a return to community is where the difficulty begins. It is not easy to develop a communal existence after all that time alone, free, dangerously free, with a rusted tobacco tin full of sorrows, and still remain true to "the original self"; defined by Morrison as, "the self we betray when we lie, the one that is always there" (McKay Interview, 422). It is especially difficult since Paul's communal existence had been one of anonymity, complete subservience, and white patriarchal dominance. At Sweet Home, even when Mr. Garner was running the plantation, Paul D was one of several Pauls, who are his brothers, differentiated only by the alphabet-letter last name, Paul A and Paul F: "Mr. Garner, Mrs. Garner, [Sethe], Halle, and four boys, over half named Paul, made up the entire population" (130). When schoolteacher takes over, Paul D becomes simply one of the Negroes, and "schoolteacher didn't take advice from Negroes" (220). At the prison in Georgia, Paul D is one of the forty-six chained prisoners, each humiliated at the whim of one of the three white guards. Life as a free man, in a family with Sethe, would be

something completely alien to Paul D, the stuff of dreams. Reintegrating into a community as a salt taster is difficult enough, as Sula finds out when she returns to the Bottom, but with the addition of Paul D's subversive experience of power and masculinity gained from white people, the transition is nearly impossible.

This need to return to community, as Wilfrid D. Samuels and Clenora Hudson-Weems point out, "reveals a primordial element in [Paul D's] spiritual and psychological quest: his desire for family" (127). James Hillman refers to this as *Gemeinschaftsgefuhl,* "'the feeling of intimate belonging to the full spectrum, of humanity'" (*Rag and Bone Shop,* 231). In *We've Had One Hundred Years of Psychotherapy,* Hillman notes that the term is adapted from the work of Alfred Adler, who, according to Hillman, regarded it as "the final goal of all therapy" (138), and has come to mean a communal feeling. It can be concluded that a communal feeling is concomitant with Jung's final phase of consciousness development in which we become aware of our duality (*Modern Man,* 100). The difference, then, between Paul D and other salt tasters, is his development, his recognition of this need for communal feeling, this final phase necessary to becoming conscious. Most other salt tasters exist outside the community and are considered pariahs, but never examine the consistency of that freedom. The difficulty lies in trying to retain the freedom one has gained, to remain that

original self, and still become a communal being. This is the tension in which Paul D exists and with the help of Sethe, Beloved and Stamp Paid, Paul D triumphs.

The seven years as a walking man have prepared Paul D for the essential step in becoming a fully conscious part of the community, the final aspect of his spiritual and psychological development. Sethe knows and attests to the difficulty: "Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership over that freed self was another" (95). Such ownership requires complete recognition and acceptance of oneself. Thoreau, in *Walden*, explains:

> It is hard to have a southern overseer, it is worse to have a northern one; but worst of all when you are the slave-driver of yourself. . . . Public opinion is a weak tyrant compared with our own private opinion. What a man thinks of himself, that is which determines, or rather indicates his fate (4).

Therefore, to claim ownership of yourself is to decide your own future, not to be manipulated by public opinion. The difficulty lies in not being one's own slave-driver, in not bending to social pressures. The means to such an accomplishment is found in the preaching of Baby Suggs:

> [I]n this here place, we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it. . . . *You* got to love it, *you!* . . . love it, love it, and the beat and beating heart, love that too. More than eyes or feet. . . . hear me now, love your heart. For this is the prize (88-9).

If you can love yourself, you will no longer be the slave-driver of yourself, you will have claimed ownership over your freedom and you will be truly free, sincere to your original self and ready to assume that final phase of consciousness development, the communal feeling.

The concept of truly freeing oneself is easily stated, but, as Morrison's other novels attest, rarely accomplished. *Beloved* illustrates the way to arrive at this freedom is through rememory, a process necessary to reclaim the past from the life-disabling position it may hold. Such a reclamation is not easily accomplished, especially when the past holds memories so horrific and painful that they are sealed forever in a rusted tobacco tin, as Paul D's are. This is the point where Beloved enters the story. She functions as a source to begin the rememory, which is a healing process, affording Sethe, Denver, and Paul D freedom from their enslaving past.

