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# Introduction

## Antiblackness of the Social and the Human

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“The brutality with which Negroes are treated in this country simply cannot be overstated. . . . For the horrors of the American Negro’s life there has been almost no language.” Of the approaching centenary of the Emancipation Proclamation, James Baldwin noted, “You know, and I know, that the country is celebrating one hundred years of freedom one hundred years too soon” (1962, 22, 95). In the past decade, the U.S. public was made aware of certain spectacular brutalities presently borne by Black people, owing largely to numerous video-recorded police and vigilante killings and the Movement for Black Lives. Reaching a tipping point in 2020, a series of such murders—of Ahmaud Arbery (February 23), Breonna Taylor (March 13), and, above all, George Floyd (May 25)—set off an unprecedented wave of protests; the violent deaths of Black trans people—Nina Pop (May 3), Tony McDade (May 27), Brayla Stone (June 25), Merci Mack (June 30), Shaki Peters (July 1), and Bree Black (July 3)—generated far less outrage.[1] This ongoing moment has been important, but, as is too often missed in academic as well as nonacademic discussions, these cruelties, the latest additions to a vast and uncatalogued archive, were not exceptional but of a piece with a long history of global scale. Even those who sought to take

full measure of the horrors continually understated them: some things, maybe many things, needed fixing, but surely, it was no longer 1963, much less 1863. There was still almost no language.

This book grew out of our dissatisfaction with not only liberal but also most leftist analyses that failed to contend, unflinchingly, with *antiblackness*—its enduring depth, breadth, and violence. Wishing to address this failure collectively and interdisciplinarily, we reached out to scholars whose work we hold in utmost respect and asked them to engage with antiblackness without compromise—to summon the necessary language. As the following chapters suggest, such an endeavor entails a thoroughgoing critique and a fundamental overhaul of the social sciences and the humanities. For our part, in this introduction, we posit and think through the constitutive antiblackness underpinning the foundational categories of the modern world, the Social and the Human.[2] As a corollary, we then draw a conceptual distinction between antiblackness and racism, the latter proving to be inapt and inadequate in capturing the former.

To conclude *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*, historian William Sewell Jr. returns to a most basic question: "So, then: What *is* 'the social' in social science?" (emphasis in original). Distilling a lifetime of interdisciplinary work across the social sciences, he answers, "The social is the complex and inescapable ontological ground of our common life as humans." In the modern "disenchanted world," the Social is the foundation of collective human existence and the "foundational term" for the scientific study of it

(Sewell 2005, 325, 329, 369). Yet the social sciences fail to grasp what W. E. B. Du Bois (1935, 727) refers to as "the most magnificent drama in the last thousand years of human history": the transoceanic, transcontinental enslavement of Africans. For example, the broadest of the social sciences that likewise claims the entirety of the Social, the modern social world, as its domain, sociology, despite thriving subfields on race and historical sociology, almost completely ignores racial slavery (Jung 2019). Even when the social sciences do acknowledge it and document it empirically, their theories of the Social—that is, social theories—inexorably misrecognize and euphemize it, most typically as a variety of coerced labor. In short, the social sciences—disciplines born of modernity that theorize, empirically investigate, and, indeed, do their part in constructing modernity—either do not or cannot comprehend arguably the most decisive and defining development in modern history.

How do we make sense of this wholly unnoticed yet fundamental paradox? A profoundly *antisocial* condition, slavery breaches the bounds of the Social, the social sciences' self-defined limits. The Social is not common ground for all. That slavery presents such an "extreme antisocial situation" (Steinmetz 2016, 101–2) is prefigured by the work of Orlando Patterson, ironically a sociologist, whose *Slavery and Social Death*, though influential outside his discipline, has had little theoretical impact within it. In the book, he carries out a comprehensive historical survey of slavery and identifies its "constituent elements": "slavery is the permanent, violent domination of natally alienated and generally dishonored persons." The enslaved is "a socially dead person" or, alternatively, "a social

nonperson" (Patterson 1982, 1, 5, 7, 13). In other words, to be enslaved is to have no recognized social existence: in and against the social world but not of it.

