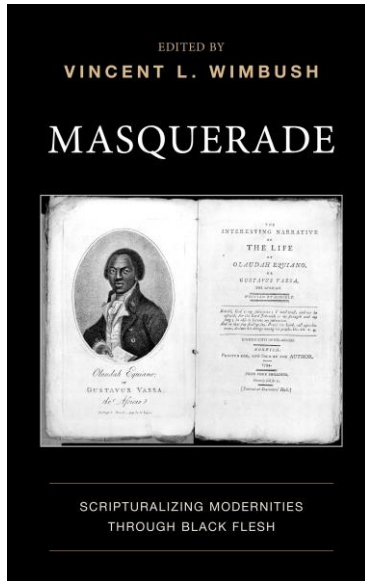


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*Masquerade:  
Scripturalizing Modernities through Black Flesh*

Edited by Vincent L. Wimbush

Foreword by Richard Manly Adams, Jr.

Contributions by: Cécile Coquet-Mokoko; Marla Frederick;  
Miles P. Grier; Jacqueline Hidalgo; P. Kimberleigh Jordan;  
Velma E. Love; Carolyn M. Jones Medine; Rosetta Ross; Rachel  
E. C. Beckley; Shay Welch and Vincent L. Wimbush

“With *Masquerade*, Vincent Wimbush has summoned us once again to ‘think hard about hard things.’ This latest volume, a collection of edited essays by scholars from across disciplines, expands Wimbush’s now two-decades long project of elucidating modernity’s scriptures—those regimes of knowledge that magically bind us to the machineries of empire. Throughout these essays, which brilliantly complement an eponymously named multimedia project, the writers expand our conceptual and technological understandings of scriptures as stages for masquerade, fantastically evoking a spirit of transgression that destabilizes what we accept as natural and real.” — **James Manigault-Bryant, Professor and Chair, Africana Studies, Williams College**

#### ABOUT THIS BOOK

Continuing his project of critical analysis of the scriptural formation of culture, Vincent L. Wimbush has gathered in this book essays by scholars of various backgrounds and orientations who focus in different registers on the theme of masquerade as the “play-element” in modern culture. Masquerade functions as a window onto the mimetic performances, dynamics, arrangements, psycho-logics, and politics (“scripturalizing”) by which the “made-up” becomes fixed or one among our realities (scripturalization). Modern-world racialization (and its attendant explosions into racialisms and racisms) as the hyper-scripturalization of difference in human flesh (registered in psychosocial relations as a type of “scripture”) is argued in this book to be one of the most consequential examples and reflections of masquerade and thereby one of the primary impetuses behind, and determinants of, the shape of the realities of modernities. The open window onto these realities is facilitated by touchstone references to—not exhaustive treatment of—a now famous eighteenth-century life story, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Ouidah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (1789). This story, told by a complexly positioned Black-fleshed self-acknowledged ex-slave/“stranger,” is itself a “mask-ing” that throws light on the predominantly white Anglophone world as masking (as scriptural formation). Equiano/Vassa’s story as masking helps makes a compelling case for analyzing through Black flesh the ongoing shaping of the modern and the perduring mixed if not also devastating consequences.

#### ABOUT THE EDITOR

**Vincent L. Wimbush** is founding director of The Institute for Signifying Scriptures.

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