

**EMANCIPATING THE PAST: AN EXPLORATION OF RUTH'S SHACKLES OF SILENCE IN
TONI MORRISON NOVEL *THE SONG OF SOLOMON***

Ms.Priyadharshini T,(23PEL0004),*MA English Literature, Dr.SNS Rajalakshmi college of Arts and science,
Coimbatore-641049*

Dr.S.M Baggio,*Assistant professor, Department of English, Dr.SNS Rajalakshmi college of Arts and
science, Coimbatore – 641049*

ABSTRACT :

The exploration of the shackles of silence of Ruth "illustrates how societal pressures and personal struggles of the character prevent her from fully expressing herself. This article explores how silence is used to control and suppress African American voices that represent historical and systemic injustices. By depicting characters as milkman dead, it shows how these shackles restrict identity and hinder personal growth. In the novel "*The song of Solomon*" by Toni Morrison explains about the characters struggle to free themselves from these constraints, seeking freedom and understanding in the face of hardship. The exploration of "The shackles of silence of Ruth reveals the complexities of race, gender and the desire for self-expression. Ruth's silence acts as a coping mechanism for her traumatized experiences, but also perpetuates her emotional numbness and disconnection, This article explores the interplay between silence, trauma and emancipation, highlighting how the past continues to influence our present and the importance of confronting and releasing it to move forward.

Keywords:*Trauma- Liberation- Emotional numbness-Silence- Empowerment*

INTRODUCTION :

"Silence is an article, a tool of the wise . When we perfect the art of silence , chances are that we will get a lot more done "- Iyanla vanzant

The shackles of Ruth's silence, evokes a moving exploration of both literal and metaphorical dimensions. Ruth from the bible represents loyalty and strength in a literary sense, but her silence may represent unanswered questions or portions of her story that have yet to be explored. This theme may have wider societal or cultural dimensions, where the silence of marginalized voices or forgotten histories begs for recognition and understanding. On a personal level, it could represent the internal battles and unheard thoughts of an individual named Ruth, highlighting the profound impact of suppressed thoughts and feelings. It invites a deep reflection on the mysteries of silence, urging us to unravel its layers and comprehend the stories it conceals. The tragic event of her father's assassination has shaped Ruth, a central character in Toni Morrison's novel *The Song of Solomon*. Ruth was traumatized by the brutal killing of Solomon dead as a young child, leaving her emotionally scarred and struggling to cope. Ruth's mother became distant and distant in the aftermath, leaving her emotionally withdrawn and alienated, leaving her feeling unloved and alienated from her family and heritage. Her experiences have also resulted in emotional numbness and disconnections from her own life and work. Ruth is a strong and tenacious character who has learned to deal with her loss by her own inner strength and determination despite her challenges. It explores the profound effects of trauma, silence and secrecy on individuals and families by focusing on the importance of confronting the past, accepting memory and finding a voice to heal and move forward. Ruth's silence has had a major effect on her life and relationships, resulting in a state of emotional numbness and disconnection from those around her. Ruth has created a sense of mystery and isolation from her family, particularly her son milkman, who struggles to recognize her and connect with her, by refusing to talk about her father's death and her feelings. Her silence has also strained relationships with her husband and friends, who are left out because of her refusal to express

themselves. Ruth's silence has prevented her from establishing intimate relationships with others, resulting in a sense of loneliness. Her silence has entrapped her in the past, perpetuating the pain of her father's death and preventing her from seeking help and finding peace. Emphasizes the harmful effects of silence and the importance of breaking the silence to heal, connect and find peace. Silence can be used as a coping mechanism for trauma and allowing for a brief respite from overwhelming emotions and memories. Individuals can regulate their emotions, avoid painful experiences and maintain a sense of control and self-protection by remaining silent. Silence can also promote dissociation, allowing individuals to disconnect from their emotions and experiences, giving them a sense of detachment from the trauma. Despite the fact that silence may provide temporary relief, it can also perpetuate trauma by inhibiting the processing and insertion of traumatic events, promoting avoidance and escapism, limiting social support and communication, exacerbating feelings of shame and shame and perpetuating the trauma narrative. It demonstrates the complicated relationships between trauma and silence by highlighting the difficult relationship between coping and healing, as well as the importance of breaking silence to face and conquer trauma.

