

**PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF SLAVERY ON A SLAVE**

**MOTHER IN TONI MORRISON'S *BELOVED***

**THESIS**

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**UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK**

**IBRAHIM MALANG**

**2021**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF SLAVERY ON A SLAVE  
MOTHER IN TONI MORRISON'S *BELOVED***

**THESIS**

Presented to

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S)

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**UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
MALANG  
2021**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled "*Psychological Impacts of Slavery on A Slave Mother in Toni Morrison's Beloved*" is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those ones that are cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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## APPROVAL SHEET

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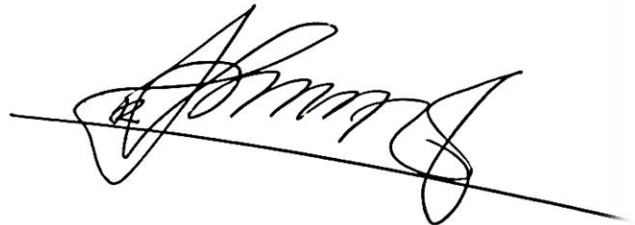
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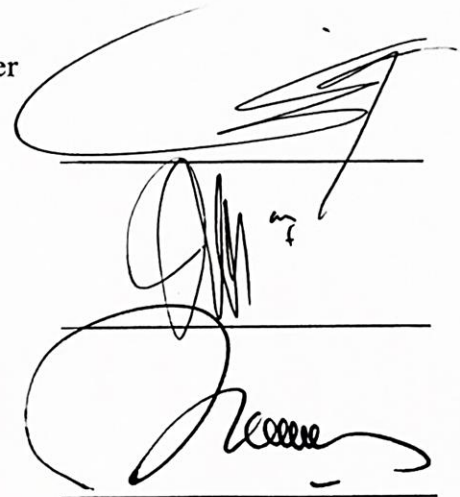
This is to certify that Kinanti Nur Azizah Kusriyanto's thesis entitled "*Psychological Impact of Slavery on A Slave Mother in Toni Morrison's Beloved*" has been approved by the Board of Examiners as the requirement for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.) in Department of English Literature.

Malang, December 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

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## **MOTTO**

*“Definitions belong to the definers, not the defined.”*

-Toni Morrison in *Beloved*

## **DEDICATION**

I proudly dedicated this thesis especially to myself, who has managed to defeat the laziness so that this thesis can be completed. This thesis is also proudly dedicated to my dearest family; my father Endro Kusriyanto, my mother Lilik Sumiati, and my brother Lintang Fitrah Ramadhan Kusriyanto.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise to Allah SWT, who has given His guidance and blessing for me so that I could finish this thesis entitled “*Psychological Impact of Slavery on A Slave Mother in Toni Morrison’s Beloved*”. Also, Shalawat and Salam are always praised to our beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW, who spreads the goodness to human life.

I would like to deliver my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Hj. Isti’adah, M.A. for giving me a lot of advice to improve my works and also helping me to finish my thesis immediately. Thank you for spending your time to read and fix my thesis. My deepest gratitude also goes to my academic advisor, Miftahul Huda, M.Pd., for always helping me during my study in Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Also, I extend my gratitude for all lecturers at English Literature Department for giving me the valuable knowledge and teaching me amazing lessons during my lecture at Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

I would express my gratitude to my beloved family, who always being “the home” for me. Thank you for always being the best support system in my life. Huge thanks to the sisters; Syania, Alifatin, Cheppy, and Fais, for always be the ears to listen to me and shoulders to lean on. Thank you for being the one call away.

Also to the person who unexpectedly appeared in my life, The Love of My Life, I have no word to explain how grateful I am to have you in my life. Thank you very much for all your support and trust in me, it means a lot to me. Sometimes I



don't think I deserve you but thank you for always being there despite many reasons you shouldn't, Mas. I love you no matter what.

Last, I admit that this thesis is far from perfect and has many shortcomings. Thus, to improve this work, criticisms and suggestions are welcomed. Hopefully, this thesis would give significant benefit to other researchers and people who read it.

Malang, 20 November 2021

The Researcher,

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## ABSTRACT

Kusriyanto, Kinanti Nur Azizah. 2021. **Psychological Impact of Slavery on a Slave Mother in Toni Morrison's *Beloved***. Undergraduate Thesis. English Literature Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

Advisor : Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

Keywords : Slavery, Trauma, PTSD, Motherhood

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Among many mental illnesses that most sufferers are women, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is one of the most frequently encountered in everyday life. As the name suggests, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder arises because of a traumatic event that the sufferer has experienced in the past. Most cases of PTSD are experienced by women due to the experience of sexual and domestic harassment (KDRT), and other discrimination against women.

In one of his masterpieces, *Beloved*, Toni Morrison talks about the impact of trauma on a mother's life due to slavery that she had experienced in the past. As described in *Beloved*, the role of women in the slave community was made as the center of family relations. Thus arose the supremacy of the mother-daughter bond over all other relationships. As Morrison recounts in her novel, Sethe uses the mother-daughter bond to do anything to save her children from slavery.

Based on the problems above, this study aims to identify the existence of trauma as a psychological impact of the slavery' experience on a mother-slave. In addition, this research is also intended to identify the impact of trauma experienced by the main character on her motherhood. This research is a literary criticism using the psychological approach that focuses on the psychological impact of slavery from the perspective of PTSD. The problems in this study were analyzed using trauma theory to obtain results in accordance with the formulation of the problem.

The results of the study found that there were indications that Sethe experienced PTSD as a result of the slavery she had experienced in the past. This is reinforced by physical scars which are considered as a link between physical trauma and psychological trauma experienced by Sethe. In addition, the trauma of slavery also had an impact on Sethe's personality. The trauma of slavery causes Sethe to suffers the PTSD since her behavior indicating its' symptoms. In addition, the trauma of slavery also has an impact on Sethe's motherhood. The trauma along with Sethe's maternal instincts made her kill her little baby to save the baby from the horror of slavery in the future. The action, in the end, not only traumatized Sethe but also her other daughter, Denver. The shadow of Sethe's past murder has an impact on her ability to carry out the role of mother to her children.

## ABSTRAK

Kusriyanto, Kinanti Nur Azizah. 2021. **Psychological Impact of Slavery on a Slave Mother in Toni Morrison's *Beloved***. Undergraduate Thesis. English Literature Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

Dosen Pembimbing : Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

Kata Kunci : Slavery, Trauma, PTSD, Motherhood

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Dari banyaknya gangguan kejiwaan yang lebih beresiko diderita oleh perempuan, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder adalah salah satu yang paling sering ditemui di kehidupan sehari-hari. Seperti namanya, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder muncul karena peristiwa traumatis yang pernah dialami penderitanya di masa lalu. Sebagian besar kasus PTSD dialami oleh perempuan karena pengalaman pelecehan seksual dan domestik (KDRT), dan diskriminasi lainnya terhadap perempuan.

Dalam salah satu mahakaryanya, *Beloved*, Toni Morrison menceritakan tentang dampak trauma dalam hidup seorang ibu akibat perbudakan yang pernah dialaminya di masa lalu. Sesuai yang tergambar dalam *Beloved*, peran perempuan dalam komunitas budak dijadikan sebagai pusat hubungan keluarga. Sehingga muncullah supremasi ikatan ibu-anak di atas segala hubungan lainnya. Seperti yang diceritakan Morrison dalam novelnya, bahwa Sethe menggunakan ikatan ibu-anak tersebut untuk melakukan apa saja agar dapat menyelamatkan anak-anaknya dari jerat perbudakan.

Berdasarkan masalah di atas, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi adanya dampak psikologis dari pengalaman perbudakan pada seorang ibu-budak. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga dimaksudkan untuk mengidentifikasi apa saja dampak trauma yang dialami karakter utama terhadap kepribadian dan sisi keibuan yang dimilikinya.

Penelitian ini merupakan kritik sastra psikoanalisis yang berfokus pada dampak psikologis perbudakan dari perspektif PTSD. Masalah-masalah dalam penelitian ini dianalisis menggunakan teori trauma untuk mendapatkan hasil yang sesuai dengan rumusan masalah.

Adapun hasil penelitian yang ditemukan adalah terdapat indikasi trauma dialami oleh Sethe akibat dari perbudakan yang pernah dialaminya di masa lalu. Hal ini diperkuat dengan bekas luka fisik yang dianggap sebagai penghubung antara trauma fisik dengan trauma psikis yang dialami oleh Sethe. Selain itu, trauma akibat perbudakan juga berdampak pada kepribadian Sethe. Trauma perbudakan menyebabkan Sethe menderita PTSD karena perilakunya menunjukkan gejala-gejala PTSD. Selain itu, trauma akan perbudakan juga berdampak pada sisi keibuan yang dimiliki Sethe. Trauma tersebut bersama dengan naluri keibuan yang dimiliki Sethe membuat ia membunuh bayi kecilnya demi menyelamatkan sang bayi dari momok perbudakan di masa depannya. Tindakan itu pula yang pada akhirnya tidak hanya membawa trauma pada Sethe tapi juga pada anak perempuannya yang lain, Denver. Bayangan pembunuhan yang dilakukan Sethe di masa lalu berdampak pada kemampuannya dalam menjalankan peran ibu bagi anak-anaknya.

