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Introduction

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Introduction

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The role of an editor is to recognize insight and quality, to follow inquiry where it leads, and to protect and promote intellectual accountability. In *Theory & Event* Issue 21.1, we have turned over those responsibilities to two scholars—M. Shadee Malaklou and Tiffany Willoughby-Herard—whose research has been ground-breaking and finely attuned to the current political environment. In this special issue, they have gathered a set of essays which bring the politics of two centrally important political theories and traditions into direct relationship with one another: Black Feminism and Afro-pessimism.

Malaklou and Willoughby-Herard do not stage an artificial confrontation between the two philosophical traditions. Instead, they have compiled essays which together note the gravitational pulls of each upon the other while also highlighting their legitimation or eclipse of modes of expression and action. The essays do not stand “for” or “against” Afro-pessimism, but rather engage with its languages and discourses to illuminate the condition of black women in our time. It is our honor to host this critical exchange.

The issue concludes with two book reviews: Craig Borowiak reviews Keally McBride’s *Mr. Mothercountry: The Man Who Made the Rule of Law*; and Antonio Y. Vázquez-Arroyo reviews George Ciccariello-Maher’s *Decolonizing Dialectics*.