



The University of Chicago

What Does It Mean to be a Global Citizen?

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July 2024

A paper submitted in partial fulfillment for the Masters of Arts degree in
the Masters of Arts Programme in the Committee on International
Relations

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Abstract

What does it mean to be a Global Citizen? The Global Color-Line has created a division between the black and white races, and by extension the Global North and the Global South. Black women within the Global-Color Line, face an intersectional experience with compounding effects of their gender and race. The compounding effects include the thingification of Black women, which leads to unforeseen hardships, but most importantly, they lead to the hold. Which places Black women in the position of perpetual Global Citizenship denial. To be a Global Citizen is to belong within a global society, and to live autonomously, unhindered by the ills of race or gender. The methods used in this project are the theoretical work of W.E.B DuBois's Global Color-Line, Kimerle Crenshaw's Intersectionality, Riley Snorton's thingification, Christina Sharpe's "the wake" and "the hold." The goal of this project is to introduce the concept of Global Citizenship into a conversation about Black women's experiences, where they are often leveraged for the political gain of others. The goal of this project is to push the understandings of these theoretical works in the context of Global Citizenship, and the dichotomy between that and Black Women. With this understanding, we will be better equipped to address these systemic issues, and support the inclusion, recognition, and empowerment of Black women in all areas of global society. This includes ensuring their representation in political institutions, supporting their educational and economic opportunities, and recognizing their contributions to global movements for justice and equality.

Introduction

Malcolm X stated the most disrespected, unprotected, and neglected person in America is the Black Woman (Malcolm X, 1962). The Cohambee River Collective also addressed this in their writing, stating that if Black women were free, everyone would be free (Cohambee River

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Collective, 1974). However, Black female freedom is an antithesis to how the global world was constructed. In fact, Christina Sharpe explains that in the wake of slavery, we must think of black death as integral to the formation and continuation of global society. I extend this by stating that denying Black Women Global Citizenship is integral to the making and continuation of global society.

The concept of Global citizenship is a fundamental building block that defines being in and of global society. It is integral to a personhood that is unchallenged, and allows for autonomy, rationality, and self-consciousness. It is also a concept that is aspirational, and not yet claimed by most in global society. Especially those that are part of a marginalized social group.

Global citizenship is defined as belonging and living autonomously within a global society. Belonging to a global society can take on many interpretations, but here it means **one)** to have your experiences recognized, and **two)** to be received as contributors and collaborators, as opposed to antagonists and nuisances. For Black women to truly belong in a global society, their diverse and complex experiences must be acknowledged and valued. This means their advocacy and political engagement should be included and prioritized in every conversation. Furthermore, living autonomously means the ability to determine your future and identity, which is achieved through **one)** inclusion in the systems that shape said future, and **two)** economic and social freedom, which are key to determining autonomy.

In addition to the concept of Global Citizenship, there is the dichotomy of the Political Tool or Global Citizen. Political Tool meaning, Black women and their images are often used as tools to construct society, and importantly as tools instrumental in their own subjugation. In other words, it is another form of exploitation, exclusion, and invisibilization of Black Women. For that reason, they become tools for whatever narrative is necessary. The Global Citizen or

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Political Tool dichotomy is a vestige of slavery, like the global color line, intersectionality, and thingification. It is also described as the “the hold,” which is what Christana Sharpe defines as, being black in the wake of slavery, the confines of a slave ship, and the womb of the black mother.

Global citizenship clashes with the theoretical frameworks concerning this project, leading to their exploitation, exclusion, and invisibilization. This creates a dichotomy where Black women are denied the full benefits of Global citizenship, and instead are being used as Political Tools, which strips them of their autonomy and belonging. This issue manifests in various ways across the Global North and South, in both domestic and international policies. It manifests in international policies like the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) which often ignores the specific needs and voices of Black women, causing harm that could have been mitigated if they were included. It manifests in IMF and WTO trade policies, which also ignores the needs of Black women in the Global South. It also appears in humanitarian aid policies, by pushing imperialistic and paternalistic tendencies. Which further undermines the autonomy and belonging of Black women, which denies them the benefits of Global Citizenship. On this account, rather than Global Citizenship being a universal and inclusive ideal, it often ends up as a status unachieved by Black Women.

In this work, I expand on the theoretical concepts presented in this project. I will define each theoretical concept, explain how Global Citizenship impacts it, and how this impact creates the dichotomy, and the hold. I do this to provide a transnational link between Black women wherever they find themselves. To continue the idea that the world was not made for Black women to be free, or to belong, but to keep them in a limbo of existence. Therefore, collectively,

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they must reimagine and lean into their identities as others, and craft a world for themselves outside what has been forced upon them.

The Global Color-Line

This section begins by defining the Global Color-Line and explaining its existence. Following this, the manifestation of the Global Color in domestic citizenship. Next, Global Citizenship and the Political Tool or Global Citizen dichotomy are defined. Next, the connection between domestic and Global Citizenship is explained. Following this, the significance of the Global Color-Line is explained. Following this, I argue that the Global Color-Line fundamentally undermines the concept of Global Citizenship through various barriers, like the exploitation of racial migrants, as a means to foster domestic policy. Moreover, it highlights that the Global Color-Line is the first step in denying Black Women Global Citizenship by exploiting them. The section concludes with a summation of what has been discussed, why it's being discussed, and why it is important.

Defining the Global-Color Line

Race is often viewed as an issue depoliticized, and most importantly, domestic, while also being used as a tool to exclude and otherize (Thompson, 2017). However, W.E.B. DuBois stated in his most famed work, *The Souls of Black Folks*, “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line (DuBois, 1903).” The Global Color-Line formed as a racist colonial capitalist project, relegating those with darker skin to a place of inferiority, to justify the exploitation of the African continent and its people (King, 2022). It became a practice of

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dominance and exploitation through institutional power, beliefs, practices, policies, and became the foundation of global society (Henderson 2007). It stole Africa's wealth and people and became a force larger than what can be seen in everyday occurrences, but DuBois definitely provides a robust framework to tackle the problem.