Articulated to transoceanic trade, empire building, and capitalism, the modern enslavement of Black people, racialized through enslavement as Black, assumes global scale and significance, distinguishing it from premodern cases of slavery. In an earlier publication, Charles Mills (2013, 35), one of this book's contributors, reflects on the singular position of Black people in the modern world:

> The peculiar experience of Africans under Western modernity, which originally turned them into "negroes" (lowercase), creating a race where previously none had existed, impressed a forced diaspora on them that took them to Europe and the Americas . . . , made the extraction of their labor central to the making of the modern world, . . . while still leaving them globally identifiable as the people who were appropriately designated a "slave race" in modernity, the very period when slavery was [otherwise] dead or dying in the West.

Taking the Social for granted as the universally shared ontological ground, social theories cannot but fail to see enslavement for what it is. A social nonperson is not a type of dominated social person among others, and social death is not a form of social injury among others. The "life" of the enslaved is radically, incommensurably insecure. They have no legitimate standing in the social world. They have no legitimate claims to power or resources, including their very "own" selves. For example, in the antebellum United States,

the enslaved were subject to sale, and the ever-present threat of sale, and the internal slave trade forced the relocation of over two million, half of them "involv[ing] the break up of a family" (Johnson 1999, 5-7; 2013, 14). As Hortense Spillers alerts us, *kinship* or *family*, as well as all other categories that constitute and make sense of social life, "loses meaning" in social death "*since it can be invaded at any given and arbitrary moment by the property relations*" (2003, 218, emphasis in original). The point is not that the enslaved always, continuously suffer such invasions. Constant terror does not require constant violation. Rather, "the fact of its possibility [is] experienced as an ever-present sense of impending doom that shadow[s] everything, every thought, every moment of [the enslaved's] existence." Basic needs of humans as social beings—such as senses of belonging, trust, and efficacy—are under relentless, "prolonged assault," and "all ties [are] precarious" (Patterson 2018, ix). What we are suggesting is that relative to such extreme antisocial conditions, we must continually doubt the adequacy of and rethink all social categories of practice and analysis, including, as we discuss below, racism.

This state of abjection does not end with formal emancipation. Against the predominant narrative of progress and freedom across the humanities and the social sciences, Saidiya Hartman (2002, 757) argues that the "time of slavery" has yet to pass, that the present is still in its grip. Chattel slavery may be, for the most part, no more (Patterson and Zhuo 2018), but what follows in the wake of the "nonevent of emancipation" is the "afterlife of slavery": "Slavery had established a measure of man and a ranking of life and worth that has yet to be undone. . . . Black lives are still imperiled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago" (Hartman 1997,

116; 2007 6). Antiblackness, part and parcel of racial slavery and its afterlife, remains the extreme antisocial condition of possibility of the modern social world. To those who would dismiss out of hand a homologous continuity between racial slavery and the present, the stranglehold of the former on the latter, and insist upon a categorical break, we pose the questions: When did Black life start mattering? When were Black people freed from the ever-present sense of impending doom?

Since the dawn of modernity, Black people have been progressively, singularly positioned—materially and symbolically—as the "slave race" around the globe. By the end of the seventeenth century, for instance, slavery in the Spanish Empire, from the Americas to Asia, was abolished for all—in law, if not fully in practice—with the sole exception of Black people, which mirrored the contemporaneous hardening of Black enslavement in the English colonies (Seijas 2014; van Deusen 2015). Further, the ever-expanding antiblackness underwrote white as well as other nonblack claims to Humanity and freedom the world over (Buck-Morss 2000), including in contexts without Black people, such as precolonial Korea (see chapter 7). Of the various color lines that have crisscrossed the planet, the one closing off Blackness, we contend, has been the most decisive and definitive, marking the outer boundary of the Human.

At the conclusion of the nineteenth century, in *The Philadelphia Negro*, Du Bois ([1899] 1996, 386–87) made a profound, underappreciated observation:

> And still this widening of the idea of common Humanity is of slow growth and today but dimly realized. We grant full citizenship in the World-

> Commonwealth to the "Anglo-Saxon" (whatever that may mean), the Teuton and the Latin; then with just a shade of reluctance we extend it to the Celt and Slav. We half deny it to the yellow races of Asia, admit the brown Indians to an ante-room only on the strength of an undeniable past; but with the Negroes of Africa we come to a full stop, and in its heart the civilized world with one accord denies that these come within the pale of nineteenth century Humanity.

