

**Trauma, Memory, and Cultural Healing: Ecofeminist Parallels in
Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Saratchandra Chattopadhyaya's
*Srikanta***

Sarder Ragib Nehal

ID: 20303011

Department of English and Humanities

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*Srikanta***

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Authorship Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis, Trauma, Memory, and Cultural Healing: Ecofeminist Parallels in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Saratchandra Chattopadhyaya's *Srikanta*, is my own work and that I have not submitted it anywhere for any award. Where other sources of information have been used, they have duly been acknowledged.

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Abstract:

This paper delves into the poignant intersection of trauma, memory, and cultural healing through an ecofeminist lens, comparing Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's *Srikanta*. Specifically, it is a branch of feminism concerned with critically analyzing and understanding the relationship between gender and the environment. Both the novels depict this particular theory, which is ecofeminism. For example, Morrison in *Beloved* shows how the natural aspects, when linked with women, indicate true self-sustenance and safety for women. Again, it strives to display the interconnectedness between oppressed women and exploited nature in patriarchal-dominated societies.

Again, the female characters which are present in the novel *Beloved* hold the significance of the land to recall memories from their own experiences. On the other hand, *Srikanta* is a novel which is from the Bengal colonial period. It had different time frames and themes. Moreover, it was also written when the term Ecofeminism was not coined. But still some themes and elements can be explored through this perspective. The novel portrays a person's individual experience, women's roles in terms of nature and so on. Here, women are portrayed in agricultural and rural activities which is a key theme of ecofeminism. Both novels are about remembering, trauma, and healing cultures, and ecofeminism is a big part of their stories. These books show how terrible events, both large and small, can hurt people and the environment very badly. The way Sethe is enslaved and her babies are killed in "*Beloved*" is a reflection of how patriarchal and economic systems oppress women and nature. This brings attention to the main theme of the terrible abuse of the land. In the same way, "*Srikanta*" shows a colonial Bengal that is destroyed by hunger and environmental damage, showing how people's actions can upset nature's delicate balance. This

comparative method shows how important it is to take an ecofeminist, all-inclusive view in order to recover. It also shows how important the connection is between human and environmental health. The main idea of both pieces is to look at how memory shapes and keeps pain alive. Sethe is still having a hard time getting over the physical and mental scars that the broken memories of Sweet Home have left her with. The main character in Chattopadhyay's "*Srikanta*," has trouble connecting with others and finding peace in his relationships because he has tried to hide pain from his childhood. This paper analyzes how both the novels showcase their personal experiences and their past lives make their life horrific in terms of gender, nature and trauma. Furthermore, the thesis analyzes ecofeminism principles to investigate how the novel uses nature as cultural healing, and shapes their life with the aftereffects and past traumatic events.

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Introduction:

The themes of trauma, memory, and cultural healing have long been an important topic in literature. Though this thesis explores the domains of these distressing narratives, it focuses on the Ecofeminist connections between two classic novels, *Srikanta* by Sarat Chandra and *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. These two novels are set in different cultural landscapes: post-Civil War America and colonial Bengal. Still, they serve as glasses through which we can study the complex interactions between trauma and memory and, again, illustrate the role of women in the broader framework of the environmental ecosystem. Ecofeminism is a political and philosophical theory that integrates feminist and ecological concerns, seeing both as products of societal dominance by men. The main question is, do these two novels portray gender-based discrimination as being relevant to environmental degradation? It certainly does in quite some of the contexts, which will be described thoroughly in this paper.

Firstly, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison is a compelling exploration of the lasting effects of slavery. It mainly centres on Sethe, who is an escaped enslaved person, but she is haunted by the memory of the infant homicide she committed. It represents the intricacies of trauma imprinted on both memory and body. Apart from looking at Sethe's and other people's traumas, the novel also explores the collective memory of a community who are still dealing with the effects of slavery.

Moreover, the natural environment becomes a silent witness, taking on memories and serving as a space for communal healing. In terms of trauma, gender, and nature, ecofeminism plays a crucial role in analyzing the interconnectedness of these themes.

Secondly, *Srikanta* by Sarat Chandra portrays the image of colonial Bengal and describes many female characters. The novel addresses themes of cultural identity, environmental damage, and women's exploitation, posing relevant queries regarding the relationship between personal suffering and broader social ills. Again, the novel connects with women's roles and the environment, especially agriculture and domestic life. Ecofeminist concepts serve as a framework for investigating the link between women and nature.

Lastly, an ecofeminist approach is the interconnectedness of environmental and gender discrimination, especially highlighting how both women and nature are oppressed and exploited by a male-dominated society. By applying this theory in both novels, one can understand how both females and ecosystems have been hampered by society. Again, this is how trauma is displayed and how cultural healing can occur in both personal and environmental places. To be specific, Morrison's *Beloved* uses ecofeminism to show how related oppression is by tying the pain of enslaved women to the exploitation of their bodies as well as the land. Moreover, Sethe's trauma is portrayed in the natural world by the main character.

On the other hand, *Srikanta* does not entirely depict ecofeminism theory but certainly touches on it. For example, nature reflects the main protagonist's emotions, creating a relationship between personal and environmental degradation. Again, in the novel, patriarchal domination is seen as men controlling both the land and women, which are regarded as resources or tools.

Furthermore, colonial exploitation is also seen in terms of both Bengali women and their environment. So, by applying this ecofeminist theory in terms of the themes of trauma, healing, and memory, this thesis has the potential to bring out new ideas. The paper will explain how women and ecology have been exploited simultaneously by a single-dominated society. It forces us to think about the intricacies of historical trauma, the power dynamics, and the continuous fight for justice and healing

1.1 Methodology:

In my paper, I will conduct my research on the basis of ecofeminist theory in terms of the themes of trauma, memory, and cultural healing. Here, ecofeminism will be used as a primary theoretical lens for the novels *Beloved* and *Srikanta*. The paper will use qualitative research methods and through a close reading approach, I will define how both the novels are similar in terms of gender oppression and environmental degradation and also the differences between them. Again, I will use literary articles, journals and books to collect data for my thesis paper. By doing this research, I will learn about the similarities and differences between the novels and how nature and gender are interconnected.

1.2 Research objective :

The purpose of this thesis is to define the connection of trauma, cultural healing, and memory through the lens of ecofeminism, which explains that it is basically the connection between

women and the environment through exploitation, oppression, and degradation. Again, through this paper, I will analyze the similarities and differences that are relevant here. Despite the novels being from another time and country, I will show how the themes are connected to each other. It compares and contrasts the two novels from an ecofeminist perspective.