In DuBois's framework, the problem originally centered around exclusion from citizenship, by way of the inequalities Black American's endured in the Antebellum South. In time, the Color Line expanded in its application, and was later labeled the Global Color-Line. Now, meant to spotlight how race and racism are foundational to how international and domestic politics is organized, and the hierarchy and oppression that structures world politics (Anievas, Manchanda and Shilliam, 2014). Most importantly, it was meant to show the clear and unequal balance between the Global North and the Global South, which perpetuates the alienation of non-white bodies, cultures, societies, and states (Murphy, 2020). Therefore, race is far reaching, and certainly more political than previously thought.

Explaining the Global-Color Line and Domestic Citizenship

Referring back to the Global Color-Line first being an indicator of race relations in the West. Black individuals in the West were excluded from important facets of citizenship, like social, political, and civil citizenship (Marshall, 1950). For instance, citizenship rights were only granted to white male property holders, thus excluding Black Women from political and social rights until long after white women, and as a result Black Women still live in a differential state of citizenship or second class citizenship (Castle, 2005; Heywood, 1994). Consequently, the issues that impact the social, political, and civil features of citizenship are interconnected, like

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poverty and education. Therefore, Black American citizenship is inconsistent and often regressive (Rigueur and Beshlian, 2019).

The Global Color-Line also shapes the extent to which immigrants receive full citizenship in Western states. For instance, Black Haitian migrants often face higher rates of detention and deportation than other immigrant populations, and are also denied asylum at a higher rate than other immigrants (Ghabra, 2022). Immigrants who experience this differential treatment are often destitute, and in need of assistance. This differential treatment is reflective of the racial climate within the United States, and it is certainly indicative of the racial climate instituted by the Global Color-Line.

Merging Domestic Citizenship and Global Citizenship

Global Citizen Defined

As previously stated, Global Citizenship is defined as belonging to a global society, and to living autonomously within that society, unhindered by the ills of race or gender. Belonging to a global society can take on many interpretations, but here it means **one**) to have your plight recognized and fully addressed, and **two**) to be received as contributors and collaborators.

Furthermore, living autonomously encapsulates having the ability to determine your future and identity, which is achieved through **one**) inclusion in the systems that shape said future, and **two**) economic and social freedom, which are key to determining autonomy.

It is important for Black Women to have autonomy and belonging, and to be global citizens because there is a long history of Black Women being exploited, excluded, and invisibilized. It is also important for Black women to be global citizens because, as Perry states,

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throughout the African diaspora, women are often the heads of households and, by extension, the entire Black community. Therefore, if Black women are underpaid and severely exploited, then the community is underpaid and severely exploited (Perry, 2013). The same logic can be applied to belonging in a global society. If Black women's experiences are recognized, then the community's experiences are recognized. If Black women are denied the opportunity to engage as Global Citizens, the entire community is denied the opportunity to engage as Global Citizens. Therefore, this is not an issue of one nation, but a global issue for Black women as a whole.

Additionally, because exclusion and invisibilization makes it easier to subjugate Black women, and ignore the harm they face. Black women tend to become the “canary in the coal mine.” Meaning, Black women have a unique position in the world that spotlights the different forms of oppression, and its potential impact on others from less marginalized groups. So whatever harm largely impacts Black women needs the utmost care. Hence the importance of having a global historical perspective that focuses on the connections between people, places, and ideas through new methods. New methods like the concept of the Global Citizen.

Political Tool Defined

In addition to the concept of Global Citizenship, a status that all should possess for ourselves, and want for others. There is the dichotomy of Political Tool or Global Citizen. Political Tool meaning, Black women and their images are often used as tools to construct society, and importantly as tools instrumental in their own subjugation. In other words, it is another form of exploitation, exclusion, and invisibilization of Black Women. For that reason, they become tools for whatever narrative is necessary.

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It is important to consider this dichotomy because of its **one)** historical roots and **two)** its modern application in global society. For instance, historically, African women were sold in the transatlantic slave trade and used as tools for labor. In time, the toolage of African women extended beyond slavery, and produced social meanings that associated dark skin with slave status. Slave women and their bodies became symbols of ideological and political battles with the use of stereotypes, like the Jezebel. It paints Black women as promiscuous, and justifies the violence perpetrated against them, which legitimizes their subjugation. It also characterizes them as passive players, unable to be decisive and active actors in their own lives. In modern day, those same stereotypes constantly serve as a racial myth that supports racism as an ideology giving legitimacy to racist domestic and international policies (LeMelle in Shepherd and Le Melle 1970).

Hence the introduction of the dichotomy, which is the Global Citizen or Political Tool dichotomy. I describe it as a vestige of slavery, like the Global Color-Line. I also describe it as the “the hold,” which is what Christana Sharpe defines as being black in the wake of slavery, the confines of a slave ship, and the womb of the black mother. Global Citizenship clashes with the theoretical concepts in this project, and causes the subject to be exploited, excluded, or invisibilized. When this happens, the subject is morphed into a Political Tool. Thus creating a “the hold” upon the subject. Keeping them constantly confined to an existence of objectification and subjectification. Keeping them as Political Tools rather than Global Citizens. This dichotomy, and hold, is what I argue is the denial of Global Citizenship. This dichotomy appears everywhere, within the Global South and the Global North. In minor everyday occurrences, in domestic and foreign policy. It is the foundation on which we live our lives.

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Similarities of Global Citizenship and the Global Color-Line

The similarities between domestic and global citizenship are numerous. By identifying these commonalities, we can establish a consistent definition of domestic citizenship that can be extended to global citizenship. A domestic citizen who embodies these qualities naturally holds global citizenship. Conversely, if a domestic citizen lacks these attributes, the opposite is also true. Using this allows for a consistent connective point between these ideas and the characteristics that shape them. This approach provides a cohesive link between these concepts and the characteristics that define them.