What Du Bois claimed about the nineteenth century, we affirm and extend to the twentieth and the twenty-first, and it is still precisely this "core concept of 'the human' that anchors so many humanities disciplines—history, literature, art history, philosophy, religion, anthropology, political theory, and others" (Lowe and Manjapra 2019, 23). The Human is to the humanities what the Social is to the social sciences: their foundational concept, the declared and assumed universality of which is ultimately belied and bounded by its "full stop" antiblackness. The Human, the modern human, defines itself in opposition to the Black (alleged) nonbeing: "The distaste must be for her. . . . Her blackness is static and dread," as Toni Morrison writes of Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* ([1970] 2007, 49). Frantz Fanon (1967) places this fear and hatred of Black people at the core of what he describes as the modern collective unconscious. The hatred of Black people is the hatred of the nonbeing, of the placeless, of the alleged nonhuman. As Rinaldo Walcott (2014, 93) notes,

> What it means to be Human is continually defined against Black people and Blackness. The very basic terms of social Human engagement are shaped by anti-Black logics so deeply embedded in various normativities that they

> resist intelligibility as modes of thought and yet we must attempt to think them. . . . This global anti-black condition produced in the post-Columbus era, still and again manifests itself in numerous ways that have significantly limited how Black people might lay claim to human-ness and therefore how Black people might impact on what it means to be Human in a post-Columbus world.

Following Baldwin, Spillers, Hartman, and others, we call attention to the perpetual, if unnoticed and ignored, theoretical incoherence generated by the deep-seated antiblackness of modernity. Applied to the plight of Black people, concepts and theories meant to index *social* domination and *human* suffering invariably falter and fall short. Under racial slavery, for instance, "the captive female body . . . could be converted into cash, speculated and traded as commodity, worked to death, taken, tortured, seeded, and propagated like any other crop, or murdered," Hartman reminds us. "The work of sex and procreation was the chief motor for reproducing the material, social, and symbolic relations of slavery [that] . . . inaugurated a regime of racialized sexuality that continues to place black bodies at risk" (Hartman 2016, 168–69). In apperceiving such antisocial, antihuman conditions, even the most radical theories of the Social and the Human, much less their mainstream counterparts, cannot but misrepresent. What conceptual vocabulary is up to the task? Exploitation or primitive accumulation? Patriarchy or misogyny? Hegemony or subalternity? Relative to antiblackness, such categories "are all thrown in crisis" (Spillers 2003, 221). Misrecognition and euphemism are inevitable.

There are at least two possible readings of the passage from *The Philadelphia Negro* quoted above. Humanity can be imagined as a continuum, with the full inclusion of the "Anglo-Saxon" on one end and the full exclusion of the "Negroes of Africa" on the other. One could then read hope into the phrase "widening of the idea of common Humanity" and envisage the ultimate inclusion of Black people. Explicitly and implicitly, this reading is manifest in more than a century of social-scientific research since the publication of what is now increasingly considered a foundational text of social science: Black people's continued position on the wrong end of countless social measures, yoked to an enduring hope, or at least possibility, of eventual equality and freedom. Even if unuttered, the hope is ingrained in the analytical assumption that the same social theories, concepts, models, and variables must obtain from one end to the other of any posited continuum.

A second, alternative reading, which this book puts forth, is to take seriously the nature of the difference that the "full stop" denotes and, as the ensuing chapters demonstrate, the character of the "one accord" that "denies" Blackness from the pale of Humanity. Even when viewed through radical social theories, all the world is a continuum, and Black people are not excepted. For instance, their enslavement is most frequently conceptualized as one, if the most extreme, regime of modern labor exploitation among others. Adopting and adapting Marxism, Du Bois himself would later, in *Black Reconstruction in America*, conceive of the Black enslaved as the "Black worker," and in between the enslaved Black worker and the "white worker" is arrayed a range of racialized and coerced workers—the other members of the "dark proletariat" (1935, 15–17). Unsurprisingly, the "worker" here is "as a category absent gender and sexual

