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Ain't I a Migrant?: Global Blackness and the Future of Migration Studies

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Abstract

In the wake of recent interventions to better connect the subfields of international migration and race and ethnicity through a sociology of racialized immigration, we push this further by arguing for the necessity of a global Blackness perspective on global migration. Such a focus does not just reflect the role of race in the dynamics of migration, and vice versa, but more importantly shifts assumptions about this relationship. So, it is not enough to say that race matters in migration but rather that blackness and Black lives matter in how migration unfolds. Using global blackness as a starting point in our analyses of migration reveals a clearer and closer entanglement of race, racism, colonialism, and migration. We argue that global Blackness structures notions of who migrates and under what conditions, as well as our ideas regarding migrants and their descendants and use the examples of New York City, Paris, and France as paradigmatic sites for understanding this relationship.

Keywords

racism, global blackness, racialized immigration, African diaspora, New York City, Paris

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Introduction

As we acknowledge the 60th anniversary of the *International Migration Review* (IMR), we would like to start this piece by reflecting on the state of the field, where it has been, where it is currently, and where it can go in the next 60. The *IMR* journal was founded by religious missionaries committed to improving the life chances of migrants through scholarship in 1964, the same year that the watershed Civil Rights Act which banned discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sex or national origin was passed. The 1960s was a period of enormous anti-racist and anti-colonial political upheaval in the US and abroad. In the US, the Black-led Civil Rights Movement (CRM) struggle revealed the white tyranny which ordered their lives and ultimately countered generations of racial exclusion experienced by Black Americans and other marginalized populations. The vision of the CRM was anti-racist, anti-poverty, and anti-war. The CRM, born out of the church basements and dining rooms of Black American youth and adults was determined to end the system of fascism that oppressed them, and the movement inspired the organized protests of Indigenous people, Asians in America, and Chicanx living on the border and queer communities in the US as well as the freedom struggles abroad of colonized peoples who sought liberation from the strongholds of white supremacy (Morris 1999). IMR was also launched on the eve of the passage of the 1965 Hart Cellar Act, which, opened up borders, and unintentionally, ushered in millions of immigrants from the Global South. As millions from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America entered American cities, they and their children have changed not only the racial demography of America, but its culture, economy and politics forever.

We believe that the CRM has done an extraordinary work not only domestically, but also in a world changing manner. The gains of the Civil Rights Movement such as voting rights and equity in employment and education has largely been rolled back, however, the continued struggle helps us understand migration histories, historical presents, and the future of migration in important ways. CRM was a movement energized by Black people from the American South who were oppressed under Jim Crow, however, they did not only understand this as being related to their own condition. They believed that American democracy was at stake, and a global democratic shift was not possible without racial equity between Black people and white people. This global vision was a part of the long-standing freedom struggle of Black people not only in the American South, but in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa who had endured generations of enslavement, colonialism and imperialism. These regimes of power against Black people have led them to be human trafficked across continental, hemispheric, regional and national borders under slavery and later used migration as a tool to manage and escape white domination, only to find new iterations of it in their destinations. Therefore, we bring into the conversation of global migration what has long been set to the margins—the globality of Blackness, the Black diaspora's struggle for place and home under regimes

of white supremacy in the West, and how it relates to the experiences of other colonized peoples.

In the wake of recent interventions to better connect the subfields of international migration and race and ethnicity through a sociology of racialized immigration, we push this further by arguing for the necessity of a global Blackness perspective on global migration. Such a focus does not just reflect the role of race in the dynamics of migration, and vice versa, but more importantly shifts assumptions about this relationship. So, it is not enough to say that race matters in migration but rather that blackness and Black lives matter in how migration unfolds. Using global Blackness as a starting point in our analyses of migration reveals a clearer and closer entanglement of race, racism, colonialism, and migration.

As we discuss, global Blackness structures notions of who migrates and under what conditions, as well as our ideas regarding migrants and their descendants. We use the term global Blackness as an expansive way to frame how Blackness is not bound to specific nation-states, but rather circulates within and across borders, and how people racialized as Black experience otherness based on this social assignment. The tradition of Black studies' scholarship centers on the African diaspora, or the dispersal of Black populations globally as a result of slavery, colonialism, forced migration, and dispossession. Global Blackness exists in contrast to global whiteness, which was constructed by European colonizers to enshrine division and exploitation (Christian 2019). Therefore, using global Blackness as a starting point in studies of migration challenges Eurocentric dominant perspectives on migration.[1] Global Blackness also allows us to see freedom struggles, triumphs and cultural innovation of Black diasporas, and how these have served as crucial advancements in human rights and democracy.

We demonstrate that, although Black migrations have been placed at the margins of migration studies, the historical and contemporary conditions of the Black diaspora are at the heart of how white nations have exploited and subjugated migrants and created a social order unto which all other migrants have been subjected. Our intervention is in line with that of other scholars who have called for a consideration of the racialized dynamics of migration, including who migrates and why, as well as the experiences of migrants in their new destinations (Golash-Boza 2019; Jung 2009; Trietler 2015). Our intervention therefore not only focuses on the racialized dynamics of migration but specifically focuses on the centrality of the myriad of Black migrations that have shaped the political economies of modern Western societies, moving migration scholars towards a more capacious understanding of the *roots of racialized migration*.

In doing so, we first situate the pitfalls of extant research on migration and race, particularly those that uncritically center assimilation, explore the promise of

[1] This move is in line with recent calls for a decolonial and postcolonial perspective on migration studies (see Mayblin and Turner 2021).

racialized migration research, and then discuss how global Blackness moves migration scholarship on racialized migration forward. We further elaborate on what a global Blackness perspective reveals by discussing Black migrations in New York City and Paris, both presently and historically. We build upon racialized migration to focus on the quotidian ways in which Black migrants and their descendants encounter, negotiate, and combat white supremacy as they go about meeting the demands of everyday life. We conclude by offering operating assumptions that will push the scholarship on the relationship between race and migration forward.

Race, Racism, and Migration

The framework of racialized migration sows together two disparate, yet intertwined fields—the sociology of race and ethnicity and the sociology of migration. In the post-civil rights movement period, the subfields of immigration and race, marking a misguided shift and wedge in the construction of the rising native-born and foreign-born minoritized communities in the US (see Trietler 2015). Migration studies in sociology became a field that largely explored how post-1965 immigrants of color's socioeconomic and political outcomes diverged from that of Southern and Eastern Europeans, and investigated how they were going to "become American." This orientation to the "migrant question" essentially succumbed to the post-racial culture of the post-Civil Rights moment, emphasizing "ethnicity" as the analytical category, abandoning the importance of critical racial analyses of how state and non-state actors reproduced white domination and hoarded resources to undermine the progress of Black and brown migrant communities (Omi and Winant 2014) entering US cities and towns in unprecedented numbers.

