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Lambert, David

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# review essay

## An Atlantic world – modernity, colonialism and slavery

*David Lambert*

Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London

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**Spectres of the Atlantic: finance capital, slavery, and the philosophy of history.** By Ian Baucom. London and Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2005.

**Modernity disavowed: Haiti and the cultures of slavery in the age of revolution.** By Sybille Fischer. London and Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2004.

**Conscripts of modernity: the tragedy of colonial enlightenment.** By David Scott. London and Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2004.

### **A dark rainbow**

Standing before me, a giant serpent casts a dark shadow in the bright summer day. It is a sculpture of a snake swallowing its own tail made from interlocking plastic jerry cans used to carry water and fuel. DAN-AYIDO-HOUEDO/*Arc-en-ciel, symbole de perpétuité* (Figure 1) is the creation of Benin-born experimental sculptor, Romuald Hazoumé, who has created artworks from salvaged industrial materials since the mid 1980s. Specially commissioned for the Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum's exhibition, 'Uncomfortable truths: the shadow of slave trading on contemporary art and design', the sculpture stood in the centre of the London museum's John Madejski Garden from February to June 2007. DAN-AYIDO-HOUEDO is an ouroboros assembled from fragments of the modern world and symbolizes the cycle of poverty faced by many in Africa.<sup>1</sup> As part of an exhibition on the legacies of the Atlantic slave trade, it evokes other meanings for me: the 'cosmic clockwise gyro' of winds and currents circling the Sargasso Sea; the 'triangular trade' in commodities and people-as-commodities connecting Europe, Africa and the Americas; the creation and destruction wrought by the slave trade and the plantations it supplied; the return of the past and the haunting of the present by the memories and legacies of Atlantic slavery.<sup>2</sup>

The V&A's exhibition was one of many commemorative events to mark the bicentenary of the British Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 2007. Owing, at least in part, to a cluster of insistent, troubling anniversaries – also including the 2008 bicentenary of the outlawing of the African



FIGURE 1 Romuald Hazoum , DAN-AYIDO-HOUEDO/*Arc-en-ciel, symbole de perp tuit *, 2006-07   ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2008.

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slave trade by the American federal government, as well as the rather different sort of bicentenary in 2004: the independence of the Caribbean state of Haiti – the last few years have seen increasing popular and academic attention given to the Atlantic world. The three books under review attest to this, as well as to the continuing development of a field of inquiry that has followed path-breaking work by Paul Gilroy and Joseph Roach, although its intellectual origins lie in C.L.R. James’ *The black Jacobins* and Eric Williams’ *Capitalism and slavery*.<sup>3</sup> This work is not only indicative of sustained interest in Atlantic slavery, abolition and resistance, but continues to challenge and transform understandings of the geographies and histories of modernity. If one of the well-rehearsed criticisms of contemporary discourses on globalization is to question its apparent novelty by pointing to earlier phases and places of globalization<sup>4</sup> – of which the precocious Atlantic world was a clear example – then those who have sought to elucidate and advocate alternative and counter-visions of globalization have also seen the submerged histories and geographies of the Atlantic as a resource for different ways of imagining the future.<sup>5</sup> Like Hazoum ’s dark rainbow, which evokes the slave trade *and* contemporary poverty in Africa, these books speak as much to the global present and possible futures, as they do to Atlantic pasts.

## The Atlantic’s long twentieth century

In 1781, the Liverpool slave ship, *Zong*, was travelling from the west coast of Africa to the Caribbean on the usual business of trafficking in captive lives. Facing rising levels of mortality amongst his human cargo, the ship’s captain, Luke Collingwood, responded by ordering

133 enslaved people to be thrown overboard to their deaths and thereby ensure that the ship's owners, the Gregson family, would be able to claim compensation for property lost at sea through their insurance policy. Collingwood's extraordinarily callous decision was no aberration, rather it was an act underwritten by a culture and system of speculative capitalism. As a result, the *Zong* atrocity and its representations are 'central not only to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the political and cultural archives of the black Atlantic but to the history of modern capital, ethics, and time consciousness'.<sup>6</sup> This is the central claim of Ian Baucom's *Spectres of the Atlantic*, a provocative, staggeringly ambitious, if somewhat obfuscatory, book.