differentiation" (Hartman 2016, 166).[3] Still, even on its own terms, Du Bois's Marxism, and its central figure of the worker, could not but come up against its intrinsic limitations as it sought to make the Black (male) enslaved legible to the world: "No matter how degraded the factory hand, he is not real estate. . . . In this vital respect, the slave laborer differed from all others of his day. . . . It was a sharp accentuation of control over men beyond the modern labor reserve or the contract coolie system" (Du Bois 1935, 10–11).[4] Not an anomalous appurtenance to sameness or similarity, this vital difference is *the* difference that makes all the difference in and for the world. For Blackness and Black people, to be rendered recognizable to the Social and the Human is to be misrecognized beyond recognition. Like Du Bois's pale of Humanity, analytical categories of the Social and the Human do not extend to the antisocial, antihuman condition of antiblackness without being overstretched, and analogies and appeals to antiblackness, such as *wage slavery*, to represent nonblack suffering and domination register as overwrought.

The incongruity, the conceptual crisis, bespeaks the incommensurability of antiblackness and the need to distinguish antiblackness from racism.[5] The analytical and political imperative of establishing a break from the social concept of racism emanates from the recognition of antiblackness as an ontological condition of possibility of modern world sociality, whereas racism is an aspect of that sociality. A world without racism requires deep transformations in social practices and structures. A world without antiblackness necessitates an entirely new conception of the social, which is to say a radically different world altogether.

A framework of antiblackness stresses the uniqueness of Black positionality and experiences relative to those of nonblack social groups. It proposes that the defining antagonism of modernity is Black-nonblack (Wilderson 2010). Deriving from theoretical efforts and historical and sociological analyses, such a perspective suggests that Black people (a) are not only exceptionally and systematically excluded socially—from housing markets, quality education, effective health care, safety, and life—but (b) are the nonbeing that underpins and engenders modern nonblack subjectivities. These propositions assume a logic of social and ontological abjection, rather than domination or subjection, of Black people. Such logic is antiblackness.

Whereas from the perspective of racism, racial and other related and intersecting forms of oppression can be eliminated, or at least ameliorated, from the perspective of antiblackness such an assumption, or hope, is suspended relative to Black people.[6] Antiblackness suggests that rather than with a set of social and institutional practices, the problem lies with the very notions of the Social and the Human underlying these practices and their constitutive rejection of Blackness and Black people. What would be the effect of reforming social and institutional practices if the basic assumptions authorizing such practices are left untouched? Or, to put the problem more directly, how would we go about proposing an entirely new type of sociality or humanity? How would we go about rejecting Humanity without rejecting the modern world, the Social?

Fanon emphasizes the singular positionality of the Black, who "has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man" (1967, 110). In an antiblack world, the Black nonsubject is constitutive of an asymmetrical social space of positionalities from which she

is excluded. The Black nonsubject provides the fixed point against which all other positionalities attain social freight and legibility, yet her presence is negated, erased, ignored. Put differently, per our reading of the passage from *The Philadelphia Negro*, while Black people fall outside the continuum of Humanity, they generate and define the continuum precisely because they are its constitutive, asymptotic other—the alleged nonbeings who delimit the social world but are not of it. By contrast, though subject to various types of combined oppressions, nonblack subjects of varied racial categories, genders, sexual orientations, social classes, and nationalities nonetheless occupy legible positions on the continuum of Humanity. Having any, even minimal, ontological resistance in the eyes of the white cisheteronormative propertied men is an all-important difference from having none—"the total absence of human recognition" (Morrison [1970] 2007, 48)—a difference in kind that is continually misrecognized as a difference in degree.

Antiblackness is an antisocial logic that not only dehumanizes Black people but also renders abject all that is associated with Blackness.[7] This generalized abjection helps us grasp the ways in which, historically and contemporarily, Black people's embattled bodies, spaces, knowledge, culture, citizenship, and humanity have served as the counterpoints to safety, rationality, belonging, and life. Unlike racism, which tends to focus on analogous experiences of oppression, antiblackness stresses the singularity of Black people's dehumanization, antihumanization.

