



The Color Black

Enslavement and Erasure in Iran

BEETA BAGHOOLIZADEH

In *The Color Black*, Beeta Baghoolizadeh traces the twin processes of enslavement and erasure of Black people in Iran during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She illustrates how geopolitical changes and technological advancements in the nineteenth century made enslaved East Africans uniquely visible in their servitude in wealthy and elite Iranian households. During this time, Blackness, Africanness, and enslavement became intertwined—and interchangeable—in Iranian imaginations. After the end of slavery in 1929, the implementation of abolition involved an active process of erasure on a national scale, such that a collective amnesia regarding slavery and racism persists today. The erasure of enslavement resulted in the erasure of Black Iranians as well. Baghoolizadeh draws on photographs, architecture, theater, circus acts, newspapers, films, and more to document how the politics of visibility framed discussions around enslavement and abolition during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this way, Baghoolizadeh makes visible the people and histories that were erased from Iran and its diaspora.

"In this pathbreaking study, Beeta Baghoolizadeh weaves together a social history of slavery in Iran; a feminist analysis of modern Iranian households and their racial underpinnings; a gendered reading of state policy on emancipation; and an intervention into the study of slavery and its afterlives. The Color Black is a tour de force of research and a beautiful and brilliant contribution to multiple fields."—Sarah Gualtieri, author of *Arab Routes: Pathways to Syrian California*

Duke University Press Scholars of Color First Book Award

dukeupress.edu/the-color-black

March 2024 | 248 pages, 33 illustrations, including 5 in color
978-1-4780-3024-9 | \$26.95 paperback **\$18.87 with discount**

Special offer: Use coupon code **E24BGHLZ** to save 30% when you order from dukeupress.edu.

