



THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY

Remembering
Slavery in
Liverpool,
'slaving capital
of the world'

JESSICA MOODY

The Persistence of Memory

Remembering Slavery in Liverpool,
'slaving capital of the world'

Jessica Moody

Liverpool University Press

First published 2020 by
Liverpool University Press
4 Cambridge Street
Liverpool
L69 7ZU

Copyright © 2020 Jessica Moody

The right of Jessica Moody to be identified as the author of this book
has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs
and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a
retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic,
mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written
permission of the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication data
A British Library CIP record is available

ISBN 978-1-78962-232-4 hardback
ISBN 978-1-80034-828-8 paperback
ISBN 978-1-78962-257-7 epdf

Typeset by Carnegie Book Production, Lancaster

An Open Access edition of this book is available on the Liverpool University
Press website and the OAPEN library, having been made possible by the
generous support of the LUP Open Access Author Fund.

For Ryan

Contents

List of Illustrations	ix
Acknowledgements	xi
List of Abbreviations	xiii
Preface	xv
Introduction: Remembering Slavery in the ‘slaving capital of the world’	i
1 From History to Memory: The Discursive Legacies of the Past	29
2 Black Liverpool: Living with the Legacy of the Past	65
3 Coinciding Anniversaries: Birthdays and the Abolition Act in 1907, 1957, and 2007	101
4 The Memorial Cult of William Roscoe: Remembering Abolition	129
5 The Rise of the Museums	155
6 Performing Memory: Local Slavery Memory in a Globalizing World	181
7 Sites of Memory: Bodies and the Cityscape	217
Conclusion: Untelling Difficult Pasts	257
Bibliography	269
Index	293

Illustrations

- 1 Liverpool Pageant, Car 'The Slave Trade.' 1907
Commemorative Postcard 109
- 2 Liverpool's 800th Birthday Coin 123
- 3 Liverpool's Bicentenary Programme 126
- 4 Roscoe Gardens Memorial Plaque, 2003 151
- 5 Sankofa Bird on Slavery Remembrance Day Postcard 202
- 6 Goree Warehouses Engraving, 1826 copy 221
- 7 Nelson Memorial, Exchange Flags, Liverpool 239
- 8 Figure in Chains, Nelson Memorial 243
- 9 After C.R. Cockerell, R.A. *The Sculptured Pediment of St George's Hall, Liverpool* c. 1850. Lithograph, 330 × 892 mm (image), 560 × 930 mm (sheet). William Grinsell Nicholl. Lithographed by Alfred Stevens. Printed by Hullmandel and Walton. Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Prudence Cuming Associates Limited 245
- 10 Close-up of the figure of 'Africa' from After C.R. Cockerell, R.A. *The Sculptured Pediment of St George's Hall, Liverpool* c. 1850. Lithograph, 330 × 892 mm (image), 560 × 930 mm (sheet). William Grinsell Nicholl. Lithographed by Alfred Stevens. Printed by Hullmandel and Walton. Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Prudence Cuming Associates Limited 249

Acknowledgements

This book has been a long time in the making and I owe a debt of gratitude to a great many people. I would like to acknowledge, first of all, the city of Liverpool for providing such rich inspiration and thank my grandparents, Jenny and Bert Moody, for taking an open-top bus tour of the city with me back in 2003 when I was an undergraduate student at the University of Liverpool. The surprise at hearing the pre-recorded voice-over declare that Liverpool had been ‘Number One for Slavery!’ set me on a path which has culminated in this book. I would also like to thank supportive lecturers at the University of Liverpool (Jill Rudd and Joan Taylor) for pushing me towards postgraduate study, as well as my MA supervisor, Laurajane Smith for sparking an interest in studying ‘heritage’ and encouraging me to pursue a PhD. Thanks also to staff at National Museums Liverpool, especially former colleagues and interviewees (James Hernandez and Richard Benjamin) and to all my interviewees who so graciously gave me their time, expertise, and insights (Ray Costello, ‘Scott’ and ‘Stephen’). For financial support in completing this project I would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Royal History Society, and the Universities of York, Portsmouth, and Bristol. Special thanks are due to the Lancashire Research Centre on Migration, Diaspora and Exile (MIDEX) at the University of Central Lancashire for funding a fellowship during which the conclusion to this book was written. My thanks to everyone at the Institute for Black Atlantic Research (IBAR) who hosted me in November 2019.