1.3 Rationale:

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the two vastly different novels *Srikanta* and *Beloved* through the lens of ecofeminism theory where the main themes of trauma, healing and memory will be the same in both the novels. Both novels struggle with memory, trauma and healing but in a unique way. This thesis explores the enduring pain, the links between personal pain, environmental degradation and chances of cultural healing through the lens of ecofeminism.

1.4 Research Question:

How both the novels *Beloved* and *Srikanta* employ ecofeminist principles to showcase the connection of trauma, memory and cultural healing through the exploitation of women and ecological degradation within their socio-historic contexts by approaching a comparative (compare and contrast) analysis.

1.5 Limitations:

In terms of limitations there are plenty of aspects where there are gaps. For example, this thesis is only focused on two novels. So it might limit the validity of my arguments. Furthermore, ecofeminism is a broader aspect of feminist theory and this theory itself encompasses a range of perspectives. Again, this paper is only focused on the ecofeminism theory but the paper could have been used other theories like post colonialism, critical race theory or ecocriticism theory. Lastly, there are the limitations of source availability. For example, this paper analyses the Bengali novel *Srikanta* and there are small sources in English which I have found through journals and articles.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction

The paper discusses the themes of trauma, memory, and cultural healing through an ecofeminist lens between the two classic novels, *Beloved* and *Srikanta*. Both novels are different from each other and written in different periods, but they can work and relate together in the frame of an ecofeminist lens. Both novels share the themes of trauma, memory, and cultural healing. *Beloved* looks at the destructive effects of slavery by following the life of a Black woman named Sethe

from her time as an enslaved person before the Civil War. Though Sethe lives there as a free woman, she is held as a prisoner by memories of the trauma that happened to her.

On the other hand, *Srikanta* is an autobiographical novel where the main character's experiences give the author a unique way to look for societal norms and the connection between personal and political problems during that period. This includes the complex struggles of women and hampering nature, which is also known as the degradation of the environment. So, this paper thoroughly discusses how males dominated women, and in terms of nature, the environment was also hampered. Again, the writers used nature as cultural healing related to ecofeminist principles.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

First of all, let's know about the concept of ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is a political philosophy that is similar to what most feminists believe. The main goal is to examine the relationship between gender and the environment in detail. To be specific, it is an ideology and a movement; ecofeminism sees how climate change, equal rights for women, and social injustice are all linked and blames them on the dominant role of masculinity in society. In its many forms, feminism has changed and come back to life many times since it began in the middle of the 1800s. Feminists have started to see how the fight for gender equality and the fight to protect the environment are linked as people become more aware of and active about climate change. Françoise d'Eaubonne, a French feminist, was the first to use "Ecofeminism" in 1974. In her view, the relationship between the mistreatment and lack of rights of women, people of colour, and people experiencing poverty, as well as the damage to nature, is profoundly connected and comes from the fact that men dominate society. Again, women such as Vandana Shiva and Carolyn Merchant

are prominent names in this movement. According to a report from the United States, because they depend on nature and don't have as much money as men, women worldwide are more likely to have to move because of climate change. Also, they often have to go farther to get things they need, like water, significantly as dry seasons last longer. Researchers have found that radiation affects women more significantly than men. An investigation suggests that some people may have developed negative views towards environmentalism because it is linked to femininity. (Brough et al., 567) As part of the early research on ecofeminism, many detailed historical records have been gathered. The main goal of this study was to look into the historical connections between women and the environment and then look into ways to break those connections. Rosemary Ruether, a theologian and one of the founders of ecofeminism, stressed how important it was for women to recognize and fight against the exploitation of nature to gain their freedom. In the late 1980s, ecofeminism changed from a movement mainly found in academia to one supported by many people. Many people say that feminist theorist Ynestra King helped bring about the change. King's argument made people think about how their beliefs affected how they used the environment in a harmful way. King also asked her listeners to think about how damaging it is to exploit the environment, which makes the problems women already face even worse. King incorporated ecofeminist theory into her study of people's everyday lives. Again, according to a survey, ecofeminism has been criticized because it assumes that women in developed countries know how their habits hurt the environment and the lives of people in less developed countries. (Sturgeon, 255)

Again, by the late 1980's ecofeminism began to branch out in two distinct schools of thought. They are: Radical ecofeminism and Cultural ecofeminism. To be specific, Radical ecofeminists

say that patriarchal society puts women and nature down by treating them the same. So, radical ecofeminism builds on the work of earlier ecofeminists who said that we need to study patriarchal rule to break the links between women and the natural world. These thinkers are especially interested in the past examples that show how men have been able to keep things in order and how women and nature have been seen as bad or something that can be bought. Putting traits into groups encourages taking natural resources and taking advantage of women.

Cultural ecofeminists, on the other hand, want eco-women and eco-men to connect with each other. They say that women are more tied to nature because of their biology (during their periods, pregnancy, and breastfeeding) and their gender roles (as mothers and food providers). Some people who believe in cultural ecofeminism think that these groups make women more aware of environmental problems like pollution and cutting down too many trees. They say that this kind of sensitivity should be valued because it helps people connect more deeply with the world they will have to live with in the future. There is a long history of cultural ecofeminism being used in religions that worship gods and the elements and the natural world to bring back the feminine spirit and the feminine place in nature. This paper will mainly use the concepts of both radical and cultural ecofeminism.

Furthermore, at present times ecofeminism has come a long way with its challenges too. There are many challenges and some of them are: Ecofeminism is both a social change activity and a philosophy that presents alternative, dynamic, and ever-changing concepts, hence it has created many significant disagreements and reflections that have yet to be resolved. One comes from ecofeminism, equality feminism, and difference feminism. Thus, we must examine how ecofeminism might link with these other feminist branches. Ecofeminism seeks systemic social change. Instead of focusing on gender equality and public regulations, it aims to reconcile the paradox by addressing the philosophical and economic roots that oppress women and girls. Ecofeminism can augment these other feminist currents by discussing systemic change,

structural change, and societal transformation beyond gender equality, rights enforcement, and violence. This could connect women's violence, inequality, and discrimination to political solutions. Again, The essentialist and constructivist ecofeminists have yet to talk. They are two competing currents or phases of the same process, theoretically. Constructivist ecofeminism holds that "women-nature is sustained by a social construct that involves the assignment of roles that give origin to the sexual division of labor and the distribution of power and property in patriarchal societies." This is linked to the evolution of power relations in economic and production organizations and the sexual division of work.(Peredo Beltran, 5) Lastly, still ecofeminism extends through ecofeminist arts, social and political philosophy, through literature and contemporary feminism.