## نبذة مختصرة

كسريانتو ، كينانتي نور عزيزة .2021. التأثير النفسي للرق على الأم العبودية في محبوب توني موريسون أطروحة جامعية .قسم الأدب الإنجليزي ، كلية العلوم الإنسانية ، جامعة الإسلام نيجري مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج

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الكلمات المفتاحية: عبودية ، صدمة ، اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة ، أمومة

من بين العديد من الأمراض العقلية التي يعاني منها معظم النساء ، يعد اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة من أكثر الأمراض التي نواجهها بشكل متكرر في الحياة اليومية. كما يوحي الاسم ، ينشأ اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة بسبب حدث صادم تعرض له المصاب في الماضي. تتعرض النساء لمعظم حالات اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة وغيرها من أشكال التمييز ضد المرأة ، (KDRT) بسبب تجربة التحرش الجنسي والمنزلي

في واحدة من روائعه ، الحبيبة ، يتحدث توني موريسون عن تأثير الصدمة على حياة الأم بسبب العبودية التي مرت بها في الماضي. كما هو موضح في الحبيب ، تم جعل دور المرأة في مجتمع العبيد مركز العلاقات الأسرية. وهكذا نشأت غلبة رابطة الأم والابنة على جميع العلاقات الأخرى. كما تروي موريسون في روايتها ، تستخدم سيثي رابطة الأم والابنة لفعل أي شيء لإنقاذ أطفالها من العبودية

بناءً على المشكلات المذكورة أعلاه ، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على الأثر النفسي لتجربة العبودية على الأم-العبودية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، يهدف هذا البحث أيضًا إلى التعرف على تأثير الصدمة التي تتعرض لها الشخصية الرئيسية على شخصيتها وأمومتها

ووجدت نتائج الدراسة أن هناك مؤشرات على أن سيث عانت من اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة نتيجة للعبودية التي عانت منها في الماضي. يتم تعزيز هذا من خلال الندوب الجسدية التي تعتبر رابطًا بين الصدمات الجسدية والصدمات النفسية التي يعاني منها سيثي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، كان لصدمة العبودية تأثير أيضًا على شخصية ست. تسببت صدمة العبودية في إصابة سيثي باضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لأن سلوكها يشير إلى أعراضه. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، فإن صدمة العبودية لها تأثير أيضًا على أمومة سيثي. جعلتها الصدمة مع غرائز الأمومة لسيثي تقتل طفلها الصغير لإنقاذ الطفل من رعب العبودية في المستقبل. لم يتسبب هذا الإجراء في النهاية في إصابة سيث بصدمة نفسية فحسب ، بل أدى أيضًا إلى إصابة ابنتها الأخرى دنفر. أثر مقتل سيثي في الماضي على قدرتها على أداء دور الأم لأطفالها

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## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher would like to provide the introduction of the study. This chapter contains the background that underlies the study that generates the research problems. This introduction chapter also describes the method and design that will be used to conduct the research.

### **A. Background of the Study**

One out of five people in U.S. is potentially severe mental illness, according to National Alliance on Mental Illness. Mental illness can be severed by anyone no matter whether the person is a man or a woman, but both have different potential ability to severe different mental illness. The differences in men and women might emerged because of various reason, such as biological factor (hormone), social-cultural system—patriarchy system, applied “beauty standards”, and peer pressure (Kirk, Okazawa Rey 2007).

Gender violence affects women in all societies, all socioeconomic classes, all racial groups, all ethnic groups, and it can occur throughout the life cycle (Heise, Pitanguy, and Germain (1994). The gender violence case is not random violence; the risk factor is being female (Heise 1989). In U.S., the gender violence—against women, includes battering, rape, child sexual abuse, stalking, obscene phone calls, sexual harassment at school or workplaces (Kirk, Okazawa-Rey 2007).

Another reason why more women are classified as severing mental illness is that the number of women seeking help for personal and emotional problems are twice as high as it is for men (Kirk, Okazawa-Rey 2007). However, we cannot

sum up that anyone who is “seeking for help” is doing it voluntarily. Voluntarily seeking help for emotional problems is linked to one’s ability to pay and finding a suitable therapist toward this kind of treatment (Kirk, Okazawa-Rey 2007).

Feminist writers offer sharp critiques of the alleged objectivity of much contemporary mental health theorizing and of the value judgements and blatant sexism involved in many diagnostic categories like depression, behavioral disorders, and other mental illness that affect women more than men (Kirk, Okazawa-Rey 2007). Symptoms for these disorders are often very general, vague, and overlapping, and there is little agreement among practitioners as to what conditions are indicated by the symptoms (Russell 1995).

There are several mental illnesses that commonly severed by women, both in these modern days and the old days before. Depression, anxiety disorder, PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), eating disorder, and postpartum depression are commonly suffered by women. Those mental illnesses might be caused by various reasons, severed by various women with various background.

One of those mental illness, the most closely related to women is PTSD. The symptoms experienced by sufferers of PTSD are usually anxiety and panic disorders. As the name suggests, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, the disorder arises due to traumatic events that the sufferer has experienced in the past. Most case of PTSD suffered by women due to experiences of sexual and domestic abuse, and other discrimination toward women. In addition, in some countries, the



habit of victim-blaming is still very much practiced, so that victims feel more and more depressed, which causes them to suffer PTSD.

In the United States, the estimate of lifetime prevalence of PTSD in adults is 7.8%, with women are riskier than men (20.4% vs. 8.2%) despite experiencing fewer trauma (Kessler et al 2005). Higher rates are also seen in African-Americans (Asnaani, Richey, Damaite, Hinton, Hofmann 2010), Native Americans 14-16%, (Robin, Chester, Rasmussen, Jaranson, Goldman 1997), and in refugees from conflict-ridden areas of the world 9-60% (Fazel Wheeler, Danesh 2005).

In one of her masterpieces, *Beloved* (1987), Toni Morrison portrays the dehumanizing effects of slavery on the past and the memory of the protagonist—who is a mother. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is a standout among modern works due to its narrative and historical context. Morrison clarified the experience of African Americans under the “institutionalized slavery” and the meaning of living as a slave, trying to understand and expose the painful experiences of African Americans history.

Morrison has succeeded in revealing the physical and psychological damage inflicted to the Black Slave Mother by the brutal inhumanity because of American slavery. In other word, through *Beloved*, Morrison try to link the event with trauma.

There is a pattern of generational violence that appears regularly in both slave narratives in general and the female characters in particular in Morrison's works. This reflects Morrison's tendency to write about mother-daughter interactions in

the context of slavery. Morrison portrays cyclical violence as a reason of psychological trauma in *Beloved* by drawing on the special dynamics of mother-daughter relationships.

Vickroy (2002) notes that in *Beloved*, Individual and collective memory are introduced to prevent forgetting by combining numerous voices, feelings, and experiences in Morrison's work. There are several narrators in Morrison's novel *Beloved* who give first-person testimony, bear witness to traumatized persons, trigger the protagonist's resistive memories, or represent collective traumas.

Morrison uses Paul D and Sethe as witnesses for each other's traumas, which date back to their enslavement in the Sweet Home 18 years before, to reveal the belated response of their unspeakable traumas, which are presented in a way of acting out that leads to the healing or working through trauma process. As a result of this, both Sethe and Paul D have had traumatic experiences, causing them to develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, which has far-reaching physical and psychological consequences.

The portrayal of trauma in Morrison's *Beloved* will be given through the traumatized experiences of the characters in order to demonstrate the late response of trauma in terms of acting out and dealing with responses. When it comes to dealing with or healing from trauma, Morrison describes how acting out the anguish helps the characters' individual journeys as well as their national historical parallels.

Thus, according to Lotta Sirkka (2011), in *Beloved*, Morrison focuses on traumatized families because uncovering physical and/or psychological trauma can cause disorder symptoms like "emotional numbing with a decreased responsiveness in the ability to feel, or even an inability to feel," as well as "recurrent flashbacks and memories" associated with trauma.

According to Bloom (2004), in *Beloved*, Morrison develops the characters to portray African Americans who had endured years of humiliation, suffering, and dehumanization as a result of the system of slavery. In this respect, in *Beloved* according to Akşak (2008), "Narrating the story of Sethe, Morrison focuses on the dehumanizing effect of slavery by emphasizing sufferings of slaves. The novel shows us what happened to Sethe, her family, and other slaves working on the plantation".

Accordingly, as the number of women trauma sufferer increased, *Beloved* should also be highlighted in order to investigating the role of slavery in causing trauma especially in slave woman. In slave community, women became the focus of familial relationships, and there came the "supremacy of the mother-child bond over all other relationships. As told in the novel that Sethe, the main character—a slave mother—uses her mother-child bond to do whatever is possible to save her children from the snare of slavery.

In other hand, Cultural Critic, Bell Hooks shows the serious long-term impacts of internalized oppression of African-Americans' mental health (Kirk, Okazawa-Rey 2007). Russell (1995) notes that slave narratives often emphasized the

essential of Black people's capacity to repress feelings as a key to survive, and that this ingrained habit has been passed on through family experiences for several generations. Many black females have learned to deny inner needs while develop the capacity to cope and confront in public life (Russell 1995).

According to all of these urges, this thesis aims to show the psychological impact in the form of trauma that might be suffered by a slave mother in Morrison's *Beloved*. As discussed previously by various scholar, through *Beloved*, Morrison portrays slavery and the slave psyche. Through the novel, Morrison shows how the traumatic collective past experiences of the Blacks and the individual own memory led to distorted experience of motherhood (Mohammed 2018). *Beloved* also shows how a slave mother lose her identity but still succeed to reconcile with the memory (Wood 2017, Massaad 2019).

It is prominent to discuss the topic because until today, violence cases against women still occurs a lot—whatever the cause. In 2019 in Indonesia, there were 431,471 cases of violence against women, consisting of 421,752 cases sourced from data on cases handled by the Religious Courts, 14,719 cases handled by service partner institutions and 1,419 cases from the Service and Referral Unit (UPR), a unit by *Komnas Perempuan*. Of the 1,419 reports, 1,277 were gender-based and 142 non gender-based cases. The reported violence data has increased significantly over the last five years (*Komnas Perempuan* 2020).

Therefore, this paper proposes to explore more about the impact that a slave mother might face in Morrison's *Beloved* by using the perspective of trauma

theory. Trauma issues are substantial to be discussed related to the impact that a slave mother might face as the impacts of slavery. Thus, this thesis aims to show that a slave mother might face a psychological impact(s) because of slavery experience.