No work of history can be undertaken without the support and expertise of archivists and, in this regard, I would like to thank the staff at Liverpool Records Office (especially during the ‘Bootle warehouse years’ when the main library was being renovated), Liverpool local libraries, the Walker Art Gallery archives, the Athenaeum Liverpool, University of Liverpool Sydney

The Persistence of Memory

Jones Library, University of York, British Library at Boston Spa, Churchill College Archives Cambridge, The Bodleian Library Oxford (and former Rhodes Library), School of Oriental and African Studies Library, Black Cultural Archives, and British Library Newspaper Archive. All attempts to find the rightful permission holders of images were made for this volume. If there are any concerns, please contact the publisher (Liverpool University Press).

I would like to extend special thanks to Geoff Cubitt for his role as my PhD supervisor and for his subsequent support and encouragement. Thanks to those who read drafts or otherwise supported me at the University of York including Henrice Altink, Catriona Kennedy, and Zoe Norridge, and the PhD gang at the Humanities Research Centre. For their additional encouragement and support I would like to thank Alan Rice, Katie Donington, Richard Huzzey, John Oldfield, Steve Watson, Stephen Small, Charles Forsdick, Michael Morris, Olivette Otele, and Alix Green; my former colleagues at the University of Portsmouth, especially Brad Beaven, Jodi Burkett, and David Andress, and colleagues at the University of Bristol, especially Tim Cole, Hilary Carey, Josie McLellan, Sumita Mukherjee, and the Black Humanities Research Centre. I would like to thank my friends and family who have listened to me talk about Liverpool and slavery for over a decade now, especially my parents Pamela and Doog Moody, my brother Baz, Peter Phillips and Anne Stringfellow, Karen and Pol Fretwell, Irene Acland (and, of course, the services of ‘TNPH’ – thanks Richard!). For her hospitality on numerous trips across the Pennines to Liverpool, Katie Douglas deserves a special mention. I am also grateful for the patience and support of Alison Welsby and the team at Liverpool University Press, and for the constructive comments of the anonymous peer-reviewers.

Finally, and most importantly, I would not have been able to complete this book without the support of my partner and teammate Ryan Hanley, who completes so much more besides.

Abbreviations

ASAPS	Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society
BHM	Black History Month
ISM	International Slavery Museum
LAARCA	Liverpool Anti-Racist and Community Arts Association
LRO	Liverpool Record Office
MCRC	Merseyside Community Relations Council
NMGM	National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside
NML	National Museums Liverpool
SRD	Slavery Remembrance Day
TSG	Transatlantic Slavery Gallery

Preface

This book went into production in the summer of an eventful 2020. The year began with major industrial action in higher education in the UK over fair pay and pensions, workloads, and against the increasing casualization of university workforces (the use of hourly paid, fixed-term and insecure teaching, research, and professional services staff) and pay inequality; especially the gender and BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) pay gaps. The BME pay gap is just one of a number of serious issues in higher education concerning race, ethnicity, and representation in the UK. In History, the picture is particularly stark – less than 1 per cent of university historians are black, and only 11 per cent of history students come from BME backgrounds. Experiences of racism and discrimination abound (see Royal Historical Society, *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History: A Report and Resource for Change*, RHS: October 2018). The global COVID-19 pandemic which spread quickly around the world in 2020 disproportionately killed more people from BME backgrounds than white people in the UK, as reviews from the Office for National Statistics and Public Health England have shown; with people from black African backgrounds dying at more than triple the rate of white British people. The pandemic has highlighted a number of serious pre-existing divisions in British society in regards to race, poverty, housing, employment, and access to resources.