Some migration scholars have examined how race impacts the experiences of im/migrants (Lee and Bean 2004; Okamoto and Mora 2014; Sanders 2002; Waters and Eschbach 1995; Waters and Jiménez 2005; Waters, Kasinitz and Asad 2014). The driving question that these studies explore is whether post-1965 immigrants are "assimilating," or becoming similar to whites and Black Americans, or making their own "ethnic" pathways to the middle class. They have largely built upon assimilationist theoretical models and explanations. For example, segmented assimilation notes that race is a factor in the experience of immigrants of color, it reproduces problematic assumptions about native and foreign-born people of color (Neckerman, Carter, and Lee 2009; Pierre 2004). The idea is that post-1965 immigrants, who in large part come to the US from predominately Black and brown countries in the Global South (Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia), are unable to "assimilate" into the white middle-class, like Southern and Eastern European immigrants of yesterday did, and are therefore in a crisis. The options, therefore, for them and their children to become upwardly mobile and become middle class are to remain a part of an "ethnic" middle class. The assumption here is that if they steer clear of becoming culturally similar to Black and Puerto Rican American people who are constructed as being a part of an adversarial, oppositional, and therefore, impoverished underclass.

The ticket to the middle class is attaching oneself to an ethnic community and joining a new "mainstream" middle class (Alba and Nee 2003).

In these models is a reverence for assimilation. However, assimilation models are rooted in the history of European conquests, and the enormous violence the British, Spanish, French, and other European colonizers inflicted on Indigenous peoples and enslaved Africans to eradicate them culturally and physically. The goal of colonial assimilation is not to "incorporate" ethnoracial others but to ensure the successful seizure of land, resources, and accumulation of capital during the colonial period (Mayblin and Turner 2021). For example, the settler colonial project aimed to remove Indigenous peoples from their land by stamping out their cultural identities and traditions and assimilating them into European capitalism. During racial slavery, enslaved Africans were stripped of their multifaceted cultural characteristics such as their African names and religious practices in order to strip them of their humanity and make them into chattel property.

Why, as scholars, would we want to use these models and reproduce normative ideas around immigrant assimilation when they devalue the cultures of minoritized people and continue to center white norms and power?

We therefore join the twenty-first-century scholars who argue that a critical race theory orientation is central to questions of migration. Critical race theory emerged in the 1970s from a collection of legal scholars of color who wanted to theorize and address the ways in which the law created, inscribed and reproduced white supremacist power (along with other hierarchies along gender, class, religion, sexuality) since the founding of the modern American nation-state.[2] Similarly, a group of progressive migration scholars of color has used the historical and analytical power of the critical race theory to push disciplines and subfields to address how the state, law, and citizens use domination to curtail comprehensive immigration reform, provide pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and have created an atmosphere of racialized surveillance, exploitation, and marginalization. Others have challenged the academy itself to center this critical approach. Moon-Kie Jung (2009) has critiqued the white assimilationist and supremacist foundations of much of migration scholarship, which he argues fails to consider how race and structural racism are often a mode for constructing communities, for migrants and non-migrants alike. The assimilation theory is based on culturally racist tenets that the white middle class is a norm to be aspired to, without attention to the colonial and racist histories and contemporary practices on the part of white institutions and everyday people to oppress non-whites culturally, politically and economically. We acknowledge that white supremacy is omnipresent in spaces ranging from work to politics to beauty standards, creating incredibly oppressive pressures for non-white people to conform in order to "be accepted" and "get ahead." However, a discussion

[2] For more on the genealogy of critical race theory in sociology, see Christian et al. (2019) and Delgado and Stefancic (2023).

of aspirational whiteness that is devoid of a critical race theoretical perspective reproduces its moral validity. In this vein, a new generation of scholars has called for more critical theoretical perspectives of race and racism to *replace* existing assimilationist perspectives that have dominated the sociology of im/migration.

For example, in separate works, Tanya Golash-Boza and colleagues (2019) and Vilna Bashi Trietler (2015) have called for the inclusion of critical race theoretical analysis in research on immigration. Trietler (2015) calls for a "dethroning" of the assimilation theory which has become a central model for explaining the experiences and outcomes of post-1965 immigrants of color in the US. Trietler (2015) argues that the racialization theory opens up opportunities for researchers to focus on how white supremacy orders our society. Therefore, this model allows scholars to call into question oppressive racial structures and, in a Duboisian tradition, move towards a sociology that is in service to reform and social change for im/migrants (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015). The ethnicity and race relations model, she argues, does not have the analytical teeth to do this critical theoretical and social justice work. Trietler (2015) states:

> If we are to offer social science that can help make a better world free of the bonds of racial inequalities, it is mandatory that we admit that such deadly structures exist and infringe on the very hopes of racialized generations past and to come. It is also incumbent upon us to point out where and when well-established social scientists play a vital role in shoring up these structures by relegating race as a contextual variable that makes for barriers to assimilation that might be overcome if oppressed agents used their agency differently, rather than examining it as an organizing principle that engineers unequal outcomes around the globe. Where we choose not to understand the latter, we are complicit—we mystify and shore up white supremacy by focusing on ethnic character rather than the character of white supremacist societies. (163)

Similarly, Romero (2008) urged scholars of international migration to engage with the critical race theory and critiqued the field's overreliance on Chicago School conceptualizations of race, ethnicity, and immigration as inherent qualities. An increasing number of studies have been published centering racialization as an organizing principle in the experiences of im/migrants. For example, Olmos (2019) argues: "the subfield of racialized im/migration has supplied theoretically innovative and empirically rich scholarship to ongoing urgent conversations about the impasse on immigration reform, the salience of structural racism, the disparate impacts of legality and citizenship, and the agency of marginalized non-White immigrant populations in an epoch of rapidly changing US racial demographics and rise of nativist politics" (2).

Relatedly, Kibria, Bowman, and O'Leary (2014) point to the Western assumptions that only non-white populations, or migrants from colonized societies, migrate, while whites are interpellated as automatically belonging to the nation-state. In other words, ideas about race, and racial groups, structure our framing of migration. Scholars have also generated useful critiques of how state and non-state actors strategically racialize Black im/migrants in the US and Europe, and therefore build

problematic models which minimize the multiplicity of Black heterogeneity and its foundation as a category of inequality in global racial capitalism (De Genova 2018; Medford 2019). Consequently, poor theorization of the racial condition of Black im/migrants in the American (as well as European) hierarchy translates into the inadequate development of models of race, racism, and migration. Therefore, we believe that the multifaceted experiences of the Black diaspora in the Americas and Europe should be the starting point for understanding the politics of power undergirding migration in modern times, rather than a peripheral "ethnic" group used in a larger assimilationist racial project. Our move towards global Blackness, therefore, pushes beyond the consideration of race and racialization in the dynamics of migration and instead calls for the incorporation of racial slavery, colonialism, and postcolonialism into the questions and methods of migration studies. We turn to these precepts in the next section.