The first part of *Spectres of the Atlantic* is concerned with enumerating and accounting for the speculative culture that permitted Collingwood's actions. The argument is underwritten by two key texts: Walter Benjamin's *The arcades project* and Giovanni Arrighi's *The long twentieth century*:

Arrighi's Braudelian analysis of capital's long and short *durées* requires something like Benjamin's cultural materialism if it is to reveal the ways in which the oscillating forms of capital inform and are informed by the shifting phenomenologies and recycled generic protocols of cultural practice.<sup>7</sup>

Arrighi's schema provides the grounds for historicizing the sort of cultural artefacts that interested Benjamin, whilst Benjamin's aesthetic and cultural analysis is used as a method for exploring Arrighi's cycles of accumulation. From Benjamin, Baucom borrows two ideas: that particular phases in capitalism's history were secured by different theories and forms of knowledge, and what he terms a 'repetocentric philosophy of history'.<sup>8</sup> Hence, Baucom explains, the 17th-century genre of allegory was repeated and intensified in the 19th century, which helped to secure the commodity capital for which Benjamin saw evidence in the warehouses and shop windows of Paris. Yet, Baucom asks, what should we make of the 18th century interruption? His answer is to turn to an 'oscillatory history of capital' derived from Arrighi's account of four long cycles of accumulation from the 15th century to the present, each dominated by a different hegemonic capital state.<sup>9</sup> For Arrighi, periods of commodity capital accumulation precede and follow periods of financial capital accumulation, but what interests Baucom are the transitional moments *between* these cycles. In these hyperfinancialized moments, 'capital accumulation proceeds virtually exclusively through "financial deals"' and they are dominated by the quarters of high finance.<sup>10</sup>

The *Zong* massacre corresponds to one of these hyperfinancialized moments: the transitional phase between the Dutch and British cycles of accumulation from the 1750s to 1780s in which a system of maritime insurance underwrote Collingwood's actions and the entire system of Atlantic slavery. Moreover, in a further elaboration of a 'repetocentric' philosophy of history, Baucom argues that the hyperfinancialized phase of 'late capitalism' not only resembles the moment in which the *Zong* sailed, but also 'in a fully Benjaminian sense, inherits its nonimmediate past by intensifying it, by "perfecting" its cultural protocols, "practicalizing" its epistemology, realizing its phenomenology as the cultural logic "of the entire social-material world"'.<sup>11</sup> These two hyperfinancialized moments – the mid-to-late 18th century and the present – mark the beginning and end of what Baucom terms the 'long twentieth century'. In so doing, he departs from Arrighi's deployment of this as a collective description of capital's 15th-to-20th-century *longue durée*, as well as his more specific use of it to designate the fourth, American cycle from the 1860s to the present. Rather, Baucom's 'long twentieth century' stretches from the mid-18th century to the present, conjoining the British and American cycles in a single sequence of Atlantic

accumulation whose key sites include today's global cities of London and New York, as well as such circum-Atlantic ports and slave-trading posts as Liverpool, Bridgetown and Cape Coast.

## Atlantic genres

Based on his argument that 'the oscillating forms of capital inform and are informed by the shifting phenomenologies and recycled generic protocols of cultural practice',<sup>12</sup> Baucom claims that the hyperfinancialized moments at either end of the Atlantic's long twentieth century were secured by an abstracting epistemology he terms 'theoretical realism'. He finds evidence for this speculative culture in 18th-century novelistic discourse, as well as in the insurance documents that endorsed Captain Collingwood's calculating actions. Furthermore, the epistemology underwriting the speculative culture was contested by a 'testamentary counterdiscourse on and of modernity' characterized by a 'melancholy but cosmopolitan romanticism'.<sup>13</sup> This counterdiscourse is specified and explored in the second part of *Spectres of the Atlantic*, beginning with the efforts made by British abolitionist, Granville Sharp, to have a murder investigation opened into the *Zong* drownings following the prompting of the formerly-enslaved campaigner, Olaudah Equiano. This romantic counterdiscourse also remains an important basis for responding to the world at *this* end of the long twentieth century because it serves as 'an alternative unit of geopolitical knowledge':

