

Framing the Stage

Structures of Race, Imperial Oppression, and Performances of Blackness, 1770–1850

*Sarah J. Adams, Jenna M. Gibbs,
and Wendy Sutherland*

The year 2012 marked a watershed moment regarding the staging, performance, and reception of Blackness and Black characters on the German stage. Berlin's Schlosspark Theater, for example, staged American playwright Herb Gardner's *I'm not Rappaport*, directed by Dieter Hallervorden, about a friendship between two elderly men in Central Park, New York. Rather than hiring a Black actor to play the role of the African-American character of Midge Carter, the role was rendered by a white actor in blackface.¹ Theater spokesman Harald Lachnit defended the use of black makeup by stating that it was a long-standing "tradition" and claiming that they could not find a suitable Black actor. In the German theater space, where permanent ensembles are indeed almost all white, whiteness is normative and invisible—a canvas on which any race can be projected—whereas a Black actor's skin is marked as visible, "raced," and "othered." While the German repertoire is said to offer too few roles for Black actors to justify a permanent position, Black actors are at the same time not Black enough to play nonwhite characters.

Later in 2012, American Pulitzer-winning Bruce Norris' play *Clybourne Park* was scheduled to be performed at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin and a white actress was cast in the role of an African-American woman. The play was withdrawn from the stage as soon as Norris found out.² Michael Thalheimer's 2012 production of Dea Loher's *Unschuld* (*Innocence*) caused even more outrage when two characters described as "illegal Black immigrants" were played by white actors in black makeup, which was almost all gone by the end of the play. It represented the process of Black individuals becoming more "human" and "allowing the viewers to shift their prejudiced views of them through the effect of empathy."³ For Sharon Dodua Otoo, this representation was deeply problematic because it relied on the centuries-old paradigm of equating whiteness "with belonging, with agency, with visibility," while constructing Blackness in terms of "'illegality', 'victimhood' and 'forgiveness.'"⁴ A dramaturg's choice to use blackface for representing

nonwhite characters is indeed consummately unsettling, but the condensed narratives that are allocated to Black characters are at least as harmful. Representations of and roles for Black people in the German theater space are largely designed according to the agendas that maintain the power relations sustained by white supremacy.

Fortunately, anti-racist activists, performers, and playwrights have been challenging the under- and misrepresentation of nonwhite performers in the German theater. The Afro-German artist collective Label Noir, for instance, founded in Berlin in 2009 and led by actresses Lara-Sophie Milagro and Dela Dabulamanzi, addresses structural racism by creating a space for Black actors to play three-dimensional and universal roles that embody their humanity rather than their skin color and not roles that reinforce foreignness and exoticism. The Bühnenwatch (Stage Watch), too, was founded to publicly critique and end racist stage practices and traditions in the German theater landscape. During one performance of Michael Thalheimer's *Unschuld*, 42 of the Bühnenwatch ostentatiously left the auditorium and distributed flyers about the offensive nature and histories of blackface and the racist overtones attached to it.

While these examples of the German theater space are arresting, racist performance praxes and politics have died hard elsewhere. In London's Covent Garden Royal Opera House, a white mezzo-soprano in blackface makeup was cast in 2005—a choice rescinded only after public outrage.⁵ The 2018 production of Hugo Claus's play on King Leopold II, by Raven Ruëll for the Royal Flemish Theater, ignored the intense debates on the racist caricature of Black Pete in Belgium, and in the Netherlands, as it staged white actors in blackface and failed to recognize the nation's violent colonial history in Congo. The only nonwhite performer in Ruëll's production was silenced and reduced to his sexuality. And on the schedule for Sorbonne University's theater festival of 2019 was a production of Aeschylus' ancient *The Suppliants*, which staged Black masked actors and violence with sexual and racist dimensions to it. The Representative Council of Black Associations (CRAN) called for a boycott and built a website to inform the public of intertwining histories of blackface and slavery.⁶