2.3 Relevance of trauma, memory and cultural healing

Now, as the paper goes with the themes of trauma, memory, and cultural healing relevant to ecofeminism, this paper is unique in its terms as there are no similar topics. Because ecofeminism is a new theory, and both novels are of different time phrases. However, there are some relevant papers in terms of the themes of trauma, memory, and cultural healing. Here, trauma theories, memory, and also cultural trauma are examined, and how they went through it. Moreover, Morrison's grief affects many others and shapes how they see themselves as a collective. The analysis ends with how the characters illustrate the importance of storytelling in historical trauma and self-discovery. (Arunakumari,768)

Moreover, the author portrayed the study of trauma in the novel *Beloved*. Where the primary intention of the survey is Sethe, who is the protagonist of the novel, suffers both from physical pain and also bears the pressure of mental health. The paper talks about the process of Sethe's

trauma and the journey to her cultural healing. As stated by Alwan, used ecofeminism and showed how nature responds to human abuse. Symbols like Sethe's scars in the shape of trees show women how nature is linked with each other. Furthermore, the author narrates that Morrison does an excellent job of drawing attention to this link by writing about gender and environmental degradation in a male-dominated society. (Alwan,4254)

Now, let us discuss the novel *Srikanta* by Sarat Chandra. As the novel does not fully portray the ecofeminism lens, it can potentially turn it into ecofeminist principles. There are many sources of women's role, including the role of nature and environmental degradation. For example, an author named Sultana Jahan described and explored the image of Indian women. The portrayal of these women's characters strongly asserts their individuality, self-worth, and salvation in a male-controlled society. This study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of Sarat Chandra's unique interpretation of virtue and the subversion of traditional gender roles by conducting a thorough analysis of the female characters where males dominate.

(Jahan,9)

Apart from the journal articles and research papers, my specific topic fills the gap between the role of women and nature, which are interlinked in both novels. Here, both novels share concerns about the connection between human suffering, patriarchal dominance, and ecological degradation. Nature plays a crucial role in both the novels. For example, nature is portrayed as a witness of personal trauma, providing comfort and opportunity for recovery. Again, people and communities are both in trouble because the land is being exploited, which shows how the oppression affects both sides. Furthermore, there are many relevant themes of cultural healing, memory, and gender-linked with the environment.

So, the critical analysis is that *Srikanta* is based on the Bengali traditional perspectives, and the links are especially colonialism, ecological exploitation, and trauma. Again, the role of traditional ecological knowledge and cultural healing is one of the most relevant issues compared to ecofeminism. On the other hand, *Beloved* tells about the harsh reality of slavery and how tough it is to tolerate and also shows the impact on African American society. Nature and the connection between black women are crucial in developing ecofeminist principles.

To conclude, according to the theorist Ynestra King and the concept of radical ecofeminism it is a movement that suggests the relationship between gender and the environment. It is the exploitation of both females and nature by a male-dominated society. This theory is used to critically analyze the two classic novels rather than being different from each other, but it has the potential to be seen in terms of ecofeminism. Again, many researchers talked about themes of trauma and cultural healing. Still, it would provide new insights if ecofeminism were used to analyze both novels because this literary theory offers valuable insights into trauma, memory, cultural healing, and the environment.

3. *Beloved*: Ecofeminist Trauma and Memory

3.1 Overview:

Beloved is a complex novel of the writer Toni Morrison and reflects the horrors of the Black community, how they were discriminated against, exploited and the victims of slavery. To be Specifically, this novel depicts the character of Beloved as a manifestation of Sethe's feelings of guilt and regret for the killing of her own child

Furthermore, the novel *Beloved* by Toni Morrison tells the narrative of Sethe, a slave who escapes from her master. The spirit of Sethe's child is believed to have been reincarnated as the woman known as Beloved, according to Sethe. In the event that Sethe's old slavemaster comes back to get her and her children, she is so afraid that she makes an attempt to kill them. Only the passing of her oldest daughter can be considered her accomplishment. When a considerable amount of time has passed, Sethe and Denver, the mother's surviving daughter, decide to take in an elderly woman by the name of Beloved. This woman, according to Sethe, is actually the spirit of her daughter after she passed away. Due to the fact that Beloved is extraordinarily demanding and hedonistic, Sethe and Denver are beginning to run out of energy. It is possible for the community to free itself of the harmful spirit that Beloved possessed if cleansing is carefully carried out.

3.2 Trauma and Memory:

As Morrison's novel shows us the harsh and brutal life of African Americans, it also portrays the themes of trauma and memory in some significant aspects. Moreover, the African-American experience lies at the heart of Morrison's literary works. In terms of oppressive forces and competing ideologies, the individuals she shows fight for the right to speak up and embrace their cultural identity. Again, Sethe is a former slave woman, and the spirit of the child she was forced to kill to escape slavery haunts her and her family in Morrison's *Beloved*. The ghost of Sethe's child follows her through the story until the women of the town drive it away. She can't get rid of the terrible memory of this event. A certain way of reading Morrison's *Beloved* puts a lot of weight on the idea of "cultural memory." The author talks about what she calls a "national amnesia" about slavery that has been going on for 300 years. The reader is under a lot of pressure to respond to the story and fill in the blanks. The "narrative structure effectively turns us into witnesses rather than just observers, urged to share the novel's judgements on history" Morrison uses a lot of different types of pain and conflict in this work, mostly through the relationship between a daughter and her mother, to criticize and bring attention to the horrible effects of slavery on African-Americans. (Abu-Fares, 2)

It is clear that trauma and memory are the key themes in this novel. But also, they are interlinked with each other as trauma shapes memory. There are some ways in which the novel shows traumatic memories, for example, through physical expressions, fragmented memories, supernatural elements, flashbacks and so on. This trauma is also the remembrance of the past. It tells us the horror effects of slavery, which the characters endured during their past life. These very traumatic memories are the result of their past life. Due to the brutal effects of slavery, all the characters experienced trauma during their life. Moreover, the main character Sethe's trauma