From the end of May onwards, major large-scale protests in support of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement took place around the world in response to the killing by police of an African-American man – George Floyd – in Minneapolis on 25 May 2020. As part of these demonstrations against police brutality and racial discrimination more broadly, protesters in different countries targeted statues commemorating figures of racial oppression; leaders of the Confederacy, slave-owners and slave-traders,

The Persistence of Memory

imperialists and white supremacists. On 7 June 2020, BLM protesters in my hometown Bristol pulled down the statue of seventeenth-century slave-trader Edward Colston (1636–1721) and rolled it into the harbour. Not long after this several other statues were removed or identified for public review. The statue of slave-holder Robert Milligan was removed by authorities from West India Docks in London, and Oriel College, Oxford voted to remove the statue of nineteenth-century imperialist Cecil Rhodes. As many historians were keen to stress in response to this action; these statues and their histories tell us far more about the attitudes and anxieties of the times in which they were erected than the ‘histories’ they supposedly represent. In the vast majority of cases they have also long been the subject of fierce public debate over their place and meaning in our towns and cities. The BLM protests of 2020 have reinvigorated a public debate about the history and memory of slavery and empire which has extended to the names of streets and buildings, memorials, institutions, education, and culture more broadly; injecting new energy into ongoing, historic campaigns and opening up new avenues of focus. There is a history to the memory of slavery which over the past 200 years has included ‘celebration’ as an active mechanism of forgetting, including through the construction of statues and monuments; celebrating abolition as a way of forgetting slavery; celebrating slave traders and merchants as civic heroes for their philanthropic deeds in ways which ‘forget’ where their money came from. However, the long history of the memory of slavery, as this book explores, is also a history of challenge and protest, of individuals and groups countering silences and mythologies, educating and memorializing, and of activism about racial justice and the treatment of black people past and present as central to these processes of history and memory.

Black Lives Matter.

JM
10 July 2020

Introduction

Remembering Slavery in the 'slaving capital of the world'

If the memory of slavery inhabits one location in Britain it is Liverpool.

Marcus Wood.¹

In 2009, I attended an honorary talk marking new additions to the International Slavery Museum's Black Achiever's Wall in Liverpool, which included the recently inaugurated President Barack Obama. En route, and inside the Merseyside Maritime Museum's lift, a (white) mother asked her son what he would like to see first. The boy did not know, so his mother suggested they start on the fourth floor, the top floor, and work their way down. A (white male) museum employee interjected stating that there was not much to see on the fourth floor these days except for the view, and that the family should instead start on the second floor. 'Floor three's pretty good too you know', said local Liverpool-born black elder, activist, slavery historian, and community campaigner, Dorothy Kuya. 'Oh yes?' asked the mother, to which the museum employee replied, 'oh yeah, that's the slavery stuff.' All smiled awkwardly. After Dorothy Kuya had exited onto floor three where the International Slavery Museum is located, the mother gasped, 'A whole floor for slavery!?' exchanging astonished looks between herself and her partner. 'I know,' replied the museum employee, 'it's madness isn't it?' We all exited onto the fourth floor and although I left this family to go and enjoy the view of a port city once known as the 'slaving capital of the world', their exchange stayed with me as I sat and listened

¹ Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780–1865* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 125.

The Persistence of Memory

to talks celebrating progress and equality, epitomised by the election of America's first black president.

This book is a history of the public memory of transatlantic slavery in the largest slave-trading port city in Europe. In tracing the history of the memory of slavery in one place across a *longue durée*, from the end of the eighteenth century into the twenty-first century, this book's analytical focus follows public engagement with this past from *history* to *memory*. Mapping this public memory over more than two centuries reveals the ways in which dissonant pasts *persist*. This is a persistence which is contested and uneven and, whilst certain facets of Liverpool's memory of slavery emerge and resurface with alarming familiarity and haunting repetition, it is a memory also always in flux, mutating, changing, being changed. This dissonance is forged through the more frequent 'form' this public memory takes both within and beyond overt acts of memory work; emerging and re-emerging in the public sphere largely as a contested and volatile debate that holds in its heart a battle over meaning and identity, over what slavery means to who Liverpool(s) thinks she is, the framing and 'use' of this past by the city's individuals, groups, and identities associated with 'place' at precise moments in time. It is also dissonant because this persistence mutates as it unfolds.² It is shaped by other histories, events, and movements, politics, and cultures which feed it by their impact and association, which brutalize and misshape it, or contest its form. Like the melting clocks in Salvador Dali's painting *The Persistence of Memory* reveals the uncanny endurance of history and time, the surreal repetition, the uneven haunting that reveals commonality and familiarity in its reoccurrence, but also unfamiliarity of what is known and not known, partially remembered, misremembered, mythologised over time. Barnor Hesse, drawing on Toni Morrison's haunting novel about slavery, memory, and forgetting, *Beloved*, has suggested that histories of enslavement have been 'forgotten like a bad dream'.³ However, this dream-like state of 'forgetting' also implies an odd remembering of sorts, a shadowed presence, an opaque memory of a traumatic past that is nonetheless part of the fabric of place. Even forgetting is not forgetting when it comes to dissonant pasts.⁴

² This speaks to Ann Stoler's theories of postcolonial histories of empire. However, Stoler's ideas are more directly applicable to the unfolding and refolding 'legacies' of the history of slavery and its effect on people of African descent. See Chapter 2. Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (London: Duke University Press, 2016).