Each character is paralyzed in some way by the events of his or her past. Sethe has allowed herself to be haunted, which caused her two sons, Howard and Buglar, to run away; she allows herself to be treated as a pariah, excommunicated by her neighbours. Denver will not leave the front porch and Paul D lives with withheld emotions: "The best thing . . . was to love just a little bit, everything just a little bit, so when they broke its back, or shoved it in a croaker sack, well, maybe you'd have a little love left

over for the next one" (45). The difficulty in healing comes from reopening the wounds of the painful memories, and this is where Beloved is important as a catalyst. The necessity for such a painful undertaking can be heard in the wisdom of Amy Denver who, in helping Sethe give birth, states: "Anything dead coming back to life hurts" (35), and "Can't heal nothing without pain you know" (78). Those once-forgotten memories are going to hurt once they are given life through rememory, but it is a necessary step in the healing process, and for Sethe, Denver and Paul D, this begins with the appearance of Beloved.

If there ever was a classic depiction of the anima figure in literature, it is Beloved, and this depiction of anima is perfect for the psychological processes that have to take place within Sethe, Denver and Paul D. Beloved is a shape-changer, seen differently by all who see her. She is closely associated with water: coming from water, drinking heavily, making Sethe void. In Hillman's *Anima: An Anatomy of a Personified Notion* Carl Jung describes the Melusina and water-nixie characteristics of anima.

> Melusina, the water-nixie, . . . [can] change herself into human form. . . . The anima belongs to those borderline phenomena which chiefly occur in special psychic situations. . . . One is comforted with a hopeless and impenetrable darkness, an abysmal void that is now suddenly filled with an alluring vision, the palpably real presence of a strange yet helpful being (64).

Jung's description of anima can be seen as an accurate description of Beloved, thereby establishing her as an anima figure. Certainly, Beloved is a strange being who appears in a seemingly hopeless and abysmal situation, and yet is a catalyst for the eventual healing that occurs. Beloved as anima further reinforces the connection between archetypal psychology and African American literature. While Beloved is undeniably representative of the middle passage, its immense significance to the legacy of African American's, and the possible repercussions of its death, the manner in which she upholds this distinction is consistent with her function as a matrix for memory.

Thus, the manner in which Beloved fosters any healing is in keeping with her anima status. By providing the necessary impetus for the characters of Sethe, Denver and Paul D to reclaim their past through rememory, Beloved affords them all the opportunity to be truly free. Beloved's most important role is, as Patrick Bryce Bjork points out, "as a living receptacle for memory, a living matrix for a past's distortive and creative possibilities" (155). Thus, she represents a past that has disabled the various characters in some form or another, but she also possesses the properties from which a new, re-imagined relationship with the past may be formed. Hillman notes in *The Myth of Analysis* that "[t]he art of memory is a work. . . . Especially important in this work is love. The images

are best activated by the emotion of love" (189). As an anima figure Beloved works best through love because "though anima is not eros, her first inclination is toward love. So she seduces in order to be turned on, set afire, illumined" (Hillman, *Anima*, 33). It is fitting then that the method Beloved uses to instigate rememory is love and seduction, as evident in her relationships with Sethe, Denver and Paul D.

This seductress role of Beloved is seen very clearly in the relationship with Paul D. At first, Paul D does not want Beloved around. He has successfully rid the house of the ghost and the haunting has ceased. Paul D is feeling good about himself, his ego is bolstered, as he has established himself as the man in the house and he can further build himself up if Sethe and he share a life together. This idyllic vision is threatened by the appearance of Beloved, whom Paul D views suspiciously; "It had begun to look like a life. And damn! a water-drinking woman fell sick, got took in, healed, and hadn't moved a peg since. He wanted her out" (66).

Not only is Beloved a threat to Paul D's desired life, he also finds her alluring:

> Paul D had the feeling a large, silver fish had slipped from his hands the minute he grabbed hold of its tail. That it was streaming back off into dark water now, gone but for the glistening marking its route. But if her shining was not for him, who then? he had never known a woman who lit up for nobody in particular, who just did it as a general announcement. Always, in his experience, the light appeared when there was focus (65).

