In this seminar, we will read Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* (1987), a masterpiece in the history of African American literature, a Nobel Prize-winning work of fiction, and arguably one of the most important novels of the twentieth century. We will discuss the book's publication history, its role as an inspiration for other authors and artists, and, above all, we will read it closely – chapter by chapter, from the first sentence to the last. We will engage in the practice of close reading, sharpen our interpretative skills, and (re)acquaint ourselves with the satisfying task of diligently working through a text in its entirety.

Please note that Toni Morrison's *Beloved* contains strong and disturbing language. It thematizes enslavement, violence, racism, trauma, and oppression. The novel's unvarnished realism about the history of slavery and anti-Black violence deserves almost every trigger warning imaginable. **If you do not know the novel make yourself properly familiar with it before enrolling in the course!**

Should you successfully enroll in the class please purchase the following edition of the novel: Penguin Books, Vintage Series, Paperback (US or UK edition)

Requirements: Regular attendance, participation in an "expert group" (Studienleistung and Prüfungsleistung; more information to follow in the first session). Prüfungsleistung: Research paper (BA: 12-15 pp.; MA: 15-19 pp., Times New Roman 12, 1.5 line spacing), deadline: 30 September 2024.