³ Barnor Hesse, 'Forgotten Like a Bad Dream: Atlantic Slavery and the Ethics of Postcolonial Memory,' in *Relocating Postcolonialism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002); Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (London: Picador, 1987), 274.

⁴ I discuss 'forgetting' more in the conclusion of this book.

Introduction

This book is the first to map an evolving public memory of a specific past across over 200 years; from history to memory. Doing so in relation to a single former slave-trading port city (in this case the largest European port involved in the slave trade), brings into sharp focus the ways in which contestations over this history and its memory are shaped by ‘legacies’ of that specific past as well as other pasts along its trajectory. This challenges the dominant position presented by memory scholars of the overwhelmingly central role given over to the place of contemporary context and concerns in shaping memory. This more ‘horizontal’ contextualization, whilst important for understanding the more official and organized acts of memory work in those specific moments (museums exhibitions and commemorative ceremonies for example), loses the longer historical understanding of the ways in which narratives about the past have persisted over time. Such narratives have a long history of their own and continue to shape engagements with dissonant histories in the present. This book maps the shape this public memory has taken from the time of the history in question (when Liverpool was still intimately involved in the transatlantic slave trade, indeed at the height of its involvement) over the succeeding decades and into the ‘memory’ of this past thereafter. It traces Liverpool’s memory of slavery from expressions of outright pride, awkward renegotiation of this identity narrative through years of abolition and emancipation, downplaying, distancing, and obscuring thereafter, alongside concurrent struggles to challenge such omissions. It therefore places efforts to acknowledge, ‘remember’, and face this dissonant past through the overt memory work and public history of the latter part of the twentieth and early twenty-first century in long historical context. It proposes a transferable methodology for the analysis of public memory (particularly that of dissonant histories) across a *longue durée* in relation to place and identity. This *longue durée* approach is important because it reveals the ways in which current narratives and debate around difficult histories have histories of their own. This approach acts to bring together the less obvious realms of memory, going beyond the overt memory work around the millennium, and provides a lens through which to view the places in between; the everyday, the shadows where, it is argued, dissonant memory has dwelled and *persisted* over time.

This book comes at a new moment of reckoning for the public history of enslavement and at a time of increasing interest and debate over the public memory and legacies of empire around the Atlantic. In 2007, the bicentenary of the abolition of the Slave Trade Act (of 1807) was marked publicly in Britain. The accessibility of Heritage Lottery Funding shifted public commemoration of this past beyond the familiar sites of abolitionist memory (memorialization in Westminster, sites connected with William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, or Thomas Fowell Buxton), or maritime

The Persistence of Memory

history (Liverpool, Bristol, London) into rural locales, and land-locked towns and cities – places that nonetheless were also profoundly shaped by this history. Much activity in 2007 also replicated the more comforting story of abolition (and was critically termed a ‘Wilberfest’ and ‘Wilberfarce’ at the time).⁵ Those wishing for radical, tangible, and long-term changes to British cultural, social, and political structures and attitudes in the wake of 2007 would be largely disappointed. Prime Minister Tony Blair, whilst expressing ‘deep sorrow’ for Britain’s role in slavery, stopped well short of an official national apology.⁶ Similarly, whilst the tone and tenor of the teaching of empire in the national school curriculum has long been a focus of intense political debate in Britain, one of the successes of 2007 was the addition of transatlantic slavery to the national curriculum by the New Labour Government.⁷ This win was short-lived, however and, by 2011, the topic was removed by Education Minister Michael Gove through the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition Government, relegating slavery to a ‘non-statutory’ topic.⁸ Needless to say, discussions around reparations gained little ground. However, 2007 *was* important for the central prominence given to the history of slavery (and related histories of the British black presence, and of industry, trade, empire, and capital more broadly), particularly by cultural organizations that had not broached the topic before. This has disrupted the stability of historic public narratives that had previously only addressed this history through the heroes of abolition, the movement of ships away from Britain, or enslavement as something that *belonged* to either Africa (and people of African descent more broadly) or the Americas.