When focusing on social citizenship, which is defined as socio-economic access. A domestic citizen or Global Citizen can use social citizenship or economic stability for protection against exploitation. W.E.B. DuBois also explains in “World of Color” that the biggest issue of the Color-Line was the exploitation of labor in Western colonies (Anievas, Manchanda and Shilliam, 2014). Additionally, resources increased for nations in the West through the theft, exploitation, and underdevelopment of regions where the races were considered inferior (Henderson, 2014). Therefore, possessing social citizenship indicates autonomy, or protection against exploitation. Political citizenship is defined as participation in political processes, either as a member, a selected official, or an elector of such members. Being part of a civil collective that votes or pushes for civil liberties signifies belonging, or inclusion. Civil citizenship, defined as rights necessary for individual freedom. Freedoms like the freedom of speech, thought, faith, the right to own property, and the right to justice. Having the civil citizenship denotes autonomy, and the ability to exercise these freedoms without restraint indicates autonomy and belonging.

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Therefore, a Global Citizen must possess autonomy and belonging, because they are core to domestic citizenship in Western nations.

Global-Color Line and Global Citizenship

The Global Color-Line adds to this discussion by focusing on exploitation as foundational to how Black women are used. It adds the understanding that the Global Color-Line already makes the Black Woman a thing to be utilized from the beginning of her racial existence to the end. It adds the understanding that she is never a citizen, and never a person within a populace, but a tool for profit, power, and political machinations.

The Global Color-Line serves as a barrier to Global Citizenship, or as a force contradictory to what Global Citizenship can achieve. C.J. Robinson elaborates this in *Black Marxism*, “The Negro had no civilization, no cultures, no religions, no history, no place, and finally no humanity that might command consideration (*Black Marxism*, 1983, p. 81). Meaning, the Negro dispossess a national identity, regardless of what geopolitical and imagined borders they may cross (Busey and Dowie-Chin, 2021). Meaning, blackness is the antithesis of domestic citizenship, and because blackness is not wanted anywhere, it is nowhere. It does not encompass citizenship, and because of that, Black aspiring Global Citizens aren’t able to truly be autonomous from what this racial status means. Nor can they belong because of their racial status.

Instances of this can be found in how those in the Global South are perceived, and how their suffering is responded to. Those in the Global South have worse life chances than those in the Global North. In the *Birthright Lottery*, Alayet Shacar discusses how *Jus Soli* and *Jus*

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Sanguinis citizenship grants legal and political membership, which protects from the inequalities faced in the Global South. Thus promoting equality within Western nations, while shutting others out (Shachar, 2009).

This implies that the Global Color-Line has made a great use of itself. Tools that once ensured material gain struggle to provide the type of citizenship most in the Global North have no trouble laying claim to. Instead, the Global Color-Line constructed a world where African's are persistently perceived as the exploited, and never cultivators of their own path. And because they are always exploited, they have no use value outside of that perception. This defines not only who they are, but what they are. And what they are is always primed for conquest, always unequal, and always subservient. This renders the inequality the African suffers as expected, and unremarkable, thus reinforcing the idea that there is no value in their existence.

For instance, many African girls live in the most war torn nations. In these conflict zones, they suffer from the sort of harm that most could not fathom. In addition to this they are also deprived of the means most in the Global North understand as fundamental to autonomy. In other words, these young girls are deprived of education (United Nations, 2024). When these individuals flee the Global South, they are once again met with the ills of the Global Color-Line. For example, 13,020 refugees received citizenship status out of 100,412 applications in France. Black African refugees face higher rejection rates than those from the Middle East (INSEE, 2017). This is clear evidence of racial indexing, where black bodies are kept away from the rest of the world.

The Global Color-Line harms these girls in two significant ways. First, it perpetuates images of young African girls as helpless and dependent, shaping perceptions that they should be separated from the rest of the world. When these girls seek new life across oceans, they

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encounter the Global Color-Line again. They are not welcomed because, firstly, their Black Western female counterparts have already been marginalized and exploited, and secondly, they are seen as lacking value. They are viewed as additional exploited beings who do not conform to their prescribed roles, by taking more than what they've been given.

What is happening is the perception of these girls as exploited beings is clashing with the concept of the Global Citizen as autonomous and included. These girls are participating in this world as a Political Tool against their will, thus creating the dichotomy between them and Global Citizenship. As a result, they enter into the hold, which is a never ending process of their exploitation. It is the tension between these girls as Political Tools or Global Citizens. The hold confines their being. Always making them destitute, or in need of help, always waiting for someone else to shape their future. Always waiting for someone to correct the past.

These girls are begrudgingly participating in what Combahee River Collective calls “racial politics” as non-participants, or non-political actors. Thus making them unable to grow as a consciousness collective capable of building an autonomous political and cultural force, capable of fighting the racist political-economic systems of capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy, as well as the ongoing social exploitation created by the Global-Color Line (Combahee River Collective, 1974).

This section explains how the Global Color-Line exploits the lives and usage of Black women. It also explains how Global Citizenship will remain out of reach for Black women if they are only perceived as tools and not citizens. Understanding this is crucial, because the Global Color-Line is just one factor denying Black women Global Citizenship. Focusing more on the intersectional approach to this concept will elucidate the importance of this project.

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Intersectionality

This section defines intersectionality, and determines why intersectionality exists. Next, the text explains what intersectionality adds to Global Citizenship. The argument then addresses how intersectionality impacts Global Citizenship by using the story of Dona Telma as an example. Next, I argue how it results in the Political Tool or Global Citizenship dichotomy, and of course, the subsequent denial of Global Citizenship. The text then highlights how this is another measure in denying Black women Global Citizenship by rendering them invisible. Finally, the section ends with a summation of what has been discussed, why it's being discussed, and why it is important.

Defining Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the idea that Black women are situated within two or more marginalized groups, which has compounding effects, and conflicting legal and political agendas (Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 1991). Or the idea that categories of difference, such as race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality, always have simultaneous and interacting effects on the social and political world (Vucetic, 2017). In other words, intersectionality is considered the multiple characteristics of a person. Whether a person is a woman, brown or black, or poor, these people experience completely different lives with complex challenges to all of them. Especially those that encompass marginalized identities, because those with these complex experiences are not always considered.

Intersectionality exists because the world was formed in ways that do not acknowledge the marginalized. Intersectionality exists because of societal structures implemented for and by

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white men to dominate others. It exists because of the Global Color-Line and because the female gender has a long history of subjugation.