At either end of the long twentieth century...the melancholy fact of history and its dominant genres of articulation (now as then) offer the promise of an alternative vision, knowledge, and politics of the global, one which can predicate itself on a frank avowal of interestedness: in the subaltern, in the hauntological, in the multitudinous scenes of global injustice, in an entire planetary array of melancholy facts, scenes, images, *and* fictions of history.<sup>14</sup>

Baucom also argues that the cosmopolitan interestedness at the heart of this counterdiscourse was – and is – always tempted, threatened and undermined by a tendency towards a universalizing, liberal cosmopolitanism that deals in abstract categories such as the 'Rights of Man' or 'human rights'. This is akin to the speculative culture that underwrote the *Zong* atrocity itself and takes the form of viewing this event as *typical* of something else – Atlantic slavery, global capitalism, human barbarity – rather than as a unique occurrence. A contrast is thus drawn between the melancholic politics apparent in Sharp's efforts to bear witness to the *Zong* massacre in the 1780s and the liberal humanitarianism that came to the fore with the institutionalization of the British abolitionist campaign after 1787. In making this argument, Baucom identifies the beginning of the Atlantic's long twentieth century with the emergence of a form of humanitarianism, in the abolitionist campaign, that gave rise to a geopolitical regime of sovereignty, apparent in the subsequent actions of the British navy to suppress the slave trade at sea and on land after 1807.<sup>15</sup> Thus, departing from Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, the articulation of global sovereign power through discourses of human rights, humanitarianism and humanity is shown not to be a recent phenomenon.<sup>16</sup>

In *Conscripts of modernity*, David Scott is also interested in genre, narrative modes and the philosophy of history. It is not the generic conventions associated with the *longue durée* of Atlantic

capitalism that are his focus, however, but those through which anticolonial historiographies are emplotted and postcolonial theories constructed:

[A]nticolonialism has been written in the narrative mode of Romance and, consequently, has projected a distinctive image of the past (one cast in terms of what colonial power denied or negated) and a distinctive story about the relation between that past and the hoped-for future (one emplotted as a narrative of revolutionary overcoming).<sup>17</sup>

Whilst the romantic may have been the conventional narrative mode for anticolonialism, previous ways of narrating colonial pasts and theorizing (post)colonial presents and futures do not necessarily retain their critical power as the situation changes. Hence, Scott argues that ‘after Bandung’, the anticolonial future for which Romance was an appropriate narrative construction is now no longer achievable. The 1955 Bandung Conference brought together leaders from 29 newly-independent countries in Africa and Asia, and established the institutional basis of the Non-Aligned Movement. In consequence, this highly symbolic event is often held as a ‘foundational moment for postcolonialism’.<sup>18</sup> Yet, this anticolonial confidence and solidarity did not last, owing in part to the recognition that political and economic independence were not the same. Today – ‘after Bandung’ – ‘we live in tragic times’, Scott suggests, times that are ‘distressingly off kilter in the specific sense that the critical languages in which we wagered our moral vision and our political hope...are no longer commensurate with the world they were meant to understand, engage, and overcome’.<sup>19</sup>