and memory play a key role in shaping the traumatic memories. For instance, there is a line that says, "You said she died soft. Soft as cream," he reminded her. "That's not Baby Suggs," she said, "Who then?" "My daughter. The one I sent ahead with the boys." (Morrison,16) Here, this phrase makes it quite evident what Sethe is trying to suppress. There are others who believe that the death of her daughter was soft in comparison to the mental anguish that it must have caused. Moreover, there is a line which is "As her much too feminine breasts were soaked by the tears she hadn't wept in nine years. (26) It demonstrates that Sethe has pushed her sad thoughts down for a long time. So here, it makes a connection to traumatic memories through her emotional detachment, and her initial denial is a strong response to trauma. Besides Sethe, who is the main protagonist, there are other characters like Halle, Denver, and Paul D, who are also the victims of their traumatic past, and that horrific memory haunts them forever. But apart from this, slavery is the sole reason behind their trauma, as we discussed earlier. Due to the fact that slavery is so harsh and difficult to live with, many of the characters in *Beloved* are unable to move on from their past as slaves, even after they have been freed from their servitude. Paul D. Sethe is primarily responsible for this phenomenon in some way. A horrific occurrence has left an indelible mark on these individuals, and they are unable to let go of the memories associated with it. They are unable to recall them in their entirety, and they are unable to allow themselves to forget about them. As stated by Bran Nicol (2009), the fact that the narrative in *Beloved* does not adhere to a fixed chronological is a positive aspect since the two major characters, Sethe and Paul. D., have a strong desire to forget about the past. As a result of the immense suffering that these individuals endured throughout their time as slaves, they are unable to even recall particulars of their history, let alone delete them. (Abu-Fares,4) One of the strong examples are the scars on Sethe's body and killing her own child. To be specific, the scars and markings on

Sethe's body are an example of how she has endured suffering while being a slave. She was tortured, raped, and exploited in every way possible by her owners. In the novel, Sethe's back is mentioned as a tree where the branches and trunk are solid and dark. As stated by Lu and Zhang, Sethe, a normal Black slave, did a brave thing to fight against slavery when she tried to kill her own children. The "family integrity" reason she gave for not giving her child to the slave master doesn't match up with her claim that freedom is different from having your own identity. Aches and scars may go away on their own over time, but the mental effects of stress are much harder to get over. As a result of slavery, all Black people suffer the same terrible mental and physical hurt. (197)

Now, as I mentioned earlier here, Sethe not only holds significance in terms of traumatic experience but also other characters who play crucial roles in terms of the theme of trauma related to their lives. Let's talk about other characters like Denver, Halle, and Paul D. For instance, Halle was Sethe's husband, and both of them worked as slaves, but Halle went mad after witnessing the horrible effects of slavery. To be specific, there were the schoolteacher's nephews who used to abuse Sethe. As soon as Halle saw the nephews of the schoolteacher seizing his wife by the milk, he completely lost his mental stability. Halle practically loses his mind as a result of the trauma caused by the rape of Sethe and the violation of Sethe's motherhood that it also signifies. Because of this, Halle's willpower and compassion were broken when she witnessed Sethe being raped and tormented when she was a slave. During his time as a slave, he came to see that being a slave meant not just losing his freedom but also losing all that made him human. (Chaimae,24) As stated by Chaimae, "My husband is over there squatting by

the chum, smearing butter and clabber all over his face. It seems like the milk they took is on his mind. (24)

Again, there is Denver, Sethe's daughter. Though she was not a slave from her childhood and was free from it, she had his mother's exploitation and guilt from her childhood as they were running from the slave owners. Mainly, it was her mother's infanticide which caused Denver's suffering and pain. Again, as a result of Sethe's killing the baby, Denver has hallucinations, frequent dreams, and hallucinations in which she sees her mother as a danger to her health. The painful memories of her mother had a big effect on her life. On the other hand, the fact that her mother killed her own child has left her mentally worn out and worried. (Youcef,26) This made her suffer and made her pain more, as there is a saying in the novel that "she would cut off my head every single night" (26). Moreover, there was a guy named Paul D., who was also a former slave. His life was full of past traumatic experiences. Some themes of his trauma are his escape attempts, loss of identity, horrific past, etc. The escape attempt with Sixo and then Sixo's brutal murder by the schoolteacher marks Paul's best portrayal of the theme of trauma. Paul D's traumatic experiences always hunt him, and he is always unable to run away from his past. There is a line that says, "He said, "I got a little tobacco tin heart." "I can only feel what I put in there." (Morrison,30) Moreover, according to an author regarding Paul D, although Sethe is forced to confront her traumatic memories on a daily basis, Paul D has the ability to redirect them to a different part of his mind. The perspective of Paul D. demonstrates that being a slave is not solely about experiencing violence and loss. (Mohamed,23).

Lastly, there is the main character, Sethe, who is the prime example of the theme of trauma. Her trauma can be portrayed in many ways. As stated by Chaimae, as a child, she went through a lot

of bad things, like being a slave and being separated from her mother, who she barely remembers. When Sethe was raped by her master's nephew, her back looked like a chokecherry tree because the school teacher had hurt her. Sethe has been free for twenty-eight days, but the terrible things that happened to her in the past keep coming back to 124 House. When the slave catchers showed up, it brought back a lot of painful memories, which made her beat her own kids badly. She thought it was the only way to keep them from knowing about the pain and horrors she had been through. Sethe's decision to commit this crime shows how deeply her time as a slave at Sweet Home affected her. It left her with physical wounds as well as spiritual and emotional scars that still bother her. (23) Again, some of the important lines where Morrison portrays trauma here are written as such,

"124 was spiteful. Full of a baby's venom. The women in the house knew it, and so did the children." (Morrison,2) It demonstrates that the house takes on Sethe's bad feelings regarding her traumatic experience. It makes the house seem like more than just a place where it is a continuous reminder of the past. Here, the house can be the symbol of trauma. Again, after escaping from Sweet Home, the master's nephew finds her, and for this reason, she kills her own child, thinking about the horrific life of slavery. This act of infanticide haunts her life as the theme of trauma as her child, whom she killed earlier, returns as Beloved to haunt her as a ghost. This is a strong portrayal of themes of past trauma. Moreover, there are lines where it depicts the physical and spiritual scars on Sethe. Which is, "I got a tree on my back, and a haint in my house and nothing in between, but the only thing that remains is the daughter I am holding in my arms." Here, the tree on my back, the haint in my house and nothing in between..daughter are used as a metaphor to showcase the traumatic life of Seth. For instance, the tree on her back is an example of the physical abuse and exploitation she endured during her slavery period. The

nephews tortured her in many ways possible and even raped her. Though she finally escaped, the beating and abuse still left a scar on her back, which she referred to as a tree on her back. Again, "haint in my house" refers to the ghost of her daughter, whom she killed with her own hands because of the dark sides of slavery. The ghost's name is Beloved, and she is haunting the house. Her presence is a reminder of why and how Sethe made some painful decisions in her life, which haunt her forever. Lastly, the line daughter and holding in her arms refers to her other child, Denver, and she is the only reason Sethe is still alive, coping with the past traumas.