### **B. Problems of The Study**

As the background of the study has been discussed before, the research problem is formulated:

1. What is the psychological impact of slavery suffered by the main characters in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*?
2. How is the trauma of Sethe influence the motherhood issue in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*?

### **C. Objective of The Study**

According to the research problem, the objective of this study is as follows:

1. To discuss the psychological impact of slavery suffered by the main characters in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.
2. To identify the effect of trauma on the Sethe's motherhood issue in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.

### **D. Scope of The Study**

In defining the research scope, this research focuses on finding the psychological impact(s) of slavery experienced by the main character of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. This research talks about the psychological impact(s) of slavery that experienced by Sethe as the main character of the novel. Furthermore, this research is limited in answering the research problem which is the

psychological impact(s) of slavery experienced by the main characters and the influence on the motherhood issue as included in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.

#### **E. Significance of The Study**

By conducting this research, the researcher theoretically expects to give a contribution in the form of concept and theory to the theoretical basis of literary works to understand and develop psychoanalysis literary criticism, especially trauma theories. Besides, practically, the researcher expects to contribute in increasing the literary work in conducting psychoanalysis literary criticism which is connected with the text or literary work. Moreover, this research is expected to contribute and enrich information into further analysis of research of psychoanalysis literary criticism.

#### **F. Research Method**

In the research method, the researcher presents research design, data and data source, data collection and data analysis of this research to point out what the researcher does in this research.

##### **1. Research Design**

This research is literary criticism using psychological approach, focusing on trauma theories. In analyzing, interpreting and evaluating the literary work, the researcher uses psychological approach in the form of literary criticism. This research focuses on Sethe's psychic state as a result of slavery in *Beloved* novel. Theory used for this research is trauma theory by Judith Herman.

##### **2. Data and Data Source**

The data source of this research is the literary work itself, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. All data form are words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues inside the

novel that indicates what the researcher tries to find out in research problems. *Beloved* (2004) with 321 pages was published in the United States by Vintage International, a division of Random House, Inc.

### 3. Data Collection

To collect the data, the researcher does some steps, as follows:

- a. Doing the first reading of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* to understand the whole story;
- b. Doing the close reading of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* to get a deep understanding of the novel. The researcher reads the most important part to identify the possible topic and data for the research;
- c. Highlighting the most important phrases, sentences, dialogues, and other shreds of evidence based on trauma theory.
- d. Evaluating and arranging systematically the appropriate data and determining the related theory to the data.

### 4. Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data by using several steps. First, the researcher classifies the data to the psychological impact(s) of slavery experienced by the main character in the novel. Secondly, the researcher analyzes and interprets the selected data based on trauma theory. The last, the researcher draws a conclusion based on the finding.

## **G. Previous Studies**

As the trauma and identity topic on slavery issue become debatable, many scholars discuss them in their researches, studies, and works. Mohammed (2018), in his study, *The Impact of Slavery in Toni Morrison's Beloved: From the Communal to the Individual*, has focused on that the slavery experience

affects not only a certain person but also a group of people who were involved in slavery. Mohammed (2018) conclude that Morrison has succeeded to dig into how traumatic collective past of Black people and the individual memory leads to distorted experience of motherhood (Mohammed 2018).

Mohammed (2018) found that in *Beloved*, Morrison successfully points out that the ghost of slavery is not only a personal matter but also a horrible communal past. Sethe's new hope and free live in the end of the novel shows that Morrison has given African-American new hope and brings individuals and community together—a sense of corporation on both the Black and White (Mohammed 2018).

In other hand, the slavery experience has been linked to identity issue, faced by the ex-slave person. Wood (2017), discuss about the abuse of slavery in Morrison's *Beloved* affect the loss of identity of the main character—who is considered as an ex-slave. Wood (2017) relating the domestic abuse that Sethe experienced to domestic abuse in marriages. Woods found that Sethe's identity is altered by *Beloved* as she often changes to resemble a loses sight of themselves and their true identity (Wood 2017).

Also, Massaad (2019) discusses the reconciliation for new self-identity in Morrison's *Beloved*. Massaad (2019) argues that the novel reveals the tension between forgetting and remembering past experiences and how the tension acts on the ex-slave lives; physically, emotionally, and psychologically. The



dehumanization treats that were affected Sethe become traumatic experiences to her, and drive her mad (Massaad 2019).

As conclusion, Massaad (2019) stated that readers can traces the three stages of self-identity reconciliation in novel. Those are repressing traumatic memory by the characters, then learning how to reconcile with their memory, and finally being cleared from all the painful experiences and having a rebirth or a new identity separate from the formal one (Massaad 2019).

According to the previous studies, this research aims to highlight that slavery experience can bring trauma to a slave mother and influence her mothering life. The research focusing on how the slavery experience cause a significant impact not only physically but also psychologically. Therefore, this research function as a refinement of the previous studies.

#### **H. Definition of Key Terms**

In this research, the researcher uses some key terms and delivers the definition of key terms that can help the reader understand the concept or the content of the research.

##### **1. Trauma**

Trauma is any disturbing experience that results in significant fear, helplessness, dissociation, confusion, or other disruptive feelings intense enough to have a long-lasting negative effect on a person's attitude, behavior, and other aspects of functioning (APA Dictionary).

##### **2. Slavery**

Slavery is a condition in which one human being was owned by another. A slave was considered by law as property, or chattel, and was deprived of most of the rights ordinarily held by free persons (Richard Hellie, Encyclopedia Britannica).

### 3. Motherhood

Motherhood means the state of being a mother for a woman, the maternity state of a woman (Dictionary.com).

## **CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. Psychology of Literature**

The works of literature not only functioning as a reading material and entertainment for the readers, but also an object for the author to express his feeling, opinion, or maybe critics. Critics of literature sees literary works as a psychiatric activity whether from the author or the readers (Djojuroto, 2006). In writing literary work, the author must be establishing characters with various characteristics to give the attractiveness of the storyboard. The psychological aspects of the literary work can be known according on the author, writing background, fiction or real-life inspired characters of the story.

Literature critics especially in psychology major, use their knowledge about psychological matters to interpret a literary work without relating to the biograph of the author. The critics review the characters' behavior in a literary work using the psychology theories. If the word turns out that the characters' behavior matches what he knows about the human soul, then he has succeeded in using psychological theories to explain and interpret the literary work (Hardjana, 1981).

In relation to literature, psychology is an auxiliary science relevant because the process of understanding literary works can be taken theories and the rules of psychology. This is supported by the opinion of Atmadja (1986) that the relationship between psychology and literature is on one side of the work

literature is considered to be the result of human activity and expression. Therefore, between literature and psychology are reciprocal, they are not in a simple relationship, but one that can be understood. According to that, can be said that literary science can relate to psychology called psychology of literature.

Psychology, in specific, can be interpreted as the study of human psyche. Endraswara (2008) stated that literature is a “psychiatric symptom”, where the psyche phenomena can be seen through the characters’ behavior. Therefore, literature can be criticized using psychological approach because both are related closely. Although authors rarely think psychologically, their works can still have psychological nuances. This is acceptable because literature and psychology have an indirect and functional cross-relationship.

Psychology itself is determined into several types that mostly related to each other, such as general psychology which examines human behavior, developmental psychology which discusses the formation of human nature, and abnormal psychology which studies about deviating habits from a human being in general. Psychological phenomena are one of the things most often encountered in everyday life.

Psychological phenomena can be form of a deviant life such as trauma, psychopathy, sexuality, or unfamiliar personality matters in normal life. Characters in a literary work are one of the main highlights in studying the literary works through a psychological approach. This causes literature to become reading material that gets a lot of reading and research by the readers.

Thus, psychology and literature have a functional relationship in which both are useful tools of studying the human psyche aspect of the literary work. The difference between the two is, the psychological symptoms that exist in literary works are imaginary human psychological symptoms, whereas in psychology they are real humans. Although human characteristics in literary works are imaginary, the author adapted real human's behavior as role models in creating and describing the characters' characteristics.

Therefore, psychology is used in literature as an approach to study the character of the literary work. In analyzing characters of literary work and their characterizations, a literary critic must be using the theory and rules of psychology that explain human behavior and character.

According to Wellek and Warren (1989), psychology of literature has four research possibilities. First, research on author's psyche as a person. Second, research on the creative process in relation to the psyche. Third, research on psychological rules as applied to literature. Fourth, research on psychological impacts of text toward the readers (Wellek and Warren, 1989).

The third type of psychological of literature research possibilities according to Wellek and Warren, is commonly used in literary work studies in relation to characters' psyche in the text. There are many life aspects that author adds into a literary work, especially human beings. These humanity aspects are the main object of psychology of literature in general because it is in humans who act as

the characters that become assets for application of the psychological aspects in literary works.

According to the theory above, the study of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is using psychological approach as study of type and rules as applied to the literary work. Specifically, the analysis that will be carried out is mainly directed at the psychological condition of Sethe, the main character who plays a role in the story to reveal her personality as a whole.

## **B. Trauma**

Trauma is a complex and multifaceted experience that can have a profound impact on an individual's mental and physical health, relationships, and overall well-being. Supratika (1995) defines trauma as an experience that destroy feelings of security, self-worth, and self-confidence, so that it causes psychological wounds that are difficult to fully healed (Supratika, 1995). When someone has trauma to lives with, then the sense of security and comfort becomes disturbed or even disappear in his daily life.

Judith Herman (1997) describes trauma as either being intimately involved with death and violence or as the threat to one's own life and physical integrity. These facts lead Lenore Terr (1990) to believe the external trauma is swiftly shaping one's mind to create psych trauma, which occurs after multiple external emotional assaults or blows that are both overpowering and unexpected.