Paul D does not know quite what to make of Beloved and feels himself out of control. To be rid of Beloved would remove the tension he feels between his ego and his inner emotions. Undoubtedly, Paul D senses a force within Beloved which could prove dangerous to him. This is apparent when Beloved successfully seduces Paul D, releasing those memories he had placed "one by one, into the tobacco tin lodged in his chest," so that "nothing in this world could pry it open" (113). "[H]e didn't hear the whisper that the flakes of rust made either as they fell away from the seams of his tobacco tin. So when the lid gave he didn't know it" (117). The seduction disturbs Paul D because he views it, not only as a betrayal of Sethe, but as a blow to his masculinity. He is humiliated; "he had become a rag doll - picked up and put back down anywhere anytime by a girl young enough to be his daughter" (126).

In *We've Had One Hundred Years of Psychotherapy* Michael Ventura presents a possible explanation for what has happened to Paul D: "the soul doesn't give a damn about human values. . . . You're with this person because your soul is hungry for them, your soul is seeking something with or through them, and it will insist on what it wants" (163). If Paul D's life as a free man has been lived with this inner sense, such an occurrence in his life must be essential for further consciousness development; that is, the achievement of communal feeling. The only way this

could happen was via seduction by an anima figure, opening his tobacco tin of painful memories, thereby establishing the means to healing.

The question becomes why is re-opening past wounds a necessary step, why is forgetting not a valid way of continuing through life? The answer can be best illustrated by Paul D's tobacco tin. When Paul D tells Sethe his remembrances of Mister, the rooster at Sweet Home, he withholds the full impact of his emotions, leaves them in his rusted tobacco tin, "for if she got a whiff of the contents it would shame him" (73). Micheal Meade, in *Men and the Water of Life*, comments:

> A tragedy becomes truly tragic if we remain blind to the part of ourselves that the tragedy makes sacred. An old saying is that the afflicted are sacred and that sacred space smells bad. A life trying to change wraps itself in afflictions. . . . A psyche trying to change will pour through any wound or break. whether it's physical, mental, emotional, moral, legal, or spiritual. The tragic events and the glorious epiphanies in our lives offer opportunities for us to learn most accurately who we are and how to nurture our souls (191).

Therefore, reopening these wounds is an essential step in discovering the person one is, and a means of claiming ownership by learning to love oneself. There is no doubt that Paul D's life is changing and that some aspect of himself is cooperating by providing the most effective means.

As a result of Paul D's encounter with Beloved, he

comes to question his masculinity and reflects upon where he obtained this sense of self. However, instead of admitting his weakness Paul D attempts desperately to re-establish his masculinity by asking Sethe to have a child with him. Deborah Ayer Sitter suggests such an act would allow Paul D to document his manhood for social definition and break the spell of Beloved (24). Of course, such an act would be laden with further complications. It would not be representative of the deeper love Paul D is really seeking, it would not be true to Paul D's original self, and it is an act of being one's own slave driver, based on community standards. The necessary way for Paul D to experience communal feeling is to fully experience and understand his humiliation (the relativization of his ego) and claim ownership of himself through self-love.

The humbling that Paul D undergoes is an important element in his attempt to become a part of community. He questions his desire to have a family with Sethe, and understands he is resentful because he is a not a part of her family and mostly because he is "not the head of it"(132). This understanding, however, is short-lived because once Paul D learns of Sethe's infanticide, he forgets the shame he felt at being seduced by Beloved and pronounces Sethe's shame chastisingly, "[y]ou got two feet, Sethe, not four" (165). Paul D views Sethe's act as a betrayal on her part, taking away his chance at re-

establishing his masculinity. He leaves, going to sleep in the church basement, but is completely overcome by the fact that such a separation leaves him with his masculinity in doubt and no way to regain it. "Wanting to live his life out with a whole woman was new, and losing the feeling of it made him want to cry and think deep thoughts that struck nothing solid" (221). Paul D has no solid reference point from which to understand himself; no family, no lover, no sense of manhood. All he has is the moral conviction with which he has judged Sethe, and even that feels wrong to him. His ego has been completely relativized. It is from this emptiness that Paul D does some of his most important and painful remembering. He recalls that his whole conception of who he was and his sense of his masculinity had been granted to him by Garner:

> Now, plagued by the contents of his tobacco tin, he wondered how much difference there really was between before schoolteacher and after. Garner called and announced them men - but only on Sweet Home, and by his leave (220).

