



## Dissensus and the Sensible: Reading Morrison's *Beloved* through Rancierean Aesthetics and Politics

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### Abstract

*This paper examines Beloved by Toni Morrison in the context of Rancierean aesthetics and politics by analysing how the novel enacts dissensus in the realm of what Ranciere calls the distribution of the sensible. Ranciere's 'aesthetic regime' opens up a terrain on which issues of visibility, voice and historical memory are put to the test and reallocated(18). By introducing the subjectivity of Black people, trauma, and silence and emphasizing them as a force that needs to be heard, Morrison challenges dominant systems of representation. Beloved resists belonging to the canon of classic literature due to its disjointed narration, voices of the ghosts, poetic interruptions, and the lack of intelligibility. My paper uses the Rancierean theories of dissensus, aesthetics, and politics as a critical lens to suggest how Morrison's aesthetic choices dismantle the stereotypes of literature, questioning who can speak, making silent pain talk, and bringing forgotten past legible. As such, this paper aims to engage the reader in reconsidering literary criticism as a realm of struggle, justice, and aesthetic dissent.*

**Keywords:** *Beloved*, Ranciere, Dissensus, Aesthetics, Politics.

### Introduction

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* can scarcely be categorized: it is a historical meditation; it is an experiment with memory, and an innovative reconsideration of narrative. *Beloved* offers the reader a world where words tremble under the weight of inconceivable trauma, a ghost speaks, and silence serves as a source of resistance. In this paper, I will discuss a work of literature as a point of aesthetic and political controversy—a space in which the boundaries of what is deemed reasonable are challenged and redefined. This paper uses Jacques Ranciere's theories of aesthetics and politics to explore how *Beloved* upsets existing regimes of representation and makes Black identity visible.

Dissensus, Ranciere's concept, implies a rupture in the distribution of the sensible, the state of self-revelatory facts of sense perception that reflects the existence of something in common and the boundaries defining the respective parts and positions within it (Ranciere 7). In Ranciere's view, aesthetics is political as it confronts this state, paving for the emergence of new modes of seeing and expressing. Morrison's novel *Beloved* exemplifies this aesthetics- the political nature of aesthetics. Morrison, through an untraditional structure, polyphonic narrative voices, the supernatural presence, disrupts the stereotypes of literary subjects and forms, and shifts the reader's attention to experiences that have been historically neglected or stifled. In "Toni Morrison, *Beloved*, Race and Tragedy," David Roger Whitehouse argues that the hidden aspects of social relationships that outline African Americans as a unique demographic group help to clarify DuBois' recurring use of the veil metaphors adapted by Morrison. The veil in the story of Morrison serves as an effective symbol that sums up the forced homogenization of enslaved people by the authoritarian command of their slaves and thus creates the stereotypical image of a unified people and hides the reality of the white supremacy (179).

This paper argues how Morrison's chosen aesthetic contents in the novel are not merely stylistic but political. The depiction of the Black slaves' pain, the scars on their souls caused by slavery, on the one hand and on the other, the rejection of sequential narrative – all help Morrison



reconfigure literature. In this way, Morrison's *Beloved* embodies a new aesthetics of emotion that encompasses trauma, anger, and resilience of the Black slaves. By raising the historically suppressed voices of the slaves and reinstating a new rational of Black memory, Morrison subverts the traditional roles of aesthetics—a subversion which, in Ranciorean terms, is a rupture in the distribution of the sensible.

This paper also takes into account how Morrison's novel makes the connection between aesthetics and ethics. It is here that the storytelling in *Beloved* becomes a moral obligation—a mode of witnessing to histories that the official narratives have refused. The aesthetic form of the novel cannot be divorced of the ethical position it takes; it, unlike traditional aesthetic practices, does not beautify, rather its beauty lies in its ability to simplify. Using Ranciere, we could view the aesthetic choices Morrison makes as political subversion, transforming not only what can be done by literature, but what must be done in the context of historical violence.

Finally, this paper encourages the reader to reconsider the definition of aesthetics in literary criticism. Instead of positing it as a principle of pleasure or formal elegance, it suggests aesthetics as a form of political intervention— a means of making visible that which has been made invisible, of giving voice to the voiceless and of disrupting the conventions according to which the literary judgment has been organized. Reading *Beloved* through the critical lens of Ranciorean theory, turns it into not only a novel, but a vindication of dissensus, an appeal to rethink the sensible world in terms of justice, memory and empathy.

