# **Contents**

## Acknowledgments — VII

Chapter I
-----------

Introduction -	Writing	Race in	n the	Moment of	f Afronc	litanism	1
IIILIUUULLIUII –	WILLIII	Nace II	ıı uıc	MOHELLE	I AIIUUU	ulanısın '	_ 1

- 1 Imagining Diaspora under the Sign of Africa 1
  - 1.1 The Moment of Blackness and the Discourse of Postness 7
  - 1.2 The Extranationality of African Literature 18
  - 1.3 The Dilemma of the Black Writer 21
  - 1.4 An African Atlantic: Provincializing the Middle Passage Epistemology —— 27
- 2 Writing Race in/as History 39
  - 2.1 Raced Temporalities 40
  - 2.2 Diasporic Historicism or the Search for a Usable Past 44
  - 2.3 Timing Historical and Racial Trauma 49
- 3 Conclusion: The Challenges of Afropolitan World Making 53

### Chapter II

Going Through The Motions – Movement, Metahistory, and the Spectacle of Suffering in Teju Cole's *Open City* — 57

- 1 Introduction: Moving On or Being Moved? —— 57
- 2 "To Trace Out a Story": Narrating Movement and the Movement of Narrative — 60
- 3 "To Experience the Pain Afresh": Metahistory and the Circling Movement of Melancholia 69
- 4 "Voices Cut Out of the Past Into the Present": Blackness in Diaspora Time —— 81
- 5 "In the Swirl of Other People's Stories": Toward an Ethics of Listening 89

# Chapter III

(Post-)Independent Women - Romance, Return, and Pan-African Feminism in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* — 100

- 1 Introduction: Not That Kind of #BlackGirlMagic? —— 100
- 2 "You Can't Write an Honest Novel About Race in This Country": Reading for Race —— 105

- 3 "True from Experience": Reception and the Realness of Racialization — 110
- "A Bitter Americanizing": Gendered Violence in the Aftermath of 4 Slavery — **117**
- 5 "An American Pathology": Reading Americanah as Quest Romance — **125**
- "An Unapologetic Love Story": Adichie's Gendered Romance with 6 Africa — **131**
- 7 "This Shared Space of Africanness": The Hair Salon as Afropolitan Heterotopia — 142

## Chapter IV

A Painful Notion of Time - Conveying Black Temporality in Yaa Gyasi's Homegoing — 150

- 1 Introduction: Writing Diaspora Across the Middle Passage — 150
- 2 Historical Fiction Is "Having a Moment" — 155
- 3 The Problem of History: Historiography's Imperial Legacies — 158
- The Other Problem of History: What Cannot Be Represented 166 4
- "An Accumulation of Time": Writing Time as History 175 5
- "The Gnarled Fingers of Fate": Curse Temporalities and the Question of Agency — 184
- Forgive Your Mother? Memory, Redemption, and the Sense of an Ending —— **190**

### Chapter V

Conclusion - The Past Is Always Tense, the Future Perfect - 204

Bibliography — 217

Index —— 238