Much further academic interest in exploring histories of enslavement and its public memory in Britain has developed in the decade since this commemorative year, and the instigation and effect of large academic projects complicating and furthering understandings of transatlantic slavery and its wide-ranging impact on British society has shifted this

5 Toyin Agbetu, ‘Restoring the Pan-African Perspective: Reversing the Institutionalisation of Maafa Denial,’ in *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*, ed. Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Ross Wilson and Kalliopi Fouseki (eds), (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 61–74.

6 Colin Brown, ‘Blair admits to “deep sorrow” over slavery – but no apology,’ *The Independent*, 27 November 2006.

7 Anthea Lipsett, ‘Slavery history lessons to be compulsory,’ *The Guardian*, 26 August 2008.

8 Department of Education, *Statutory Guidance – National Curriculum in England: History Programmes of Study* (published 11 September 2013), www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study (accessed 9 November 2018).

Introduction

dialogue further.⁹ Recent public debates about the public memory of dissonant racial pasts have emerged in the wake of a shifting transatlantic popular politics in Europe and America; increasingly prominent, vocal (and increasingly electable) far-right political parties, and of ethno-nationalistic populism in the face of large-scale refugee and migrant crises in Europe. In Britain, recent debates have focused around the commemoration of contested figures of empire, particularly in the wake of student activism in South Africa and the 'Rhodes Must Fall' campaign, whose British counterpart focused on the statue of nineteenth-century imperialist, early advocate for apartheid (through the Glen Grey Act) and white supremacist, Cecil Rhodes, at Oriel College Oxford, and other commemorative naming associated with Rhodes.¹⁰ Whilst tensions over narratives of slavery and racial violence at plantation houses and around Confederate statues in the US have been playing out for some time, these have also recently come to the fore following acts of violence against African-Americans, protest against this through the Black Lives Matter movement, and the increasing racial divides of America under President Donald Trump.¹¹ A renewed interest has also been emerging in Britain around the public memory of transatlantic slavery in the late 2010s, especially within former slave-trading port cities. Colston Hall in Bristol had announced a change to the venue's name in 2017 to sever connections with slave-trader Edward Colston, whose city centre statue had long been the subject of fierce debate. Following the killing of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis on 25 May 2020, the subsequent global Black Lives Matter protests directed urgent attention to the statues of slave traders and imperialists in Britain's towns and cities. On 7 June 2020, protestors in Bristol pulled the statue of Edward Colston down and threw it in the

9 See for example the *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership* project at UCL, which analysed the compensation records paid to slave-owners following the Emancipation Acts of the 1830s which illustrated the wide-ranging investment from different segments of British society (www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/), the *Anti-Slavery Usable Past* project at the Universities of Hull and Nottingham (www.antislavery.ac.uk), and research conducted with academics and English Heritage around slavery and country houses, published in Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann (eds), *Slavery and the British Country House* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2013).

10 See Roseanne Chantiluke, Brian Kwoba and Athinangamso Nkopo (eds), *Rhodes Must Fall: The Struggle to Decolonize the Racist Heart of Empire* (London: ZED Books Ltd, 2018).

11 Jessica Moody and Stephen Small, 'Slavery and Public History at the Big House: Remembering and Forgetting at American Plantation Museums and British Country Houses,' *Journal of Global Slavery* 4:1 (2019).

The Persistence of Memory

harbour.¹² Increasing attention has also be directed towards institutions and a number of British universities have followed American moves in launching projects and creating positions to interrogate their own institutional historic interconnections with the slavery business. The University of Glasgow's offer has so far been the largest and most comprehensive, having issued a report acknowledging its own financial connections to historic enslavement and promising further work and reparative measures, and the universities of Cambridge, Liverpool John Moores, Manchester, Liverpool, Warwick, and Bristol are among those who have joined the Universities Studying Slavery group started by the University of Virginia.¹³ The universities of Cambridge and Bristol have created dedicated staffing roles for researching connections between their institutions and the slave economy.¹⁴ The potential ramifications of such renewed interest (and public media coverage) will no doubt spread to other institutions, including heritage organizations that have had mixed successes in their public histories of enslavement. The National Trust has nominated the year 2022 as a moment for the reinterpretation of their properties in line with histories of slavery and empire.¹⁵ Much of this research and related public history framing has emanated from 'place' as a starting point; leading inwards from the port cities and connecting people, families, institutions, and industries.

