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The Color Line Syndrome in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*

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Abstract

The history of the United States of America reveals a predominantly racial space full of hegemony and power relations that continue to exist from the time of slavery to the Black Lives Matter movement (2013- present) as the latest antiracial manifestation. Simultaneously, the world that Toni Morrison depicts in her latest novel *God Help the Child* (2015) is full of violence, racial prejudice, and sexual abuse. The exploitations of the young by the adult, the black by the white, women by men, and the impact of the past on the present are themes that Morrison vividly portrays as an attempt to assimilate and harmonize relationships between the white race and the black one. Unlike many black writers, Morrison forecasts the problems of the black community from within while the white community remains in the background of the story. By doing so, the novelist creates a text dominated by black characters overwhelmed with insecurity feelings and a sub-text dominated by white characters who perform many racial abuses to guarantee their security. Space hegemony controls power relations and divides the world into white secure territories contrasted to black insecure territories. Accordingly, the novel brings into light the dilemma of blacks and their constant insecurity while living on the margins of a white dominated society. As such, the fundamental premise of this paper is to scrutinize diverse polarities in terms of the skin color, past and present along with the eccentricities and its role in dividing the world of Americans into secure and insecure places. The world inside world relationships reveal a set of complex racial and interracial encounters that are still lived in today's America. The novel captures the generational gap between older people and younger ones. While older generations of blacks continue to be traumatized by the legacy of the racial history, younger generations seem to overcome their inferior past in the shadow of white masters.

Key words: Race; Trauma; Past; History.