Herman defines trauma as an experience that "shatters the self." In her book *Trauma and Recovery*, she describes trauma as an event or series of events that

overwhelm a person's ability to cope, and leave them feeling helpless, powerless, and disconnected from themselves and others.

Herman notes that trauma is not just the result of physical harm, but can also result from emotional, psychological, and social harm. She argues that trauma is not just an individual problem, but also a social and cultural problem that is shaped by the broader context of social inequality, oppression, and violence.

Herman also notes that trauma is not caused by just a single event, but can also result from ongoing experiences of abuse, neglect, or oppression. This type of trauma, known as complex trauma, can have lasting and pervasive relationships and society.

Judith Herman's definition of trauma emphasizes the profound impact of traumatic experiences on an individual's sense of self and their ability to cope with and navigate the world. She highlights the importance of understanding trauma as a complex and multifaceted experience that is shaped by both individual and social factors.

Herman also identified that there are three key symptom clusters that are associated with traumatic experiences. These symptom clusters are known as hyperarousal, intrusion, and constriction (Herman, 1997).

1. Hyperarousal

This symptom cluster is characterized by a state of heightened alertness and sensitivity to potential threats. Individuals experiencing hyperarousal may be easily startled, irritable, and may have difficulty sleeping or concentrating. They

may be hypervigilant, constantly scanning their environment for potential danger, and may feel on edge or anxious even in relatively safe situations. Individuals who experience hyperarousal may feel constantly tense of anxiety and may have trouble relaxing or feeling safe.

## 2. Intrusion

Intrusion refers to the way that traumatic memories can invade an individual's consciousness, even when they are not consciously thinking about the traumatic event. This symptom can be particularly distressing, as they involve involuntary recollection of traumatic experiences. These can take the form of flashbacks, which involve feeling as though one is reliving the traumatic event, or nightmares, which can be vivid and intense. Intrusive symptoms can also manifest as physical sensations, such as pain or tension in the body, or as emotional distress, such as feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or helpless.

## 3. Constriction

Constriction is a pattern of emotional and behavioral avoidance that can develop in response to trauma. The symptom involves emotional and behavioral avoidance, as individuals seek to avoid any stimuli that might trigger memories or reminders of the traumatic event. This can take the form of avoidance behaviors, such as avoiding people, places, or situations that remind one of the trauma, or avoiding thoughts, feelings, or memories associated with the trauma. Constriction can also manifest as emotional numbing or disconnection, as individuals may find it difficult to experience or express their emotions fully.



It is worth noting that trauma symptoms can be complex and multifaceted, and may present differently in different individuals. Symptoms may vary in intensity and duration depending on the individual and the nature of their traumatic experience. Additionally, symptoms can be influenced by a range of factors, including the severity and duration of the traumatic event, as well as an individual's personality, coping mechanisms, and support systems. Herman's theory highlights the wide-ranging impact that traumatic experiences can have on an individual's emotional and psychological well-being, and underscores the importance of providing support and resources to individuals who have experienced trauma.

Furthermore, Judith Herman classified the trauma to help providing a framework for understanding the different type of trauma that individuals may experience.

Type I trauma or Acute Trauma is typically associated with a specific, discrete event that is often sudden and unexpected, such as natural disaster, car accident, or violent attack. Individuals who experience Type I trauma may feel a sense of shock, horror, and helplessness in response to the event. They may also experience symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, and anxiety in the aftermath of the trauma (Herman, 1997).

Type II trauma or Chronic Trauma is associated with prolonged exposure to traumatic events, such as ongoing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, neglect, or living in a war zone. Individuals who experience Type II trauma may develop

complex PTSD, which is characterized by symptoms such as emotional numbness, dissociation, and difficulty regulating emotions. They may also struggle with feelings of shame, guilt, and self-blame (Herman, 1997).

Type III trauma is the complex one, associated with the betrayal of a trusted caregiver or authority figure, such as a parent, teacher, or therapist. This type of trauma can result in a deep sense of betrayal and loss of trust in others. Examples of type III trauma can include emotional or physical abuse by a caregiver, sexual abuse by a therapist, or institutional abuse by an organization. Individuals who experience Type III trauma may struggle with issues such as trust, intimacy, and boundaries in their relationships with others (Herman, 1997).

The trauma theory developed by Judith Herman proposes that traumatic experiences can have lasting effects on individuals, particularly when trauma is chronic and ongoing. Herman identified three stages of recovery from trauma, such as safety and stabilization, remembrance and mourning, reconnection and reintegrating (Herman, 1997). Those can be elaborated as following:

1. Safety and Stabilization

In this stage, the focus is on ensuring the individual's safety and creating a stable environment. Herman recognized that trauma survivors often feel unsafe and may struggle with trust issues, so creating a safe and stable environment is critical to help them feel secure enough to engage in the recovery process. This may involve addressing basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare, as well

as providing emotional support and helping the individual develop coping skills to manage the symptoms of trauma.

## 2. Remembrance and mourning

In this stage, the individual is encouraged to explore and process the memories of the traumatic event. This can be a painful and difficult process, but it is necessary for healing to occur. The individual is supported in expressing their feelings and emotions related to the trauma and in mourning any losses or change that resulted from the experience. Herman emphasized the importance of providing a supportive and validating environment for this stage of recovery, where the individual can feel heard and understood without being judged and invalidated.

## 3. Reconnection and reintegrating

The final stage of recovery in Herman's model is reconnection and integration. This involves helping the individual reintegrate into society and rebuild their life. This can involve developing new relationships, finding meaning and purpose, and creating a sense of identity that incorporates their experience of trauma without being defined by it. Herman emphasized the importance of helping the individual develop a sense of agency and autonomy in this stage of recovery, so that they feel empowered to make their own decisions and pursue their own goals.

Based on the three stages of trauma recovery above, Herman also identified several key principles of recovery from trauma:

### 1. Empowerment

This involves helping the survivor regain a sense of control and agency in their own life. It can involve developing skills and strategies for coping with trauma-related symptoms, as well as setting and achieving goals that are meaningful and empowering for the survivor.

## 2. Trauma-Informed Care

Another key principle of recovery from trauma is the provision of trauma-informed care. This approach recognizes the impact of trauma on the individual and takes into account their needs and experiences. It involves creating a safe and non-judgmental environment plan that is tailored to their specific needs.

These key principles of recovery from trauma according to Judith Herman's model emphasize the importance of safety, validation, and empowerment in the recovery process. By creating a supportive and validating environment, survivors can begin to process their trauma and move towards healing and resilience. By focusing on empowerment and agency, survivor can regain a sense of control over their own lives and pursue their own goals and aspirations.

According to the explanations above, can be concluded that trauma is a bad experience that emerged in someone because there is unpleasure event that can bring big impacts to his physic or psyche. The psychological impact that will be caused will be more dangerous. It will bring great feelings of anxiety, threatened, and helpless to the person impacted.

### CHAPTER III FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the researcher would like to provide the findings and discussions of the study as the answer of the research questions which have been mentioned in first chapter of the study. The researcher analyzes Toni Morrison's *Beloved* through the trauma theory by Judith Herman.

Correspondingly, the research has found out that the characters in the novel suffered trauma as the form of psychological impact of slavery. The trauma issues occur in Morrison's *Beloved* through the characters' experiences of slavery, abuse, loss, violence, and their struggles to come with their traumatic pasts and find a way to move forward. According to Judith Herman's classification of trauma, all three of them are occurred in the novel, suffered by the characters.

Furthermore, the novel serves as a powerful depiction of the lasting impact of trauma on individuals and their communities, and the ways in which this trauma can be passed down through family lines. Morrison depicts the experiences of some characters who have been impacted by slavery and its legacy of trauma. It will later be mentioned as intergenerational trauma.

In addition to the result of analyzing the traumatic experiences in *Beloved*, the novel also shows the impact of trauma on memory and identity. The characters struggle to come to terms with their traumatic pasts and to find ways to move forward in the aftermath of their experiences. For Sethe, the protagonist of the

novel, this involves confronting the trauma of her past and finding a way to reconcile with her daughter, Denver, and the ghost of her murdered child, Beloved.

#### **A. The Psychological Impact of Slavery Suffered by The Characters of The Novel**

Trauma issues are a central theme in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. This novel depicts the traumatic experiences of its characters as the psychological impact of their experiences of slavery. The symptoms of trauma that shown in the novel demonstrate how trauma affects individuals in different ways and can have long-lasting effects on their emotional and psychological well-being. The symptoms of trauma depicted in the novel are consistent with Judith Herman's theory, and serve to highlight the importance of recognizing and addressing trauma in order to promote healing and recovery.

One of the key ways in which trauma issues occur in the novel is through the experiences of Sethe, the novel's protagonist, who is a former slave. Sethe's traumatic experiences include the physical and emotional abuse that she endured as a slave, the loss of her husband and children, and her decision to kill her own child in order to spare her from the vicious circle of slavery.

Symptoms are shown by the characters in the novel, indicating that they suffer from trauma. Sethe is haunted by the trauma of her past as a slave and her decision to kill her own child rather than let her be returned to a life of slavery. Sethe's trauma is manifested in her emotional numbness and her inability to connect with others, including her surviving children. She also experiences flashbacks and

nightmares related to her past, and has physical scars that serve as a reminder of the abuse she endured as a slave.

The hyperarousal symptom is seen in Sethe's constant hypervigilance and fear of losing her daughter, Beloved. Sethe is always on guard to protect Beloved from any potential threats, and she has difficulty sleeping and is easily startled. Sethe's hypervigilance is likely a result of her past experiences as a slave, where she was constantly in danger and had to be vigilant to survive.