To fully engage with this perspective's implications and consequences, it is important that we avoid a common and understandable tendency: the identification of counterexamples that affirm Black people's humanity. Of course, we know of countless

examples, historical and contemporary, of a radical Black humanity—a vital humanity that exceeds the present social world, one that operates according to ethical and aesthetic principles not reducible to normative parameters, one that categorically rejects dehumanization. It is the humanity of "the commodity who speaks," of those who inhabit the space of the fantastic and "refuse victimization."[8]

Black humanity is never in question. The point of stressing antiblackness is not to negate Black people's humanity or accept Black a-humanity. Rather, it is to locate in the globally shared notion of the Human the source of Black people's dehumanization, suffering, and death. It is not to negate or dismiss Black people's agency, but rather to reframe Black agency as necessarily and always engaging the fundamentally antiblack world as it is and projecting radically alternative conceptions of what it is to be human and live in society.

"Slavery is with us still. We are haunted by slavery. We are animated by slavery," Anthony Paul Farley, one of this volume's contributors, argues in an earlier publication. Antiblackness "is slavery *and* segregation *and* neosegregation *and* every situation in which the distribution of material or spiritual goods follows the colorline" (Farley 2005, 221; emphases in original). The persistence, multiplicity, and interconnectedness of diasporic antiblack forces that trace to racial slavery are impossible to negate, given the greatly disproportionate presence of Black people in spaces of dispossession and death, physical and social. Singular in their extensiveness and intensiveness, such antiblack dynamics

include the targeted criminalization and industrial warehousing of people in jails, prisons, immigration detention centers, juvenile facilities, and foster care institutions; intensifying protocols of punishment and confinement of ostensibly uncoercive institutions, such as schools, universities, hospitals, and welfare; intractable levels of unemployment and subemployment; absurd deficit in wealth accumulation; hypersegregation in housing and schools, as well as looming gentrification; blocked access to quality education; exposure to environmental toxins leading to birth defects, chronic illnesses, and death; premature death by preventable causes, including treatable cardiovascular, stress, and birth-related conditions; the AIDS/HIV pandemic; and ever-outlying rates of homicide, domestic violence, and other forms of state and nonstate coercion. This litany is but a sample of the afterlife of slavery that characterizes the Black diaspora.[9]

The essays assembled in this book examine antiblackness across expansive coordinates of time, across the modern era. Antiblackness, they find, fundamentally structures the past and the present, from nineteenth-century slavery to the 2020 U.S. Census, from precolonial to colonial to postcolonial formations of state, empire, nation, and civil society. The chapters collectively disrupt the deeply taken-for-granted assumption of an inexorable, if halting, march through history toward recognition and rights for all, including Black people. Rather than a relic, anomaly, or contradiction being gradually overcome, antiblackness is conceptualized as foundational to modernity.

The essays likewise span vast coordinates of space, from Great Britain, France, and the United States to Haiti, India, Korea, Palestine, and South Africa, from the White House to plantations, prisons, refugee camps, and schools. Across such disparate geographies, we

find a coherent pattern of antiblackness, as modern subjects—not only Europeans or whites but also various nonblack subalterns—define themselves and construct a world, the modern social world, in opposition to the Black nonsubject. The challenge, which the contributors confront head-on rather than sidestepping, is to grapple with the common fact of antiblackness while attending to the specific inflections of particular historical moments and contexts.

The present book is unique in bringing together scholars in and beyond Black studies. Black studies scholars provide robust retheorization of antiblackness and novel empirical investigations. Deployed to trouble seemingly critical or liberatory categories such as democracy, mass incarceration, feminism, and citizenship, antiblackness gains conceptual complexity as it reveals essential but previously hidden dimensions of theoretical discourses, everyday interactions, and institutional processes, historical and contemporary.

Placing antiblackness at the center, contributors whose primary specialization is not Black studies scrutinize anew apparently unconnected histories and peoples. Antiblackness shapes and haunts plantation agriculture in colonial India in the nineteenth century, Koreans' Declaration of Independence in 1919, indigeneity and settler colonialism in the contemporary United States and Palestine, and politics over the racial categorization of Latinx. What the authors glean are not merely overlooked stories and data to be assimilated into existing literatures but fundamental reorientations. In heterogeneous contexts far and wide, antiblackness structures and bounds the Social and the Human.

