

Acknowledgement

I could not have reached this moment in my academic career without the intellectual support and cordiality of my first advisor, Prof. Dr. Kerstin Knopf. Thank you for listening to my proposal in your office four years ago, immediately offering me an acceptance letter to submit at the *Ausländeramt*, and providing critical feedback on my work that got me my funding. Your crucial early support of this work and continuous mentorship brought me this far, and I am ever grateful. Also, I had the good luck to meet my second advisor, Prof. Dr. Priscilla Layne as I was nearing the end of my research work. Thank you for your enthusiasm, mentorship, and indispensable feedback. Because of you, my bookshelf is richer and my Black feminist knowledge deeper.

Research is never easy without funding. I am grateful for the financial support of the Evangelische Studienwerk Villigst. Thank you for the three years of financial support, for funding my summer school at Amsterdam, as well as my research stay at the African American Studies Department, Boston University, Massachusetts. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Kerstin Knopf and the University of Bremen for awarding me the four-month completion grant, as well as to the Bremen State and University Library for their partial funding support of this book publication.

To you Simon Vāth, my husband, buddy, and the truest love of my life. This book is a finished book because of my grit, as it is because of your labor of love and versatility. I am eternally grateful for the absolute nurture and care through the writing phase. For the utopia we have created together, for holding me in softness, and for removing everyday obstacles from my path.

To my dad, Gabriel Talabi, whose vision and tenderness outlives him. I know what love and allyship should look like because of you. Thank you for giving me seventeen years. Thank you for being my first life and professional advisor. Thank you for instilling in me a sense of agency, autonomy, and quiet strength from childhood. For showing me that feedback in any form should be

treated as a recommendation. And that at the end of the day, the choice of what to consider and reject is mine alone.

A special and loud thank you to my mum, Grace Tutu. You have supported me in ways unimaginable. Thank you for your futuristic imagination. Thank you for your fierceness, audacities, and unwavering inclinations. Watching you from a young age speak back to the theatrics of power in a loud, clear, and unrelenting voice modeled to me a powerful way to exist in my body, even if we did not agree on everything. Thank you for performing gender in an aberrant way. You didn't need to know the word 'feminism' to raise me to take up space and to speak up. I am where I am and what I am today because of you.

To my siblings, Oluwasoga and Oluwagajuwa, my childhood stories are richer and funnier because of you. Thank you for the check-ins, for the applause across distance and for never standing in the way of my authenticity. To my cousin, Olugbemisola, your decision to study Germanistik and visit Germany for an exchange program not only changed your life but also paved the way for me to be here today. I cannot thank you enough.

To my best girl, Nkem, thank you for the steadfast belief in me long before any of this made sense, from the days of rambling on about Judith Butler even though you had absolutely no idea who I was talking about. You are a cheerleader every girl should hope to have as a friend. To my girlfriends, Ifunanya, Estelle, Bimbola, Olivia, thank you for the gift of community, for consistently showing up, and for the endless belly laughs amidst our fierce resistance against patriarchy. To Danny, thank you for your sociability and for consistently showing up.

To my friend, Oluseun Tanimomo, thank you for your wealth of knowledge, support and for answering my always-urgent messages. Your friendship means the world to me, and this dissertation is richer because of your congenial feedback.

And finally, my deepest thanks to all of the Black women and people of marginalized identities around the globe for whom I write with deep love and reflection. Your unrelenting activism, creativity, and subversion inspire my rebellion against the gender binary and continue to inspire my thoughts and actions. Our lives, intertwined and multifaceted, are the heartbeat of this dissertation.