So, in this way, the theme of trauma is portrayed in the novel *Beloved*, and it shows how every character copes with it. The trauma that not only Sethe but also other characters experience slashes through their mind like a sharp knife, resulting in the formation of two distinct selves: the one who encounters the trauma and the one who is able to triumph over it. It makes perfect sense that the symptoms of trauma would become more severe over time, given that repeated exposure to trauma would build up over time. The memories of the past assault those who have been through traumatic experiences in a variety of different ways, which is why they are morbid. (Lu and Zhang, 197)

Another theme is memory, and it is interconnected with the themes of trauma, as trauma helps to shape memory. *Beloved* is a reminder of the past that shows how memory works and how powerful it can be to remember things. Sethe will always remember the days she was a slave at Sweet Home and how the schoolteacher picked on her and the other slaves. Right now, the past is having an effect on Sethe, Denver, and other people. Many years have passed since the event in question, but the memories that come with it still affect their lives today. Their memories own

them, and Beloved is a physical representation of those memories. The most important reason that African Americans revisited traumatic experiences was because of their memories. There are a lot of memories packed into the character biographies in *Beloved*. They had nightmares about the terrible things that had occurred in the past, which caused them to experience the same pain over and over again. These flashbacks had a significant impact not only on the individual's life but also on the lives of those who were closest to him. (Chaimae,27) Again, according to Youcef, the mysterious Beloved, who lived during the time period in which she would have been that age, is responsible for a great deal of activity. Despite the fact that the child who was murdered continues to torment us, she is also the spirit of all the slaves who perished while attempting to gain their freedom. When Paul D. entered her life, she was forced to confront the painful memories of her past. The idea that recalling those terrible things might assist her in overcoming the pain was something that she entertained. (30) So, we can basically say that these memories shaped the character's trauma. Mainly, all of their memories are brutal effects of slavery. They escaped from it, but it still haunts them for life. They are stuck in the past. Some of the powerful lines that portray memories are as such, "Beloved. The name itself slicked her tongue. A sweet. Yeasty sound that seemed to invite her in, like a child's laughter in the dead of night." (Morrison,5) Here it tells about the presence of the ghost who is Beloved herself and who was killed by her mother Sethe when she was a child. Beloved (the ghost) is a symbol of Sethe's past memories, and her (Beloved's) existence is a portrayal of Sethe's trauma. Again, there is a line which says, "He put his hands on his chest.. Like a fist." (Morrison,84). It depicts the character Paul D, who is trying to escape his past memories, which is how he was oppressed and exploited in working as a slave. But the novel tells us that no matter what we do, we cannot forget past memories, and so does Paul; he also cannot forget his brutal days of slavery. Lastly, in addition

to bringing up issues such as slavery and memory loss, Morrison asserts that the past has the potential to destroy a person. This makes the past appear even more dreadful. It is essential that we have a healthy relationship with our past in order to overcome anything that has happened to us and return to being normal people.

3.3 Cultural Healing:

To start, this cultural healing is a practice or an approach with a sense of restoring one's own cultural identity in terms of a cultural context. Moreover, it is a reconnection with traditions and addressing how people's lives suffered traumas like slavery, exploitation, colonization and so on.

This theme can be portrayed within the context of the novel *Beloved* and with its characters.

Though this theme is not properly evident and narrated by Morrison, she mainly focused on trauma and memory, healing as a process to recover from their traumatic past. According to Chaimae, when Paul D. came back, he brought up long-buried memories and let Sethe talk about her terrible experiences. This helped her start to heal from her traumatic past. In reality, facing her past helped her get back to normal. She was with Denver and Paul D., and she even attended the funfair. But *Beloved's* presence made Sethe face another dark part of her life that she had pushed to the back of her mind for 18 years. That being said, this did not last long. The death of *Beloved* marks the end of her haunted past. After a long, hard journey full of painful memories, she was finally able to face her repressed traumas and make peace with her past. (28)

Again, Paul D. tries to build a new community and forgets his past, which is a reminder of his trying to heal. "They talked. Everyday. About everything. Not only the obvious things, like the sweetness of Denver's smile or the nastiness of the ghost who liked to turn milk sour, but about things too distant and too difficult to explain in words." (Morrison,41) Here is a conversation

between Paul and Sethe about their past experiences and how they are trying to build a new relationship. Again, they are discussing the past. For example, in the last line, he says, "too distant and too difficult to explain," which basically means their previous act of slavery. How brutal and horrific those days were and how they endured the trauma while working as a slave in the Sweet Home. They are sharing their trauma with each other, and this thing works as a healing because the more they share and tell about their traumas, the more the pain will get relief. To be specific, sharing traumatic experiences is a crucial component of trauma recovery. Furthermore, Sethe and Denver use spiritual songs which are filled with trauma, slavery, connection to self-identity and so on. The line is, "Denver knew the song. They sang it a lot, especially lately. It was a sad, slow song that made you think about water. Not just any water, deep water, wide water." (Morrison,42). Sethe also uses positive experiences for her healing. For example, despite her killing her own child, she thinks about how she escaped from slavery, how a woman helped her on the road and so on. She uses positive experiences to get rid of trauma. In this way, Morrison portrayed the themes of cultural healing, but she used it in a metaphorical way, which is recollecting the emotion and narrating the past is the only way to their healing.

3.4 Ecofeminist Perspectives:

Ecofeminism is a theory which brings together feminism and environmentalism; together, it points out that patriarchy and capitalism are to blame for the environmental catastrophe and the dominance of men over women. This theory is portrayed strongly in terms of their trauma and

memory. Ecofeminism is the connection between gender and ecology; on the other hand, in the novel, there are also incidents of gender discrimination and environmental degradation.

Moreover, in her novel *Beloved*, Toni Morrison discusses the ways in which African American women have always viewed nature, as well as the ways in which slavery severed their ties to the land and made it a source of tension for them. Using the singular perspective of a female author, Toni Morrison examines the nature-human dynamic in "Beloved" to demonstrate how resolute African-American women were in their pursuit of freedom and independence, as well as their determination to escape slavery. In this book, Morrison portrays women and nature in a manner that causes them to appear to be victims. In the universe of *Beloved*, trees hold a significant amount of significance for the inhabitants. With the 'emerald closet' that she constructed out of boxwood bushes, Denver is able to relax and feel at ease. Due to the wonderful trees that can be found in Sweet Home, Sethe is unable to recall the actual horrors that occurred on the plantation. At the same time that Paul D. is following flowering trees in a northerly direction, Sethe is able to escape through a forest. Through the utilization of the metaphor of a "chokecherry tree," Amy Denver transforms the terrible wounds that Sethe has on her back into a place that is both healing and beautiful. However, trees also reveal the negative aspects of people because they were the locations where lynchings and the death by fire of Sixo took place. (Ahlawat,57)