The present volume hopes to further expand our knowledge about the performance historiography of racialized subjection, which continues to regulate Black people's place and representation in Anglo-European theater today. The acceptance of racial mimicry for depicting nonwhite people, the vestigial narratives and images about them, and their barring from working on white-dominated stages harken back to early modern performance "traditions." Europe has a long history of blackface as a performative pattern, connected to preindustrial alterity, demonic powers, and proto-racist sentiments.⁷ Since the mid-eighteenth century, blackfacing was invariably linked to slavery and racialized subjection. Between the 1770s and the 1850s, an age of revolution, colonial expansion, and rapid intellectual, social, and economic change, the slave trade, race,

slavery, and freedom were newly negotiated and performed in images, texts, street dances and festivals, and on theatrical stages. Abolitionist playwrights, in particular, employed blackface as a dramatic strategy to mobilize audiences for a crusade against the institutions of the slave trade and slavery. Contemporary scholars of theater, Blackness, and slavery tend to detach blackface from its sometimes progressive impulses while in fact racism and antislavery radicalism were mutually dependent.⁸ In line with what Saidiya V. Hartman has argued, even humanitarian scripts, when performed in blackface, can uncover how discourses of reform transmitted symbolic and long-lasting terror to Afro-diasporic people until today.⁹ Most of the above-mentioned modern playwrights, too, are well intentioned and consider themselves to be progressive and anti-racist. Similarly, the proliferation of blackface performances in the late eighteenth century was predominantly in plays intended to protest against slavery, yet these antislavery dramaturgies helped establish later proslavery, deeply racist performative tropes and character types.¹⁰

Staging Slavery thus rests on the premise that the playhouse could be an arena of protest but also a venue for racist and imperialist exploitations of those who were colonized and enslaved. Being the most popular cultural venue of its time in colonial and metropolitan locales, the theater was a ludic site of debate and its embodied performances of slavery and Blackness could function as a particularly powerful conduit for questioning societal and cultural assumptions. The chapters in this book examine such plays and productions in far-flung sites in the metropolises of Paris, London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, New York, Sydney, and Hamburg, as well as in the Portuguese and British colonies, illustrating how theater reflected and helped shape contemporary political and societal discourses and events. At the same time, however, against the backdrop of the Atlantic and Asian slave trade and the widespread displacement and colonization of nonwhite peoples, many of the plays under scrutiny here testify to the white obsession with bodies of color in visual and performative arts and were deeply imbued with competing discourses of race. Such theatrical productions ballooned, of course, to create and sustain the meanings of colonial operations and define and secure a white—and in some cases national—identity. The chapters in this volume explore some of the critical thematic nodes of this dialectic, while also seeking to highlight how these practices still inform understandings and performances of Blackness today.

This volume joins an exciting body of standard publications and more recent studies that trace the centuries-long record of symbolic violence couched in the application of masks, burnt cork, or face paint and the dehumanizing and restricting narratives, images, and ideas that were attached to it. Increasingly, scholarly work on this topic starts from a trans- or international approach. *Staging Slavery*, too, traverses the Francophone, Anglophone, German, Dutch, and Danish speaking and

Iberian worlds around 1800. In so doing, the volume self-consciously contributes to newer scholarship that was, arguably, galvanized by breakout works like Joseph Roach's *Cities of the Dead*, which brought the term "circum-Atlantic" into common scholarly usage and helped augur the transnational, pan-colonial, and global turn. Indeed, the efforts of several of this volume's contributors are part of this newer scholarship that expands our purview to an international and even global lens. In the Anglophone context, the published works of Jenna M. Gibbs and Kathleen Wilson and their contributions to this volume offer a transnational Anglophone purview.¹¹ There is also growing scholarship on race, slavery, and performance in the French metropolitan and colonial context, including that of Sylvie Chalaye, Laurent Dubois, and Sibylle Fischer.¹² Several recent works contribute to both these perspectives, including Heather S. Nathans' compelling analysis in this volume on the staging of slavery and freedom on French and U.S. stages.