The realization that his concept of self had been at the discretion of a white man to simply bolster the white man's ego leaves Paul D to painfully remember the burning of Sixo, and the consequences of their failed escape plan. Ashamedly, he recollects how schoolteacher had discussed the monetary values of all the slaves, in white man terms, and Paul D's was nine hundred dollars. Paul D then compared his value to the other Sweet Home slaves:

> Remembering his own price, down to the cent, that schoolteacher was able to get for him, he wondered what Sethe's would have been. What had Baby Suggs' been? How much did Halle owe, still, besides his labor? What did Mrs. Garner get for Paul F? More than nine hundred dollars? How much more? Ten dollars? Twenty? Schoolteacher would know. He knew the value of everything (228).

The fact that Paul D had actually allowed himself to consider his own self-worth, as well as the value of his family members, based upon the white people's inhuman, warped system, represents the bottom of Paul D's tobacco tin, the most painful of his memories.

However, this is also an epiphany for Paul D, for it is at this moment that he truly understands "what Baby Suggs died of, what Ella knew, what Stamp saw, and what made Paul D tremble" (251). He marries past and present to realize:

> That anybody white could take your whole self for anything that came to mind. Not just work, kill, or maim you, but dirty you. Dirty you so bad you couldn't like yourself any more. Dirty you so bad you forgot who you were and couldn't think it up (251).

Paul D recognizes that this staining of black people was what had happened to him at Sweet Home, thinking of himself and others in slavers' terms. Most importantly, he realizes that the dirtying had allowed Sethe to kill her child in an act of love. It is after this realization that Paul asks Stamp Paid, "[h]ow much a nigger supposed to take" (235)? Stamp Paid's answer, "[a]ll he can, all he can" (235),

affirms Paul D's empathetic forgiveness of Sethe for killing her child.

Forgiveness becomes the way of claiming ownership over oneself, coming to terms with the past and learning to love oneself, thereby enabling one to get on with his or her life as a part of community. Hillman, in *A Blue Fire*, describes the benefits of forgiveness:

> It may well be that betrayal has no other positive outcome but forgiveness, and that the experience of forgiveness is only possible if one has been betrayed. . . . *Self-betrayal* is perhaps what we are really most worried about. . . . Such forgiveness is a forgiving which is not a forgetting, but *the remembrance of a wrong transformed within a context*, or as Jung has put it, the salt of bitterness transformed to the salt of wisdom (280-81).

The only possible solution, therefore, to betraying one's original self, or feeling betrayed by others, is forgiveness, thereby allowing oneself to experience the full implication of the betrayal. This forgiveness is also a necessary requirement in the achievement of communal feeling, while still being true to the original self. As Paul D learns, however, the process is not an easy one, requiring much humbling: first, to enable the realization of self-betrayal, and second, to generate forgiveness of the self and others.

The way for freed slaves, and perhaps anyone, to forgive is to combine the wisdom of Stamp Paid and Baby Suggs. Stamp Paid knew white people dirtied you, but he

also knew:

> Whitepeople believed that whatever the manners, under every dark skin was a jungle. Swift unnavigable waters, swinging screaming baboons, sleeping snakes, red gums ready for their sweet white blood. In a way, he thought, they were right. The more coloredpeople spent their strength trying to convince them how gentle they were, how clever and loving, how human, the more they used themselves up to persuade whites of something Negroes believed could not be questioned, the deeper and more tangled the jungle grew inside. But it wasn't the jungle blacks brought with them to this place from the other (livable) place. It was the jungle whitefolks planted in them. And it grew. It spread. In, through and after life, it spread, until it invaded the whites who had made it. Touched them every one. Changed and altered them. Made them bloody, silly, worse than even they wanted to be, so scared were they of the jungle they had made. The screaming baboon lived under their own white skin; the red gums were their own (198-99).