Towards Global Blackness

In order to contend with migration as a racialized system, we must first grapple with its origins in the most important event in modern human migration: The Transatlantic Slave Trade. By the end of five centuries of the slave trade in the 1800s, an estimated 13 million souls were abducted and trafficked from the shores of West Africa to the North America, the Caribbean, and South America. The Transatlantic Slave Trade, using brutal violence, dispersed African people from their homelands, tribes, families and cultures to colonies and nations in the Americas. Slavery was the engine of global capitalism. Therefore, the bodies as well as labor of enslaved Africans were the backbone of the development of the modern world economy and propelled Europeans and Americans to their economic and political positions of global dominance. Enslaved Africans and their descendants came to be called "The African Diaspora," a political term created by historians and activists to suture together people forcibly removed from their lands, kin, cultures, and whose lives in their new societies fundamentally shaped culture, politics, and economics in unprecedented ways (Patterson and Kelley 2000) in European and American controlled societies which were totalitarian in their quest to oppress them and their community formations (Walters 1997). Herein this *Black Atlantic* (Gilroy 1993) lies the origins of how a migrant population becomes the center of oppressive racist political regimes. Racial slavery was the basis for the development of modern-world capitalism. The bodies of enslaved Africans were the engines of capital accumulation. The colonial and postcolonial state societies which emerged rose to power on the backs of slavery created laws, policies, codes, customs and culture in order to inscribe the Africans as Black + slave, the Europeans as white and free, and the indigenous as Indian + targets of eradication. The foundation of America's political economy, therefore, in this repressive system has fundamentally shaped who is defined as a human versus property, citizen versus foreigner, belonging versus outsider.

A global Blackness perspective centers on the origins of the relationship between European capitalist domination, the development of the nation, in racial slavery, therefore helping scholars frame the historical evolution of how the capture of Africans and their distribution in the Americas serves as the cornerstone of who is deemed desirable insiders and disposable outsiders of Western nations. For example, since the 1990s, the United States has ramped up the militarization of immigration enforcement. The calls of white America to restrict immigration, and the use of racial stereotypes in order to validate these demands have a long history dating back to racial slavery. The early seeds of today's militarized immigration and border enforcement were planted during slavery. As abolitionist ideas were taking shape and white society saw the impending freedom of millions of enslaved Africans in the South as a crisis, they supported a plan for the US to sponsored programs for Black people to colonize Africa as an alternative to them remaining in the US. This emigration project, or planned deportation, was an alternative to granting freedom to the enslaved and treating them as equal citizens with human rights. Overseen by the American Colonization Society, a segment of the white population saw these as *racial removal projects*, which would ensure that they would not have to emancipate Blacks within the borders of the United States and acquiesce to their demands for access to citizenship, land, work, and mobility (Burin 2016; Sherwood 1917). These state-sponsored programs for managing unwanted racialized populations would evolve over time into structured deportations, removing migrant populations who were deemed to threaten the political interests and power of white society, which continues today.

A global Blackness perspective also clarifies the intertwined relationship between human migration and colonialism. The African diaspora was distributed across colonial societies ruled by the British, French, Portuguese, Dutch, and Spanish empires before they were formed as Western nation-states. Colonialism and imperialism were inherently racial projects structuring mobility and immobility through borders, particularly between the Global North and the Global South (Mayblin and Turner 2021). Although slavery ended in the 1800s in various Caribbean colonies, the domination of European empires over the political and economic affairs of the colonies continued. Because colonialism is a system of widespread extraction, colonial societies in the Caribbean fostered conditions of debt peonage and entrenched poverty for the descendants of racial slavery in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. The colonial apparatus, therefore, created a large free, proletariat class who saw *migration as a key strategy* for escaping conditions of intergenerational poverty. These colonial migrants, from Jamaica to Trinidad, circulated throughout the Caribbean to Cuba, Panama and Florida in search of material and political freedoms. Often, these Black men and women left entire families behind as migration pioneers in what historian Putnam (2013) calls *radical moves* to free themselves from oppressive colonial regimes only to find new regimes of anti-Black immigration legislation in their destinations in the Caribbean, Latin America and the US. These migrations and the overlapping of Black people from different linguistic, religious,

cultural, and social backgrounds in global cities of Harlem, New Orleans and Havana gave birth to world-changing political and cultural movements such as the Universal Negro Improvement Association and Jazz.

Other cases of colonial and postcolonial migrations highlighted through a global Blackness perspective reveal how colonial subjects migrated from the colonies to empires in the hopes of finding avenues for freedom for themselves and their families. In 1948, migrants from Barbados, Jamaica, and other British colonies in the West Indies arrived at the Port of Tillery near London via the Windrush ship. Under the 1948 British Nationality Act, people from the Commonwealth colonies had the right to live and work in Britain. As such, migrants arrived without official documentation and the UK government did not properly record the details of these migrants. By 1970, about half a million people had migrated to the UK. By 2018, a scandal emerged as the UK Home Office (the British government department designated to deal with matters related to immigration) deported several members of this "Windrush generation" who could not prove their indefinite right to remain in the UK. These migrants were the descendants of formerly enslaved, Black colonial subjects of the island of Jamaica, which provided labor and capital, and was a cash cow for the British empire for over two hundred years. In search of an escape from the decline of plantation economies and rampant poverty in post-slavery/colonial Jamaica, these migrants sought economic opportunity by migrating to the metropole. Their and their descendants' presence in London, and the UK more generally, shaped and continues to shape the dynamics of inclusion versus exclusion and belonging versus non-belonging (Perry 2016). Deportation is one of the ways that states structure citizenship and "manage" unwanted populations (De Noronha 2020). This history of migration is therefore also a history of slavery, colonialism, antiblackness and Black radical cultural politics on a global scale. This is not a migration that can be understood simply through a perspective of race or racialization, but rather one that accounts for the construction of blackness and its relationship with national belonging in both the West Indies and Britain.[3]

Within the US, Jim Crow was a mechanism of internal colonialism (Gutiérrez 2004; Pinderhughes 2011). In the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, Black Americans in the US South lived under a system of totalitarian racial tyranny. White southerners had mounted a system of racial violence and control which subjected Black people to constant threats of lynching, violence, rape, theft, and incarceration (Brown 2018; Chatelain 2015; Wilkerson 2011). As a result, beginning in 1910, Black Americans left the US South in large numbers to escape the Jim Crow conditions. Hailing from the farmlands of Alabama to the bayous of New

[3] Stuart Hall was instructive for making these links as they relate to blackness and the British empire, as he described how tea is a symbol of the UK even though there are no tea plantations in Britain itself. Rather, they are in the colonies. So, the construction of the modern nation-state cannot be divorced from these colonial and migration histories.

Orleans, and together, millions of Black Americans protested the apartheid conditions of the US South with their feet. This exodus is known as the Great Migration. They formed new diasporas of Southerners in cities from New York to Baltimore, to Detroit, to Los Angeles. Author Isabel Wilkerson sees this migration of Black Southerners to the North as akin to the experiences of other migrant groups fleeing political oppression:

> The Great Migration was an unrecognized immigration within this country. The participants bore the marks of immigrant behavior. They plotted a course to places in the North and West that had some connection to their homes of origin. They created colonies of the villages they came from, imported food and folkways of the Old Country, and built their lives around the people and churches they knew from back home. They doubled up and too in roomers to make ends meet. They tried to instill in their children the values of the Old Country while pressing them to succeed by that standards the New World they were in. (Wilkerson 2011, 536)

Therefore, the underdeveloped migration scholarship on the Great Migration has had research and political consequences. First, the migrants who entered the urban North and were relegated to segregated, neglected parts of the city were seen as longstanding citizens entrenched in generations of poverty, or what has been called the "underclass," as opposed to seeing them as internally colonized subjects, who have used migration as a tool of freedom, yet only to find the Jim Crow conditions of segregation and impoverishment in Northern cities (Drake and Cayton 1945; Du Bois 1899; Hunter and Robinson 2018).