Sethe is haunted by the fear of being recaptured and returned to slavery, which leads to her being overly protective of her children. This fear and paranoia stem from the trauma she experienced as a slave. Sethe tells Paul D about her decision to kill her children rather than let them be returned to Sweet Home,

*"I took and put my babies where they's be safe...Eighteen eighty, Cincinnati. More than twenty years past 1855, but still held on to that fear. Like a madwoman holding on to a sane moment, she rationed off her head."* (Morrison, 2004, p.16)

Another evidence of Sethe constantly afraid of being captured and returned to slavery, and this fear causes her to be paranoid and mistrustful of others. As stated in the book page 43,

*"Sethe didn't take kindly to strangers who thought they could come in and spy on her. Especially whitefolks. She did not care who they were there, but she took pleasure in driving them out of 124, taking back what was hers."* (Morrison, 2004, p.43)

Sethe's intrusive memories of her past trauma, particularly the trauma of having her breastmilk stolen, indicated that Sethe has the intrusion symptom of trauma. These memories invade her consciousness and she is unable to suppress them. Sethe also experiences flashbacks and nightmares related to her traumatic

experiences. For example, she has vivid recollections of being whipped and having her milk stolen, and she has nightmares about being trapped in a dark place.

Sethe experiences frequent flashbacks of her past as a slave, such as the trauma of her journey from Sweet Home to Ohio. Sethe has a flashback of her escape from Sweet Home,

*“In the quietness that came to her after the screaming, she heard the whispering of the women. Their heads bent together, their skirts touching as they silently looked out at her rough riding on the river.”* (Morrison, 2004, p.18)

Sethe experiences nightmares of her traumatic experiences as a slave. She has a recurring dream about a white dress that she associates with the trauma of being whipped. As stated in the book,

*“It was not a story to pass on. So they forgot her. Like an unpleasant dream during a troubling sleep. Occasionally they wondered about Sethe’s earrings or a blue dress she used to wear, but no one remembered the sadness that settled down on her after Beloved”* (Morrison, 2004, p.273)

The constriction symptom is seen in Sethe’s emotional avoidance and numbness. She has difficulty expressing her emotions and tends to avoid talking about her past. Sethe is emotionally disconnected from her partner, Paul D, and has trouble trusting him with her secrets. Sethe’s emotional avoidance is likely a coping mechanism she developed to protect herself from the pain and trauma of her past.

Sethe is emotionally numb and detached as a result of her trauma. She has trouble connecting with others and expressing her feelings. As stated in the book,

*“Sethe, Denver thought, was a tree on fire from the inside. She could put her hand on the trunk and feel the vibrations from the core. But she could not see the fire. The tender shoots of new leaves were consumed before they had a chance to uncurl, and the old ones burned away into ash. Sethe was crippled from the waist down and she approached life crawling”* (Morrison, 2004, p.45).



Sethe has a tendency to shut down emotionally in response to trauma, particularly when it comes to discussing her experiences as a slave. When Paul D tries to get her to talk about her experiences at Sweet Home, she responds with silence as stated in the book,

*“He looked into her face and saw that it was not shut down but hard, closed to him. Hard, closed and the eyes like the rest of her-staring and not seeing.”* (Morrison, 2004, p.16)

Therefore, Paul D is also affected by the trauma of his past as a slave. He has difficulty forming meaningful relationships and is emotionally guarded as a result of his experience. As the book suggests,

*“It was a nice dance, but he wanted her only because she was there, because it was night, and because he had nothing else to do. That was all”* (Morrison, 2004, p.163).

Paul D experiences frequent, vivid memories of his past as a slave, which intrude into his present reality. For example, Paul D has a flashback to a brutal punishment he received on the Sweet Home plantation.

Paul D also experiences flashbacks and nightmares related to his past, which often leave him feeling helpless and powerless. He has a flashback of being imprisoned in a “place with no roof” as found in the novel page 35,

*“He began to remember a place; a dark, cramped, dead-air hole where he had been confined once for two months... no light, no room, someone chained to the wall next door who moaned and prayed and defecated right there in front of them all.”* (Morrison, 2004, p.35)

Paul D is depicted as emotionally disconnected from those around him, which suggests a form of emotional numbing. He is described as feeling “empty”, which suggests that he is struggling to connect emotionally with his own feelings and those of others.

Paul D is haunted by the memories of his past and has difficulty processing and integrating them into his present life. This causes him to feel emotionally numb and disconnected from his present reality. As stated in the book page 24,

*“He had ceased to wonder what was beyond the cotton fields and had come to accept his limits absolutely. The future was a matter of keeping the past at bay.”* (Morrison, 2004, 24)

Paul D avoids situations or stimuli that remind him of his past trauma. For example, Paul D avoids looking at Sethe’s scar, which serves as a reminder of the violence she experienced as a slave. As stated in the book,

*“And since that time in the Sweet Home men’s hut when he saw the circle and saw them coming toward him, he had not seen nor touched nor smelled anything related to it”* (Morrison, 2004, p.36).

He is also hyper-vigilant and easily startled, which suggests a state of hyperarousal. For example, Paul D is startled by a bird and jumps, which indicates that he is in a state of heightened sensitivity. As in page 37 of the book,

*“He started when he heard the tread of feet on the steps outside. After a moment, he recognized the sound of his own boots.”* He also experiences fear and paranoia as stated in *“He was afraid to love those things which might disappear... He wanted to put his story next to hers”* (Morrison, 2004, p.125).

Therefore, the character Beloved exhibits symptoms of trauma that are consistent with Judith Herman’s theory of trauma. She has intrusive memories of her past, is hyper-aroused and emotionally disconnected from others. Beloved’s symptoms of trauma are likely a result of the abuse and neglect she experienced as a child, as well as the trauma of being killed by her mother.

Beloved is often hypervigilant and fearful of being abandoned or rejected, which are symptoms of hyperarousal. She is very possessive of Sethe and is always worried that Sethe will leave her. Beloved is also easily startled and has trouble sleeping, which are also symptoms of hyperarousal.

Beloved is frequently afraid of being abandoned or forgotten. She often asks Sethe, “*You still love me?*” (Morrison, 2004, p. 39) and says things like, “*Don’t let them throw me away*” (Morrison, 2004, p.34).

Beloved also often fearful and mistrustful of others. She believes that Sethe and Paul D are going to abandon her, and becomes enraged when they leave her alone. Beloved thinks to herself,

“*They won’t come back. Nobody ever comes back.*” (Morrison, 2004, p.243)

Beloved also has intrusive memories of her past, particularly memories related to the abuse and neglect she experienced as a child. These memories often invade her consciousness and she is unable to suppress them. Beloved also experiences flashbacks and nightmares related to her traumatic experiences.

Beloved is haunted by memories of her past, particularly her death, which she relives in her dreams. For example, on page 224, Beloved dreams about being “*in the water again, the cold, the dead.*” (Morrison, 2004, p.224)

Beloved frequently has flashbacks to her life before she died, particularly to moments with her mother. For example, she says,

“*I remember... I remember... I remember*” (Morrison, 2004, p.36) and “*My mother did not pick me up. She liked to see me crawl.*” (Morrison, 2004, p.38)

Beloved exhibits emotional avoidance and has difficulty expressing her emotions, which are symptoms of constriction. She often withdraws from others and avoids talking about her past. Beloved often seems disconnected from her surroundings and experiences. she struggles to communicate her thoughts and feelings to others, and is often described as being in a “*trance-like state.*” For

instance, Sethe notes that “*Beloved had stopped speaking, stopped moving, stopped eating.*” (Morrison, 2004, p.234)

Beloved often appears emotionally detached, particularly when talking about her past. For example, when Sethe asks her if she remembers anything about her life before she died, Beloved responds, “*Not much.*” (Morrison, 2004, p.36)

Beloved’s trauma and presence itself represent the intergenerational trauma of slavery. The inherited trauma among slave legacy is all symbolized as Beloved presence in the novel. Beloved’s arrival disrupts the family’s attempt to move on. Her appearance embodies the collective trauma of the black community. Beloved’s hunger and desire for revenge symbolize the legacy of slavery and the cycle of violence in slavery.

In the novel, Beloved’s arrival interferes the family’s attempt to move on. Sethe and her children have been struggling to rebuild their lives after escaping from slavery. Beloved’s sudden appearance disrupts their progress. Beloved’s need for attention and validation draws Sethe and Denver into a cycle of guilt and obligation that mirror the emotional toll of slavery.

*“They didn’t talk much. They didn’t talk at all about what might be coming in the morning. They didn’t talk about what each had seen, what each felt. They just sat. Quiet. Waiting to see if tomorrow would be different from yesterday”* (Chapter 19).

The passage before reflects the stagnation and emotional numbness that Beloved’s arrival brings to the family.

*"Nobody stopped playing checkers, nobody looked up"* (Chapter 16). This sentence demonstrates the sense of isolation and disconnection that Beloved's presence creates within the community.

Beloved is described as *"all the parts of [Sethe's] self that had been shoved away, blooming out of her daughter's face"* (Chapter 19). She represents the unacknowledged trauma of slavery that haunted the black community, and her presence forces Sethe and her family to confront their own repressed memories and emotions.

*"It was not a story to pass on. So when Baby Suggs, holy, saw them walking down the road that led to the Clearing, she didn't tell herself it was her daughter and granddaughter. She thought it was the two sisters, Mary and Liza, whom she had not seen since they were children"* (Chapter 4).

The passage before suggests that the trauma of slavery has made it difficult for people to recognize their own family member.

*"She was the only one who had no childhood to remember. So when the other two thought of themselves as babies, it was only natural that she would be left out of the picture. They made her up, creating in their minds whatever missing parts her presence in the world required"* (Chapter 19).

The passage before highlights how Beloved's trauma is not just her own, but also the result of a larger societal trauma.

Moreover, Beloved's insatiable hunger is a metaphor for the unfulfilled needs and desires of the black community that were never addressed after slavery ended. Her need for food and attention reflects the psychological hunger that arises from intergenerational trauma.

