Shuger's basic premise, suggesting that ideas about civility were a medium precisely for the suppression of dissent. This book, then, illuminates, but ultimately, in overreaching, also obscures.

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Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History,* Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Pp. 400. $23.95 (ISBN 0-8223-3596-4).

In early September 1781 the slave ship *Zong* left West Africa for Jamaica, carrying 440 enslaved Africans. Almost three months later, on the other side of the Atlantic, the *Zong* had lost sixty of the Africans and much of its crew to disease; the remaining slaves, many of them ill, offered poor prospects for the Jamaica market. At the end of November, Captain Luke Collingwood held a meeting in which he proposed, in light of the ship's dwindling water supplies and in keeping with current insurance practices, to jettison a portion of the ship's cargo on the pretense of preserving the remaining cargo and crew. The "cargo" to be thrown overboard were 133 human beings. The drownings occurred over three days, even after the crew had collected rainwater enough to sustain the entire ship for an additional eleven days; the last ten slaves jumped overboard in grim preference to being thrown into the sea. Tellingly, the ensuing case was a civil rather than a criminal proceeding: the *Zong*'s owners successfully sued the ship's insurers to compensate them for the drowned slaves (valued at £30 each). On appeal the decision was upheld by Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice of Court of King's Bench and celebrated author of the *Somerset* decision (which had effectively outlawed slavery in England a decade previously).

In directing our attention once again to the *Zong*, Baucom seeks to demonstrate that "the event 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" (31). Central to this argument is Baucom's insight that the cold horror of the *Zong* lay not simply in the chattel slavery regime's conversion of humans into commodities but, crucially and simultaneously, into "a type of interest-bearing money . . . the reserve deposits of a loosely organized, decentered, but vast trans-Atlantic banking system: deposits made at the moment of sale and instantly reconverted into short-term bonds" (61). This speculative financial logic, along with the corresponding emergence of an actuarial science which calculated value on the basis of typicality, Baucom argues, links the late eighteenth-century world of Captain Collingwood and the drowned slaves with today's globalism. "The cultural, epistemological, and capital protocols of that hypermonetarized, hyperspeculative moment," Baucom contends, find their "intensified repetition . . . within our own exorbitantly financialized present" (26). A phenomenon with implications far beyond the economic, this "theoretical realism" (42), Baucom maintains, is manifested in the eighteenth-century rise of the novel (with its depiction of familiar social types) as well as the more recent

literary critical embrace of historicism (and its set-piece, the anecdote). Borrowing Giovanni Arrighi's concept of the long twentieth century, Baucom illustrates how, far from being a new world order, today's globalism should be seen as intensifying the economic and cultural logics that produced the *Zong* and its legal aftermath.

But just as the defense for the *Zong*'s insurers was itself underwritten in part by a coalition of British abolitionists, Baucom finds in artistic and political responses to the case an important counterdiscourse of modernity, what he terms "melancholy realism" (33). This romantic, testamentary expression of "cosmopolitan interestedness" (230) resists modernity's disinterested, speculative, calculating logic by seeking to accumulate, to incorporate, or to resuscitate that which has been lost (or rendered invisible) by time or space. If the historical fiction of Sir Walter Scott and the sweeping canvases of J. W. M. Turner suggest ambivalent nineteenth-century attempts to reconcile these two countervailing discourses of modernity, Baucom suggests, Black Atlantic authors like Edouard Glissant, Derek Walcott, and Toni Morrison have more consistently articulated melancholy realism's challenging political imperatives and complex forms of sedimentary geopolitical knowledge.

Baucom does an admirable job of summarizing a daunting array of theorists, from Adam Smith and Walter Benjamin to Jacques Derrida, Gayatri Spivak, and Slavoj Žižek. Too often, however, the attempt to reconcile a wide range of theories verges on becoming a discrete intellectual exercise that threatens to detract from Baucom's brilliant analysis of the trial and its contexts. Less attention to such theoretical luminaries would have left Baucom more space to elaborate the implications of his rich findings for closely related (but here virtually unacknowledged) discussions in the legal history of slavery and abolitionism in the United States. How, for example, does his reading of British abolitionists Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson's "affective theft" (254) of the slave's suffering resonate with the very similar arguments made by Karen Sánchez-Eppler and Saidiya Hartman in the antebellum context? Or how do the British court's contradictory claims of financial disinterest and humanitarian interest pertain to the similar tensions in American slave law discussed by Robert Cover and William E. Wiethoff? Ultimately, however, any criticism of Baucom's magisterial, impressively readable study is rendered insignificant by the magnitude of his accomplishment.

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Elizabeth Foyster, *Marital Violence: An English Family History, 1660–1857,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. 282. $70 cloth (ISBN 0-521-83451-1); $27.99 paper (ISBN 0-521-61912).

Mary Beth Sievens, *Stray Wives: Marital Conflict in Early National New England,* New York: New York University Press, 2005. Pp. 169. $42 (ISBN 0-8147-4009).

Elizabeth Foyster and Mary Beth Sievens have given us two fine works on the history of community responses to marital discord. Considered together, they raise