A global Blackness perspective helps us focus on the pursuit of liberation and freedom of the African diaspora in the Caribbean. Haiti, the first free Black republic in the world, and illuminates the world-changing vision of enslaved people to create a worldview that toppled racial slavery and colonialism. Since this time, Haiti has been excluded from the "sister of nations," seen as a threat to the interests of white hegemonic rule since the Haitian Revolution in 1804 by American and European governments (Alexander 2022; Eddins 2022). As a result, the postcolonial period introduced neocolonial extractive conditions of life in Haiti. As a result, Haitians have left Haiti for countries as close as Cuba and as far as France in search of life and liberty. In the Dominican Republic, Black Dominicans and Black Haitians have faced some of the most violent and repressive anti-immigrant systems which have later been used to exclude other racialized migrants. Anti-Haitian racism (*anti-Haitianismo*) in the Dominican Republic has included state-sponsored ethnic cleansing (Turits 2002), the fortification of the border, mass deportations, apartheid and dehumanization. Anti-Haitian racism, including racial profiling of Black Dominicans, serves to mark them as inferior to Dominicans, and therefore as outsiders in "someone else's country" (Childers 2021, 7). A global Blackness perspective helps us see how the Dominican Republic's state policies of eroding the citizenship rights and rendering Black Haitians (people born in the Dominican Republic of Haitian

origin) stateless with liminal legal status (Childers 2021) is a form of postcolonial racial state politics (Omi and Winant 2014). But this anti-Haitian racism is a form of ongoing anti-blackness. Its violent articulations represent the ongoing legacies of color conflicts incited by Spanish and French colonialism in Hispaniola (the island that Haiti and the DR share) and Dominican white supremacy which emerged as a response to the Haitian Revolution in 1804. Therefore, this case is an important example of the ongoing relevance of colonial, decolonial and postcolonial histories in shaping the movement of Black people across borders, how states respond to their presence and affirmation of human rights.

In the US, the contemporary deportation system also centered around anti-Black interests. This was made evident in the 1970s when the US began to criminalize Haitian refugees who were approaching US shores, but later incorporated Cuban refugees fleeing Castro's regime. The racist hypocrisy of the US Wet Foot/Dry Foot policy was part of the beginning of the US large-scale assault on immigrants of color seeking a better life in the US, marking the anti-Black origins of today's immigrant detention and deportation system (Lindskoog 2019). Without an examination of the structural and interpersonal racism which influence, and support these state policies, our understanding of immigration is limited, telling only partial truths.

In each of the examples discussed above, we see how a framework of global Blackness clarifies the racialized the dynamics of migration, including how slavery, colonialism and postcolonialism have shaped the Black population movement, where they migrate to, and their experiences once they arrive. Migration reproduces racial hierarchies within the citizenry and Black migration is undergirded by global white supremacy. So, our intervention here is not just for migration scholars to pay attention to race, racialization, and racism, but also specifically to how blackness globally structures many of the dynamics of migration in societies built on racial slavery, colonialism, and imperialism.

A focus on global Blackness reveals how antiblackness structures the dynamics of migration *and* our study of migration. Doing so also requires a more expansive definition of blackness beyond being a synonym for skin color or African origin to, as Nicolas de Genova argues, "a provisional understanding of blackness as a racialized sociopolitical category that can be understood to encompass the full spectrum of identities produced as specifically 'non-white'" (2018, 771). Such a definition challenges us to not naturalize the sociostructural conditions *producing* populations as Black.[4] For example, the European response to the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis also illustrates how the construction of Europe as innocent and civilized belies its colonial history and ongoing neocolonial practices and logic (Mayblin and Turner 2021). This is a construction of Europe that sets Black, as well as Arab, populations outside of its

[4] As De Genova (2018) further notes, this understanding of blackness is in conversation with Stuart Hall's own reflections on seeing himself read as Black only when he migrated to Britian, and not before when he lived in Jamaica.

historical and contemporary narrative construction (De Genova 2018; Small 2018). Blackness in this way is a broader way of considering the opposite of white, or how Europe was constructed as white against Black and Arab "others" in the colonies. Comparing colonialism in Algeria and Senegal, for example, reveals how despite the particularities of various colonial arrangements, natives of both societies were specifically produced as non-white and therefore not European. Therefore, we can also consider migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea from various African countries to reach the shores of Europe and how antiblackness justifies their dehumanization and mistreatment (Mayblin and Turner 2021).

In what follows, we operationalize the framework of global Blackness in two prominent migration cities: New York and Paris. These cases were selected as they represent central geographical destinations for the Black world, and their histories reflect the importance of centering the experience of the African diaspora in the migration study inquiries, theoretical frames and methodologies. These sites also serve as cases which we have deeply researched. Due to our extensive empirical research on both these sites, we are confident that they begin to reveal how centering the experience of the African diaspora is crucial for understanding the past and present migration dynamics. We do not suggest they are the only cases for which to see these dynamics but rather introduce them to further develop our framework. Our hope is that migration scholars will build upon the empirical insights in the next section, and explore the variegated ways in which Black migrations throughout the Global North and Global South have influenced how we should theorize and study human migration experiences.

Global Blackness and Migration in New York City and Paris

New York

New York Enslaved Exchange. New York is a quintessential site for exploring the relationship between white supremacy, migration, and agency. Although it is lauded as being an "immigrant city" with migrants from all over the world, the definition of who is an im/migrant is narrow and overlooks that New York is one of the most hyper-racially segregated cities in the country. It is a longtime North Star for Black Southerners, a gateway city for Caribbean and Latin American immigrants, and a newer destination for postcolonial African immigrants (Agyepong 2019; Foner 2001; Watkins-Owens 1996). However, at the center of the city's modern political and economic origins is the Transatlantic Slave Trade (1626 by the Dutch West India company). It is a settler colonial city that rose to global primacy as a result of racial slavery (Miles 2019). In Tiya Miles's (2019) essay "The 1619 Project," she develops a historical overview of how the forced migration of free and enslaved Africans by first the Dutch and then the British to then New Amsterdam, and argues that today's New York created the early seeds of capitalist

development in the modern West. Wall Street, for example, was the marketplace where enslaved Africans were trafficked to, and through, before they were sold to slave owners and planters in the North and the South. This is important for migration theorizing because it serves as the model for migration as human trafficking in modern Western societies. Enslaved Africans were trafficked to New York to build its urban infrastructure and toil the land. They were traded and sold on Wall Street as chattel property, their bodies used as the machines to fuel the city's and the empire's rise to global power.

Migration scholarship is largely silent about the Transatlantic Slave Trade (1400s-1800s), and its centrality to modern migration processes. This is where a global Blackness approach helps to expand the categorical and experiential breath of migration, racism, and the urban literature. Since the colonial era, New York has been the epicenter of racial slavery, and later, the constrained movement of Black diasporas in the late nineteenth to twenty-first century during Jim Crow, the Civil Rights Movement, and post-Civil rights racialized neoliberalism. The largest migration of people in the modern world, the British, French, Portuguese, Dutch, and Spanish empires developed the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which trafficked 12.5 million Africans from the continent to the West. As a result, the Transatlantic Slave Trade should be an epistemological, and phenomenological starting place for theorizing how European domination has shaped modern migration processes, Black migrant agency, and urban development. The transatlantic slave trade was a forced migration created in the name of capital accumulation for European empires and enforced by brutal violence and state participation. This forced migration became the vehicle for the modern capitalist system. Enslaved Africans were bought and sold as property and labor that fueled European and American plantation economies and global commerce. They arrived and built world-changing cultural and political movements such as the Abolitionist Movement. The contemporary experiences of Black people with state and non-state racial marginalization and violence in New York are not separate, but intertwined with these histories and cannot be fully studied or theorized in the absence of them.