### **Defining Ranciorean Dissensus, the Sensible, and Aesthetic Politics**

In *The Politics of Aesthetics*, Ranciere says, “I call the distribution of the sensible the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it” (7). In its most basic sense, the distribution of the sensible is how Ranciere refers to the way society arranges what is visible, sayable and hearable, and by whom. It is not merely about the sense experience, but who gets the chance to shape the reality.

Ranciere states that politics commences when a person who has not been enclosed in this distribution, and whose voice was deemed as a noise—who form the part that have no part— breaks the order, and claims, “I am a part of it as well.” That is dissensus: a break in the sensible order. Therefore, politics is not all about legislation and rulings. It is about re-inventing the perception when the invisible is made visible and the inaudible is made audible. To Ranciere, politics is not about what people get or demand. It is not the institutional formulation of equitable social systems. Rather, it relates to what people do, especially, what challenges the hierarchical framework of a society. To seek to disrupt such a hierarchy is to do so on the premise of being equal. When the action is considered political, it will be collective, but not individual. It will entail a collective of individuals (or part of that collective) assumed unequal by a given hierarchical structure, and those who stand in solidarity with them, acting as though they are, in fact, equal to those who are above them on that hierarchy, and disrupting the very order of things. What is disrupted here are not just the power relations of that social order but even more deeply those of the foundations, the perceptual and epistemological grounds of that order, the apparentness and naturalness of that order. It is this disruption that Ranciere calls dissensus. Considered as such, it is possible to begin to understand how it relates to the issue of aesthetics. A dissensus is not merely a disagreement as to the equitability of certain social arrangements, though that is also a part of it. It can also be used to reveal the contingency of the whole perceptual and conceptual structure in which such arrangements exist, the contingency of what Ranciere calls ‘le partage du sensible’, the division or distribution of the sensible.

Aesthetics also confronts a particular allocation of the sensible, in another sense. But before we could understand how it goes against the sensible, we have to keep in mind that aesthetics does not mean art in general but rather a particular regime of aesthetic practice, what Ranciere calls “the aesthetic regime of the arts” (Ranciere 18). Art is no longer subject to rules in this regime; it is not assessed according to whether it imparts moral lessons, as in ethical regimes, or how effectively it mimics reality, as in classical representation. Rather, art transforms into something that challenges the



routine, reframes perspective, and asks us to view the world in a different way. Politics and aesthetics, as Margus Vihalem suggests, are closely interwoven: politics always requires perception and engagement, and aesthetics defines the frontiers of what can be perceived and represented (7). Aesthetics is not then a wise and informed contemplation about art, nor a series of judgement-criteria; but it is, in essence, a question about how, as a community, people perceive the world in sight or sound, touch or other senses, and how these perceptions evoke their responses and affect them. Both politics and art, according to Ranciere, define a type of consensus, a dissensual reconstruction of the common knowledge of the sensible. Therefore, a dissension from a particular distribution of the sensible is what constitutes an aesthetic practice, just as politics. They both address what Ranciere refers to as the distribution of the sensible—what is seen, heard, said, and felt.

Politics occurs when the outsiders or the part without part disturb the order of things. It is not being about the control of society, but breaking it in order to insist on equality. The aesthetic regime does not have art merely reflecting the world. It reconfigures it. It renders the invisible seen and the inaudible heard. It puts new senses and imaginations open. Both aesthetics and politics oppose the status quo whether it is with a protest or a poem. They are the rearranging of coordinates of possibilities.

### **Reclaiming the Sensible: Visibility, Voice, and the Politics of Perception**

The themes of Toni Morrison's novels include racial discrimination, sexual politics, history, community, enslavement, love and survival. Through these universals she devotes herself to rewriting history, re-considering cultures and examining the stereotypes of black-white and man-woman in America. She also insists on the inclusion of the African community in her works that discuss the lives of African Americans in different historical periods. When Morrison dramatizes the first-person experiences of trauma inflicted on the bodies of African American women, she directs the reader to focus on the moral and ethical consequences of these experiences, and implicitly asks the reader to consider how best to memorialize and rectify the atrocities to which her characters are witnesses (Cox 97). Morrison as a literary artist emerges as a conduit to the rediscovery of her people and their consequent empowerment. Morrison is a historical thinker who attempts to redeem and re-contextualise the African past that has been lost in the slavery in America. She hopes to know more about herself by learning about her legacy. Her themes have evolved into universal themes as opposed to being exclusive to her or her group. They pertain to contemporary times and address disintegrating families. Her books share an ambiguous relationship with history; to a degree, they are historical fictions narrating the pitiable stories of African Americans who have lived through American history.