While much recent scholarship situated in the Francophone and Anglophone worlds has received the attention it deserves, non-canonic perspectives and stories in other languages have remained on the fringe of the "academic mainstream." An increasing number of scholars, however, is bringing these "peripheral" contexts into the English-speaking world, thus assuring a more panoramic understanding of racialized representations and constructions of whiteness in the early modern theater. Noémie Ndiaye, for instance, in her recent monograph, studies the vivid "stage idiom of Blackness" developed by white performers in early modern France and England, but also includes Spanish theater historiography.¹³ Nicholas R. Jones' *Staging Habla de Negros* on the white appropriation of Africanized Castilian, which illustrates anti-Black racism of not only white authors and audiences but also Black agencies in the African diaspora, has received an enthusiastic reception in 2019.¹⁴ In this volume, we are especially gratified to contribute to the English-language scholarship situated in non-Anglophone contexts. Mariana S. Mayor and Britt Dams, for example, expand the English-language scholarship on Iberian performances of slavery and resistance in Brazil. Wendy Sutherland's groundbreaking monograph of 2016 has illuminated how representations of race in German cultural productions influenced the construction of a white bourgeois German self.¹⁵ Her study served as an inspiration for other scholarly works, including Sarah J. Adams' recent *Repertoires of Slavery*, which speaks to the complete lack of attention to the Dutch context in international analyses of colonialist culture.¹⁶ Literary scholars have also pointed out the absence of Scandinavian perspectives in this debate.¹⁷ Sine Smed's dissertation on Danish theatrical discourses about slavery, as well as her chapter for this volume, helps to further the discussion about abolitionism in a transnational context.¹⁸

One of this volume's greatest strengths is its sampling of analyses not solely based on French and Anglo-American theater, but also on German,

Dutch, Iberian, and Scandinavian cultures. In the chosen time period of this volume, the 1770s–1850s, antislavery discourses and racist views were widespread in all European and colonial contexts—ranging from Enlightenment texts like those of Immanuel Kant, David Hume, and Denis Diderot to popular performance pieces like those discussed in this volume. The tensions between antislavery sentiment on the one hand and racist tropes on the other are germane to this volume’s coverage. The authors of *Staging Slavery* study scripts and performances within different linguistic spheres—and in the languages of the colonizers. For reasons of legibility, we have asked all contributors to translate German, French, Portuguese, Danish, or Dutch excerpts into English in the running texts and give original citations in the footnotes. Translating is always a tricky business, especially so when it concerns passages and phrases replete with (un)concealed racialized violence. Not only do shades of meaning easily get lost, but translating also involves finding a balance between taking into account the historical contexts in which these texts were cultivated and not actively reproducing words that helped shape the harmful ways in which people of color continue to experience discrimination. Original citations are always inserted in endnotes and titles of historical texts will be preserved. The n-word will never be actively translated into English, however. This choice is not a matter of “censoring” history—in fact, translating is always a matter of making informed choices and, while historical texts may be timeless, the ways in which we speak about them, fortunately, change. Obviously, the terms “white(ness)” and “Black(ness)” are not used in this volume as distinct biological categories, but as concepts shaped by social, political, and cultural processes.

In addition to the difficulties of language usage, the authors in this volume, in interrogating structures of power and attempting to lay bare the symbolic violence in humanistic texts, cannot avoid reproducing some of the thoughts, images, and assumptions that we mark as racist today. We can only hope to provide a critical context in which they can be used and perceived for purposes contrary to those for which they were initially fabricated. The various forms of today’s racialized violence were prefigured by the artistic, intellectual, and political investments co-mediated through colonial cultures. Thoroughly studying these colonial contexts and structures of power may provide new historical perspectives to help us comprehend the implications of white supremacy that stand until today.

The volume is divided into three parts. **Part I**, “Slavery, Revolt, and Abolitionism,” addresses the metropolitan theater as a site and laboratory for reflecting, shaping, and negotiating antislavery protests and ideologies. The plays and productions under discussion here were written, translated, and staged against the backdrop of increasingly coordinated and formal antislavery activism across the globe. In 1787 and 1788, societies for the abolition of the slave trade were founded in Great Britain, France, and the newly formed United States, pressuring their respective governments

to legally end human trafficking in the decades that followed. The Danish abolished the slave trade in 1792 and the law came into full effect in 1803; the British Parliament followed suit in 1807; by 1804 slavery was illegal in all northern states of the United States and the foreign slave trade was legally ended in 1808. Meanwhile, the newly proclaimed King of the Netherlands, following arrangements made in the light of the Congress of Vienna, abolished the Dutch slave trade in 1814. Across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, slave resistance and uprisings underscored for the metropolises the dangers of holding millions of people in bondage. Following numerous precedents in colonies such as Berbice, Indonesia, Surinam, and Cuba, it was the major rebellion that erupted in the French Caribbean, in Saint-Domingue, in 1791—according to some, predicted by Abbé Raynal—that terrified white Europeans the most and eventually led to the establishment of the independent Haitian Republic in 1804. The chapters in [Part I](#) explore how playwrights and thespians in the metropole seized on or interacted with these specific global developments and helped shape their audiences' understanding of the institution of slavery and antislavery protest.