The only way to avoid the jungle is to follow the advice of Baby Suggs. "Lay 'em down, Sethe. Sword and shield. . . . Don't study war no more" (86). It is no mistake that Baby Suggs preached in a clearing. The jungle of the whitepeople should be left to them and the only way to do this is, essentially, ignore it and learn to love yourself. Lashing out at white people, as Sethe did, would only confirm white people's thoughts of black people's incivility, and defending with a shield would not help either because that meant giving credence to the white people's belief, further enabling the growth of the jungle. The only way to rid oneself of the jungle, to clear it out, is to forgive; to forgive oneself for allowing the jungle to exist within him

or herself, and to forgive others who had been judged for their actions.

Once the jungle has been cleared and one has come to forgive him or herself and others, then one can further follow Baby Suggs' advice and love that self. If one loves oneself, claiming ownership over the freed self is easy. Furthermore, a person will not be his or her own slave driver because what another person thinks will have no effect upon one's own self esteem. Experiencing that communal feeling will follow. If one loves oneself, there is no animosity toward others and one's self-love will be reflected back. Furthermore, such a person is capable of a deeper love, a conscious devotion to the other, one that extends beyond the limits of sex and gender. In *Letters to a Young Poet*, Rilke states: "This advance . . . will transform the love experience . . . reshape it into a relationship that is meant to be between one human and another, no longer one that flows from man to woman" (78). Truly, the last phase of consciousness, communal feeling, allows one to, as Jung suggests, be aware of duality; our individual and our communal existence.

Morrison stated in an interview with Charlie Rose on PBS that *Beloved* is a search to find "who is the person who lives inside us that is our beloved, our own best thing, the thing you can trust." After much trial and tribulation Paul D comes to understand that this person is him, his original

self, the one he learned to trust who brought him to Sethe, and the one he learned to trust who returned him to Sethe.

"His return is the reverse of his going" (270). The house at 124 Bluestone Road is quiet. Beloved has been run off by a group of singing women, signifying Sethe's return to community: "it was as though the Clearing had come to her. . . where the voices of women searched for the right combination, the key, the code, the sound that broke the back of words" (261). Paul D enters the quiet house and Sethe is singing, but distraught at the loss of Beloved, whom she refers to as her best thing. She is reminiscent of the defeated Baby Suggs. This represents Paul D's return to community. He achieves communal feeling, not through wish-fulfilment or self-definition, but through a love that flows from person to person; an honest concern for Sethe's well-being, and recognition of the importance of her in his life. He begins by applying his newly transformed "salt of wisdom" to Sethe's pain. "You your best thing Sethe. You are" (273).

Paul D's communal feeling is a natural outgrowth of his original self; they are one and the same. The individual/ communal duality is composed within one integrated personality. There is no slave-driving compromise, no masculine power struggle, no ego-reinforcing displays. He has come full-circle and it is in his becoming that he is admired. His acceptance of his inner knowledge and his

trust in himself has allowed him to become fully conscious, Morrison's example of what men are capable of becoming.

CONCLUSION

Sleeping With the Anima: "Wholly free."

But I know I live half alive in the world,
Half my life belongs to the wild darkness.

Galway Kinnell, from "Middle of the Way"

CONCLUSION

Sleeping With the Anima: "Wholly free."

An examination of the men in the novels of Toni Morrison reveals several messages for men, and about men. I think the most important is that men have to realize their dual nature, conscious and unconscious, and not rely on one side or the other. Traditionally, men have been accustomed to depending upon their ego-consciousness to meet the challenges of everyday life. The unconscious world of soul has been interiorized and inferiorized, becoming linked with what was considered the feminine world, by a patriarchal, white society. Hillman's *The Myth of Analysis* explains the history behind such a tradition and its many difficulties. The unconscious, because of its unknowable nature and its dependence upon a symbology for expression, became unimportant. The mind became the seat of the entire individual and the only aspect of our nature worth understanding, for the white, male world. The soul was denigrated to femininity and forgotten.

Gates relates a delightful African story that illustrates this situation and the African place in it.