Morrison writes largely in a realistic vein, and the narrative structure that she employs places the Black people as Other and the White people as dominant in the American society where the racial issues are yet to be resolved. As an Africa-American herself, Morrison has continued to be a true representative of the African-American cultural past in her novels. History is the most important part of African Americans legacy. It links them with their glorious history. The Black people in the country have been degraded and distorted by the majority, the Whites, whose view has been influential to American history. Without being able to hear the voices of the people on the margins, the history of America will remain incomplete.

One of the motifs that are prevalent in the novels of Toni Morrison is the conflict between the African-Americans and the White community based on racial distinctions. She uses the perspectives of African-American characters and their difficulties to articulate her opinions about the conflicts between the Black people and the Whites. Her writing life began when the African-Americans were experiencing a myriad of injustices. The majority of the main characters in her works conflict around the questions of identity and have to deal with the outcomes not only due to their own experience but also to their own roots, traditions, and cultural practices.

In *Beloved*, Morrison emphasizes the significance of modern Americans seeking remedy of this historically significant event and honouring the ancestral spirit that still carries on and speaks of the pain caused by such a traumatic past, by offering a perspective of reinterpretation and vision to the effects of enslavement and the inescapable racism that follows (Dhakal 129). Morrison employs a real-



life event in the history of African Americans with the main focus being the horrors and infringements of slavery as a historical reminder to the reader. *Beloved* is based on the real-life story of a slave Margaret Garner. Since Garner did not want her children to visit the plantation where they laboured, she murdered her two-year old daughter and attempted to murder her other two children on January 28, 1856. Morrison aims at highlighting the ugly and forgotten aspects of slavery since she thinks that the atrocious issues relating to slavery are unacknowledged and evaded in the conventional narratives about slavery. The books by Morrison compel the reader to perceive the truth and the conditions of slavery in the country that had even forgotten about them.

A novel to Morrison must be undoubtedly political because she holds that good art has always been political. The concept of the distribution of the sensible by Jacques Ranciere provides an interesting explanation of how Toni Morrison replaces the black subjectivity at the centre of narrative and memory. In Ranciere's view, the distribution of the sensible is the implicit rules that operate in the aspect of what can be perceived, heard as well as spoken within a given social order. The aesthetic aspect of politics is the manner in which the perception itself is constituted in such a way that it includes some voices and excludes some. In this context, the fiction of Morrison is a radical dissensus: breaking the hegemonic regimes of visibility and audibility, Black lives and histories previously silenced or distorted are able to be heard.

According to Morrison, the former slaves were not granted a chance to overcome their trauma as their stories needed to be approved by white masters, and thus, they could not say all they desired to say. The infanticide episode, in *Beloved*, presents the idea that slavery has rather been written by the dominant White culture. Sethe and her four children evade slavery by escaping from Sweet Home. The family is discovered by her master, a schoolteacher, who attempts to re-enslave it. In order to defend them against the schoolteacher and not to return to slavery, Sethe kills her daughter Beloved and then attempts to kill her other children. Through the infanticide Sethe not only tells the audience about it justifying her action but her action gives her an opportunity to vocalize the traumatic experience. Yet she is silenced. The slave catcher is the only white and judgmental person who describes the story to the audience. The event is written about or explained only by the slave owners and abolitionists with the help of newspaper articles where there is no space left to the story of Sethe herself. White people use the story of Sethe to their advantage making Sethe silent. Morrison hopes that the African American women would read the text as a way of rediscovering a lost, suppressed or distorted cultural history (Cox 100).