“The Shackles can be broken by the resounding power of our voices”-Misty Griffin

Ruth's silence has far-reaching consequences, resulting in a state of emotional numbness and disconnection that pervades every facet of her life. Ruth has become detached from her own feelings by refusing to face her loss, attempting to feel and process them in a healthy way. This numbness has also resulted in her disconnection from others, making it difficult for her to form intimate friendships or feel a sense of belonging. Ruth's silence has also disconnected her from herself, leaving her uncertain and confused about her own thoughts, feelings, and desires. She is depressed from reality as a result of her inability to find meaning and purpose in her life. The silence that was supposed to shield her has in the end perpetuated her pain, exacerbating her emotional suffering and limiting her ability to heal and move forward.

For Ruth, unchaining the past means confronting the troubling events that have held her captive for so long. It requires her to break the silence that has engulfed her family's past and face the painful memories she has attempted to erase. As Ruth begins to tell her story, she begins to free herself from the burdens of her past, releasing the pain, anger, and shame that have weighed her down. She begins to reclaim her identity, reconnect with her family's roots, and discover her own voice as a result of this process. Ruth can rewrite her story by unchaining the past, turning her loss into a tale of resilience and strength. She frees herself from the silence of silence with each word, embracing a newfound freedom and the opportunity to heal, to love, and to live.

Ruth begins to reconnect with her true self, her family, and her community by the brave act of unchaining her past. She bridges the gap between generations by sharing her story, restoring a sense of heritage and cultural identity. The veil of secrecy and silence has been lifted, allowing her to form genuine friendships with those around her. Ruth regains her dignity, her voice, and her sense of purpose with each step toward healing. Her journey becomes a testimony to the transformative power of truth-telling, as she transforms her loss into a source of strength and wisdom. Ruth reconnected with her past, achieving a sense of wholeness and joy that had been impossible for so long. She not only heals herself but also serves as a source of healing for those around her, resulting in love, understanding and liberation.

“There is a Silence that blinds us. It ties our tongues when we need help. It muzzles our minds When we need to reach out and Shackles our voices when we need to speak up.

- Joanna Ho

CONCLUSION :

Ruth's silence acts as a shackling tool, sustaining her suffering and isolation from others and herself. Ruth's silence has morphed into a coping mechanism that numbs her emotions and isolates from her family and community, as a result of her father's tragic death and her mother's subsequent withdrawal. However, when Ruth finally breaks her silence and shares her story, she begins to reconnect with her past, her identity and her voice. Ruth transforms her pain into strength and wisdom by doing this courageous act, resulting in a ripple effect of healing for those around her. It demonstrates the liberating power of truth-telling by examining Ruth's journey, stressing the importance of confronting and sharing our stories to free ourselves from the chains of silence and trauma.

In *The Song of Solomon*, the struggle between emancipating the past and breaking silence is of utmost importance because it emphasizes the crucial role truth-telling plays in personal growth and liberation. This reveals the devastating effects of unspoken trauma and the transformative power of speaking out about painful experiences by delving into the shackles of silence that unite Ruth and her family. We witness the emancipatory power of breaking silence as Ruth breaks the bonds of her life and reclaims her identity, voice, and story. Ruth is freed from the burdens of her family's past by this brave act of truth-telling, but she also learns to connect with her heritage, her family, and herself.

Ruth's shackles of silence has highlighted the importance of creating spaces for truth-telling, listening, and healing, according to me. It has also emphasized the need to recognize the interconnectedness of our lives and the collective power of our stories. Ruth's journey has taught us that emancipation from pain is possible, and that speaking truth to silence is a revolutionary step toward personal and collective liberation.

"When you're free from the shackles of solitude you never get the sense any mountain is too high to scale, or any horizon is too far to conquer."

— Saim .A. Cheeda

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