What holds this book together is not theoretical consensus. Not all of the contributors would wholly agree with this introduction or all of the other chapters. Rather, the gathered authors each consider antiblackness from their particular vantage points but with the common goal of pushing past accepted understandings. Working in a humanities discipline that is starkly devoid of and hostile to Black people and Black thought (Botts et al. 2014; Curry and Curry 2018), philosopher **Charles W. Mills** contends that Black philosophy, born of "racial subordination in modernity," is singularly positioned to illuminate the workings of race and modernity as "the position of Blacks is unique among all the groups racialized as nonwhite by the modern West": "For no other nonwhite group has race been so enduringly constitutive of their identity, so foundational for racial capitalism, and so lastingly central to white racial consciousness and global racial consciousness in general." Interweaving theory and autobiography, **Frank B. Wilderson III** provides a precis of Afropessimism and illustrates it with personal experiences that, in part, inspired it. Recalling white comrades in the African National Congress and a Palestinian friend in Minneapolis, he lays bare the "ruse of analogy" at play in even revolutionary politics and social theories as they relate to Blackness and Black people. In critical dialogue with Afropessimism, **Iyko Day** takes up the question that, according to Patrice Douglass (2018, 116), is being insistently asked of it—"does Afro-pessimism adequately deal with the question of black gender?"—and ultimately answers in the negative through a heterodox Marxist critique of racial capitalism. Juxtaposing Marx, Freud, the Gospels, Goethe, Wittgenstein, C. L. R. James, and others, legal scholar **Anthony Paul Farley** outlines a general theory of antiblackness that, among other things, posits "the rule

of law [as] nothing other than the endless unfolding of the primal scene of accumulation" of the Middle Passage.

The next set of chapters ground their analyses in histories of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Focusing on the production and circulation of Carolina rice, **Zach Sell** narrates a global history of racial capitalism and colonial empires, linking settler slavery of antebellum Georgia and South Carolina to the mills and markets of England to colonial plantations of British India. At bottom, antiblackness was the "foundation stone" (Du Bois 1935, 5), not only in the form of enslaved labor but also in the form of "negative recognition," the enslaved's indispensable but overlooked knowledge of rice cultivation, without which colonial efforts to introduce Carolina rice production in India were predestined to fail.[10] Hartman's generative concepts of the nonevent of emancipation (1997, 116) and the afterlife of slavery (2007, 6) are vividly borne out in **Sarah Haley**'s account of Black women ensnared in the Jim Crow carceral regime. Under ever-present conditions of physical and sexual terror, they were compelled to materially and symbolically "reproduce white life at the detriment of their own," forced to engage in "a form of perverse social reproduction"—the reproductive labor of their own incarceration—"activity that maintains the barest life . . . for the maintenance and naturalization of the category of Black prisoner and the maintenance of a system of captivity that extracted industrial and agricultural labor to the point of human expiration." Studying a context halfway around the globe from the U.S. South, **Jae Kyun Kim** and **Moon-Kie Jung** make sense of Black people's persistent presence in the public discourse of, despite their physical absence in, precolonial Korea at the turn of the twentieth century.

Buffeted by closing imperial forces, Koreans managed their intense colonial vulnerability and imagined their place in the modern world through the figure of its absolute other, the enslaved African, to lasting colonial and postcolonial consequences.

Exploring dimensions of captivity as political subjugation, the four subsequent chapters provide analytical insights into the carceral logics of antiblackness. **Dylan Rodríguez** examines the ways in which the term "mass incarceration" has been politically domesticated to conform to a reformist agenda. Such an approach ultimately fails to address incarceration as a fundamentally antiblack logic and methodology of social management. Focusing on the experiences of a Black woman in Britain who for decades fought against police abuse in London, and providing a genealogy of the repression against African Caribbean women contesting state violence in postcolonial Britain, **Mohan Ambikaipaker** shows how gendered antiblackness is at the core of Western liberal juridical rule. **Connie Wun** presents an analysis of the narratives of six Black girls disciplined in their high school and argues that antiblackness includes everyday forms of surveillance and punishment enacted in accordance with institutional protocols. As part of a larger structure of carcerality, schools draw from and reproduce antiblack logics according to which captivity is policy. Framing Sally Hemings, Michelle Obama, and Deborah Danner as *captive maternals*, **Joy James** argues that their experiences, including survival strategies, suggest the limits of democracy. Their experiences as feminized bodies link antiblackness, violence, and presidential powers. Despite the different historical periods they inhabit, the three women share vulnerabilities traceable to global racial slavery.