In *Beloved*, Morrison symbolizes the collective identity of her African-American people as being lost and haunted, literally and figuratively, by the traumatic experiences of enslavement (Cox 100). The Black experience is belittled by the White narrative of slavery. Morrison tries to find the meaning of this derision in her White characters and their perception that Blacks are inferior race. The schoolteacher objectifies slaves; he is documenting the bestial nature of the slaves in his little book. Even though the slavery institution has ceased, White discourses have taught the African Americans to deny their subjectivity so that they can control over their lives. Morrison depicts Sethe who is grappling with her shame and disgust with herself. Embarrassed being dehumanized, Sethe cries where she reflects on the opinion of the schoolteacher that the slaves are animals. The only way to dismantle shame and internalized racism is to expose the lie of the scornful White perspective on slavery and the Black identity by creating their own narratives in their perspective. Morrison writes to reclaim her Blackness by arguing against a White culture that continues to construct her as exotic and mythical Black 'other'. By writing, Morrison reclaims Black ancestors narrating their stories in a Black perspective. Their narratives need to be written, spread, understood, and documented to ensure that the narratives bring about a powerful Black culture. This is exactly what Ranciere refers to as aesthetic dissensus: a break of the sensible order that enables new perception and subjectivity to appear.

### **Reimagining History and Innovative Narrative Strategies as Dissensus**

Historical events and records are often incomplete, biased, and fragmented and leave gaps in our understanding of what has occurred. Therefore, history is not complete. The inadequacies in the



historical record can be explained by the following reasons: the historical record can be relatively small, damaged, or lost; historians and archivists may have their own interests making them selective in their approach to the description of events; alternative interpretations of the historical events can emerge depending on the cultural, social, and political background; and the marginalized communities could have been neglected in the historical record or their records suppressed. This sense of incompleteness is what motivates the perpetual search, through the generations, to explore more of the forgotten facets of the self and the community, the past, the present and the future. The attempt to rewrite the historical experience and redefine the world through the prism of nationality, cultural legacy, and personal experience is a commendable endeavour that Toni Morrison has made in her historical fiction. Toni Morrison as a literary figure has a sense of duty to unveil the unfinished history and redefine it in her narratives. The theory of the aesthetic regime by Ranciere suggests that art does not reflect the world, but it makes it. It makes the invisible thing visible and the inaudible thing audible. It establishes alternate ways of perception and imagination. Ranciere does not insinuate that art is the same as life but he believes that art is a place in which life can be re-imagined. The process of imagining is crucial in dealing with the insufficiency of history and resisting historical denial or absence. On the one hand, the focus of imagination shows the creativeness of the memory and increases image-making ability and essential distance and disloyalty to fact. Conversely, imagining serves as a liberating device to the writer and helps him/her to overcome the constraints posed by documentary evidence to make a choice, to build and to cogitate a historical reality (Ying 12). It is a kind of third space in which we have a glimpse of the possibilities that exist beyond the reality. Through reconfiguring real and fictional, Morrison re-enacts and re-constructs the nature of a historical past that could otherwise be unreachable. The relation to history in the works of Morrison is complicated. Morrison is required to perform the imaginative reconstruction in order to unravel the neglected spaces of history.

In *Beloved*, Morrison tries to enter the mind of those people who were enslaved, and to bring the emotion, which must have been connected with a great amount of uncertainty, loss, and violation. That personification is brought into reality in the novel through Beloved's character. Beloved can also be regarded as a symbol, a personification of all the trauma and devastating human price of the Middle Passage and slavery (Gillespie 19). The most prominent idea in *Beloved*, according to Tessa Roynon, is a phrase that Morrison coined in the novel itself: 'rememory' (46). *Beloved* is also concerned with not only reconstructed memory, but also deconstructed history. The story is set in the post-civil war Ohio where Sethe leads a terrible memory but she has avoided it by closing down one part of her brain; the novel is about the previous life of Sethe as a slave in Sweet Home Farm, her escape with her children to what appears a safe haven and the tragedy that follows. In spite of surviving physically, Sethe is still psychologically oppressed and the need to love and be loved turns destructive for her. Morrison is also concerned with the challenges that former slaves encounter. Once slavery has violated the history of one, once past is something more real than present, once the anger of a dead baby can literally shake a house, one no longer has a sufficient instrument in the conventional novel. And *Beloved* is written in fragments and pictures, shattered in the form of a mirror on the floor to be assembled by the readers. Sethe is an escaped slave and a mother whose life and the lives of the people around her are depicted by Morrison in a hypnotic, beautiful and elusive manner in her novel. The wisdom that we gather out of them reaches deeper than understanding, due not only to the extraordinary, but also to the experimental style, and to the intensity of the subject matter.