In [Chapter 1](#), Anja Bandau examines the complex representation of Black revolt by turning to popular French boulevard theater. The blackface characters that were staged in these highly politicized venues were vehicles to promote patriotic education to wide audiences and convert violent transformations of the colonial order into a consensual project of reform, often incarnated by intimate new family configurations that bridge distance and overcome dissent through friendship. In [Chapter 2](#), Sarah J. Adams discusses how resistance was imagined on the stages of the Netherlands, opening up the fraught question of who could envision slave emancipation and determine the very strategies for acquiring and maintaining such freedom. Dramatists and spectators alike disparaged nonwhite protesters and minimized their role as agents in Black emancipation. This thwarting contrasted sharply with the violent ways in which the Dutch Patriots sought to organize their own political revolution in the very same decades. Sigrid G. Köhler's in-depth analysis of F.G. Nesselrode's 1778 play *Zamor und Zoraide* in [Chapter 3](#) then moves the discussion to the German states, where, despite their rather peripheral position in the transatlantic system, authors and thespians created radical antislavery theater to contest the institutions' violation of human rights. She reads the protagonist's eloquent speeches against slavery as a form of political "truth-telling," highlighting the interdependency of freedom of speech and self-determined conduct of life, so fundamental for Enlightenment ideas of modern nation-building, but disregarded in colonial law. In [Chapter 4](#), Heather S. Nathans finally investigates how the blackface rebel is depicted on the stages of the United States and France, two nations that had recently undergone revolutions based on liberty and equality. But equality for whom? While French cultural productions offered a more utopian view on Black emancipation than

American ones, theaters in both nations implemented paternalistic notions of race. The stage therefore became a laboratory for experimenting with dramatic visions that reconciled the discourse of race and freedom. In varying ways, the plays and productions examined in [Part I](#) grapple with slavery, slave-led revolt, and antislavery, mediated through the thoroughly transatlantic and troubled use of blackface and developing a language of protest founded in white superiority.

[Part II](#), “Race, Nation, and Empire,” instead focuses on the popular performance of slavery in relation to the theories of human difference and national identity. The productions discussed here were written and performed in a period that was characterized by seething debates over race—debates that were entangled with questions of slavery, freedom, and citizenship. Whereas philosophers and physicians such as Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, and Petrus Camper influentially formulated environmental and cultural classifications of the human variety, the closing decades of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century marked a shift toward biological racism advocated by Samuel Thomas Sömmerring, Georges Cuvier, Josiah Nott, George Gliddon, Samuel Morton, and others, who connected physical appearance to intellect and propagated white people’s superiority over others. Metropolitan playwrights, cartoonists, and thespians were acutely aware of these developments and contributed to the crystallization of racist ideologies through disturbing visions of empire and white identity, even as they disseminated critical visions of slavery.

In [Chapter 5](#), Wendy Sutherland examines how the white space of the bourgeois home serves as a stage in which ideas of gender, race, and racial belonging are constructed and performed and where insiders and outsiders to that space are defined or eliminated. The free trading town of Hamburg, the entry point for colonial goods, is a fitting stage for testing the boundaries of who should or should not belong to the future German state. Kathleen Wilson, in [Chapter 6](#), through the lens of Edward Young’s *The Revenge* of 1796, explores how Sydney became an amphitheater of struggle driven by the competing claims of British authorities and aboriginal leaders, over the “improvement” that justified British power and coercion across the world. Wilson investigates how this blackface performance about the threat of the “Moors” during Spanish dominance negotiated the various levels of revenge that coursed across the Cumberland plains. Mercy Vungthianmuang Guite’s [Chapter 7](#) explores the connotations of skin color in Theodor Körner’s German play *Toni*. Using the backdrop of the Haitian Revolution and the pseudoscience of the period created around race and racial hierarchies, Guite analyzes the characterizations and dramatic constellations in Körner’s *Toni*, a reworking of Heinrich von Kleist’s “Die Verlobung in Santo Domingo,” to highlight and expose how the racial binary between Black and white served to support and underpin early nineteenth-century German understandings of race, racial

hierarchies, and belonging. [Part II](#) closes with Sine Jensen Smed's [Chapter 8](#), which sheds light on Denmark as a major player on the global stage of slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the analysis of three plays performed at the Royal Danish Theatre in Copenhagen. These scripts—one of them written by Denmark's figurehead Hans Christian Andersen—were deeply influenced by international motifs and discourses, while also being particularly attuned to Danish national politics and traditions. Together, [Chapters 5](#) through [8](#) disclose a newly pernicious idea of a racialized nation, which grew out of and supported the continuation of imperialism and the subjection of nonwhite people and their exclusion from freedom and citizenship.