As stated in the novel, *"Beloved ate up the food Sethe had cooked, ate it all without stopping, without taking a breath"* (Chapter 19). This shows Beloved's insatiable hunger

as the representation of the psychological hunger that arises from intergenerational trauma.

Also stated in Chapter 19 of the book, *“She ate like an animal, quickly, fiercely, with no grace or mercy, just as a hog would eat”*. The passage reinforces the animalistic nature of Beloved’s hunger, which reflects the way that black people were treated like animals during slavery.

Also, Beloved’s desire for revenge against Sethe represents the cycle of violence and oppression that was inherent in slavery. Her anger and desire for retribution are a reflection of the pain and suffering that black people have endured for generations.

In Chapter 20 of the book, *“I will never run from another thing on this earth. Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another”* reflects Beloved’s desire for revenge against Sethe, which is rooted in the power of dynamics of slavery.

*“And 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 anymore. Dirty you so bad you forgot who you were and couldn’t think it up”* (Chapter 18).

This passage describes the ways in which black people were dehumanized and degraded during slavery, which underscores the need for revenge and retribution.

Denver, Sethe’s remaining daughter, is also affected by the trauma of her past. She is isolated from the outside world and has difficulty forming relationships outside of her immediate family. Denver’s trauma is a result of her mother’s action

and the societal stigma associated with being the child of a slave who killed her own child.

Denver is easily startled or on edge, especially when she is reminded of the trauma she experienced—such as when Sethe talks about killing her sister in order to save her. In addition, Denver experienced fear and anxiety. For instance, in Chapter 2, when Paul D arrives at 124 Bluestone Road, Denver is described as being afraid to approach him and feeling anxious about his presence. The text states,

*“Denver backed away from him, trying to steady herself. She had not been this close to a man in years, not since the schoolteacher had taken her brothers away”* (Morrison, 2004, p.30).

Denver also experiences nightmares and flashbacks related to the trauma of slavery and the violence that her family has faced. For example, when Denver describes her dreams, she says,

*“I dreamed of Ma’am, crawling on the floor, her dress up over her head, all her clothes on fire, reaching for me. And my feet wouldn’t move”* (Morrison, 2004, p.38).

This dream is a manifestation of Denver’s trauma, as it is a flashback to the violence that she has witnessed and a feeling of helplessness in the face of that violence.

Denver experiences flashbacks of the trauma she experienced, which makes her struggling in concentrate or engage in everyday activities. She avoids situations or people that remind her of the trauma, such as not wanting to leave the house or not wanting to talk about what happened. As in Chapter 16 in the book, when Baby Suggs’ funeral takes place, Denver chooses to stay home alone instead of attending the gathering. The text states,

*“Denver refused to go, retreated to her room and stayed there until the sun began to set”* (Morrison, 2004, p.174).

Denver struggles with feelings of guilt or shame related to the trauma she experienced—such as feeling guilty for being saved while her sister was not. She has difficulty trusting others, especially if she feels like they could put her in danger. Denver believes that she is inherently unsafe or that the world is a cruel and unjust place. As the book suggests in page 22,

*“She lived in that house and saw the same furniture and the same yard and the same faces, but there was no world at all outside of it for her. She might as well have been living in a dream or a foreign country.”* (Morrison, 2004, p.22)

Denver often appears numb to her surroundings and emotions. For instance, she is unable to feel happy or joyful despite the fact that her family’s situation has improved and her mother, Sethe, has stopped talking about her traumatic past. Another example is Denver’s sense of isolation and emotional numbness. This is particularly evident in Chapter 5 when she is left alone with Beloved while Sethe and Paul D are out. The text describes Denver’s feelings of loneliness and detachment, stating,

*“She had the strange feeling that she was the only one in the world, that everybody and everything else had disappeared”* (Morrison, 2004, p.62).

Additionally, Denver exhibits symptoms of avoidance and withdrawal from social interaction. For example, in Chapter 16, when Baby Suggs’ funeral takes place, Denver chooses to stay home alone instead of attending the gathering. The text states,

*“Denver refused to go, retreated to her room and stayed there until the sun began to set”* (Morrison, 2004, p.174).



## **B. Trauma of Slavery Effect on The Motherhood Issue**

The trauma of slavery also affected Sethe's motherhood. This sub chapter will explain the effect of the trauma on motherhood issue. The trauma of slavery drives Sethe to murder her baby in order to save the baby from the practice of slavery in the future. As a result, Sethe's ability to become a mother is also impaired.

In Morrison's *Beloved*, trauma deeply affects motherhood, particularly Sethe's experience of motherhood. Sethe is a former slave who has escaped to freedom, but she is haunted by the memories of the trauma she has endured. She has been forced to give birth to her children in a barn and has experienced the pain of being separated from her children, including her daughter who was taken away from her when she was a baby.

In Morrison's *Beloved*, trauma and motherhood are closely intertwined. The trauma that the characters have experienced, particularly in the context of slavery and its aftermath, has profound and lasting effects on their abilities to mother their children. The trauma in the novel has deeply affected the characters' ability to mother and be mothered, illustrating the lasting impact of slavery on both individuals and the broader society.

Trauma is a central theme in Morrison's *Beloved*, and it has a significant impact on motherhood in the novel as stated before. Sethe, the protagonist, is traumatized by the violence and abuse she suffered as a slave, and this trauma affects her ability to be a good mother to her children.

Sethe's traumatic experiences have affected her ability to mother her children. She is overprotective of her children and is willing to go to extreme lengths to

keep them safe. This is evident in the way she kills her own daughter Beloved rather than allowing her to be taken back into slavery. Sethe's actions are driven by her trauma and her fear of losing her children again.

Sethe's traumatic experiences as a slave have left her unable to trust others and fearful of losing her children. This leads her to commit a horrific act of infanticide to protect her children from the horrors of slavery, an act that haunts her for the rest of her life. Sethe's experiences of trauma lead to her being emotionally distant from her children and struggling to show them affection. Her trauma also leads to her extreme protectiveness of her children.

Sethe's trauma from her experience as a slave has affected her ability to be a present and loving mother to her surviving children, as stated in the book,

*"And if she thought anything, it was No. No. Nono. Nonono. Simple. She just flew. Collected every bit of life she had made, all the parts of her that were precious and fine and beautiful, and carried, pushed, dragged them through the veil, out, away, over there where no one could hurt them. Over there. Outside this place, where they would be safe."* (Morrison, 2004, p.251)

Another example of how trauma affects motherhood in *Beloved* can be seen in Sethe's relationship with her children. Sethe's experiences as a slave have made her fiercely protective of her children and determined to keep them from suffering the same fate as she did. However, her trauma also causes her to struggle with motherhood, as she is haunted by the memories of her own mother's abandonment and feels unable to give her children the love and care they deserve.

Sethe's trauma and her intense need to protect her children are shown to have a direct impact on her ability to be a nurturing mother. Additionally, the trauma of slavery is shown to have a ripple effect on subsequent generations, as seen in

the character of Beloved, who is the manifestation of the trauma experienced by Sethe and her ancestors.

Sethe reflects on her struggles with motherhood,

*“It was easy enough to be a mother when she was telling her children what to do. She could be strict, demanding, and sometimes even cruel. But when it came to the other thing, the love thing, she was lost. She couldn’t do it. She had tried, but the effort was too much for her. And when the effort got to be too much, she stopped trying”* (Morrison, 2004, p.192).

This passage illustrates how Sethe’s trauma has affected her ability to show love and affection to her children.

The trauma that Sethe experienced as a slave is also passed down to her surviving daughter, Denver, who is raised in an atmosphere of fear and anxiety. Sethe’s trauma has also affected her ability to bond with Denver, who grows up in near isolation as a result of her mother overprotectiveness. Denver is also traumatized by her isolation and lack of socialization, as her mother’s protectiveness has resulted in them living in almost complete isolation.

As Sethe reflects on her relationship with Denver, she says,

*“She loved them all but had to love Denver in secret. She couldn’t risk losing her the way she had lost her boys because the knowledge of Denver’s value would have put her in the master’s eyes”* (Morrison, 2004, p.192).

Denver’s traumatic experiences as a child impact her relationship with her mother. She is initially isolated from the outside world and has no experience with mothering and nurturing. As a result, she struggles to understand her own feelings and emotions as she grows older. However, as she begins to understand her own trauma and the trauma of her mother, she becomes more emotionally mature and takes on a maternal role within the household, particularly towards Beloved.

Beloved's character is complex, and her behavior can be interpreted in various ways. However, there are some instances in which her behavior can be seen as related to motherhood and the trauma associated with it. For example, Beloved is obsessed with Sethe and often demands her attention and affection. This can be seen as an attempt to reclaim the motherly love that she never received as a result of her traumatic death as a baby. Additionally, Beloved's behavior can be seen as an expression of the anger and pain that she feels as a result of being denied the opportunity to have a mother.

Beloved's trauma, which is representative of the intergenerational trauma of slavery, has also had a profound impact on her motherhood. She longs for the motherly love and attention that she was denied as a result of her enslavement, and her arrival in Sethe's household disrupts the fragile balance that exists between Sethe and Denver.

Beloved's presence in the novel represents the traumatic loss of motherhood. She is a ghostly figure who embodies the memory of Sethe's dead daughter, and her arrival disrupts Sethe's attempts to rebuild her family. Beloved's presence creates a sense of unease and emotional turmoil within the household, and Sethe's relationship with her surviving children becomes increasingly strained as a result.

Furthermore, Beloved's desire to merge with Sethe can also be interpreted as a desire to experience the mother-child relationship that was denied to her. Her need for love and attention can be seen as a manifestation of the trauma of her

past, and her attempts to connect with Sethe can be seen as a way of trying to heal this trauma.