White dominance finds its main origin in the degradation of Black bodies so as to exercise control over them which can best be achieved by convincing them that their black bodies are ugly. Thus, slavery aimed at women as its primary targets with the help of the tool of dehumanizing the body. Speaking of institutionalized slavery, it is pertinent to know that the maltreatment of the African-American women was a more pressing topic than the issues of liberation alone. It was more effortless to apply cruelty on women since, besides being Black, they were the most vulnerable in the Black society since they were women. This fact made White oppressors sexually abuse them. *Beloved*



by Morrison is a clear depiction that there are many more to the oppression of slavery because under slavery women were pervasively rape victims, forcibly bearing children, and forced isolation from their new-born children. That they were mothers encouraged the white masters to dehumanize and deprive women to a greater degree than could be done to slave men.

Therefore, the cruelty of dehumanization which indirectly compelled Sethe to kill her child can be exemplified best with the examples from the novel. Sethe has been dehumanized by the White oppressors through two important moments in her life. The first instance in Sethe's story that served as a turning point in her life and radically changed her understanding of the future, was when she was placed on the side of the animal in the list of features based on the schoolteacher's education. Sethe listens to the lesson delivered by him in which he teaches his nephews about the natural aspects of a human, and he creates a very thick line between a human being and an animal. He has provided the exact example of the distinction between the animal and human worlds; he categorizes Sethe as representative of the animal world. The second moment becomes even more significant when Sethe is pregnant with Denver much later in her life. The milk of Sethe is then stolen off her to nourish the nephews of the schoolteacher. Sethe repeatedly refers to her violation as she often says 'they took my milk' (Morrison 33). The fact that Sethe is robbed of her milk is clearly painful to her since she is being robbed of her soul, the most treasured of all things she has—her maternal milk. Her total concern to get the milk back to her children even neglecting her bodily pain emphasizes how Sethe sees her milk as more valuable than her own body. Thus, Sethe is reduced to the role of a breeder—like an animal in the service of feeding humans.

The humiliation culminates when Sethe realizes that her husband, Halle, had been a witness to the situation. He is emasculated, being unable to protect her and leaving her alone. Paul D, being the last of the sweet-home men and the only survivor, is introduced into the life of Sethe eighteen years after she killed her child and is ready to develop a feeling towards Sethe. However, to the disappointment of Sethe, Paul D is unable to come to terms with the fact that Sethe committed such barbaric act as the murder. Sethe, who has envisaged Paul D to support her in her suffering does not get it either from the Black society or from Paul D.

The act of Sethe may be perceived as a heroic act of resistance that exposed in it the entire concept of slavery and explores her stance by her statement that if the master could subject the slave children in bondage to a slow social death, the mother could release them through physical death. Morrison appears to be inviting her readers to view Sethe's killing of her child as not the exception but instead as a reenactment of the stereotype of the mammy figure. Her society once joyfully accepted her as a legitimate member of this society and welcomed her into their free society after she had managed to escape slavery. It can however only be a month and she experiences the status of a black sister. The people who are able to comprehend her motives best due to their shared experience reject her after the unforgivable infanticide. Sethe is rejected, and she has no home to live in; she only discovers a home of desolation in the walls of 124 Bluestone house and manages to isolate herself. Sethe confines life to the house and in this case, she can perceive a means of discovering her true self. The subconscious desire of Sethe to receive the explanation of the past and at the same time forgiveness leads her to the appearance of the ghost of her murdered child. The West Africans hold that the dead are not done with the living as the past (the dead), the present (the living) and future (the unborn) are co-existent. The ancestors who have passed away can and do talk to their own descendants especially because some rites of the dead have not been performed. This is such a worldview that points to a continuity and fluidity between past and present.

Therefore, Morrison's novel not only narrates but also reorders the perception, restores the voices that were not given a chance to speak, and reinstates the Black subjectivity as the new location of the narrative and memories. In Rancierean terminology, dissensus is the intervention of the excluded in the order of the dominant— a fissure in the sensible order by confronting the established framework of perception, thought, and action with the 'inadmissible' (89). Nonlinear narration of the story by Morrison is a kind of aesthetical dissensus, as it refuses the linear, chronological narrative that is the preferred mode in the mainstream historiography. Another example is that in *Beloved*, the



memories of Sweet Home where Sethe escapes and the killing of her child are not mentioned in order. Rather, they come out in fragments, like emotional flash-points. This aligns with the rhythm of trauma and the unreasonableness of the chronological sequence of telling the history. According to Morrison, “It was not a story to pass on” (523). This line implies that there are some stories that refuse containment, yet claim to be remembered.