Black-led protests and productions—like the aforementioned CRAN's boycott in Paris and the bracing productions of the Afro-German Label Noir in Berlin—are not new, as is evident in [Part III](#) of this volume, "Black Agency, Performance, and Counter-Theater." The chapters in this part center on some Afrodiasporic contributions to the transnational popular culture of slavery and freedom, focusing on the agency of these performers to resist the strictures of racism and slavery through forms of counter-theater, both on and off the stage. These Black performances of race, slavery, and resistance took place within the larger contours of the emergence of freedom for some in the diaspora, and the backlash against freedom in the face of continued slavery for most.

In Portuguese America, free Black and "mulatto" individuals were more prevalent than in the Anglophone world. Mariana S. Mayor's [Chapter 9](#) turns to the lives of performers at the Opera House of Vila Rica, established in 1770, and their choices in representation and tactics of resistance in the context of oppressive conditions. In a society built on slave labor, all these pieces were performed by Black and Mestizo actors and actresses in whiteface makeup. Although most of these artists were free workers, some documents reveal a violent labor relationship between theater entrepreneurs and performers, suggesting slave-like conditions. In [Chapter 10](#), Britt Dams examines the staging of slavery and antislavery sentiment in a newly emergent colloquial Brazilian theatrical oeuvre in juxtaposition to performances of rebellious subversion in creolized African-derived *candomblé* and *batuques*. Her chapter explores these theatrical and vernacular Black performances in Rio de Janeiro against the backdrop of growing tensions over slavery in the first half of the nineteenth century, when enslaved people were a major part of city life.

Meanwhile, in the early decades of the nineteenth-century United States, there were free Black communities in all the northern cities as a result of the gradual abolition laws passed in the revolutionary era, including 1820s New York. Although many were poor, some free Blacks in New York became upwardly mobile, but faced hostile and sometimes violent opposition to civic participation and voting rights. Jenna M. Gibbs' [Chapter 11](#) examines how the all-Black repertory troupe of the

African Grove Theater rewrote and reinterpreted popular British plays featuring blackface characters, augmenting them with new scenes and specially written ballads, to stake a claim for Black freedom and to protest racial injustice. All three chapters in [Part III](#) keep with the volume's premise of the theater (and its related media) as a venue not only for reinforcing—and even inventing—hegemonic structures of race and imperial oppression, but also as an arena of actual protest. They show how people of color used performative culture to voice resistance and assert autonomy, both through vernacular African-descended performative traditions and the cultural reinvention of “white” languages and traditions of enlightenment, theater, and music.

The necessity of re-organizing white spaces is one of the focal points in Tunde Adefoye's epilogue to this volume. We have asked Adefoye—who was formerly affiliated with the Royal Flemish Theater in Brussels, where Ruëll's *Het leven en de werken van Leopold II* also debuted—to read the chapters from his own experience and perspective. Bringing together theatrical praxis and drawing on the works of bell hooks, Audre Lorde, and others, Adefoye offers a searing and insightful critique of the continuation of past representations of Blackness in modern-day theater and film. In line with the concerns we have expressed at the beginning of this introduction, the epilogue exposes that there is still much work to do in diversifying artistic arrangements and productions. But equally important is Adefoye's point on diversifying academic discussions about Blackness. Not only do we need to pay more attention to how race intersects with other axes of peoples' and characters' identities, including gender, sexuality, and class, but we also need to work toward an academic environment that includes more narratives and scholars from the Global South. We think Adefoye is right, and we hope that this volume will help open up those necessary larger conversations about white supremacy and scenes of Blackness in global contexts.