Again, there were exploitations, abuse and oppression towards women and also towards nature. For example, "Sweet Home!where the soil was black and rich enough to grow anything under the sun. No houseplants, though, not even a single geranium in a tin coin on the windowsill. (Morrison,4) This means the exploitation and oppression of both the women and land. Here, the land of Sweet Home is described as fertile and good for production, but with the brutal effects of slavery and abuse from the owners, both the land and women slaves become harsh. The enslaved

people were forced to bring out maximum production from the land, which left the land devastated. Furthermore, there are other portrayals of ecofeminism too, such as: "Her breasts were like little pillows and her yellow skin, smooth as rainwater, made him think of those little, sweet, yellow peaches you could buy in Cincinnati in the summertime. The school Teacher cleared his throat. You could just imagine how a man would dig his face in there. (Morrison,20) These lines mark the significance of Sethe's abused body and her connection to the environment. Here, Sethe's body is compared to fruit, and the school teacher compares her breasts to pillows and her skin to rainwater, which is a natural element. He uses peach fruit to describe Sethe. This highlights how women's body is shown as objects of pleasure and torture. Again, here, nature is depicted as a source of exploitation. Lastly, ecofeminism is a theory where both nature and women are exploited together by strong, dominated men, and here in this novel, we can see how the owners of the slaves see women and nature as a means of exploitation and degradation. Still, there are some lines where nature is used as trauma rather than healing. We know that, in ecofeminism, nature is used as a healing for the trauma, but in some parts of the novel, nature is used as a trigger to trauma. One important line in short is, "She stopped by the water. It was very slow, but the river was a ride. She seemed to whisper to herself. Then she looked at her hands. They were empty." Again, here, the river is used as a source of healing as the calmness of the water gives Sethe a somewhat escape from the brutal realities of her life. Moreover, nature is also a witness of trauma. "The wind whispered through the trees, secrets in a dead language, secrets older than any living things." (Morrison,87) Here, the environment and ecology hold down Sethe's past memories in terms of both good memories and brutal memories.

Lastly, it can be said that ecofeminism is the way through which the female characters, especially Sethe, portray their scars, abuse and exploitation in terms of nature. Here, nature is also exploited, and ecological degradation happens throughout the novel. Again, nature stood out for the exploited women as a means of both good and bad. Morrison shows how women and nature working together is the first step towards women having real freedom and safety. Throughout the novel, Sethe, the main character, and the other characters learn about ecofeminism, face and overcome challenges, and ultimately come out on top.

4. *Srikanta*: Trauma, Healing and the Ecofeminist lens

4.1 Overview:

Author Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay wrote an autobiographical four-part book called *Srikanta*. The storytelling style makes them fun to read, even though some books are travelogs and others are just collections of stories that don't have anything to do with each other. Also, *Srikanta*, who tells the story of Saratchandra's epic, is a lost soul who doesn't know where he's going. He is an observer of his own life and needs the power of another person to get by. As a child, he looked up to Annada Didi because she was kind and didn't care about herself. *Srikanta*,

a young adventurer, meets Abhaya in Burma. Abhaya is defiant and has left her abusive husband to live freely with her boyfriend. After trying to be a sanyasi, Srikanta falls under the spell of Kamal Lata, a Vaishnava. He continues to travel aimlessly until he breaks free of the social norms of his upbringing by committing to a life with the famous but beautiful Pyari Baiji. Through his colorful and interesting characters, Saratchandra brings the prejudiced and ready-to-change Bengal of the nineteenth century to life.

4.2 Trauma, Memory & Healing:

As trauma and memory are interlinked with each other, on the other hand, the novel Srikanta also portrays the theme of trauma and memory. However, the novel does not fully dive into past traumas but rather into the after-effects of the trauma, including the search for self, disillusionment, and meaning. In the first part, the theme of trauma and memory is not portrayed strongly, but it gives a hint of it. Moreover, it basically tells us about the early and young life of the narrator himself. How he becomes friends with Indranath and again, how he comes to know Annada Didi, and so on. In fact, social exclusion can be a way to trauma; Srikanta, in his early days, saw his idol Annada Didi's exclusion from society, her mistreatment by her husband and also Srikanta's witnessing the trauma of Annada Didi. For example, there is a line that says that as soon as Annada Didi came back, a shudder went through the neighbourhood's reputable households. This means that the people around that time did not approve of Annada's decision, and they disapproved of her in all terms. The reason behind all of this was her own decision to

marry a snake charmer, and she eloped with him. Again, the decision she took was a result of her trauma. Her husband

Mistreated and abused her, which reflects her trauma. On the other hand, the trauma for Srikanta was witnessing Annada Didi getting rejected by society, her mistreatment and the desire to help Annada while he was young but could not do anything can be a source of trauma for a young boy. Again, in terms of memory, it can be selective and also a source of escape. Like in the first part, Srikanta wants to be a Sannyasi, and it is fueled by his memories of his grandfather, who says, "Grandfather often used to speak about some holy men who used to live around the Himalayas, and they spread out peace and wisdom." (Chattopadhyay, P1) Again, Srikanta's life was full of restlessness and helplessness, and it could be driven by his bad and depressed memories. From the novel, we can get the idea that he(Srikanta) would roam through the forest, woods and streets for hours, which is a bad feeling in his memories. It highlights the restlessness of his life and his desire to escape from the current scenario.

The second part is basically about a young man who has grown up and is handling his life with some uncertainties. In fact, he begins a journey to find meaning in life through spirituality, relationships, and traveling. He visits various places, meets many new people, and encounters disillusionment. Here, the theme of trauma can be shown through restlessness and disillusionment. A strong example could be his traveling and movement from one place to another. A line that represents his trauma is, "he had something missing in his life, and also he was not able to escape this feeling. For that reason, no matter where he went, a sense of uneasiness followed him. Again, Srikanta became Sannayasi, but it did not last long. But Srikanta used this thing as an escape from the world and also from his past. Furthermore, there is

a character, Abhaya, and her character basically serves as a trigger for Srikanta's unsolved traumas. A line that reflects this is that Srikanta soon understood Abhaya's strange way of life. Again, it showed the desire to get away from the limits that society puts on people. In terms of memory, yearning for escape can be considered as the theme of memory. The hot air and crowded streets of Calcutta made Srikanta feel oppressed. His only wish was to return to his childhood days when he was happy.