Scott’s strikingly original argument about the need for a tragic mode of criticism in the postcolonial present is developed through a stunning critical reading of *the* foundational text in Atlantic studies. This is C.L.R. James’ *The black Jacobins*, which describes the revolution that took place in the French colony of San Domingo (1791–1804) and resulted in the creation of Haiti, the second independent state in the Americas. Focusing on differences between the original 1938 edition and the 1963 re-issue, Scott describes *The black Jacobins* as a book of ‘profound historiographic self-consciousness’ that contained what could be thought of as a critical best-before date.<sup>21</sup> Hence, whilst James’ account of the San Domingo revolution provided a narrative of black people making their own history that was both culturally resonant and critically powerful in the interwar period, the additions made for the re-issue, particularly to the seventh chapter, are held as evidence for James’ belief that the anticolonial moment of the first edition had passed. Elaborating from James’ portrayal of the Haitian revolutionary leader, Toussaint L’Ouverture, Scott argues that a tragic sensibility is more apt today because it is ‘not driven by the confident hubris of teleologies that extract the future seamlessly from the past’ and instead is more attuned to the ‘intricacies, ambiguities, and paradoxes’ that relate actions to consequences and chance.<sup>21</sup>

Central to the critical languages of anticolonialism that Scott sees as no longer adequate in these tragic times are those of black emancipation. Whilst remaining sympathetic to the ‘oppositional desire to affirm the humanity of the subaltern’ that resonates in studies of the black Atlantic, he is doubtful that ‘the story of resistance and agency’ that this line of argument promotes is still useful or relevant for present-day postcolonial critique.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, rather than *resistance* being the key concept for understanding the Atlantic past today, in particular, and theorizing the postcolonial present, in general, Scott argues for the centrality of *conscription*, an idea he develops from the work of Talal Asad.<sup>23</sup> This refers to the ways in which non-Europeans – like

Toussaint himself – were coercively obliged to render themselves the objects and subjects of modernity. Hence, instead of a narrative of how subalterns responded to and resisted (Atlantic) modernity, Scott wants to focus on how these subjects were constituted through modern conditions. Put simply, he argues that the key issue in our ‘new history of the postcolonial present’ is understanding the mechanics of power and dominance, not a vindicatory search for anti-colonial resistance.<sup>24</sup> For some, this will be a profoundly pessimistic conclusion. They may even feel betrayed by Scott’s use of *The black Jacobins* to make this argument given its canonical status for conceptualizations of the black Atlantic and work on modernity that it has inspired. Yet, turning to another book published in the same year as *Conscripts of modernity* that contributes to the writing of a ‘new history of the postcolonial present’ – Derek Gregory’s *The colonial present* – it seems that Scott is not alone in believing that we now live in ‘tragic times’.<sup>25</sup>

Scott’s contention about the obsolescence of the romantic in the postcolonial present is in startling contrast with Baucom’s belief that a ‘melancholy but cosmopolitan romanticism’ remains the basis for ‘an alternative vision, knowledge, and politics of the global’.<sup>26</sup> One explanation is that, unlike Scott, Baucom’s engagement with black-Atlantic thought is limited. He only devotes it one chapter, which alone makes up the third and final part of *Spectres of the Atlantic*, focusing on Édouard Glissant’s *Poetics of relation*.<sup>27</sup> In a book of such theoretical breadth – ranging from Agamben to Žižek – it is striking that those who have articulated a ‘diasporic philosophy of history’, including Fred D’Aguiar, Paul Gilroy, Derek Walcott, as well as Glissant himself, are relegated to what feels like an addendum. Perhaps, in consequence, Baucom’s conclusions about ‘the promise of an alternative vision, knowledge, and politics of the global’ based on the narrative mode of Romance are rather conventional and uncritical.<sup>28</sup>