The final part of the book is composed of studies of contemporary dynamics that unsettle received narratives, assumptions, and theories to reveal the breadth and depth of antiblackness. **Crystal M. Fleming** asserts that in France, antiblackness is both quotidian and structurally embedded—it is part of what it means to be French. Yet, in the French context, antiblack racism is seldom related to chattel slavery. Such denial, or what Charles Mills (1997) calls "epistemology of ignorance," makes it difficult to grasp historical and structural aspects of antiblack racism, including the ways in which European whites continue to benefit from it. Analyzing U.S. as well as Latin American census information, **Tanya Katerí Hernández** argues that antiblack racism and its corresponding aversion to Blackness explain Latinxs' strong preference for the white racial category, regardless of one's physical characteristics. Thus, the proposal to collapse "Hispanic" ethnicity into a single racial category—replacing the current two-part question about "Hispanic" ethnicity and racial identity—would make it even more difficult to collect data on Black Latinxs and effectively render them invisible. Drawing from Joy James's (2016; this volume) theorizations of the womb and the captive maternal, **Sarah Ihmoud** contends that Zionist settler violence against Palestinians in occupied territory is energized by an antiblack logic that seeks to preserve the Jewish body from the imagined threat of contamination. Grappling with seemingly irreconcilable critiques of settler colonialism and antiblackness, **Jodi A. Byrd** reflects on "how indigeneity situates itself in and benefits from antiblackness" and proposes that "choosing a return to what remains will allow us to turn away from nationhood, sovereignty, and jurisdiction and toward governance, relationality, kinship, and land."

# Notes

[1] This book went into production in early 2020, before the protests.

[2] We capitalize the Social and the Human to specify their modernity.

[3] Hartman goes on to demonstrate how "gender" and "sexual differentiation" as social concepts lose coherence when applied to "the captive female body": "Depending on the angle of vision or critical lexicon, the harnessing of the body as an instrument for social and physical reproduction unmakes the slave as gendered subject or reveals the primacy of gender and sexual differentiation in the making of the slave" (2016, 168).

[4] For a more detailed analysis of the enslaved and the worker in relation to Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction in America*, see Jung (2019). In relation to Gramsci, see Wilderson (2003).

[5] In our view, the dominant way of thinking about antiblackness has been to conceptualize it, whether explicitly or implicitly, as a synonym for antiblack racism. In the rare instance, a certain distinction is drawn, but it has not been expressly focused on and argued through. Our own previous work, including earlier versions of this chapter, has not been clear on this point.**{Ed: OK? I'm not sure what you mean. Yes ok}**

[6] Derrick Bell's writings, of course, are an exception to the assumption that racism can be eliminated (see, e.g., Bell 1995**{Ed: 1995 in refs.}**).

[7] Here we reference Fred Moten's longer discussion of Black abjection. It is important to note that in Moten's work, Black people object to their abjection in multiple ways, including aesthetic practice (see Moten 2003).

[8] "The commodity who speaks" is, of course, Fred Moten's (2003, 8) formulation. The space of the fantastic is Cedric Robinson's rendition of Black spaces, expressed at an event at the Southern California Library in 2012 (see Vargas 2018)**{Ed: Give reference? (See Vargas 2018)}**. Joy James (this volume)**{Ed: Source? (chapter in this volume)}** has written on the refusal to be victimized. See also Jared Sexton's (2011) "The Social Life of Social Death."

[9] Especially in officially postracial contexts, we could speak of saturation points beyond which antiblack processes spill onto and affect even nonblacks (Vargas 2018).

[10] With regard to the cotton industry of the same period, Du Bois (1935, 5) wrote, "Black labor became the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but of Northern manufacture and commerce, of the English factory system, of European commerce, of buying and selling on a world-wide scale."