In the post-Civil Rights Movement US, studies of migration and immigration have largely focused on Latinx and Asian communities. However, as has been demonstrated by Black institutions such as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and many Black studies scholars (i.e., Farah Griffin (1995) and Manning Marable (1995), migration and immigration have been at the heart of the political, economic, and cultural experiences of the African Diaspora since racial slavery and have has been at the core of modern capitalist development. There is nowhere else in the country where this is more palpable than in New York City.

If we examine racialized migrations to New York from a global Blackness perspective, we see that today New York houses the largest Black urban population in the US (approximately two million), yet the community continues to fight for its rights to the city (Clergé 2019).

Migration as Political Refuge. Over two hundred years after the beginning of racial slavery in Dutch New York, another large-scale migration to New York took hold which has largely been undertheorized in migration literature studies: The Great Migration. The Great Migration, the mass movement of Black people from the Jim Crow South to the American North and West, began in the early 1900s and tapered down by the 1970s (Beveridge 2008; Tolnay 2003). New York City was one of the premier destinations for Black migrants during the period. The flow of migrants began as a trickle during slavery as thousands of enslaved Africans defied fugitive slave laws and left the American South for "freedom" in Northern states, and became a river of people fleeing the post-slavery Jim Crow South, a watershed movement which helped New York evolve into the epicenter of Black global culture in the twentieth century.

The Great Migration was fueled by the desires of Black people in the South who were invested in creating an alternative future for themselves and their families (Brown 2018; Field 2018; Hunter and Robinson 2018). In states such as Alabama and Georgia, local and state governments had launched anti-Black laws and policies which rendered newly freed Black people as stateless citizens subject to poverty, violence, illiteracy, and disenfranchisement. Tactics such as convict leasing sought to re-enslave free Black men, women, and children by imprisoning them and extracting their labor on plantations. Lynching was used as a tool used to inflict terror on Black American citizens, with criminal organizations such as the KKK and everyday white vigilantes in order to "keep them in their place" and deny them access to basic freedoms and citizenship rights. In Alabama, for example, local officials created several barriers to African Americans seeking to exercise their citizenship rights and vote by enacting literacy tests and poll taxes to African Americans and not to whites. Exclusion from the ballot, schools, neighborhoods, and lunch counters were maintained with extreme white supremacist violence. One person after another, one family after another decided that they would pack their bags, large and small, and left the physical and sexual violence and debt peonage of the Jim Crow South, boarded trains, cars, and horses, and sought what Isabel Wilkerson (2011) called "warmer suns" in cities like New York, Chicago, Detroit. Wilkerson framed the Great Migration as "the first step the servant class took without asking" (2011, 11). By the end of the Great Migration in 1970, approximately six million Black Americans had left the South, some to return, creating chocolate cities and a racial political map that changed the course of American politics forever.

Black Southerners migrated to New York and created world-changing cultural and social movements such as the Harlem Renaissance, propelled the Jazz Age, and inscribed the literary contributions of Black people through The New Negro Movement and were architects of the Civil Rights Movement. The migration literature, however, has largely ignored the magnitude of the Great Migration, both the undemocratic and capitalist exploitative motivations for why Black people left the South by the millions, as well as how they were received in the Northern cities

where they had more opportunity but encountered North-style Jim Crow conditions, and how they created cities *anew* through political, cultural, economic and technological innovation (Hunter and Robinson 2018). We believe that more research on the Great Migration, focusing on the intersection between migration and blackness, is crucial to developing an understanding of racial exclusion, the quest for liberation, and theories of migration.

Postwar, Postcolonial, Post Civil Rights Migrations. As the Great Migration to New York tapered down in the 1970s, a new form of Black migration was taking shape. A trickle of hundreds of Black Caribbean migrants before borders closed in the 1920s turned into a wave of thousands and then hundreds of thousands of Black migrants beginning in the late 1960s entering New York, (as well as Miami and Boston) from decolonizing and post-colonial nations in the Caribbean, Latin America, and later Africa. These migrants were leaving behind the turmoil of former plantation economies, oppressive dictatorships imposed by US and European foreign policies, and unstable economies created by neoliberal exploitation and extraction interests (Schmitz 1999). These migrants entered New York in large numbers and were met by segregation, and a bifurcated, deregulated economy.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, Harlem has been a quintessential Black city within New York City. It was the neighborhood where Black migrants from the American South and Caribbean could find residential housing, build businesses, send their kids to school, and make a way forward for their families during the Jim Crow period and post- Civil Rights era (Watkins-Owens 1996). Since Harlem became overcrowded in the mid-twentieth century, Black people have made Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx new sites of migrant settlement. In addition to Black Southerners, migrants from the English-speaking Caribbean have come to New York to fill the labor shortages in its public schools and public hospitals by providing critical labor as teachers and nurses (Burgess 1989). Furthermore, political instability in Caribbean countries such as Trinidad, Jamaicans, and Guyana and African countries such as Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana have encouraged many migrants to build up lives and communities in New York in unprecedented numbers. As citizens, legal permanent residents, or undocumented migrants, these Black diasporas have changed the face of post-Civil Rights New York (Biney 2011; Kasinitz 1992; Rogers 2004).

Black migrants to New York have faced racial barriers at every turn. This is evident in New York's labor force, where Black migrants have found anti-Black policies and conditions from segregated education, to housing and employment. They have encountered few mechanisms for mobility outside of work in the public sector, healthcare, and entrepreneurship (Clergé 2019). White and white ethnic New Yorkers have segregated and created unequal economic and political conditions for Black migrants. For example, Black New Yorkers consistently have higher

unemployment rates than white New Yorkers.[5] Well-paying jobs in finance and technology largely hire whites and Asians and are slow to hire and promote Black workers. Real estate agents continue to racially steer Black homebuyers to segregated and unequal, exacerbating the city's racial wealth gap.[6] Black youth in New York are disproportionately more likely to be racially profiled by police. For example, some of the most high-profile police assaults and murders of Black New Yorkers have been post-colonial immigrants and/or their children. For example, the New York Police Department murders of Patrick Dorismond and Amadou Diallo rocked Black New Yorkers at the turn of the twenty-first century, marking continued state-sanctioned violence against their communities. Therefore, global Black migrations to New York demonstrate the importance of a racial analysis—particularly of anti-blackness and the racial state—in building knowledge about migrant experiences.