> Olorun was the eldest of the deities, and the first child of the King of the Air (Oba Orufi). Some forty years afterward the King of the Air had a second son Ela, who was the father of the diviners. In the *morning* all the *Whitemen* used to come to Ela to learn how to read and write, and in the *evening* his *African* children, the babalawo, gathered around him to memorize the Ifa verses and learn divination (13).

Essentially, we all had access to the same information at one time, but Whitemen chose to concentrate on only those overt, conscious activities of the mind, reading and writing, and in the daylight. The Africans continued their oral tradition by memorizing their tribe's verses, and learning divination, the ability to read the signs. They came at night, illustrating a comfort with the darkness. Pilate tells Milkman: "You think dark is just one colour, but it ain't. They're five or six kinds of black. . . . Well, night black is the same way. May as well be a rainbow" (40). For Jadine, on the other hand, the night black she sees in Eloe is like death: "She might as well have been in a cave, a grave, the dark womb of the earth, suffocating with the sound of plant life moving, but deprived of its sight" (252). The fact that Pilate sees darkness as beautiful and Jadine sees it as fearful is an indication of how the world that each represents regards the unknown. Gates contends that African Americans have a predisposition to divination because of their African ancestry.

Whitemen, thinking themselves superior because they had great conscious abilities, denied any and all value

associated with darkness, or the unconscious. This contributed to the treatment of African slaves in America, who brought with them a rich tradition and knowledge, considered inferior and valueless to white, male Americans. The African Americans of today, the intended audience for Morrison's novels, are in a doubly precarious situation. They have been removed from their tradition, which would have provided them with a source of strength, and are trying to adapt to a way of living that only endorses half of our being. No wonder Morrison feels her people are being devoured, and no wonder the African American male as depicted in the excerpt from *Tar Baby* is in a dilemma. For many of them, like Paul D, the only definition of being a free man came from the white world. But a white-determined identity was fraught with difficulty. First, the white males resisted any desire to share their patriarchy. Second, those males who struggled to be included were eventually taken to task for their part in the inequitable distribution of wealth and power between genders. It may well be easier just to dump it all and either flaunt masculinity, or go to the other spectrum and make no attempt to act or look masculine, lest you be accused of contributing to the world's problems. Society has become more aware of the need to share equally beween genders, but this has done little for the African American male. Arguably, the move to equity distribution has done little more than to include more women

locked in the ego-conscious world, as Sula and Jadine seem to suggest. The problems that were once mostly faced by males, now become something we all must face.

In the final analysis, while this study has focused on men in Morrison's novels, the message is the same for everyone. In order to become "wholly free" (Morrison, Septo Interview, 389), we need to have an equal relationship with our unconscious, our soul, which is communicated to us by anima. Africans could do this as readily as whites could read and write, and Gates contends this is carried over into their literature, at some elemental level. Morrison would like her people to reclaim this legacy, would like Jadine to be aware of her heritage, as African American and woman. This is why the symbol of the middle passage is so significant to African Americans. It, in part, represents the vital link to their heritage, forcibly denied them, and the life-affirming forces of ancestry. Milkman is forced to relearn the oral tradition of his African ancestors and their ability to read the signs. There is no doubt that this is what Morrison intended, as there is no doubt that Milkman's life in the white, patriarchal world made those lessons more difficult to learn and understand. However, this does not mean that this message was only for men. Milkman may have had more to learn than a woman, as Morrison contends, but both men and women have to reach the same point. Thus, this study is not about only men.

In Morrison's Nobel Prize acceptance speech, "When Language Dies," young inquisitors implore the blind, old, wise woman: "Tell us what it is like to be a woman so we may know what it is to be a man" (18). This simple statement contains much of the intended message of Morrison's fictional world. On the one hand, what it means to be a man can be derived from her novels by understanding her presentation of what it means to be a woman. The world she creates in her novels that is so identifiable for women, contains, by its very existence, a world for men that I have found intriguing and worthy of exploring and understanding. However, after examining the men in her novels, I have come to realize another meaning contained within the young inquisitors' request. What it means to be a woman is the same as what it means to be a man, and vice versa. When Paul D can truly love Sethe because he can appreciate her beyond traditional gender roles, he has accomplished the ultimate in consciousness development. When we can relate to each other as people, rather than genders we will have come a long way.