Intersectionality adds to this work by providing a focal point within the Global Color-Line. It focuses on Black women, and how they are invisibilized and adds intersectionality into a conversation of citizenship. It helps us understand the ways Black women are denied citizenship. And lastly, it serves as a bridge to the next theoretical concept proposed in this project.

Intersectionality and Global Citizenship

When Black women are confronted with the exploitation of the Global Color-Line, they enter into a liminal space-an atmosphere of uncertainty and disconnection that feels surreal and abandoned. In this liminal space, the exploitation of the Global Color-Line is unrestricted and unaddressed. Here, intersectionality molds Black Women's lives into matters of nothing. It ensures there is no space that actually considers Black women who suffer from intersectional invisibility (Carbado 2013, 814).

When this happens, the problems she experiences from the Global Color-Line are doubled. Her experiences remain unnoticed, and rather than her taking control and fostering a space for herself, rather than her being a part of society as herself, as someone capable of championing for her own cause. She is ignored, and in some instances seen as a threat to the status quo. Because of this, she is deprived of the ability to live autonomously, she is deprived of stability, inclusion, and freedom. Instances of this are one of many, within the Global South and North. To explain how this happens, the story of Dona Telma must be introduced in this conversation.

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Dona Telma: Intersection, Invisibilization, and Cooptation

Dona Telma was a poor black Brazilian woman who built her home on top of land, which was legally given to her grandmother two decades before. The home sat on the outskirts of Salvador, which was the largest port for tracking African slaves and goods. Making Salvador the blackest city in Brazil, and most susceptible to state violence. Palestina, which was the neighborhood the home sat, was considered substandard and crime ridden, an eyesore that blocked whatever profit could be made from the land. Naturally, the government and many agencies marked the neighborhood for “slum clearance” or black clearance.

Dona Telma’s home and land were targeted by engineer, Adolfo Stelmach. He claimed ownership of the land, and with the support of the courts, he ordered her family and many other families to buy the land from him or vacate. Dona Telma lived with her husband, seven children, two grandchildren, a daughter-in-law, and another family. Which would have made finding another home twice as difficult. The two families refused to leave, and were soon visited by the police and demolition squads. They resisted the states objective to “enhance local culture” by arranging a strategic peaceful gathering of family, friends, and neighbors in her home to curtail the military police and demolition squads. She resisted the theft of her land because it was a clear negation of citizenship on the grounds of race, gender, and class left by a long forgotten colonial past. She resisted because she would have to face a violent state, or the type of violence that comes with relocating to the ends of town with reduced access to important material resources, like grocery stores, communities, and hospitals.

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Her story was broadcast onto the news, many watched through the windows of electronic stores, or stood out on their neighbors' porches while watching through the front door. They watched as workers loaded the families' belongings into the trucks parked in front of the houses. Crowds formed, primarily women pleading on Dona Telma's behalf. As they continued to work, Dona Telma too cried and pleaded with the police and the driver of the bulldozer, Senhor Amilton, who eventually refused to demolish the home. Unsurprisingly, the media focused heavily on Senhor Amilton and not the black woman who defied the police. Press headlined papers and articles, "Um Homem" (One Man), and the accompanying described his heroism as one against screams 20 policemen armed with rifles (Perry, 2013).

Dona Telma experienced denial of Global Citizenship not once, but twice because of her intersecting identities. She also experienced it through limited resources, which pushed her to the periphery of society, and primed her for land theft. In other words, her intersecting identities made her plight invisible to others, thus depriving her of autonomy and inclusion. Secondly, she was denied Global Citizenship through the co-opting of her story, thus invisibilizing her political prowess. As Perry states, historic stereotypes label black women bad, and sexually passive. Which deems them uneducated, and unsophisticated in their political action. Which often results in black men championed as political leaders, as opposed to black women (Perry, 2013). Essentially, her story was co-opted and manipulated in ways that serve a broader political agenda, rendering her a Political Tool based on historical and systemic biases.

Dona Telma was essentially stripped of her agency and belonging, by the invisibilization of her experiences. As a result, she becomes a Political Tool, unable to gain or champion opportunities that could improve her life, further entrenching her lack of autonomy and belonging. Her story exemplifies the hold, because her invisibilization holds her in a cycle of

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disempowerment. It is in this liminal space of intersectionality that women like Dona Telma do not experience Global Citizenship. It is completely disconnected from their identity, because their identity is black, and it is woman. It is not connected to the world outside of this liminal space. It is invisible to the naked eye, and because of that, Black women are invisible to the naked eye.

Within the Global Color-line, in this intersectional liminal space, we have discussed intersectionality as another step in denying Global Citizenship. We discussed intersectionality as a means to invisibilize Black women's struggle with the Global Color-Line, and their attempts to correct these struggles. We've discussed this to transition from this space into other vestiges of slavery. And we've discussed this to highlight how invisibility reflects the lack of care and knowledge of black women, and the brutality of oppression and repressed politics. Studying Global Citizenship through the lens of Black Women's intersectionality is important, because there is a tension between Political Toolage and Global Citizenship. It holds Black Women in a fixed position that primes them for these types of turmoil that can only be found in the wake.

In the Wake

This section first defines the wake and determines why the wake exists. Next, it explains how the concept adds to Global Citizenship. Next, it argues how the wake impacts Black Women's ability to be Global Citizens, and the result of the dichotomy that stems from its impact. Next, it highlights how this is another measure in denying Black Women Global Citizenship by excluding them. Lastly, it ends with a summation of what has been discussed, why it's being discussed, and why it's important.

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Defining the wake

The wake has many meanings, the trace that lingers in the water behind a ship; a state of consciousness; the mourning of the dead; the vestiges of slavery and colonization that causes turmoil in Black women's lives. It is where black inhabitants are with no state or nation that is able and willing to protect them, and with no citizenship is the immanent loom of death (Sharpe, 2016). Hartman describes this as the afterlife of slavery, where black inhabitants have limited access to health and nourishment, suffering from premature death, lack adequate education, are imprisoned disproportionately, and are wholly impoverished (Hartman 2007, 17). DuBois would describe this concept as “the veil” meaning the chaos and moral paralysis inflicted upon blackness inside the Global Color-Line (DuBois, 1903; Savory, 1972).

