

Bodily Liberation and Spiritual Redemption of Black Women in Beloved: From the Perspective of Ecofeminism

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Abstract : Since its release, Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* has garnered significant international recognition, and its adaptation of a historical account has profoundly affected readers and scholars, evoking a visceral understanding of the suffering endured by black slaves. The ecofeminist approach has garnered more attention in recent times. The emergence of ecofeminism may be attributed to the feminist movement, which has subsequently evolved into several branches, including cultural ecofeminism, social ecofeminism, and socialist ecofeminism, each of which is developing its own specific characteristics. The many branches hold differing perspectives, yet they all converge on a key principle: the interconnectedness between the subjugation of women and the exploitation of nature can be traced back to a common underlying cognitive framework. Scholarly investigations into the novel *Beloved* have primarily centered on the cultural interpretations around the emancipation of African American women, with a predominant lens rooted in cultural ecofeminism. This thesis aims to analyze Morrison's feminist beliefs in the novel *Beloved* by integrating socialist and cultural ecofeminist perspectives, which seeks to challenge the limitations of essentialism within ecofeminism while also proposing a strategy to address exploitation and dismantle oppressive structures depicted in *Beloved*. This thesis examines the white patriarchal oppression system underlying the relationships between men and women, blacks and whites, and man and nature as shown in the novel. What the black women have been deprived of compared with the black men, white women and white men is a main clue of this research, while nature is a key complement of each chapter for their loss. The attainment of spiritual redemption and ultimate freedom is contingent upon the social revolution that enables bodily emancipation, both of which are indispensable for black women. The weighty historical pains, traumatic recollections, and compromised sense of self prompted African slaves to embark on a quest for personal redemption. The restoration of the bond between black men and women, as well as the relationship between black individuals and nature, is a clear and undeniable pathway towards the final freedom of black women in the novel *Beloved*.

Keywords : beloved, ecofeminism, black women, nature, essentialism

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