In *Fire in the Belly*, Sam Keen makes the same point:

> In my own experience, I can locate nothing that feels 'feminine' about holding my daughter in my arms, allowing myself to be comforted, weeping for the pain of the world, or exercising my intuition. . . . There is an obvious difference between men and women that has no realtionship to the supposed differences between 'masculine' and 'feminine.' In my judgement, we would gain much clarity if we ceased using the

> words 'masculine' and 'feminine' except to refer to the stereotypes of the genders that have been historically predominant (214).

Archetypal psychology has rescued Jung's contrasexual model from the limitations, biases and prejudices of its time. Considering Morrison's fictional world from its perspective affords the understanding Morrison has intended. She herself, in the McKay interview, states; "I think that the conflict of genders is a cultural illness" (421). To be free of all the excess baggage of gender would make establishing a relationship with anima that much easier, for all of us, especially for African Americans. Gates contends the ties with their African ancestors are prevalent in African American literature and language today. All that is required are details on what to relearn, how to relearn it, and support and nurturance along the way. Archetypal psychology informs me that Morrison believes sleeping with the anima will provide the what and the how. Her novels supply the support and nurturance.

The manner in which the support and nurturance is provided is unique. Some criticism has consisted of scathing judgements of some of Morrison's characters, holding them up to ridicule, as if the lesson is to "not" be like this person. Such display is not, I believe, how Morrison wishes to provide nurturance. The spectrum of comments on various characters such as Cholly, Eva, Guitar, and Jadine, belies the fact Morrison did not intend to hold

any of these characters up as an example. Morrison has stated in interviews that she loves all her characters. In her novels she always includes each character's "story." My understanding of Paul D is that he he is only truly free when he learns self-love and forgiveness, which frees him finally from himself. But he does learn, as does Milkman, Claudia, and Violet. The nourishment Morrison wants to provide is the understanding that life is flux and we may find ourselves at one time or another like a character in her novels, but we are not to despair or feel ridiculed. Such feelings could engender denial, further complicating things. These characters populate Morrison's fictional world so we may identify with them, examine ourselves, and know we are meant for better. Characters like Claudia, Milkman, Paul D, and Violet ensure us that a better life is possible.

The notion that Morrison's messages are the same for everyone, regardless of gender, can be further supported by this study when it is realized women in her novels learn the same lessons. The chapter on Son could have easily concentrated on Jadine and the same understanding would have been gained. By following a path similar to the one Pilate had followed, Milkman simply arrives at an awareness of the world that Pilate had understood much earlier. Paul D returns to community, learns the redemptive powers of forgiveness and how to love consciously, deeply, and freely.

Both Denver and Sethe share in Paul D's experiences and in *Jazz* Violet learns how to love deeply and freely by experiencing the power of forgiveness. Morrison's novels prove that there is a way to be "wholly free" in the world and it is the same for men and women.

Finally, an examination of Morrison's fictional world from the perspective of archetypal psychology has allowed me, I believe, to approach one of Morrison's concerns and a concern of other African American women writers. She tells Nellie McKay she longs "for a critic who will know what I mean when I say 'church,' or 'community,' or when I say 'ancestor,' or 'chorus'" (425). It seems to me she is looking for a criticism that can read the signs, one that can free the archetypal images and "ennoble, empower [them] with the widest, richest and deepest possible significance." Morrison later informs McKay, "My plea is for some pioneering work to be done in literary criticism' (426). Archetypal psychology has allowed me to see Morrison's intended use of the tar baby myth. It has allowed me to see the importance of Milkman's quest in terms of Morrison's fictional world, and it has allowed me to see how Paul D achieves his aforementioned status as "generous and dignified." To me, Morrison is true to her African heritage, which oozes as soul from the depths of her characters. A literary criticism of soul may be the answer to Morrison's plea. If so, literary study from the

perspective of archetypal psychology would be an excellent start.