Essentially, the wake is the remnant of slavery and colonization. It is a scourge upon all of Africa’s people, but it finds an especially sinister place in the degradation of the black female. It is the inequality in every facet of her life, it is the exclusion of her from life itself. Here, the wake can be defined as the turbulence within Black women’s lives. It arouses the senses, and leaves a trail of destruction in its rear.

The wake exists due to the blueprint left by slavery and colonization for the world to follow. The blueprint of keeping Black women away from a fulfilled life, keeping her out and on the margins of society, keeping her away from the image of a fully realized Global Citizen. The wake exists because there was never a true effort in correcting the Global Color-Line.

The wake adds to this project by telling us how Black women are not Global Citizens, how there are constant reminders of this. It adds to this project by showing the ways Global

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Citizenship is denied through exclusion. And it adds the understanding that Black Women's Global Citizenship is constantly under attack.

The Wake and Global Citizenship

The Wake leaves Black women in a liminal space. In this space “black inhabitants are with no state, or nation that is able and willing to protect them” rings true in this sense, especially when considering Global Citizenship. In a modern day, we think of citizenship as reliable and part of our identity (Webber, 2022, IRR). However, in the wake, the afterlife of slavery, Blackness is an all-encompassing identity that tears apart these notions. Because blackness is constantly contending with the image of the slave, and therefore, is the anti-citizen. Which consistently makes Blackness an object of termination, and most importantly, a thing to be excluded (Busey and Dowie-Chin, 2021; James and Costa, Vargas, 2012; Sharpe, 2016).

In the wake, Black women are left finding themselves, always shifting and moving, hit repeatedly, unable to find their footing. Belonging, and autonomy is detached from them over and over, because that is the purpose of the wake. It repeatedly harms Black women until it has completely detached her from being included in society, whether by her image or by her actual physical position.

As a result, Black Women have to negotiate and renegotiate their belonging and autonomy, or Global Citizenship. For instance, those born within the borders of the West either adhere to respectability politics, or become victims of state sanctioned violence or incarceration. Harris-Perry calls this the *Crooked Room*, where black Women have to reshape their image in order to keep their citizenship status intact (Harris-Perry, 2011). Those that hail from the Global

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South enter an “invisibility bargain” which restricts black female migrant identities and political participation by demanding political and social invisibility in exchange for tolerance of their presence in the host country (Pugh, 2021). When this happens, these black women and their intersectional identities are forgotten, and they are susceptible to more harm. Black migrant women who have to restrict themselves are exposed to battery and cruelty by those deemed nationals. Making them reluctant to report their abuse, out of fear of being deported (Crenshaw, 1989).

Here, the Black Woman is hit again and again, excluded from the protections of citizenship on all fronts. Yet even with this in mind, they are hit again with political fears of their presence. They are pummeled into Political Tools, made to stir fears of others. In turn, they are made to feel like the Political Tool that they are. Constantly confronted with the knowledge of their other status, or her non-status. For instance, Weber states, British citizenship deprivation was conducted when deemed necessary and conducive to the public good. And that ‘deportation logic’ on which the deprivation powers are based gets rid of these undesirables, regardless of family ties, or how long they have lived in the nation. In the wake, she understands that she isn’t included in the “public good” and she certainly doesn’t designate what is a “public good” and who is part of the “public good” (Webber, 2022, RTP). And if these women were to cause trouble, or can’t prove their right to be included in that “public good”, they are hit once again by the wake, and they are discarded away.

Yet again, in the wake, the margins of citizenship are marked. The wake causes her to be excluded and exploited. Exclusion and exploitation diminished autonomy by depriving them of the ability to make choices, and control their own lives uncompromised. Exclusion and exploitation separate her from belonging, because to belong requires a sense of agency, and it

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requires support from others. Instead, she becomes a Political Tool through this exploitation and exclusion. She is unable to govern herself, and is only perceived as something worth exploiting or excluded.

Her being positioned as a Political Tool enforces the Political Tool or Global Citizen dichotomy. In other words, she cannot be a Political Tool and a Global Citizen, and because she is a Black woman she can only be a Political Tool. And once again, she is denied Global Citizenship. She is then held in this fixed position, because the hold serves to separate her from autonomy, and belonging. In the hold, she is excluded from being part of a world that was never meant for her to belong to. This that to be a black woman, is to be an anti-citizen. Because she was never intended to be a citizen provincially or globally (Mbembe, 2017).

Within the Global Color-line, in this intersectional liminal space, there is the wake. In this section, we have discussed that the wake is another step in denying Global Citizenship, because she is within the Global Color-line, in an intersectional liminal space, within the wake. We have learned that the wake, attacks the lives of Black women by excluding them from Global Citizenship by making them Political Tools. This is being discussed because the wake repeatedly beats away at black women. Acknowledging this is important, because we must recognize that black female life is meant to be under attack. That is a hard acknowledgment, but it is legitimate for so many Black women.

Thingification

This section defines thingification and determines why thingification exists. Next, it describes the process of thingification, and explains what thingification adds to Global Citizenship. Next, it argues how thingification impacts Black Women's ability to be Global Citizens, and how it results in the Political Tool or Global Citizenship dichotomy, and of course,

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the subsequent denial of Global Citizenship. It then highlights how this is another measure in denying Black Women Global Citizenship by exploiting them. Lastly, this section ends with a summation of what has been discussed, why it's being discussed, and why it's important.

Defining thingliness

A thing, it is defined as an inanimate object that does not need a name, so it is not given one. It is not a sentient being, that is viewed as alien, and in some instances it is unwelcomed because of this. The word “thing” drudges up images of the writer Stephen King’s conception of what “the thing” could be. In the 1982 film, the thing can look like other life forms. It often contorted itself into shapes that the original form wouldn’t naturally possess. Other times, it would detach itself from what part to make another, and reveal itself as the true monster it was. The thing would do this over and over again, replicating itself, contorting itself, detaching itself, and repeating it all over again. In this project, a thing is defined as something that can be detached, molded, and formed into something new, for another purpose.