While New York does house a rooted Black middle class (created largely through public sector work), the combination of the high cost of living and the racial barriers in Black advancement since the Civil Rights Period, the majority of Black New Yorkers live in poverty, working poverty and vulnerable working-class households (Clergé 2019). Many have left the city for more affordable lifestyles in the South. This means that in the millennium, we are seeing new trends of Black migrations *out* of New York City, and into the suburbs and the south. These trends are often overlooked in migration literature as they are within country moves. However, they are indicative of important global, national, and local racial and economic inequality experiences which have forced Black families to pack their bags and seek Southern geographical spaces of freedom and new possibilities.

Outkasts: Millennial OUT-Migrations. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the mass movement of Black people out of the city was just as sociologically significant as their moves into it. From 2000 to 2010, New York saw its first significant decline in the city's Black population, and that number has been on the decline since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000; 2010; 2020). This was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Wong and Yadavalli 2023).[7] There were dual forces shaping the outmigration of Black New Yorkers. First is the exceptionally high cost of living and declining availability of livable wages. Second is the strategic gentrification and

[5] Emi Mella Pablo and James A. Parrott. 2023. "Although unemployment has fallen in New York City, the last year has seen a sharp divergence in White and Black unemployment rates." Economic Update. Center for New York City Affairs, The New School. http://www.centernyc.org/reports-briefs/although-unemployment-has-fallen-in-new-york-city-the-last-year-has-seen-a-sharp-divergence-in-white-and-black-unemployment-rates

[6] NYCLU Stop and Frisk Data. 2022. https://www.nyclu.org/en/stop-and-frisk-data

[7] https://www.osc.ny.gov/press/releases/2023/12/changing-face-post-pandemic-new-york-city#:~:text=White%20and%20Black%20populations%20in,2022%2C%20growing%20by%203.3%25.

dispossession of Black renters and homeowners discouraged the old generations and the new from continuing their sojourn in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Harlem. Third, the passage of punitive, restrictive racial and immigration laws (such as the 1996 IRRIRA Act) led to large numbers of deportations of Caribbean Black immigrants (Golash-Boza 2017). This worked in tandem with the city's ongoing war on Black communities and the state-sanctioned violence which terrorized Black and brown youth. Fourth, in addition to seeking wider open spaces and better amenities in metro areas suburbs, many Black people were participating in what has been called the Reverse Great Migration (Pendergrass 2013), or the mass exodus/ return of Black people, young and old, to the American South they and their ancestors had left decades ago. Caribbean and African immigrants and their children, too, are a part of this exodus. A trip to Charlotte, North Carolina, the suburbs of Marietta, Georgia, Houston, Texas or South Florida reveals the presence of former New Yorker Haitians, Dominicans, Jamaicans, Panamanians and Nigerians through local businesses such as restaurants, hair salons, and churches.

As an older generation of Black migrants from the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa are leaving the city, new waves of migrants escaping civil war, famine, and poverty from Mali, Gambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Senegal are peopling what the *New York Times* has called "The Other New York Migrant Crisis"[8]. A trip to Home Depot in Jamaica, Queens, for example, once meant that a customer would find Latinx men offering a range of construction services, from painting to junk removal. These days workers are now predominately Black. These migrants are largely young men, Muslim and settling in long-standing Black Muslim communities in the Bronx, Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant. Unlike the African Diaspora who arrived in the Americas as a result of slavery and colonialism, these migrants are escaping the political and economic disasters caused by European and American postcolonial, neoliberal extraction and exploitation of their countries. For example, migrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo are fleeing a country deep in civil wars over natural resources such as gold, cobalt and oil[9]. Like the Latinx migrants who are made to be the face of the "migrant crisis" at the US–Mexico border, African migrants are traveling throughout Latin and Central America before arriving at the border, crossing, and being brought to New York by religious organizations. They are the Newest Black New Yorkers, and their stories of family separation, exploitation, sojourn represent a new chapter of Global Blackness in New York. In sum, historical and contemporary Black migrations to and from New York offer important, anchoring insights into how a global Blackness perspective can expand the breath of migration theory and methods of social inquiry.

[8] https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/13/nyregion/west-african-immigrants-nyc.html
[9] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Countries/CD/FS-5_Natural_Resources_FINAL.pdf

Paris, France

French Republicanism and Disavowal of Race, Racism, and Colonialism. As the capital city of one of Europe's largest colonial empires, Paris is also a paradigmatic site for attending to the interrelationship between migration and global Blackness, as well as to the dynamics of racialized im/migration. Despite its national narrative, France has long been a nation of immigrants, mainly from other parts of the French empire to what is now understood as the geographical boundaries of France, which has made Paris—and France more broadly—ethnically diverse. Specifically, migration from former colonies and present overseas *départements*, from Senegal to Martinique to Vietnam to Algeria, has shaped and continues to shape all historical and present dynamics of French life—from why people migrate, to where they migrate, to the structural conditions facilitating or hindering their "integration." France's colonial empire in much of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean among other regions has been integral in creating the present French nation-state, and France itself has long been a country of immigration (similar to the US). As such, France is not and has never been a solely monoethnic society, despite its colorblind ethos. And Paris, especially, is a site of past and present racialized immigration and one to understand how blackness and antiblackness are foundational to understanding the dynamics of migration.

Partly due to French Republican ideology, and its influence on French academia, the racialized dimension of migration in France has long been underexamined and underrecognized. According to French historian Gerard Noiriel (1988), immigration is often presented as external to France, versus central to French history and identity. In other words, migration (as well as race) is presented as outside of an otherwise cohesive and stable France. This is part of symbolic violence, per French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, positioning non-white individuals as outside of France's national narrative. According to French Republicanism, all individuals are supposed to just identify as French. No other identities—whether they be ethnic, or racial, or religious—are recognized. France does not collect statistics related to race and ethnic origins. While its Republican ideology and colorblind ethos promote a society devoid of racial and ethnic designations, much research, particularly on colonialism and migration, has demonstrated the opposite (Celestine 2018; Peabody and Stovall 2003; Pichichero 2022; Thomas 2007).

Within French academia, and sociology of migration specifically, there has historically been little attention to, and active dismissal of, the relevance of racism, antiblackness, and colonialism for understanding trajectories and dynamics of migration. As we cannot separate immigration from French history, we also cannot separate immigration from colonialism (Mayblin and Turner 2021; Zahra 2022). We argue that a focus on global Blackness moves us as scholars towards a better understanding of the role of colonialism in migration, and in the construction of the nation-state as a whole. Part of this approach requires reckoning how colonialism, including formal colonial rule and decolonization, shapes both the construction of European

nation-states, including France, and how postcolonialism did not alter the racial logics undergirding formal colonial rule. So global Blackness both explains who migrates to France *and* the conditions of them and their descendants once there, as we discuss shortly.

In this Republican context, this global Blackness perspective also incorporates xenophobia, as the mainstreaming of Far Right anti-immigrant sentiment illustrates. In a context in which invoking race and ethnicity is taboo, "immigration" becomes even more racialized, and immigrants become euphemistic for Blacks and Arabs.[10] Due to French colonialism of much of North and West Africa, "immigrant" becomes a way to express antiblackness and denote otherness, while simultaneously masking French colonial and imperial histories in service of promotion of an indivisible and colorblind French Republican society.