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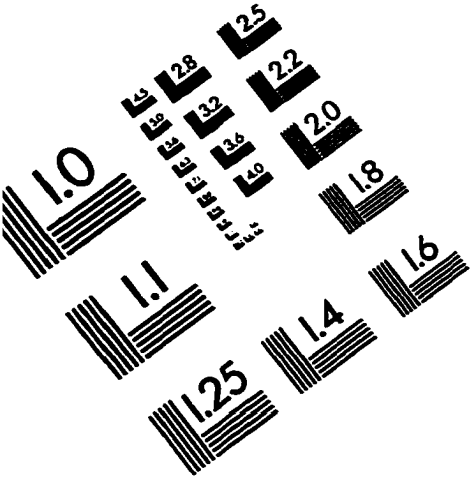

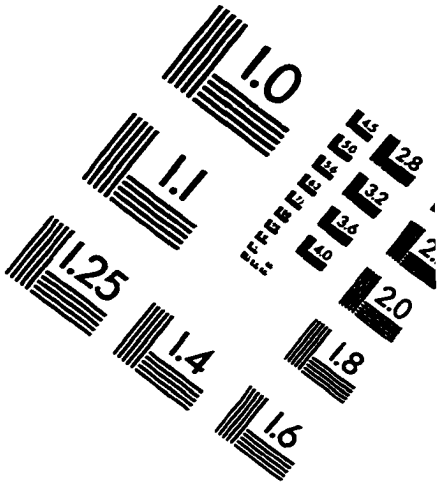

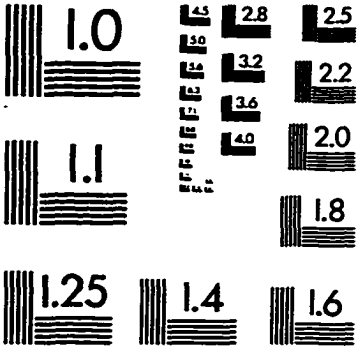

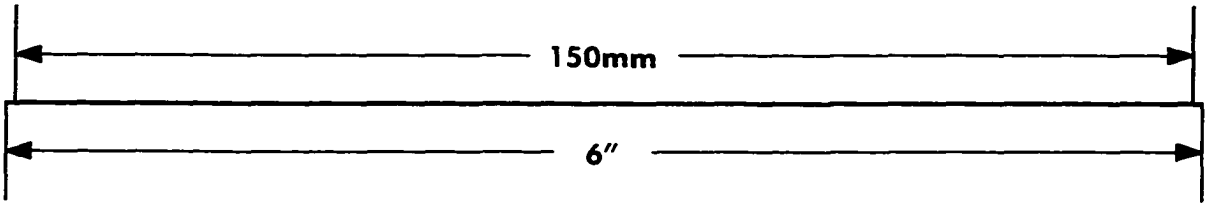

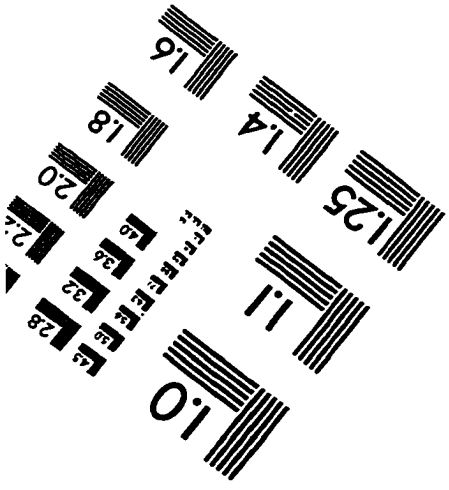

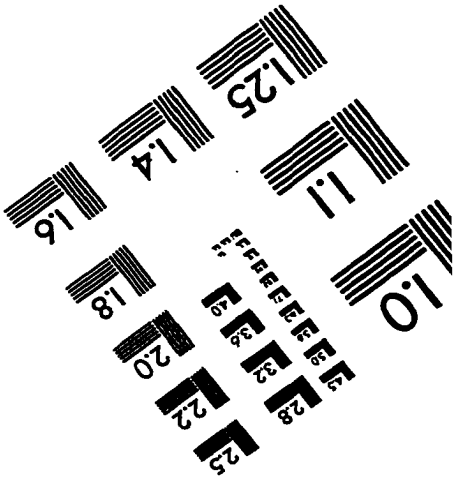

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