Another example is when Beloved insists on being with Sethe all the time and not leaving her side. This can be seen as a desperate attempt to cling onto a maternal figure and to never let her go, as her own mother was taken from her at a young age. Beloved's desire for a mother is so strong that it causes her to become possessive and jealous, even to the point of trying to harm Sethe.

Beloved's presence has a significant impact on Sethe's ability to be a mother. Her arrival in family causes Sethe to become consumed with guilt and to neglect her other children, as the text states,

*"Her mother's love was like a blade at [Denver's] neck. She could not get enough of it. When [Sethe] was present, Denver felt her mother absence: when Sethe was gone, her mother's pallor and absence remained like a sullen aftertaste in Denver's mouth."* (Morrison, 2004, p.196)

These behaviors can be seen as a manifestation of the trauma that Beloved experienced as a slave and as a motherless child. Her desperation for maternal love and connection is a direct result of the pain and trauma she has experienced in her life.

In Morrison's *Beloved*, Baby Suggs also experiences the impact of trauma on her motherhood. Before the events of the novel, she had given birth to eight children, all of whom were either sold or died in slavery. This loss and trauma deeply affected her and caused her to question her own value as a mother.

The trauma of slavery also impacted her ability to fully enjoy her remaining children, including Halle and Sethe. She has difficulty expressing affection and

joy towards them, and her sadness and grief sometimes manifests in anger and frustration. As a result, she withdraws from her family and community, finding solace in her garden and spiritual practices.

Baby Suggs, Sethe's mother-in-law, is a former slave who is deeply affected by the trauma of slavery. The trauma she has experienced has a significant impact on her approach to motherhood. One example of how trauma affects Baby Suggs' motherhood is her decision to encourage her children to love their own bodies.

In the novel, Baby Suggs tells her children to "*love their hands, love their eyes*" and to "*love themselves.*" This focus on self-care is a direct response to the trauma of slavery, which stripped many slaves of their humanity and agency. By encouraging her children to love themselves, Baby Suggs is helping them to reclaim their dignity and sense of self-worth.

Other example of trauma affecting Baby Suggs' motherhood can be found on page 89 of the novel. In this scene, Baby Suggs is reflecting on her past experiences as a slave and how they have impacted her ability to fully love and care her children. She thinks,

*"I couldn't love them [her children] proper in Kentucky because they wasn't mine to love. ... I didn't have enough milk for them, for the ones that was mine. ... I couldn't get through to them no way. ... I had too much hurt."* (Morrison, 2004, p.89)

This passage shows how Baby Suggs' trauma as a slave, which includes the loss of her own children and the inability to care for them properly, has affected her ability to love and care for her remaining children. She feels a sense of detachment and inability to connect with them, which is a common symptom of trauma.

She has also experienced the trauma of losing her children to slavery. This has caused her to feel a sense of emptiness and to question the value of motherhood.

As stated in the novel:

*“She never made the trip to Cincinnati to see any of her children, and when they visited her, she was distant, as though they were no more than dreams or figments of her imagination”* (Morrison, 2004, p.68).

Baby Suggs’ trauma has affected her motherhood as can be found in Chapter 4 of the novel, where it is revealed that Baby Suggs had eight children, but only one—Halle—survived. The text describes Baby Suggs’ grief and despair over the loss of her children, and her belief that the only reason Halle survived was because he was born after she had stopped praying for the death of her children. As it could be seen in the book, page 88-89.

*“She had only one thing left to love – the abstract idea of what could have been her children and grandchildren. She had looked around at those gathered in her yard that day and felt herself slipping. Slipping until she was one of them, waiting for her at the other end of the magnolia-treed grace yard. Waiting for the missing ones—all of them dead—to lean over and welcome her. Baby Sugs, holy, offered up to them her great big heart. She did not tell them to clean up their lives or to go and sin no more. She did not tell them they were the blessed of the earth, its inheriting meek or its glorybound pure. She just sat on her pallet and let the tears come. She had not cried at all in Cincinnati, but now she let them come because they were no longer alone. The spirits she lived with and believed in were suddenly dispersed and unreliable. Baby Suggs’ great heart, swollen with love, felt its way into her daughter’s and guided her to life. There were no words to describe; it was all feeling. Deeper than speech, deeper than sight, deeper than sound.”* (Morrison, 2004, pp.88-89)

The previous passage suggests that Baby Suggs’ trauma—the loss of her children—had a profound impact on her ability to love and mother. She is unable to provide physical or emotional care for her surviving child, Halle, and instead turns to a more abstract love for the idea of her lost children and grandchildren. The trauma also appears to have affected her relationship with the divine, with her previously reliable spiritual beliefs becoming *“dispersed and unreliable.”*

Additionally, Baby Suggs' trauma is passed down to her daughter-in-law Sethe, who struggles with the guilt and trauma of having killed her own child in an attempt to protect her from slavery. This further compounds Baby Suggs' own trauma as she watches her family continue to suffer from the legacy of slavery.

Throughout the novel, the trauma that Baby Suggs has experienced is evident in the way she interacts with her children and the community. Her loss and separation from her children have left her with feelings of guilt and inadequacy, leading her to doubt her ability to be a good mother. Her teachings about love and joy can be seen as a response to her own experiences of trauma and her desire to heal herself and others. However, her death suggests that even these efforts may not be enough to overcome the lasting effects of trauma.

Other example of how trauma affected Baby Suggs' motherhood can be found in the following passage from Chapter 1:

*"But it was a wonderful thing to watch her walk – her tight face, her chin jutting out, her arms, stiff and bent at the elbow, swinging up high, her hands tight and curled, and then the roll and sway of her wide behind. That's how they walked in Congo. Baby Suggs' great heart struggled to its feet, then it dragged her to the kitchen, to her tin pans, her washpot, and her own cooking. She washed, boiled, stewed, and baked. Baked up love and care and something else that put the shine on her face, for the world to see. Watched the world watch her. By and by, all trace is gone, and everybody knew by heart her last and only prayer: 'Thank you. Oh, thank you.'" (Morrison, 2004, p.88)*

This passage suggests that Baby Suggs' motherhood was affected by her trauma in that she channeled her pain and struggle into her cooking and caregiving. Her physical movements are described as tight and stiff, indicating a certain amount of tension and rigidity. Her prayer of thanks at the end of the passage suggests a deep sense of gratitude for the ability to provide love and care, perhaps indicating that she did not receive such love and care herself in the past.



This passage can be seen as evidence of the ways in which trauma affected Baby Suggs' approach to motherhood, as she used it as a means of coping with her pain and finding purpose in her life.

## CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### A. Conclusion

Psychological trauma is a recent psychological condition that has captivated a number of literary writers. *Beloved* by Toni Morrison is a novel that explores the trauma experienced by Black slave mothers and the generational violence that results from cyclical violence in mother-daughter relationships. Finally, the passage describes how Morrison portrays trauma in *Beloved* through the experiences of the characters and the late response to trauma, emphasizing the healing or working through the trauma process.

Morrison's *Beloved* deals with the theme of trauma and its long-lasting effects on the lives of the characters. Set in post-Civil War Ohio, the novel tells the story of Sethe, an escaped Slave, and her struggles to cope with the trauma of her past.

The trauma experienced by Sethe is multifaceted, stemming from her enslavement, the physical and sexual abuse she endured, and the horror of the infanticide she committed to prevent her children from being taken back into slavery. The novel explores the psychological and emotional impact of this trauma on Sethe and her family.

The symptoms of trauma that are depicted in the novel include flashbacks, nightmares, avoidance behavior, and difficulty trusting others. Sethe experiences flashbacks of her enslavement and the trauma she endured, which

makes it difficult to her to live in the present moment. She also has nightmares and is unable to sleep peacefully. Sethe's avoidance behavior is demonstrated by her reluctance to confront her past and her tendency to withdraw from others. She has difficulty trusting anyone, even her own family, because of the betrayal she experienced in the past.

Other characters in the novel, such as Beloved, Denver, and Paul D, also suffer from the trauma from their past. Beloved, in particular, represents the repressed memories and unresolved trauma that haunt the characters. She embodies the daughter that Sethe killed and serves as a reminder of the traumatic event that Sethe is trying to forget. Denver, on the other hand, has grown up in the shadow of her mother's trauma and is unable to form meaningful relationships outside of her family.

The novel depicts the ways in which trauma can have a lasting impact on individuals and their families, affecting their ability to form healthy relationships, trust others, and move forward in their lives.

In Morrison's *Beloved*, the experience of trauma has a significant impact on the issue of motherhood. The protagonist, Sethe, is a mother who has suffered the trauma of slavery, including the horrific experience of having to kill her own child to prevent her from being taken back into slavery. This traumatic event has had a profound impact on Sethe's ability to mother her other children and connect with them emotionally.

Sethe's trauma has caused her to be overprotective and possessive of her surviving children, especially her remaining daughter Denver, whom she has kept isolated from the outside world. Sethe's trauma has also caused her to be distant and detached from her children at times, and she struggles to express love and affection for them in a healthy way. In some ways, Sethe's love for her children is obsessive and stifling, stemming from a fear that she will lose them as she lost her previous child.

Furthermore, the trauma of slavery also affected Sethe's sense of self and identity as a mother. The trauma has caused her to question her own worthiness as a mother and to feel that she is not deserving of love or forgiveness. This internal struggle is reflected in her interactions with her children, where she seeks validation from them but also feels a sense of guilt and shame about her past.

The trauma of slavery has had a profound impact on Sethe's ability to mother her children and it is a major theme of the novel. Morrison explores how trauma can shape a person's sense of self and their ability to form healthy relationships with others, particularly in the context of motherhood.