## A disavowed Atlantic

Another difference between *Spectres of the Atlantic* and *Conscripts of modernity* is that Baucom does not demonstrate much interest in enslaved lives. Despite his insistence that the reader bear witness to the victims of Atlantic slavery, he is more concerned about how and why Captain Collingwood came to order 133 people to be thrown from the *Zong* than with those who were ‘spared’ for life on the plantations. The Caribbean barely features in his argument, as evidenced by the conspicuous absence of the Haitian Revolution from his account of the Atlantic’s long twentieth century. In black-Atlantic historiography, this is deemed a revolution of at least the same importance as those in the American colonies and the French metropole. In many ways, it is seen to represent the realization of the potential in the French Revolution, whilst its marginalization highlights the Eurocentrism of discourses on modernity.<sup>29</sup> Baucom makes a similar argument with respect to the *Zong* atrocity. For him, trans-Atlantic slavery is ‘an “event” of equal significance to the French Revolution in the philosophical discourse of modernity’.<sup>30</sup> Given this decentering of the French Revolution, Baucom’s almost complete silence both on the place of the Haitian Revolution in his account and the discourse around *this* event – which is literally paranthesized in the book – is striking and underlines his relative lack of engagement with black-Atlantic theories and historiographies.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast, the Haitian Revolution occupies the central, if repudiated, place in the work of Sybille Fischer. In *Modernity disavowed*, she examines the impact and aftermath later in the 19th century of the revolution on the nearby territories of Cuba and Santo Domingo, as well as in Haiti itself. Examining constitutional, historical, literary and poetic texts, as well as fragments of material culture, Fischer searches for traces of a ‘radically heterogeneous, transnational cultural network ... whose political imaginary mirrored the global scope of the slave trade and whose projects and fantasies of emancipation converged, at least for a few years, around Haiti’.<sup>32</sup> This radical antislavery formed part of the revolutionary Atlantic and, as with other elements of this ‘many-headed hydra’, its ideologies, politics and practices have been broken, scattered, and silenced.<sup>33</sup> In the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, this occurred through the establishment of a geopolitical, economic and cultural *cordon sanitaire* by regional slave-owning powers fearful that its influence would spread. Radical antislavery was also suppressed within Haiti itself. By scrutinizing changes in the Haitian constitution, Fischer skilfully demonstrates how the transnationalism of its founding ideology was renounced as the newly-independent state sought to survive in a hostile geopolitical environment.

To understand the suppression of the radical antislavery that coalesced around the Haitian Revolution, Fischer deploys the concept of *disavowal*, which is understood ‘both in its everyday sense as “refusal to acknowledge,” “repudiation,” and “denial” (*OED*) and in its more technical meaning in psychoanalytical theory as a “refusal to recognize the reality of a traumatic perception”’.<sup>34</sup> This latter sense is particularly evident in the second part of the book, which considers the political and cultural impact of radical antislavery on Santo Domingo, the Spanish colony that shared the island of Hispaniola with the Haitian state. Yet, whilst finding the concept of disavowal helpful for understanding popular and elite responses to the revolution in Santo Domingo, Fischer is critical about the unthinking application of trauma theory to such Atlantic contexts.<sup>35</sup> Generally, her concern is the politics of how and why disavowal occurred. ‘Disavowed modernity’ is used to signal how the radical antislavery of the Haitian Revolution was suppressed and made to vanish from ‘respectable modernity’ (as also seems to happen in Baucom’s *Spectres of the Atlantic*).<sup>36</sup> This disavowed/respectable binary accounts for Fischer’s rather different understanding of modernity from that of Scott:

Instead of equating modernity with the Eurocentric regime of racial subordination and colonial exploitation that became hegemonic in the course of the nineteenth century, *and then* opposing that modernity with a counterculture that grows out of suffering, we need to understand the ideological, cultural, and political conflicts that led to the ascendancy of a modernity that could be claimed only by European nations.<sup>37</sup>

Her refusal to accept that modernity was wholly European in the first place challenges the formulation at the heart of Scott’s concern with how ‘non-Europeans were conscripted to modernity’s project’.<sup>38</sup> In Fischer’s account, those aspects of ‘modernity’s project’ represented by the potential of radical antislavery were suppressed, denied and repudiated – but they had been there and traces remain. Perhaps it is best to see disavowal and conscription operating in conjunction in the Atlantic world in that through them non-Europeans were rendered external to modernity’s creation in order that they could be coerced into being its objects, not its authors.