Lastly, in the third and fourth parts of the novel, there are the after-effects of trauma, which are linked with memory. Srikanta's love life is portrayed in these parts. For example, his choice to be with Pyari, who is basically a prostitute. To be sure, he always supported her and basically started to live with her, defying all the societal norms and traditions. Srikanta still used to live with her, and all the people of the society ignored or rejected her from the society. Here, it can be depicted that his attraction towards Pyari can be linked to his personal trauma of feeling like an outsider. Again, memory can also play a crucial role here. Because, in his childhood, Annada Didi was his favorite person. But when she was rejected from society and abused by her husband, all the exploitation and oppression was seen by Srikanta himself, which can be a bad memory for him. And this memory from his childhood can be the reason for choosing Pyari. Furthermore, in the last part, Srikanta starts to reflect on his wandering life, which results in his quest for self-discovery. Again, even after Pyari's death, he feels empty in his life and gets traumatized by the memories he had of Pyari. So, at last, it can be said that the novel is about the after-effects of trauma rather than portraying traumatic events. Here, memories can be worked as a trigger. Characters like Abhaya and Annada Didi may trigger memories from the past. On the

other hand, trauma can be shown through sudden decisions, Srikanta's displacement from one place to another and so on.

In terms of healing, there is no clear evidence of it, but it can be shown through some challenges and complexities. Some ways of healing in the novel could be self-reflection, a realization of self-discovery, the search for meaning in life, and relationships with Annada Didi, Abhaya, Pyari, etc. Women in this novel play a critical role in trauma, memory, and healing.

4.3 Ecofeminist Narratives:

To start with, ecofeminism is a modern literary movement that tells us about the interconnectedness of both women and nature. Basically, it is the link between women's oppression and environmental degradation. While the novel *Srikanta* does not portray ecofeminism in broader aspects, as both were from different periods, it gives us a hint of how women's lives were portrayed, how they were exploited in a patriarchal-dominated society and how nature was seen. To be specific, Rajlaksmii, Annada, Abhaya, and Kamal Lata are some of Sharat Chandra's female characters in this work. They aggressively establish their uniqueness, self-worth, and freedom from the traditional and male-dominated society that existed at the time. Because these people won't give in, they can see themselves in a free future light. All of these women were models for the kinds of women that feminist writers would later write about. All four female characters" Rajlaksmi, Annada, Kamal Lata, and Abhaya, feel that marriage doesn't make it easier to love and value each other. Instead, they see marriage as a religious and social obligation that earns men praise but leads to self-deception. (Jahan,8)

The author mainly tried to portray the female characters through the life of Srikanta's journey. In his journey, Srikanta met many women who were struggling with their lives. Women such as Annada Didi, Kamal Lata, Abhaya, Pyari etc. As Jahan stated, there are times when Rajlaksmi and Abhaya try to break the rules to get what they want. Annada is lying to her parents and her society by marrying a Muslim snake dancer. Also, Kamal Lata, a Baishnobi (follower of Bishnu), is very honest, firm, and quick to share her feelings, beliefs, and choices. She has a hard past and has been hurt by the hardness of patriarchy. Girls and women in our society depend on men for money. In the early 1800s, some women did have their own money and worked outside the home, but not many did. (9) So, from the lens of ecofeminism, we can see that women in this novel lived in rural areas and relied on domestic work and livelihood. Again, ecofeminism refers to gender discrimination by the male-dominated society, and so it happens in *Srikanta*. For example, Annada Didi, who elopes from his house and society, later on, decides to marry a Muslim snake charmer and decides to live with him. Unfortunately, she faced abuse and exploitation from her husband, and when her husband died, she faced all kinds of criticism and debt left by his husband. Moreover, there is a woman named Abhaya who is different from others as she is the most rebellious woman because she left her abusive husband and moved on in her life. So, in this novel, Sarat Chandra tried to portray the role of women and the oppression they faced in that period of Bengal. Furthermore, in terms of Nature, Sarat Chandra does not fully tell us about the degradation of nature or its role but again suggests some hints about it. The novel is set in the period of colonization, during which nature is a key theme. As the novel is set in rural Bengal, the female characters have a connection to nature in terms of fetching water from the rivers, working in the fields and so on. The women have a connection to nature, but their connection remains limited due to the patriarchal dominance over women, which leads to

social norms being restricted to domestic duties. This control over women can also be seen as an extension of control over nature. Again, when both nature and women get exploited in the novel, the character Annada Did, who lost everything, her abusive husband and the people who rejected her from society, then finds peace and solace from nature, where she tells the beauty of nature. It suggests the deeper connection of women to nature.

So it can be said that both the theory and novel are of different periods, and the novel does not fully portray the theme of feminism, but we can see it through the life of women, how they lived, how they handled all the discrimination and also in terms of Nature though Sarat Chandra did not write about nature that much.

5. Comparative analysis between *Beloved* and *Srikanta*

Both the novels have similarities and differences in terms of trauma, memory and healing. It also can be viewed through the lens of ecofeminism. There are strong portrayals of trauma, memory, and healing in the novel *Beloved*. On the other hand, *Srikanta* does not fully explore these themes, but they can be explored through these themes. *Srikanta* is basically a portrayal of one person's individual search for meaning. Though both the novels can be seen through an ecofeminist lens, there are huge differences between the two novels in terms of the time period, narrative style, historical setting and so on.

5.1 Focusing on similarities:

To start, Toni Morrison's literary skills are clearly shown in *Beloved*, a book that combines historical fiction, gothic horror, and bildungsroman, also known as a coming-of-age story. It explores the wild, unrepentant minds of many people who are still carrying the terrible weight of the hidden sins of slavery. To be sure, in *Beloved*, we see how the mental, emotional, and spiritual scars of slavery stay with the main characters and how they have achieved freedom. Mainly, it can be said as a coming-of-age story where the protagonist's journey is portrayed from childhood to adulthood, and they tackle issues with slavery, identity, love, and loss. And like that, *Srikanta* also portrays the theme of coming of age in a story as it tells us about a wandering boy and his journey from childhood to adulthood. The novel shares themes of self-identity struggles, the search for meaning in life, and love and loss. Here, both these novels deal with the issue of self-identity. In *Beloved*, there is a woman who is a former slave and has been a slave from her childhood. She elopes from her work and now questions herself about her life and the world where her past has been so brutal and full of oppression. Her whole life is full of past traumatic experiences. Similarly, in *Srikanta*, a young man's journey is portrayed, and throughout his journey, he is not able to find his place in a society where there are too many limitations and expectations. Again, both the novels grapple with the issues of love and loss. For example, in Morrison's novel, love and loss are portrayed fiercely and in a destructive form. Sethe kills her infant child brutally because she does not want her child to face the horrors of slavery. This act of infanticide suggests that she wanted to protect her child from slavery in every way possible, and it resulted in a horrific way. So the loss was her child who died many years ago, and her death is the reminder of her trauma, and the return of her child renamed Beloved,