### **B. Suggestion**

The researcher has asked readers to recognize the psychological consequences of slavery on a slave mother through the analysis offered. The purpose is to get readers to think about and care about the psychological impact of slavery on a slave mother in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. In addition, the

researcher hopes that future research will develop and broaden the criticism. Other scholars, the researcher hopes, will look into other aspects of a slave mother's life.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE



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## APPENDIX

### Indicators of trauma of the characters in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

No.	Variable	Indicator	Behavior
1	Categorized into trauma symptoms	Sethe exhibits the hyperarousal symptoms	<p><i>"I took and put my babies where they's be safe...Eighteen eighty, Cincinnati. More that twenty years past 1855, but still held on to that fear. Like a madwoman holding on to a sane moment, she rationed off her head."</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.16)</p> <p>Sethe didn't take kindly to strangers who thought they could come in and spy on her. Especially whitefolks. She did not care who they were there, but</p>

			<p>she took pleasure in driving them out of 124, taking back what was hers. (Morrison, 2004, p.43)</p>
		<p>Sethe exhibits the intrusion symptoms</p>	<p>In the quietness that came to her after the screaming, she heard the whispering of the women. Their heads bent together, their skirts touching as they silently looked out at her rough riding on the river.  (Morrison, 2004, p.18)</p>
			<p>It was not a story to pass on. So they forgot her. Like an unpleasant dream during a troubling sleep.  Occasionally they wondered about Sethe's earrings or a blue dress she used to wear, but no one remembered the sadness that settled down on her after Beloved. (Morrison, 2004, p.273)</p>

		<p>Sethe exhibits the constriction symptoms</p>	<p>Sethe, Denver thought, was a tree on fire from the inside. She could put her hand on the trunk and feel the vibrations from the core. But she could not see the fire. The tender shoots of new leaves were consumed before they had a chance to uncurl, and the old ones burned away into ash. Sethe was crippled from the waist down and she approached life crawling. (Morrison, 2004, p.45)</p>
			<p>He looked into her face and saw that it was not shut down but hard, closed to him. Hard, closed and the eyes like the rest of her-staring and not seeing. (Morrison, 2004, p.16)</p>
		<p>Paul D exhibits the hyperarousal symptoms</p>	<p>He started when he heard the tread of feet on the steps outside. After a moment, he recognized the sound of his own boots. (Morrison, 2004, p.37)</p> <p>He was afraid to love those things which might disappear... He wanted to put his story next to hers. (Morrison, 2004, p.125)</p>

		<p>Paul D exhibits the intrusion symptoms</p>	<p>He began to remember a place; a dark, cramped, dead-air hole where he had been confined once for two months... no light, no room, someone chained to the wall next door who moaned and prayed and defecated right there in front of them all. (Morrison, 2004, p.35)</p>
		<p>Paul D exhibits the constriction symptoms</p>	<p>He had ceased to wonder what was beyond the cotton fields and had come to accept his limits absolutely. The future was a matter of keeping the past at bay. (Morrison, 2004, p.24)</p>
			<p>And since that time in the Sweet Home men's hut when he saw the circle and saw them coming toward him, he had not seen nor touched nor smelled anything related to it. (Morrison, 2004, p.36)</p>
			<p><i>"You still love me?"</i> (Morrison, 2004, p. 39)</p>

		Beloved exhibits the hyperarousal symptoms	<p><i>“Don’t let them throw me away”</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.34)</p>
			<p>Beloved thinks to herself, <i>“They won’t come back. Nobody ever comes back.”</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.243)</p>
		Beloved exhibits the intrusion symptoms	<p>Beloved dreams about being <i>“in the water again, the cold, the dead.”</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.224)</p>
			<p><i>“I remember... I remember... I remember”</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.36)</p>
			<p><i>“My mother did not pick me up. She liked to see me crawl.”</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.38)</p>
		Beloved exhibits the constriction symptoms	<p><i>“Beloved had stopped speaking, stopped moving, stopped eating.”</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.234)</p>

			When Sethe asks her if she remembers anything about her life before she died, Beloved responds, " <i>Not much.</i> " (Morrison, 2004, p.36)
		Denver exhibits the hyperarousal symptoms	Denver backed away from him, trying to steady herself. She had not been this close to a man in years, not since the schoolteacher had taken her brothers away. (Morrison, 2004, p.30)
		Denver exhibits the intrusion symptoms	<i>"I dreamed of Ma'am, crawling on the floor, her dress up over her head, all her clothes on fire, reaching for me. And my feet wouldn't move"</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.38)
			Denver refused to go, retreated to her room and stayed there until the sun began to set. (Morrison, 2004, p.174)

		Denver exhibits the constriction symptoms	<p>She lived in that house and saw the same furniture and the same yard and the same faces, but there was no world at all outside of it for her. She might as well have been living in a dream or a foreign country. (Morrison, 2004, p.22)</p> <p>She had the strange feeling that she was the only one in the world, that everybody and everything else had disappeared. (Morrison, 2004, p.62)</p> <p>Denver refused to go, retreated to her room and stayed there until the sun began to set. (Morrison, 2004, p.174)</p>
2	Beloved's presence as the representation of the	Beloved arrival disrupts the family's attempt to move on.	They didn't talk much. They didn't talk at all about what might be coming in the morning. They didn't talk about what each had seen, what each felt. They



	intergenerational trauma of Black people		just sat. Quiet. Waiting to see if tomorrow would be different from yesterday. (Morrison, 2004, p.241)
			Nobody stopped playing checkers, nobody looked up. (Morrison, 2004, p.3)
		Beloved embodies the collective trauma of the black community.	...all the parts of [Sethe's] self that had been shoved away, blooming out of her daughter's face. (Morrison, 2004, p.273)
			It was not a story to pass on. So when Baby Suggs, holy, saw them walking down the road that led to the Clearing, she didn't tell herself it was her daughter and granddaughter. She thought it was the two sisters, Mary and Liza, whom she had not seen since they were children. (Morrison, 2004, p.87)

		Beloved's hunger symbolizes the legacy of slavery.	Beloved ate up the food Sethe had cooked, ate it all without stopping, without taking a breath. (Morrison, 2004, p.256)
			She ate like an animal, quickly, fiercely, with no grace or mercy, just as a hog would eat. (Morrison, 2004, p.251)
		Beloved's desire for revenge mirrors the cycle of violence in slavery.	<i>"I will never run from another thing on this earth. Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another."</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.324)
			<i>"And 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 anymore. Dirty you so bad you forgot</i>

			<i>who you were and couldn't think it up."</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.39)
3	The trauma impact on motherhood issue.	Trauma of slavery has affected Sethe's ability to be a present and loving mother to her surviving children.	And if she thought anything, it was No. No. Nonono. Nonono. Simple. She just flew. Collected every bit of life she had made, all the parts of her that were precious and fine and beautiful, and carried, pushed, dragged them through the veil, out, away, over there where no one could hurt them. Over ther. Outside this place, where they would be safe. (Morrison, 2004, p.251)
			<i>"It was easy enough to be a mother when she was telling her children what to do. She could be strict, demanding, and sometimes even cruel. But when it came to the other thing, the love thing, she was lost.</i>

			<p><i>She couldn't do it. She had tried, but the effort was too much for her. And when the effort got to be too much, she stopped trying" (Morrison, 2004, p.192).</i></p>
			<p>She loved them all but had to love Denver in secret. She couldn't risk losing her the way she had lost her boys because the knowledge of Denver's value would have put her in the master's eyes. (Morrison, 2004, p.192)</p>
		<p>Beloved's presence has significantly impacted Sethe's ability as a mother.</p>	<p>Her mother's love was like a blade at [Denver's] neck. She could not get enough of it. When [Sethe] was present, Denver felt her mother absence: when Sethe was gone, her mother's pallor and absence remained like a sullen aftertaste in Denver's mouth. (Morrison, 2004, p.196)</p>

		<p>Baby Suggs' past experiences as the slave impacted her ability to fully love and care her children.</p>	<p><i>"I couldn't love them [her children] proper in Kentucky because they wasn't mine to love. ... I didn't have enough milk for them, for the ones that was mine. ... I couldn't get through to them no way. ... I had too much hurt."</i> (Morrison, 2004, p.89)</p>
		<p>Baby Suggs' has experienced the trauma of losing her children to slavery.</p>	<p>She never made the trip to Cincinnati to see any of her children, and when they visited her, she was distant, as though they were no more than dreams or figments of her imagination. (Morrison, 2004, p.68)</p>
			<p>She had only one thing left to love – the abstract idea of what could have been her children and grandchildren. She had looked around at those gathered in her yard that day and felt herself slipping. Slipping until she was one of them, waiting for her at</p>

			<p>the other end of the magnolia-treed grace yard. Waiting for the missing ones—all of them dead—to lean over and welcome her. Baby Suggs, holy, offered up to them her great big heart. She did not tell them to clean up their lives or to go and sin no more. She did not tell them they were the blessed of the earth, its inheriting meek or its glorybound pure. She just sat on her pallet and let the tears come. She had not cried at all in Cincinnati, but now she let them come because they were no longer alone. The spirits she lived with and believed in were suddenly dispersed and unreliable. Baby Suggs' great heart, swollen with love, felt its way into her daughter's and guided her to life. There were no words to describe; it was all</p>
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			<p>feeling. Deeper than speech, deeper than sight, deeper than sound. (Morrison, 2004, pp.88-89)</p>
		<p>Baby Suggs' channeled her pain and struggle from trauma of losing children into her cooking and caregiving.</p>	<p>But it was a wonderful thing to watch her walk – her tight face, her chin jutting out, her arms, stiff and bent at the elbow, swinging up high, her hands tight and curled, and then the roll and sway of her wide behind. That's how they walked in Congo. Baby Suggs' great heart struggled to its feet, then it dragged her to the kitchen, to her tin pans, her washpot, and her own cooking. She washed, boiled, stewed, and baked. Baked up love and care and something else that put the shine on her face, for the world to see. Watched the world watch her. By and by, all trace is gone, and</p>

			everybody knew by heart her last and only prayer: ‘Thank you. Oh, thank you.’ (Morrison, 2004, p.88)
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