Fischer does not share the same explicit concerns with Baucom and Scott about genre and epistemology, but her narrative mode offers an interesting and provocative contrast on the history of the Atlantic world. Although she writes of Haitian elites and masses, as well as of those in Cuba and Santo Domingo, who longed for – or feared – radical antislavery, *Modernity disavowed* is not a romantic, vindicationist's story of 'the slave's unmediated will to resist'.<sup>39</sup> Its account of radical antislavery is assembled from fragments and conjectures that leave 'a trace of alternatives, of a route not taken, of unsuccessful historical projects'. Elsewhere, she considers what 'might have been different' in Haiti, Cuba or Santo Domingo – and, indeed, in the Atlantic world or with the construction of the discourse of modernity itself – had the radically heterogeneous transnationalism that converged around the Haitian Revolution not been disavowed.<sup>40</sup> Fischer thus offers an account of Atlantic modernity narrated not in the modes of Romance or tragedy, but rather the conjectural, hypothetical and counterfactual. This is a 'speculative' discourse on history, but not the same form that Baucom associates with hyperfincialized capital. Rather, this is a speculation about what 'might have been different', an anti-determinist narrative mode that insists on the radical openness of the past and suggests how this might serve as a resource for crafting alternative visions, knowledges, and politics of the global. This is a bold argument that stimulates questions about the place of counterfactualism in postcolonial and counter-global criticism, and what it might mean to think about the 'counterfactual Atlantic' for our understanding of modernity.

## Atlantic endings

Just before closing his book, Baucom writes that the 'fatal Atlantic "beginning" of the modern is more properly understood as an ending without end'.<sup>41</sup> Sitting in the John Madejski Garden in the Victoria and Albert Museum as I read these words, I cannot help but look up at Romuald Hazoumé's DAN-AYIDO-HOUEDO/*Arc-en-ciel, symbole de perpétuité*. Simultaneously, it evokes the place of Atlantic slavery in the modernity of the Western Hemisphere, as well as the cycle of poverty faced by many in Africa at our end of Baucom's long twentieth century. In contrast with the heroic statues of enslaved resistance that were erected by post-independence Caribbean states – defiant figures with heads aloft, chains broken<sup>42</sup> – Hazoumé's dark rainbow also seems more appropriate for Scott's tragic times, evoking the continual processes of conscription that he insists must be the focus of the 'new history of the postcolonial present'. Yet, whilst this sculptural ouroboros is emblematic of at least some of the central concerns of Baucom and Scott, perhaps it does not quite fit with Fischer's more open and conjectural sense of what (Atlantic) modernity might have been. Nevertheless, like DAN-AYIDO-HOUEDO and the exhibition of which it was part, all three books attest to the shadow that Atlantic slavery continues to cast. In writing of the modern Atlantic world, Joseph Roach argued that 'a New World was not discovered' by Europeans, but that 'one was truly invented there'.<sup>43</sup> The originality and creativity of the texts by Baucom, Fischer and Scott suggest that the Atlantic remains an extremely productive – though dark – space for theoretical and historiographic inventiveness about our world.

## Acknowledgements

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## Biographical note

David Lambert is Reader in Historical Geography in the Geography Department at Royal Holloway, University of London. His principal research interests are in cultural and historical geography, and he is currently writing a book on slavery, exploration and the histories of geography. He can be contacted at: Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, UK; email: d.lambert@rhul.ac.uk