We finish this introduction as we began with a striking example of the intersections between anti-racist activism and theatrical performance. Ten years after the staging of *I'm Not Rappaport* in Berlin's Schlosspark Theater, the Afro-German theater collective Label Noir performed the theater-film, *Emmett, Tief in meinem Herzen* (*Emmett, Deep in My Heart*), based on Clare Coss' play, directed by Lara-Sophie Milagro and Dela Dabulamanzi, and screened at the HAU Hebbel am Ufer Theater in Berlin in January 2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The plot depicted the circumstances around the brutal murder of the fourteen-year-old African-American Emmett Till, who was visiting relatives in Mississippi in the summer of 1955. White men killed Emmett Till for allegedly whistling at a white woman. The production, filmed in the Summer of 2021 in Berlin-Marzahn, also interweaves uncannily similar stories of anti-Black racist violence in recent German current events, thereby also making Emmett Till's story a German story. The staging of this theater film represents a

bold step in combating white supremacy in the German theater scene—it is not about finding a suitable white actor for the role, as is the excuse in traditional theater productions that choose to use blackface. *Emmett* shifts the power dynamics on a deeper level by having the Black actors not only play Black roles, but also pushes them to occupy the role of the white perpetrators. Contemporary anti-racist dramaturgy has been one inspiration for this volume, to which academic scholars as well as two dramaturgical activists, Mariana S. Mayor and Tunde Adefloye, have contributed.

This volume's main objective is to map and analyze the theatrical modes, tropes, and scenarios of racialized slavery and subjection that have been crucial to the production and preservation of white hegemonic structures as well as the early white and Black artistic strategies for opposing it. The volume started from an international scope, to bridge the common divides between North and South America, and between Anglo-America and the Iberian Peninsula in the scholarship. By bringing together cases from different colonial and imperial powers—ranging from Denmark, the Netherlands, the German states, Portugal, France, and Great Britain, as well as the expanding United States—the chapters collectively illustrate how these different imperial projects were both imitative yet disparate. The manacles of slavery, oppression, displacement, and European legitimating hierarchical notions of “race” and “civilization” manifest in all colonial contexts in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian basins. So, too, do the agency of resistance and revolt in the slave trade and lived colonial slavery, and the emergence of antislavery protest and discourse of emancipation in the metropolises. Yet even though colonial and European metropolises were discursively and economically interconnected, dissimilarities between colonial cultures and settings gave rise to quite varied ideas about human and social differences, and the development of abolitionist and emancipationist ideas and actions at different times in different ways. Related to the volume's overarching international purview is that the chapters also illustrate the interplay between the colonies and the metropolises, and how the local, national, and global were in constant dialogue and must be understood as being mutually constitutive of the realities and performances of colonial slavery and race. Clearly, this work needs to be continued, contributed to by more diverse and nonacademic voices, and extended to other colonial contexts not considered here.

Notes

- 1 *I'm Not Rappaport* has been staged in Germany about 40 times since 1987. In that time the African-American character was played by a Black actor only twice.
- 2 Breitenbach and Abbany, “Berlin Theater Surprised.”
- 3 Otoo, “(Ab)using Fadoul and Elisio.”
- 4 Otoo, “(Ab)using Fadoul and Elisio.”
- 5 “So Long Mammy: Opera Says Farewell to Blacking Up.” *Observer*, November 20, 2005

- 6 Derbew, *Untangling Blackness*. See also Piser, “France Doesn’t See Race.”
- 7 Vaughan, *Performing Blackness on English Stages*; Hornback, *Racism and Early Blackface*.
- 8 Gibbs, *Performing the Temple of Liberty*.
- 9 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 11.
- 10 Nowatzki, *Representing African Americans*.
- 11 Gibbs’ *Performing the Temple of Liberty* discusses performances of slavery in the theater scenes of London and Philadelphia; Wilson’s *Strolling Players* looks at Indian, Caribbean, Australian, and still other locales.
- 12 Chalaye, *Du Noir Au Nègre*; Carrier and DuBois, “Voltaire et Zaïre”; Fischer’s chapters on revolutionary theater *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine*; literature in *Modernity Disavowed*; and an array of articles by Anja Bandau, Barbara T. Cooper, and Wendy C. Nielsen. Additionally, there are works that illuminate the participation of people of color in the commercially thriving colonial theaters of Saint Domingue, such as Clay’s *Stagestruck*.
- 13 Ndiaye, *Scripts of Blackness*.
- 14 See also Santana’s and Noriega’s edited volume, *Theater and Cartographies of Power*, which includes the work of performers alongside that of theater theorists and historians to discuss power, race, representation, and violence in the Americas.
- 15 Sutherland’s *Staging Blackness and Performing Whiteness* is, to date, one of the only English-language works on the performance of race and slavery in German Studies. We can look forward to Priscilla Layne’s and Lily Tonger-Erk’s forthcoming volume *Staging Blackness*, however. The German-language scholarship includes Sadji’s *Der Mohr auf der deutschen Bühne*; Riesche’s *Schöne Möhrinnen*; and the articles by Sigrid G. Köhler.
- 16 Adams, *Repertoires of Slavery*. An important exception here is Kurupath’s *Staging Asia*.
- 17 Baggesgaard, “Precarious Worlds.”
- 18 Smed, “Imellem Verdener.”

