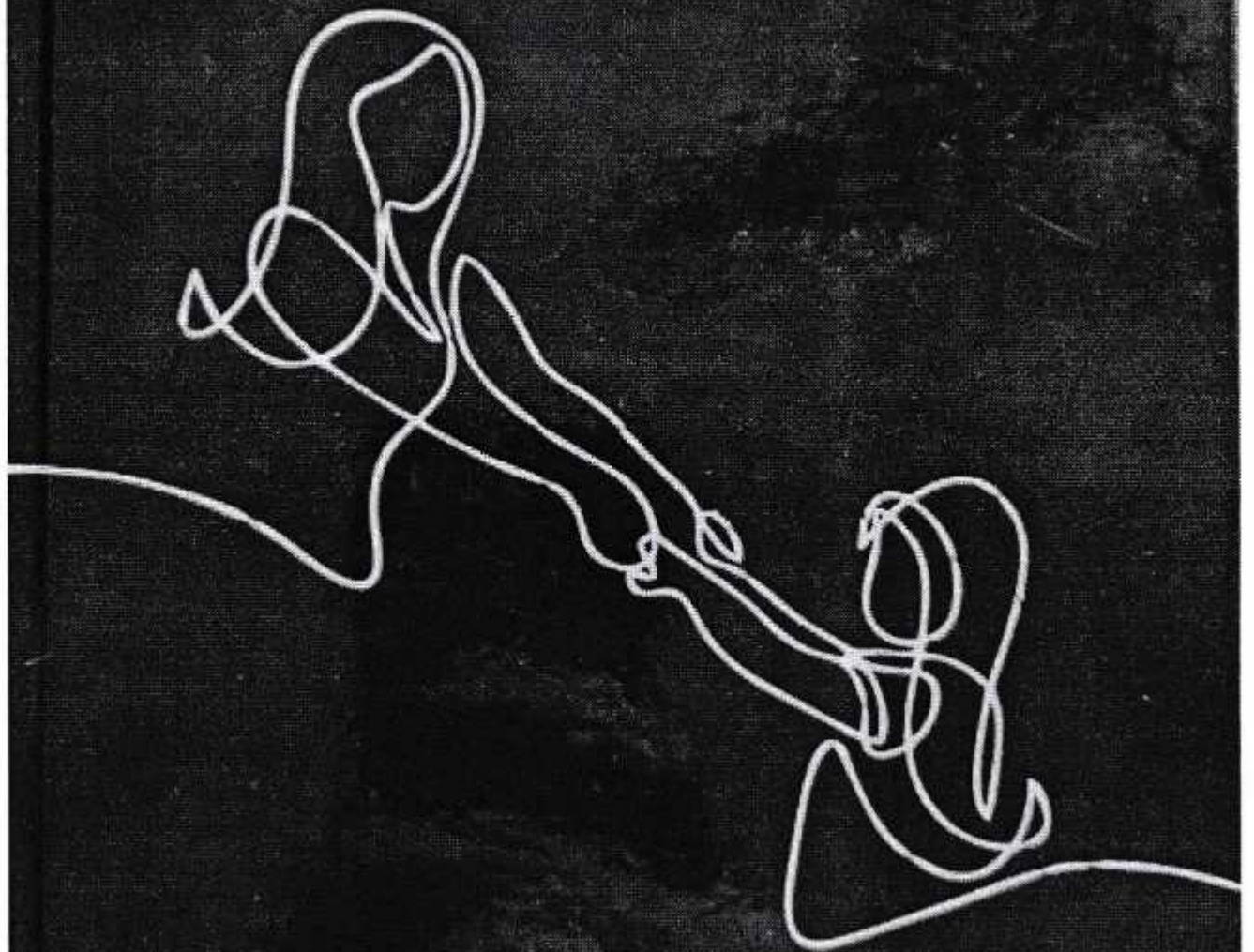


TONI MORRISON'S
BELOVED

A Critical Companion

EDITED BY
SUBASHISH BHATTACHARJEE AND INDRAJIT MUKHERJEE



● ● ● Worldview Critical Companion

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Why Toni Morrison's *Beloved*?

SUBASHISH BHATTACHARJEE
AND INDRAJIT MUKHERJEE

Toni Morrison (1931–2019), alias Chloe Anthony Wofford Morrison, the ninth American author to be awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize in 1993, is known for her deft depictions of subaltern life and the accompanying optimism and beauty that lie underneath the world's harshness, unlike many other African-American authors. Her work goes beyond ethnic literature's confining boundaries, offering universal mythological themes and undertones while remaining anchored to black Americans' cultural history and socio-economic concerns. *Beloved* (1987), the literary *tour de force* that has significantly influenced the American canon, aims to examine Toni Morrison's silent lexis and reveal the layers of humanistic concerns that denote her words by integrating blacks into the larger drama of existence. This magical realist¹ narrative is more of an effort to look upon history from the subaltern viewpoint to allow African-Americans to overcome the trauma of slavery and its prolonged consequences.

It becomes significant as a form of resistance and agency, notably in an age where Derek Chauvin's murder of George Floyd, a black man, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, prompted massive anti-racism demonstrations against the Trump regime globally — and the subsequent return to power of the Democrats — and has brought into light the racial issues that are lying under a thinly veiled veneer of 'whitewashing.' The contemporary sociopolitical scenario and the resultant ethnic tensions are a reality that has manifested itself through the sheer mechanisms that are barely capable of containing the issues, and black narratives have acted as a means of accessing the roots of the tensions, with Toni Morrison's oeuvre acting as an important source for the enactment of such narratives in a historically conscious yet actively contemporary way.