This book analyses the way slavery has been remembered in Europe's largest slave-trading port city; in a place that *has* had more overt, repeated, and permanent interventions through memorialization, public history, and heritage than anywhere else in Britain. Writing the long history of Liverpool's public memory of slavery, therefore, offers important insights as to why the tone and tenor of official commemorations in the twenty-first

¹² Michael Young, Tristan Cork and Natasha Davies, 'Colston Hall to be renamed for 2020 relaunch,' *Bristol Post*, 26 April 2017.

¹³ For the full list of members, see 'Universities Studying Slavery,' *University of Virginia* <https://slavery.virginia.edu/universities-studying-slavery/> (accessed 31 October 2019).

¹⁴ Bristol appointed Professor Olivette Otele as its first Professor of the History of Slavery to lead on this research and connected public engagement. Otele was the first black female professor of history in Britain. See 'Bristol University appoints History Slavery Professor,' *BBC News Online*, 30 October 2019, www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-50180417 (accessed 31 October 2019). See also 'Cambridge University launches inquiry into historical links to slavery,' *University of Cambridge*, www.cam.ac.uk/news/cambridge-university-launches-inquiry-into-historical-links-to-slavery (accessed 31 October 2019).

¹⁵ 'University of Glasgow Publishes Report Into Historical Slavery,' *University News*, University of Glasgow, 16 September 2018, https://www.gla.ac.uk/news/headline_607154_en.html (accessed 2 October 2019); National Trust, *Research Strategy 2017–2021* (Swindon: The National Trust, 2016), 10.

Introduction

century have been hard to shift long-term, even with such large-scale projects and public funding as was the case in 2007. Crucially, it is the *persistence* of this dissonant memory through contested public discourse from history to memory, and through debate over meaning, identity, and ownership, through and beyond official commemorative practices that have profoundly shaped engagements with this history from past to present. Liverpool, the largest slave-trading port city in Europe, whose ships transported more enslaved African people to the Americas than any other port city, which is home to the oldest continuous black presence in Britain, has much more in its long and rich history of negotiating its connections with the history of transatlantic enslavement, than just one floor in a maritime museum. The history of how Liverpool has publicly ‘remembered’ its own slaving past, how this has changed over time, and why, what has shaped and influenced this memory, and the broader public discourse around such memory work, are of central significance and relevance to current efforts to face contested histories, particularly those surrounding race, slavery, and empire.

Slavery, Memory, Public History

This book makes a significant and original contribution to the growing body of scholarship around slavery and memory by recovering where this memory persists beyond overt memory work, and by historicizing and contextualizing historical memory narratives across a *longue durée*. The public memory of slavery has long been of academic interest in North America; however, recent work has broadened this scope to consider public memories of slavery in Europe, Africa, South America, and the Caribbean. The growth of scholarship on Europe in recent years, particularly in Dutch and French contexts, has predominantly tracked efforts to *memorialize* slavery in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.¹⁶ Much of this work has accompanied developments in overt memory work; memorial building projects, anniversaries, and commemorative events and apologies, with much less focus on more everyday interactions with the past, and indeed absence.¹⁷ Work that addresses the ways in which transatlantic slavery has

¹⁶ See for example chapters within Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2001). And Jean-Yves Camus, ‘The Commemoration of Slavery in France and the Emergence of a Black Political Consciousness,’ *The European Legacy* 116: (2006); Markus Balkenhol, ‘Emplacing Slavery: Roots, Monuments and Politics of Belonging in the Netherlands,’ *African Diaspora* 4:2 (2011).