Ranciere believes that equality is emulated when the voices are all treated as intelligible. The application of multiple narrators and interior monologues by Morrison democratizes perception. We listen to Sethe, Denver and Paul D, and even Beloved. They do not have their voices silenced by an omniscient voice. Rather, Morrison allows each consciousness to form the narrative, a mosaic of Black experience. The haunting voice of Beloved transcends boundaries and thus resists fragmentation by claiming a shared memory: “I am not separate from her, there is no place where I stop her face is my own and I want to be there in the place where her face is” (Morrison 402).

The prose by Morrison is tactile, vibrant, and emotionally charged— it offers dignity to Black bodies. The back of Sethe, scarred into a chokecherry tree, is depicted as a living archive. Morrison does not provide a clinical manifestation; she makes it as poetic flesh, as the place of agony and endurance. “Trunk, branches, and even leaves. Tiny little chokecherry leaves.”—this metaphor turns the trauma into a myth, restoring the body as a place of meaning, rather than merely a place of misery (Morrison 31). This is echoed by Ranciere who believes that aesthetics is a political field when it restructures the sensory field. Dissensus, in Rancierean thought, resists resolution. The endings in Morrison’s narrative usually provide ambiguity, echo and return. *Beloved* is concluded not by justice or reconciliation, but with a dying voice: “It was not a story to pass on” (Morrison 523). The line does not aim to suggest that the story is unpalatable and deserves to be forgotten; nor does it aim to make trauma palatable and domesticated. Instead, imposing on it the continuity of memory, which must be active, unfinished and shared, Morrison keeps the wound unhealed.

Morrison’s is an aesthetic politics which always defines itself by a certain recasting of the distribution of the sensible, a reconfiguration of the given perceptual forms; the rediscovery of history and the narrative experiments by her are, then, not merely literary inventions, but they are the acts of redistribution in Rancierean terms (Ranciere 59). She challenges the distribution of the sensible by placing the lives, voices, and memory of the Blacks at the centre. By doing this, she creates aesthetic politics in the sense that Ranciere means it, without preaching, but by reorganizing perception itself.

## **Conclusion**

When we read *Beloved* in the perspective of Jacques Ranciere and his aesthetics and politics, we start to notice how the narrative of Morrison does not merely narrate what happened but reconfigures perception itself. Her narration turns into a kind of dissensus, refuting the prevailing distribution of the sensible that has all too long excluded Black voices, memories, and subjectivities to the mainstream literary and historical discourses. Fragmented form, ghostly figures, and polyphonic voices, in Morrison’s book, are not merely a manifestation of trauma but they disrupt the aesthetic system of values, where the concepts of coherence, linearity, and rationality are valued. Thus, she sets a space of another form of truth—one that is emotional, embodied, communal. This is what Ranciere refers to when he talks about politics as a violation of the sensible order, when the invisible or unheard say they are there and are refused to be ignored. In *Beloved*, Morrison asserts her authority to narrate the Black experience on its own terms. She does not plead to be part of the canonical narrative; she brings in a change in the very landscape of narrative, raising a voice to be heard by those voices which were previously silenced. Her fiction is an aesthetic resistance, in which memory is not an archive, but an experience, and history is not concluded, but re-read. Through this, the work of Morrison becomes very close to the vision of Ranciere of aesthetic politics. Both claim that equality is never a goal that can be bestowed on us but a principle that should be practiced by use of words, images, and imaginary thinking. Both are of the opinion that art may also be political not through conveying messages, but through transformation of what we can see and feel. Therefore, *Beloved* is not merely a slavery or survival novel. It is an anti-capitalist novel, a rearrangement of the world, of finding a place to fit the part that has no part, of demanding that the lives, memories and



desires of Black people be claimed as the central figure in our collective human narrative. Morrison is not only committing a literary innovation but also engaging in political courage in her aesthetic choices. And within the context of Ranciere, we are able to start comprehending how such decisions do not just speak to the past, but to the future of how we are going to read, remember, and resist.

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