African-American Expatriates and Blackness in Paris, France. France's colorblind ethos has existed simultaneously with a so-called "celebration" of African American expatriates to Paris and other parts of France, including Josephine Baker and Langston Hughes, who were supposedly freer from racism than they ever could in the United States (Stovall 1996). This is a different form of racialized immigration; yet in this case, African American expats were and are not framed as migrants in a traditional sense. Their presence is deployed to assert France's colorblindness in contrast to the racial logics of the US. They also are not framed as migrants because, in large part, they were not seeking permanent formal membership and citizenship in France. This allowed French leaders to assert Paris as a cosmopolitan and sophisticated city, while maintaining a marginalization and second-class membership for actual French Arab and Black populations.[11]

Like New York City, Paris is also an important site for understanding global Blackness and antiblackness. It is a global city where Black migrants, Black French citizens, African American expatriates, and Caribbean intellectuals, including James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, and Jeanne and Paulette Nardal, who were the precursors to the Negritude movement, regularly engaged in an examination of what it means to be Black globally and how to resist antiblack racism globally (Pitts 2019). Each of these Black migrants left their mark on Paris, by, among other things, sustaining a Black community and presence in the capital. For example, in 1936, Eslanda Goode Robseon (the wife of Paul Robeson) published an article surveying African-American life in Paris and concluded that "Negroes form a definite part of Parisian life, and play an important and recognized role in the political, educational, intellectual, literary and theatrical life of Paris, in the ordinary, every-day life, and in the night-life" (Stovall 1996, 100).

[10] In the French context, Arab is used synonymously with Maghrebin, or North African.

[11] James Baldwin (1955) remarked on this distinction between how he was treated as an African-American expat in Paris in comparison to Arab and Black French.

Walking through Paris, one sees unmistakable signs of Black life, history, and presence, as well as unmistakable signs of French colonialism, including various streets and metro signs named after former colonial officers. The signs of Black life tend to emphasize the African-American "freer" experience in Paris, versus signs of Black French individuals themselves. For example, one can locate the Piscine Joséphine Baker, a public pool, which opened on Quai François Mauriac on the Seine River in 2006 or a plaque on rue Monsieur-le-Prince in the 6th *arrondissement* denoting the apartment where Richard Wright lived from 1948 to 1959. These are the "acceptable" Black migrations. But Black migrations from former French colonies, both past and present, are far more obscured.

Race, Migration, and Colonialism. French societal membership and citizenship are also racialized as they were shaped by colonialism and slavery (Beaman 2017). France's colonial empire was driven by its "*mission civilisatrice*," or civilizing mission, justifying French rule in the Maghreb (Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco), West Africa (including Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Niger), French Indochina (now Vietnam and Cambodia), French Polynesia and the Caribbean (including Haiti and the Dominican Republic), as France sought to civilize these "inferior" races. Unlike the US, France held slaves in these overseas colonies and territories and not on its mainland, or within the geographical borders of what is now considered France (and this fact is often deployed by the French to assert that race and slavery existed elsewhere, and not in France). As in the US and other slave-holding societies, laws dictating the rights and movement of slaves from overseas colonies to mainland France were racial in nature, codifying the distinction between white French citizens and Black French "others." To give one example, the Code Noir, or Black Code, defined slavery and its conditions in these overseas territories and its author, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, is honored today with a statue near Paris's National Assembly. Slavery in the French empire, which was abolished in 1848, codified white as synonymous with French, and non-white, in particular Black and Arab, as synonymous with *not* being French.

While France has a long history of immigration from its colonies and overseas departments, decolonization in the Maghreb and West Africa in the 1960s further increased the numbers of migrants to continental France (Hollifield and Héran 2022). In other words, France—and Paris, in particular—was remade both through colonial rule and its formal end. Migrants flocked to Paris and other large cities due to the presence of factories and other low-wage employment and subsidized housing. Policies regarding naturalization for both immigrants and their descendants varied depending on countries of origin, partly to stymie the inclusion and integration of Black and Arab migrants from former colonies into the French polity.

In other words, citizenship policies varied for migrants from former French colonies versus for migrants from other regions. Increasingly restrictive immigration policies across the political spectrum followed, and immigration was increasingly framed as a social problem or "crisis," owing more to the demographic changes in

who migrates than an actual increase in the numbers of migrants. And today, despite France's civic conception of its citizenship and national membership, Black and Arab migrants and their descendants remain excluded despite their citizenship status and formal membership (Simon 2012; Beaman 2017). Black and Arab migrants and their descendants are routinely questioned about their origins and belonging in France, in contrast to their white counterparts (Simon 2012).

According to the Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, or INSEE), as of 2015, about 11 percent of the French population has at least one immigrant parent (and half of this second-generation population has only one immigrant parent).[12] As of 2018, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia are among the largest immigrant-origin countries. As of 2015, approximately 3 million individuals of West African origin live in France.[13] These migration dynamics are particularly pertinent in the Parisian metropolitan region, or *Île de France* (encompassing both the Paris center city and the surrounding *banlieues*). As of 2012, approximately 38 percent of France's immigrants live in the Parisian metropolitan region.[14] There is a similar geographical concentration of descendants of immigrants in the Parisian metropolitan region.[15]

Place, Race, and Parisian Banlieues. A global Blackness perspective highlights not only how and why Arab and Black migrants have come to Paris, but also where they migrated to specifically in the Parisian region. Blackness therefore is also spatialized (Silverstein 2018). As migrants concentrated in the outskirts, or banlieues, of Paris and other large cities, race and blackness became spatialized as "banlieue" was euphemistic for Black and Arab in a society where ethnoracial labels are disavowed (Body-Gendrot 2010) (and *banlieue* residents remain discriminated against in various domains of society, see Silverstein 2018; Silverstein and Tetreault 2006). In the case of Paris, Maghrebin-origin and Black individuals—migrants and non-migrants alike—are often concentrated in *banlieues* immediately surrounding the city center, such as Seine-Saint Denis or Nanterre, or the neighborhoods near Gare du Nord and Gare du L'Est in the 10th *arrondissement* or Belleville in the 20th *arrondissement* (Kleinman 2019). Château Rouge, also referred to as Quartier Africain, in the 18th *arrondissement*, has become a center of African business and culture within the metropole, located between the neighborhoods of Montmartre and Barbès Rochechouart, and characterized by its large concentration of Black and Arab individuals (Lesbros 2006). The current state of many French *banlieues*,

[12] https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/2856476

[13] https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/africa/the-african-diaspora-in-france/#:~:text=The%20best%20way%20to%20get,/or%20second%2Dgeneration%20immigrants.

[14] https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/2121531

[15] Compared to the US there is a paucity of ethnoracial statistics due to the lack of measurement of these categories.

including lack of economic resources and employment opportunities, substandard living conditions, and related disadvantages, result from French colonialism and subsequent related migration. And relatedly, the conditions of individuals living in these communities reflect similar marginalization as was the case in French colonies.

The 2005 uprisings in various *banlieues* throughout France reveal how the construction of these racialized places marginalizes their inhabitants. In October of that year, two teenagers—one of Tunisian origin and the other of Malian origin—were electrocuted in an electricity substation as they fled police in the *banlieue* of Clichy-sous-Bois. Zyed Benna and Bouna Traoré were apparently trying to avoid identification checks by the police (perhaps best understood as the French version of "stop and frisk").[16] Their deaths led to uprisings, which spread in *banlieues* throughout France for about three weeks. While these uprisings were framed in the media as a failure of immigrants and their descendants to assimilate or integrate themselves into French society, what was often missed was how these uprisings were a result of state violence and hypersurveillance of ethnic minorities by the police. This is the same state violence and hypersurveillance that occurred in France's colonies. That Zyed and Bouna and *banlieue* residents like them are positioned outside of French society is a direct result of the antiblack logics undergirding French colonialism.