¹⁷ This includes the notable publication of the French bill recognizing slavery and the slave trade as a crime against humanity (10 May 2001). Charles Forsdick, ‘The Panthéon’s empty plinth: commemorating slavery in contemporary France,’ *Atlantic*

The Persistence of Memory

been remembered in America has included more acknowledgement of the ways in which this history is silenced, misremembered, and forgotten, much owing to and developing Toni Morrison's claims in the 1980s that there were not any 'sites' of slavery memory in the US.¹⁸ The dissonance of the history of enslavement in the US has been presented against historical narratives that otherwise foreground themes of freedom and liberty in American identity.¹⁹ Such studies have foregrounded the experiences of African-American people historically and in memory.²⁰ Much of this work has focused on developments in heritage tourism, including silences surrounding enslavement in historic properties and plantation houses. Critical commentaries have followed attempts to incorporate slavery into the narratives of such sites, within the recent reconstruction of houses of the enslaved.²¹ America's comparatively more visible and tangible 'heritage' of enslavement, of plantation cultures,

Studies 9:3 (2012); Renaud Hourcade, 'Commemorating a Guilty Past: The Politics of Memory in the French Former Slave Trade Cities,' in *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (New York: Routledge, 2012). See also Nicola Frith and Kate Hodgson (eds), *At the Limits of Memory: Legacies of Slavery in the Francophone World* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015) especially Nicola Frith's chapter, 'The Art of Reconciliation: The Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery in Nantes,' 68–89. Johanna C. Kardux, 'Monuments of the Black Atlantic: Slavery Memorials in the United States and the Netherlands,' in Heike Raphael-Hernandez (ed.), *Blackening Europe: The African American Presence* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

18 Toni Morrison, 'The Site of Memory,' in *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*, ed. William Zinsser (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1987).

19 James Oliver Horton, 'Slavery in American History: An Uncomfortable National Dialogue,' in *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*, ed. James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (New York: New Press, 2006); A.V. Seaton, 'Sources of Slavery-Destinations of Slavery: The Silences and Disclosures of Slavery Heritage in the UK and the US,' in *Slavery, Contested Heritage, and Thanatourism*, ed. G.M. Dann and A.V. Seaton (New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 2001).

20 See in particular the essays by Ira Berlin and David Blight in Horton and Horton, *Slavery and Public History*. See also Ron Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also Derek H. Alderman, 'Surrogation and the Politics of Remembering Slavery in Savannah, Georgia (USA),' *Journal of Historical Geography* 36:1 (2010).

21 See for example Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2002); Stephen Small, 'Still Back of the Big House: Slave Cabins and Slavery in Southern Heritage Tourism,' *Tourism Geographies* 15:3 (2013). For broader slavery tourism work see Tiya Miles, *Tales from the Haunted South: Dark Tourism and Memories of Slavery from the Civil War era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); E. Arnold Modlin Jr, Derek H. Alderman, Glenn W. Gentry, 'Tour Guides as Creators of Empathy: The Role of Affective Inequality in Marginalizing the Enslaved at Plantation House Museums,' *Tourist Studies* 11:1 (2011); Derek H. Alderman, David

Introduction

and larger demographic groups who are descended from enslaved people of African descent has led to a longer and more developed slavery heritage tourism and, albeit contested, public memory of this subject. Britain's more strategic avoidance of historical culpability by comparison has dominated its public memory of this history since the nineteenth century. Whilst there has been a growth of interest in Britain's memory of slavery generally, including beyond maritimized locations (at country houses, industrial centres, and the biographical museums of abolitionists), this has still largely focused on overt acts of public history and memory work.²² This book traces not only efforts to overtly memorialize slavery, but broader public engagement with this past, during and before the rise of museums and heritage towards the end of the twentieth century.

Moreover, in taking Liverpool as its geographical focus, this book has been able to map the history and evolution of a public memory of *slavery* rather than a dominant focus on *abolition*. Much scholarship on Britain's memory of slavery, which emerged primarily from the 1990s onwards following museological developments, has argued that Britain has primarily framed its history of slavery through the celebratory prism of abolition.²³ John Oldfield, in his meticulously researched book *Chords of Freedom*, has argued that Britain's memory of slavery has been dominated by what he terms a 'culture of abolition', which focused memory largely around narratives (and anniversaries) of heroic (predominantly white) British abolitionists rather than the much longer story of Britain's involvement in transatlantic slavery.²⁴ Similarly, Marcus Wood has suggested that imagery of slavery, abolition, and emancipation created by Europe and America represents not slavery itself, but a 'white mythology' that 'works hard to deny the possibility of gaining knowledge of the disaster of the Atlantic slave trade'.²⁵ The growth

L. Butler, Stephen P. Hanna, 'Memory, Slavery, and Plantation Museums: the River Road Project,' *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 11:3 (2016).