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> 'Uncomfortable truths: The shadow of slave trading on contemporary art and design', Victoria and Albert Museum, 20 February–17 June 2007.
- <sup>2</sup> I.K. Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675–1740: an exploration of communication and community* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 7. On temporal and spatial cycles in Caribbean and Atlantic historiography, see B.W. Higman, *Writing West Indian histories* (London, Macmillan Education, 1999), pp. 183–96.
- <sup>3</sup> E. Williams, *Capitalism and slavery* (London, André Deutsch, 1964, new edition); C.L.R. James, *The black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo revolution* (London, Allison and Busby, 1980), P. Gilroy, *The black Atlantic: modernity and double consciousness* (London, Verso, 1993); J. Roach, *Cities of the dead: circum-Atlantic performance* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1996).
- <sup>4</sup> A.G. Hopkins, ed., *Globalization in world history* (London, Pimlico, 2002).
- <sup>5</sup> D. Featherstone, 'The spatial politics of the past unbound: transnational networks and the making of political identities', *Global networks* 7 (2007), pp. 430–52. Compare also P. Linebaugh and M. Rediker, *The many-headed hydra: sailors, slaves, commoners, and the hidden history of the revolutionary Atlantic* (London, Verso, 2000), and M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Multitude: war and democracy in the age of empire* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 2005).
- <sup>6</sup> I. Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic: finance capital, slavery, and the philosophy of history* (London and Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2005), p. 31.
- <sup>7</sup> W. Benjamin, *The arcades project* (Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press, 1999); G. Arrighi, *The long twentieth century: money, power and the origins of our times* (London, Verso, 1994); Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, p. 23.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- <sup>11</sup> F. Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism* (London, Verso, 1991); Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, p. 29.
- <sup>12</sup> Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, p. 23.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.
- <sup>15</sup> M. Lynn, 'Britain's West African policy and the island of Fernando Po, 1821–43', *Journal of imperial and Commonwealth history* 18 (1990), pp. 191–207; I.K. Sundiata, *From slaving to neoslavery: the Bight of Biafra and Fernando Po in the era of abolition, 1827–1930* (Madison, WI, University of Wisconsin Press, 1996).
- <sup>16</sup> M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA and London, Harvard University Press, 2000).

- <sup>17</sup> D. Scott, *Conscripts of modernity: the tragedy of colonial enlightenment* (London and Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 209–10. Scott notes that one of the events that stimulated the emergence of English Romanticism was the *Zong* massacre.
- <sup>18</sup> R.J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: an historical introduction* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2001), p. 191. See also D. Scott, *Refashioning futures: criticism after postcoloniality* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1999).
- <sup>19</sup> Scott, *Conscripts of modernity*, pp. 2, 210.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114. Compare M. Rediker, *The slave ship: A human history* (London, John Murray, 2007).
- <sup>23</sup> Scott, *Conscripts of modernity*, pp. 8–9.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- <sup>25</sup> D. Gregory, *The colonial present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2004).
- <sup>26</sup> Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, pp. 33, 226.
- <sup>27</sup> E. Glissant, *Poetics of relation*, translated by B. Wing (Ann Arbor, MI, University of Michigan Press, 1997).
- <sup>28</sup> Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, pp. 34, 226.
- <sup>29</sup> L. Dubois, ‘An enslaved Enlightenment: rethinking the intellectual history of the French Atlantic’, *Social history* 31 (2006), pp. 1–14.
- <sup>30</sup> Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, p. 32.
- <sup>31</sup> See *Ibid.*, p. 247.
- <sup>32</sup> S. Fischer, *Modernity disavowed: Haiti and the cultures of slavery in the age of revolution* (London and Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2004), p. 1.
- <sup>33</sup> P. Linebaugh and M. Rediker, *The many-headed hydra*.
- <sup>34</sup> Fischer, *Modernity disavowed*, pp. 37–8.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 135–44.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37, emphasis added.
- <sup>38</sup> Scott, *Conscripts of modernity*, p. 9, emphasis added.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- <sup>40</sup> Fischer, *Modernity disavowed*, pp. 94, 274. See, for example, pp. 221, 236.
- <sup>41</sup> Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, p. 333.
- <sup>42</sup> D. Lambert, “‘Part of the blood and dream’: surrogation, memory and the national hero in the postcolonial Caribbean”, *Patterns of prejudice* 41 (2007), pp. 345–71.
- <sup>43</sup> Roach, *Cities of the dead*, p. 4.