Thingliness exists because of long historical, and institutional makings that have led to the objectification, and thingfication of the black female since the era of colonialism (Snorton, 2017). It exists because capitalism needed female slaves as property to continue making capital. It exists because those considered property were not considered humans, let alone citizens.

With the understanding of why thingliness exists, it is important to know what it adds to this work. The understanding that in the process of denying Global Citizenship, Black women are molded into things. The understanding that when you are a thing, you cannot claim citizenship in any form. And it adds the understanding that when you are a thing, you are only meant to be exploited.

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The Process of Thingification

As previously stated, black women were enslaved, and through enslavement, the perception of them was that of a commodity and as property. And because the owners of these female slaves, were able to buy more, and more. They were able to have these women as nursemaids for their children, or replaceable, or an object ready to be terminated when it wouldn't bend to the whim of its oppressor, or if it no longer had any use. This process of thingification not only made the labor of Black women fungible, but the black female body as fungible as well.

Once made fungible, by disregarding the features that made her human and emphasizing the cultural institutions that reinforce her subjugation, the enslaved female body lost all autonomy, and was used in various violent ways (Snorton, 2017; Spiller, 1987). For example, Snorton uses the story of Lucy to explain the fungibility of the black female body. He explains the story of Lucy, who was not one woman, but the name used to refer to a number of women who were used in violent experiments to cure vesicovaginal fistula (VVF). These women were not seen as separate individuals, but one part of a whole. Dismembered and pieced together into a monstrous mass.

In this process of fungibility the enslaved black female was then ungendered, meaning, stripped of womanhood and ascribed as not feminine, therefore not a woman, or ungendered (Spiller, 1987). Ungendering, took the female form of the black woman detached it from its humanity, molded it into something new for whatever purpose, and continued to do so until she was no longer she. She was a thing, a mass of every other image of the one before her.

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Thingification essentially turned Black Women into an amorphous vessel for channeling the fears, moral panic, and hatred directed toward the black racial masses. The making of the slave woman responsible for the violence enacted upon her, while blaming her for being a “birther of terror” thus justifying unequal treatment and anti-citizenship (Sharpe, 2016). The process by which an object becomes a thing, creates a monstrosity.

Thingification and Global Citizenship

Thingification impacts Black women’s Global Citizenship, making them fungible, through the stereotypes of Black women being promiscuous, which makes Black bodies easy to replace. It then un genders them by determining them as capable of handling the violence inflicted upon them. It then thingifies them by making Black women seen as part of a whole, and never as an individual. As a whole, their experiences become detachable, thus leaving it unrecognizable or invisible. As things, Black women are seen as exploitable, and worthless when not in use. Thus, excluding them from a sense of belonging and autonomy because things have no thought, no voice, and no agency.

And because of this Black women carry the burden of how they are perceived, and how the next black woman may be perceived. As things their lives are not your own, being seen as either useful or antagonistic to those around. To be used as a thing, is to be denied belonging and autonomy. This is the thingification of Black women, it is the process of reducing of them to Political Tools. As such, they are either Political Tools or Global Citizens. This harmful dichotomy holds them in place, and denies them Global Citizenship, because things cannot have freedom in a world where it was meant to be used.

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Within the Global Color-line, in this intersectional and liminal space, in the wake, Black women are reduced to objects, or thingified. In this section, we explored how, within the Global Color-line and in this liminal intersection, Black women are thingified—treated as things rather than Global Citizens. We examined this phenomenon because it is a process that has been perpetuated for centuries.

The Hold

In this section, I first define the hold and determine why the hold exists. Next, I explain what the hold adds to Global Citizenship. Next, I argue how the hold impacts Black women's ability to be Global Citizens, and how it results in the Political Tool or Global Citizenship dichotomy, and the subsequent denial of Global Citizenship. Next, I highlight how this is another measure in denying Black women Global Citizenship by excluding them. Lastly, I end with a summation of what has been discussed, why it's been discussed, and why it's important.

Defining The Hold

The hold takes many meanings; Chistina Sharpes defines it as blackness in the wake of slavery, the confines of a slave ship, the holding cell that confines black bodies, and the womb of the black mother, the thing that determines the condition of black life. Here, the hold is like a tag, meant to mark this new shiny object. It describes the object and helps the manufacturer organize and track this new thing. Once tagged, the object is held in storage, and awaits its new purpose once shipped out of the Global Color-Line.

The hold exists because black female life is meant to be exploited, excluded, and invisibilized. It exists because there needs to be a permanent underclass to sustain the life of the

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Global North. It exists because constraining black female life constrains the life of the community.

The hold adds the understanding that when a body is in a hold, it is separated from the rest of the world, and everyone forgets that this body exists. In turn, those that oversee this body can exploit it without repercussions. It adds the understanding that when that body creates a new member of the hold, they are tagged. Tagged with a membership that will forever, and always be an anti-citizen that is to be exploited, excluded, and invisibilized.

The Hold and Global Citizenship

When Black women are finally confronted with the hold, they realize they are marked for life. Their blackness becomes a permanent label, and with the awareness of being both Black and female, they must grapple with the reality that their bodies continue to be used to create a perpetual underclass. The hold tags its new things as either, childlike, animalistic, barbaric, savage, brutish, lazy, sexually deviant, unevolved, unintelligent, dishonest, gangsters, welfare queens, dependents. It labels each new thing in whatever way fits the time and present.

Viewing the hold in this way addresses the reason why there are large disparities between the Global South and Global North, by framing it as a problem born of black blood. Because, although there are anti-discrimination clauses in constitutions in foreign and domestic legislation. In many countries, there is a defacto citizenship that has formed in the underbelly of political formations (Goldstone, 2006). Causing anti-blackness to be a practice that is more normalized, because it is not explicitly being addressed. Therefore, affirming Sharpes understanding that we must recognize that black death is predictable and a core tenet of democracy (Sharpe, 2016). It

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affirms Fanon, James and Costa Vargas that the terror and death handed out by the empire is normative, and it would take blackness to be recognized as both human and citizen (James and Costa Vargas 2012; Fanon, 1952). This reinforces the project's stance that Global Citizenship stands in direct opposition to Black femalehood. In other words, Black women cannot truly be Global Citizens in a world built upon the foundation of their marginalization.