Bibliography

- Adams, Sarah J. *Repertoires of Slavery: Dutch Theater Between Abolitionism and Colonial Subjection, 1770–1810*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023.
- Baggesgaard, Mads Anders. “Precarious Worlds: Danish Colonialism and World Literature.” *Journal of World Literature* 1, no. 4 (2016): 466–483.
- Breitenbach, Dagmar and Zulfikar Abbany. “Berlin Theater Surprised by Bitter Dispute over Blackface Actor.” *Deutsche Welle*, January 13, 2012.
- Carrier, Bernard and Laurent Dubois. “Voltaire et Zaïre, ou le théâtre des Lumières dans l’aire atlantique français.” *Revue d’histoire moderne & contemporaine* 54, no. 4 (2007): 39–69.
- Chalaye, Sylvie. *Du Noir Au Nègre: L’image Du Noir Au Théâtre à Jean Genet 1550-1960*. Paris: L’Harmattan, 1998.
- Clay, Lauren R. *Stagestruck: The Business of Theater in Eighteenth-Century France and Its Colonies*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2013.
- Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.
- Gibbs, Jenna M. *Performing the Temple of Liberty: Slavery, Theater and Popular Culture in London and Philadelphia*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014.

- Hartman, Saidiya V. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-making in Nineteenth Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Hornback, Robert. *Racism and Early Blackface Comic Traditions: From the Old World to the New*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.
- Jones, Nicholas R. *Staging Habla de Negros: Radical Performances of the African Diaspora in Early Modern Spain*. University Park: Penn State University Press, 2019.
- Kuruppath, Manjusha. *Staging Asia: The Dutch East India Company and the Amsterdam Theatre, 1650–1780*. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016.
- Layne, Priscilla and Lily Tonger-Erk, eds. *Staging Blackness: Representations of Race in German-Speaking Drama and Theater*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2022.
- Nathans, Heather S. *Slavery and Sentiment on the American Stage, 1787–1861: Lifting the Veil of Black*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Ndaiye, Noémie. *Scripts of Blackness: Early Modern Performance Culture and the Making of Race*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022.
- Nowatzki, Robert. *Representing African Americans in Transatlantic Abolitionism and Blackface Minstrelsy*. Louisiana State University Press, 2010.
- Otoo, Sharon Dodua. "(Ab)using Fadoul and Elisio: Unmasking Representations of Whiteness in German Theater." *Textures: Online Platform for Interweaving Performance Cultures*, May 27, 2014.
- Piser, Karina. "France Doesn't See Race (Officially): A Blackface Performance Challenged That." *The Atlantic*, June 11, 2019.
- Riesche, Barbara. *Schöne Mohrinnen, edle Sklaven, schwarze Rächer: Schwarzenardarstellung und Sklavereithematik im deutschen Unterhaltungstheater, 1770–1814*. Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2010.
- Roach, Joseph. *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Sadji, Uta. *Der Mohr auf der deutschen Bühne des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Salzburg: U. Müller-Speiser, 1992.
- Santana, Analola and Jimmy A. Noriega. *Theater and Cartographies of Power: Repositioning the Latina/o Americas*. Translated by Anna White-Nockleby and Alejandra Marin Pineda. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2018.
- Smed, Sine Jensen. "Imellem Verdener - Om mulatfiguren i 1830'erne og 1840'ernes danske litteratur om Vestindien." PhD diss., University of Aarhus, 2019.
- Smith, David. "So Long Mammy: Opera Says Farewell to Blacking Up." *Observer*, November 20, 2005.
- Sutherland, Wendy. *Staging Blackness and Performing Whiteness in Eighteenth-Century German Drama*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2016.
- Vaughan, Virginia M. *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Wilson, Kathleen. *Strolling Players of the British Empire: Performance in the British Imperial Provinces*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021.