A global Blackness perspective better captures the actual experience of racialized migrants and their descendants, and troubles notions of migration as divorced from ethnoracial differentiation and colonialism. Arab and Black migrants and their descendants remain distinct from how migrants of other ethnic and geographical backgrounds are treated, both as migrants and in their attempts to be accepted in French society.

And Paris, not only as a capital city of empire, but a site of immigration, especially Black migration, reinforces this. Despite being a cosmopolitan and diverse city, antiblackness is still present as colonial histories are repeatedly disregarded. It can perhaps not be overstated how Paris was a crucial site of global Black self-assertion and community. This can be especially seen in solidarities across different Black populations who connected through shared experiences of different histories of slavery and colonialism. Black individuals, whether from the United States or from former colonies in the Antilles and West Africa, bounded over the unique experiences of being racialized and subjugated as Black individuals. Black Paris was a "meeting place of cultures in exile" (Stovall 2009, 45). Late historian Tyler Stovall further notes "To think of Paris as a black city is to wrestle with the legacy of French universalism, both challenging and in some ways reshaping and reaffirming the idea of the metropolis as the capital of the world" (Stovall 2009,

[16] And the fact that one victim was Arab, and one victim was Black also speaks to how blackness as a socially-constructed vessel of otherness operates in the French context, versus being solely synonymous with skin color.

44). As Paris, and France more broadly, often is seen as a site of the crucible of European Enlightenment and civilization, a perspective of global Blackness, especially in the context of immigration, necessarily troubles these portrayals and invites us as migration scholars to ask different questions.

Discussion: Why Global Blackness Matters for Migration

In this critical review, we began by discussing extant research linking race and migration. We outlined the emerging sociological research which uses the critical race theory as a tool for uncovering and challenging the white, Eurocentric, and assimilationist assumptions in much migration scholarship. We pushed this further by arguing for a global Blackness perspective to the study of migration which illustrates the silenced histories of human migration. We focus on the role of racial slavery, colonialism and decolonization in shaping migration, and creating what we know of today as the Black Atlantic (Gilroy 1993). We see global Blackness as a central pillar of the modern migration experience, and its uses by white supremacy as well as its potential as a tool of freedom and liberation for the oppressed. In order to "ground" or spatialize the global Blackness framework and its potential for expanding our discourses about who is a migrant, we have used the cases of New York City and Paris, France to illustrate how centering blackness and Black populations leads to deeper understanding of the relationship between race, racialization and migration. As Black studies scholar Kehinde Andrews (2020, 701) stated "Blackness remakes how we understand nation, troubling one of the most taken-for-granted concepts in the academy."

Here, we have interrogated how Black lives *do* matter in for understanding the modern roots of human migration, both nationally and globally, as well as the sociology of migration more broadly. Centering blackness in migration studies opens up opportunities to theorize forgotten, discarded and marginalized experiences which have the potential to expand migratory epistemologies, and deepen methodological approaches in migration studies. Frameworks of global Blackness reflect the forced and agentic movement of Black populations through colonies, nations, regions and states. Using this as a starting point, rather than an afterthought, reveals a closer interweaving of race, racism, colonialism, and migration and understanding migration processes of other racialized groups on this side of the color line. Black migrations are continually organized around colonialism and racism, shaping both trajectories of migrants and their experiences once they do migrate from their countries of origin. We demonstrated this point by discussing Black migrations—past and present—in New York City and Paris.

We believe that starting with the following operating assumptions in studying global migration broadens the analysis of how race, racism, and migration interrelate and argues for the need for a global Blackness perspective. First, mass migration in the modern world has always been a racial project (Omi and Winant 2014).

This racial project was in service to the rise of global capitalism, or the development of a world economy based on Europeans trafficking and exploiting African peoples in Africa and the Americas in order to extract and compound capital wealth for their empires. The removal of Indigenous peoples from land and the human trafficking of enslaved Africans across the Middle Passage to toil on this land were the first examples of the birth of our modern systems of racialized im/migrations.

Second, in the post-emancipation moment, European and US empires sought new ways to recreate slave-like labor conditions within their nations and empires. This led to imperial domination of the Global South, instability in their political economies, and propelled new racial migrations from the Global South to the metropole (Mayblin and Turner 2021). For example, the violence at the core of US racial politics propelled internal migrations of Black peoples from the South to the North which marked the reordering of American racial geography and challenged its systems of white supremacy and domination. However, like slavery, the Great Migration receives little attention as a major turning point in modern racialized migration discourses and theorizations. Relatedly, Europe's "scramble" for Africa made and remade the racial order governing African colonies and solidifying the European empire.

Third, in the postcolonial, neocolonial, and post-Civil Rights Movement era, the Black diaspora in Europe and the Americas lives and thrives in the shadows of these histories. They are continuously using migration as a tool to free themselves from racial subjugation, however, often encountering new articulations of white domination and therefore, antiblackness in their new destinations. The enormous demographic and political shifts which occurred in the mid-twentieth century in colonial and postcolonial societies led to mass migrations from Black countries and regions. However, this exodus was occurring as whites mobilized to roll back the gains made by anti-racist and anti-colonial movements. For example, in the post-Civil Rights period, increased militarization of Black urban neighborhoods has been used as a tool to surveil and control the growing Black American and Black immigrant population. A similar approach has been taken by the French state to oppress Black and Arab populations in the banlieues throughout France. Therefore, a global Blackness frame helps us see the changing nature of Black migration, and the varying political, economic and cultural responses of white-led societies to their freedoms and mobilities.

We offer these operating frames as an invitation to migration scholars to resituate our framing of who migrants are, the importance of colonial and imperial histories in theorizing and studying migration, and subverting the white assimilationist and Eurocentric frameworks which dictate which human migrant lives *actually* matter. Global Blackness matters for migration beyond New York City and Paris. The rise of white supremacist, nativist political regimes in recent decades has demonstrated the urgency of understanding the histories and contemporary manifestations of race, capitalism, and migration. Globally, migration has been increasingly framed as a "crisis," as euphemistic for fears of white populations being overtaken with

Black and brown migrant "others." In the US, Donald Trump has said that Mexicans are "bad hombres," and that African immigrants are from "shithole countries." In France, Emmanuel Macron's centrist political party, Renaissance, has increasingly introduced restrictive immigration policies and mainstreamed many Far-Right discourses on immigration and integration (Mondon and Winter 2020). In Britain, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has a large-scale plan to send political refugees back to Rwanda. These are all examples of anti-immigrant, and particularly anti-Black immigrant, rhetoric, and illustrate how global Blackness undergirds ideas about migration. Focusing on blackness and the migration of Black populations is a crucial step forward in understanding the relationship between race and migration. While we focus on the African Diaspora in the Americas and Europe in this article, we especially invite migration scholars to think about the uses of a global Blackness perspective in African and Pacific contexts.

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