Which is why Sharpe profoundly states that the black mothers womb is a factory for producing blackness. The black womb has condemned its descendants to lives filled with death and violence. But most importantly, it is what gives the black race its perpetual unequal citizenship (Sharpe, 2016). W.E.B. DuBois too notes this in his work, where he states that the black enslaved woman, who through the sexual exploitation by the enslaved or master was the only factor that could reproduce the status of slave (W.E.B. DuBois, 1903).

The hold tagging the black female body and its descendants and exploits, excludes, and invisibilizes them because of their mother. When tagged, they are essentially being labeled as something to use, or exploit. When they are no longer useful, they are trashed, or excluded. And when tragedy befalls them, their experiences are invisibilized, because there is no need to worry about the experiences of things that have been discarded. This takes away that sense of belonging and autonomy, because this process was made for them, before them. This denial again places the black Women in “the hold”, where they are Political Tools, and not Global Citizens. This dichotomy is the hold that is continually perpetuated against black women.

In this section, we have discussed that the hold is the last step in denying Global Citizenship, because within the Global Color-line, in an intersectional liminal space, within the wake Black women are thingified, and they and their offspring are tagged. Marking them as

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anti-Global Citizens. And because of that the hold is everywhere, it is transnational, it is what links Black Women, and what links the diaspora as a whole.

We've discussed the hold and how it tags Black women as anti-Global Citizens, because the anti-blackness she faces is constant, and hereditary. It's important to discuss this because looking at anti-black women as a precursor to all black suffering is how we determine what needs to be done.

The Dichotomy

In this section, I wrap up my take on Global Citizenship, and the many vestiges of slavery that serve as a foil to Global Citizenship. I reiterate how the dichotomy is created, the hold it has on black women, and how this is the denial of Global Citizenship. Next, I apply the concept of Global Citizenship to a broader example. I use the example of the Responsibility to Protect, Sanctions against African States, and the International Criminal Court.

Theory Applied

Denial of Global Citizenship (core theory)

A Global Citizen is to belong within a global society, and living autonomously, and unhindered. Belonging means to have your plight recognized and fully addressed. And to be received as contributors and collaborators, as opposed to antagonists and nuisances. However, Black Women are relegated to Political Tools by the exploitation, exclusion, and invisibilization of their bodies and images. The denial of Black Women as Global Citizens is multilayered.

It began when the Global Color-Line was formed, which made Black women property, prime for exploitation. When this happens, Black women enter into an intersectional liminal

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space, where they were then excluded. In that space, they are pummeled, and beaten by the wake, constantly facing against the vestiges of slavery. In time, these women who had culture, family, friends, land, and life were stripped of everything, and transformed within the wake. Made out to be replaceable or fungible, stripped of their gender, or ungendered, and transformed into things. And within the hold, this thing is tagged as whatever best fits others agendas. In turn, the offspring of these things too are tagged within the hold, unaware of what future use they may face.

What is being described here is the hold slavery has upon the black women, and by extension the black community. This is a process that has been repeated over, and over again in the modern world, this still rings true. In the past, slaves were used to build nations, fight wars, determine foreign, and domestic policies.

In the modern world, this remains, in the Global North, conservative domestic policy is shaped to exploit, exclude, and invisibilize black women. This is done by leaning on stereotypes, and other ways of modes of otherization, like citizenship laws. The black women in these polities have to contend with them by renegotiating their status as citizens, to retain the protections they should have. Others black individuals migrating to these states face even bigger challenges as migrants and refugees with state policies.

Black Women have always been denied the opportunity to shape the world. Preordained notions of Black Women as Political Tools or things, instead of political actors, or Global Citizens. Thus creating a dichotomy between the black woman and the Global Citizen. And confines the black collective into the hold, again unable to cause material change.

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I push Sharpe's notions of the hold as the dichotomy between Black women and Global citizenship. This perspective affirms the understanding that the hold is not just being black in the wake of slavery, or the confines of a slave ship, or simply just the womb of the black mother. It is the holding of the black woman as a tool and not a citizen, it is a tool that tags its own people over and over again.

The Responsibility to Protect

The Global Citizen or Political Tool Dichotomy is quite apt in its application. Especially when used to assess the problems of the Global Color-Line far beyond Western horizons. Problems like policies that were meant to contend with issues of militarism and war. Policies like the Responsibility to Protect.

Bouka writes about this in her work that calls to make "make foreign policies as if black and brown lives mattered." Essentially, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the Women, Peace and Security agenda came about as a United Nations effort to protect women through international interventions. The usage of R2p implies powerful states determine the conditions the responsibility to protect is discharged (Bouka, 2003). Meaning, the R2p emboldens paternalism among nation states that hold power, and the ones that do not (Cunliffe, 2010). As a result, the UN intervened in Somalia in 1993 due to humanitarian endeavors, which eventually failed in 1995. Now several years later, women are exposed to violence on a larger scale than one could have imagined (Bouka, 2003).

Efforts to understand how these interventions failed, because they are governed by military objectives and troop fatalities. In other words, the study is male centered, and does not consider how Black Women are impacted by war, and how these interventions also impact these

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women. Impacts like displacement, disease, physical and sexual violence, malnutrition, loss of education and homes.

Thus making this a problem of the Global Citizen, or Political Tool Dichotomy. Countries that R2p is mostly employed have histories of exploitation by the West. And because these states were former exploits, the people within these states are viewed as unfit to govern themselves. Because of this Western-led missions often rely on racist stereotypes that infantilize and subordinate non-Western societies, reinforcing patriarchal structures (Bouka, 2003).

This reinforces the Global-Color Line, because it makes these black inhabitants out to be subservient. Black women inside the Global Color-Line become invisible. As a result, they are not considered in intervention, and are invisibilized within the liminal intersectional space, which causes further harm. Because of this their experiences compound, and they are hit again by the wake. Eventually, they become things, because things do not govern their own lives, or how they are used. The things they become are molded into tools by and tagged with labels that say they were never fit to govern themselves in the first places.