displays the continuous reminder of her sacrifice and pain. In terms of Srikanta, the portrayal of love and loss is different, and the novel also explores it in its own way. Srikanta, the main character here, struggles to maintain connections with women. He met with many people but was unable to maintain a connection, which is the result of his loss. He keeps searching for love and connection. In short, it can be said that in both novels, the love and loss are somewhat different, whereas Sethe's love is protective and aggressive. On the other hand, Srikanta's love is idealistic, and he fails to maintain a long relationship. Both the novels look for healing and try to move forward after their loss. Lastly, they are on the quest to search for meaning. Sethe moves on from her traumatic past and tries to live with her other child peacefully. Again, Srikanta, from his childhood, met with many people and gathered experiences from their lives, Questions about his life, his purpose and the places he goes. So, there are many similarities between the two novels. Furthermore, in terms of trauma and memory, both novels can be seen through the lens of ecofeminism. *Beloved* is a strong portrayal of ecofeminism, as there is both gender discrimination through slavery and ecological degradation. Nature played an important role in terms of the characters. Similarly, Srikanta can also be seen through ecofeminism as there is gender discrimination and oppression through the many women characters mentioned by Sarat Chandra, but the role of nature is not mentioned as much as it has explained in Morrison's novel

5.2 Highlighting differences:

As there are similarities between these novels, there are differences too. There is much more contrast between them rather than similarities. Some of the main differences are historical

context, the structure and narrative style and, again, different situations of trauma. Both the novels are from different periods. To be sure, even though the book *Beloved* came out in 1987, the most important thing to know about it is that it takes place between 1855 and 1873. The American Civil War took place during this time (1861-1865), so the book covers the years before and after slavery was officially ended in the United States. Basically, it tackles the issues of post-traumatic slavery, the horrors of slavery and so on. On the other hand, *Srikanta* is set in the early 20th century or mainly set in the colonial period of Bengal, where it tells the story of a boy who embarks on his journey and meets many women in his life. So, here, the time periods are different from each other. Again, the narrative style is also different. *Beloved's* style is non-linear and fragmented storytelling, and *Srikanta* is a linear narrative and is of lyrical style. The focus of trauma and memory are different from each other. Though both the novels share trauma and memory, they are different. To be specific, in *Beloved*, the novel is filled with past slavery trauma. The characters, along with Sethe, are the victims of the brutality of slavery. All of the characters have their own traumatic past related to slavery. Here, slavery is the main reason for the traumas. All the characters are haunted by their past. The main protagonist's act of infanticide is the result of her trauma and suffering related to slavery. But, the trauma in *Srikanta* is different. Trauma is less central here, and it basically tells about the after-effects of trauma rather than the past traumatic events. The novel mainly focuses on the personal elements of loss and disillusionment. The trauma in *Beloved* is very brutal and destructive, and it is interlinked with the main characters' past lives, but *Srikanta's* trauma offers more individualistic, idealistic, which grapples with the individual experiences of loss and discontentment.

Lastly, we know both novels are different from each other but also have similarities. In terms of ecofeminism, they offer a glimpse into the characters' relationship with nature. Both novels portray gender discrimination and how women were portrayed in their respective time periods. As stated by Alwan, Morrison shows that when natural things are linked to women, they mean that women will be truly independent and safe. By the end of the novel, Sethe and the other characters had become more ecofeminist, gotten through hard times, and were almost self-sufficient. Morrison wants female readers to become more ecofeminist and voice their beliefs through the book by supporting more eco-friendly ways of living. Moreover, Sarat Chandra portrayed the life of women in a bold and progressive way possible. The main characters in *Srikanta*, who are women, best show Chattopadhyay's unique view on virgins and breaking standard gender roles. He gets into the details of the female leads who bravely face problems caused by men. He shows that marriage doesn't make it easier for people to love and respect each other. Instead, he shows how these women see marriage as a religious and social lie that makes men happy but makes women feel bad about themselves. He shows women as strong, confident people who aren't afraid of their jobs or skills, even though they are slaves of a patriarchal culture. Even so, they fight to stay alive and speak out against how men act when they're not being honest. (Dey,2023) So, both novels, which are different from each other, portray the harmful effects of gender discrimination in a male-dominated society.

At last, both these novels can be viewed from the lens of ecofeminism. Some of them are the strong connections between female trauma and ecological degradation, nature as a source of healing, some contemporary issues like environmental justice movements and sustainable development.

Conclusion:

To conclude, both the novels are unique in their own ways. As far as ecofeminism goes, male forms of oppression and hatred have hurt both women and the natural world. Ethnocentrism and sexism are things that ecofeminists want to change in order to make society fair and free of conflict. Toni Morrison tries to show that restrained women and the environment are closely linked in a patriarchal society. In *Beloved*, however, nature is more than just a background; it acts like a living thing, responding to human abuse and exploitation and feeling what the hurting are feeling. Throughout American history, women and the natural world have been abused and put down by male power, which has been made stronger by the harmful effects of capitalism. Just like that, ecofeminism also says that the domination of both women and the degradation of women are the result of patriarchal dominance. Though *Beloved* is a strong portrayal of trauma and memory through an ecofeminist lens, *Srikanta*, on the other hand, is totally different as it tells about personal life experiences. Still, it can be drawn through the lens of ecofeminism. The portrayal of women and the rural Bengali nature plays an important role here. The trauma and memory are different from those in the novel *Beloved*. In *Srikanta*, women go against traditional gender roles and social rules about marriage, sexuality, rank, honor, and chastity. From the point of view of women, the main conversations look at and criticize how women are left out and used. As stated by Sharma, the stories of *Srikanta*'s rebellious women once again show how the relationship between men and women in a patriarchal society is false and two-sided. As their jobs require, each character deals with sexist cultural norms about love and marriage and asks if

it is fair that men and women have different sexual norms. (Sharma,67) Finally, though the two novels are separated from countries and have different genres, they offer the themes of trauma, memory and healing in their own ways. Morrison's novel offers the brutality of slavery, which relates to their trauma, and Sarat Chandra's novel offers alienation and one person's personal experiences from life. Both the novel's characters are on a quest to rebuild their lives. In *Beloved*, the land, due to slavery itself, becomes a way of slavery, but in *Srikanta*, it explores how nature has been there to offer peace and solace to the characters. Thus, the two novels, whether different from each other, play a key role in defining trauma, memory and cultural healing through an ecofeminist lens.

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