The vicious cycle repeats, while they and their images continue to be exploited, thus priming them for more interventions that do not consider them, and further excludes them. Because of this, they become political tools, and are constantly held in the position where they do not belong, yet are incapable of making decisions for themselves.

Humanitarian Aid and the Sudan crisis

Sudan has been in a perpetual state of war since the first civil war in 1962 (Poggo, 2009, 1). Fighting factions refused to cooperate in peace agreements, resulting in a third civil war beginning in 2023. In 2024, ACLED recorded over 14,790 reported fatalities throughout the

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region. With fighting causing cuts to power, disruption of healthcare services, disease, sexual violence, acute malnutrition, and targeting of water plants, villages and the like (ACLED, 2024; SudanTribune, 2024). The situation has increasingly become unstable, with no end in sight. At the same time, constraints on humanitarian access have become extremely concerning (IRC, 2024). Especially with philanthropy at an all time low compared to the Ukraine conflict, as called out by the CDP in 2023 (CDP, 2024).

A consequence of this conflict has been the framing of it as a civil war, and not as a violent match between two rival factions. In fact, the Sudanese do not consider either faction as legitimate. The people impacted by the fighting wish for control of their own governments, instead of these rival factions (Medani, 2024).

Additionally, Reuters reported Norway, and the United States and Britain are trying to promote Western ideals through negotiations (Reuters, 2024). Forgetting that local civil society remains active. Because of this, international philanthropy has been largely absent, influenced by stereotypical views of Africa as only places of war and disease (Abbas, 2024).

Because of this, recent pledges for Sudan's crisis response fell short of the needed amount, and there is little support for grassroots feminist movements like the Strategic Initiative for the Horn of Africa (SIHA) and the Urgent Action Fund – Africa (UAF-A). However, these groups have managed to organize resources to address the crisis (Abbas, 2024).

Once again, the Political Tool or Global Citizen dichotomy is applicable. Within the Global Color-Line, the exploits of war terrorize the Sudanese people. In turn, the liminal space of intersectionality invisibilized the major harm the war has done to women, but also the efforts of these women. The wake hits these women over and over, with disease and violence, and the

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misrepresentation of the terror they face. They become things, used as tools of war, especially with the sexual violence they face at the hands of militant forces. These women are then held in the positions as Political Tools, for depriving resources, and as tools by the very men waging war within their country. This is the denial of Global Citizenship to the women of Sudan.

IMF and World Bank Trade Policies

National governments across sub-Saharan Africa have implemented World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies. Countries that received financial assistance were required to implement a standard set of economic policies designed by the IMF officials, with little or no input from the recipients (Owusu, 2003, p. 1661). In turn, the IMF has claimed to improve the conditions of these countries, yet rapid industrialization has caused many domestic industries in African countries to close or have been serious damage in the 1980s and 1990s, and as a result conditions in these regions have not increased (Khor, 2006).

Now, Western onlookers have deemed these nations as ‘state failures’, a phrase that often echoes the paternalistic, colonialistic, racist making of Global Color-Line. Making the rest of the world unsure of these countries and their ability to be full members in the global community (Niang 2018; Wai 2014 2018).

As a result of these happenings, World Bank and IMF liberalization policies have largely impacted rural women’s rights in sub-Saharan Africa. User fees for education lead to increased illiteracy which limits their job prospects. Policies weakened labor laws which increased the gender wage gap. Food insecurity increased after support for these women as farmers was

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withdrawn. These policies essentially neglected the gender and cultural factors, which exacerbated gender inequality and social justice issues for rural women (Ibnouf, 2008).

Once again, we see the Global Color-Line implementing loss of Black Women's labor, bodies, and time. This loss diminishes their autonomy, their ability to make independent decisions for themselves. In turn, this increases dependency and further reduces their ability to act freely. In turn, this excludes them from social, economic, and political life. Which denies them a sense of belonging in their communities, and in global society. And further stigmatizes them as incapable of governing themselves. Then here they become invisible, their contributions to their community aren't recognized, their intellect and drive isn't and thus a cycle of disempowerment ensues.

What we are seeing is these women and their communities were exploited by Western policies within the Global Color-Line. Invisibilized by the lack of consideration of their identities, struggles, and how they would be impacted by these policies. The wake then takes these policies and causes problems in these women's lives over, and over. This is the thingification of these women, because as things they cannot govern themselves. In turn, they become Political Tools, where these policies move agendas unknown to these women. These women are then held in this position, and denied Global Citizenship.

Conclusion

The Global Color-Line has created a division between the black and white races and by extension, the Global North and the Global South. Black Women within the Global-Color Line, face an intersectional experience that they are facing compounding effects of their gender and race. The compounding effects include the thingification of Black women, which leads to

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unforeseen hardships, but most importantly they lead to “the wake” which in turn, holds Black Women in a position of perpetual Global Citizenship denial by way of the Political Tool or Global Citizen dichotomy. Modern applications of these theoretical works are apparent in everyday life. In the policies that keep out and deport migrants, or the policies that aid and govern in African nations.

Addressing Global Citizenship through the lens of “the hold” allows deeper conversation on not just black death as institutional to how modern global society. It works to address Global Citizenship denial as foundational to harming Black women, and by extension the community. It fosters a deeper understanding as Black womanhood as inherently political. This project pushes the understandings of these theoretical works in the context of Global Citizenship, and the dichotomy between that and Black Women. To further the conversation of these concepts undermining Global Citizenship. With this understanding, we Black women, as a collective are better equipped to address these systemic issues within our own communities. To accept the fact that challenging harmful stereotypes, and acquiring support, inclusion, recognition, and empowerment is a project that we alone can understand and implement.

This project is essentially a love letter to Black Women in all areas of global society. It is a piece that considers their representation in political institutions, supporting their educational and economic opportunities, and recognizing their contributions to global movements for justice and equality. It is a project that determines what makes a Global Citizen.

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