²² Early considerations focused on heritage and tourism: see Seaton, 'Sources of Slavery-Destinations of Slavery'; John G. Beech, 'The Marketing of Slavery Heritage in the United Kingdom,' in *Slavery, Contested Heritage, and Thanatourism*, ed. G.M. Dann and A.V. Seaton (New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 2001). And museums, literature and culture: Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

²³ Although the subject matter had been represented in part by Wilberforce House in Hull, which opened in 1906, this was primarily a biographical museum that largely focused on the story of abolition and the life William Wilberforce.

²⁴ John. R. Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom: Commemoration, Ritual and British Transatlantic Slavery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

²⁵ Wood, *Blind Memory*, 8. Wood's work has also looked critically at the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery in Liverpool: see the Conclusion of *Blind Memory*.

The Persistence of Memory

of more recent academic interest in Britain's memory of transatlantic slavery owes much to the national celebrations marking the commemoration of the 1807 Act abolishing the British slave trade in 2007, though much of this work necessarily focused on critically analysing these events.²⁶ Liverpool had a comparatively weaker local culture of abolition than can be said of the national picture, or even of rival slave-port cities such as Bristol. Foregrounding abolition in memory work has therefore been a much harder affair. More often than not what has emerged publicly over the past 200 years is a (nonetheless uneven, weak, contested, and dissonant) discourse around Liverpool and *slavery*. For places, institutions, and groups looking to develop public history and memorialization of enslavement, Liverpool provides some important lessons.

This book also makes an original contribution to the small but growing scholarship around slavery and memory, which specifically seeks to historicize and contextualize public memory, furthering this work by providing a keener understanding of civic identity narratives and processes. Much of the small body of work around the history of the public memory of slavery has taken a broader scope across the Atlantic.²⁷ Marcus Wood's work has considered historical imagery of slavery (and abolition/emancipation) alongside more recent commemorative work with a focus on visual and literary sources in Britain, America, and Brazil.²⁸ Similarly, Ana Lucia Araujo has recently published a number of book projects that seek to write the history of the public memory of slavery and reparations movement in the Atlantic world. Araujo argues that the memorialization of slavery emerged after the Second World War, following the public acknowledgement of the horrors of the Holocaust, decolonization in Africa, and civil rights movements led by people of African descent. Much early public memory work emerged from the 1960s onwards around coastal locations in West Africa, and was directed at preserving tangible sites, such as the castles

²⁶ See, for example, Geoffrey Cubitt, 'Museums and Slavery in Britain: The Bicentenary of 1807,' in *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (New York: Routledge, 2012); Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Ross Wilson, and Kalliopi Fouseki, *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements* (New York: Routledge, 2011); special edition of the following journals *Museum and Society* 8:3 (2010); *Slavery and Abolition* 30:2 (2009); *History Workshop Journal* 64:1 (2007).

²⁷ See Abdoulaye Gueye and Johann Michel (eds), *A Stain on Our Past: Slavery and Memory* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2018).

²⁸ Wood, *Blind Memory*; Marcus Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom: Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Marcus Wood, *Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Introduction

and fortresses that held enslaved people and developing these for tourism.²⁹ The explosion of memory work around slavery in the 1990s included large transnational projects such as the UNESCO Slave Routes Project, as well as the emergence of a number of local museums and memorials in maritime spaces; former slave port cities and sites of slave sales. These emerged in the context of a broader ‘memory boom’ – a proliferation of museums, memorials, and historical apologies around a number of difficult pasts, especially around the Holocaust, coinciding with the 50-year anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and when a generation of direct Holocaust survivors were aging and passing away. That the proliferation of memory work around the Holocaust led to renewed interest in remembering other traumatic pasts, other historical victims and perpetrators, speaks to memory’s more ‘multidirectional’ credentials than to its supposed oppressive competitiveness, as Michael Rothberg has argued.³⁰

This book significantly furthers work that interrogates slavery and memory in relation to place and identity in Britain, emphasizing the importance of place-specific histories and contextual cultural timing.³¹ Alan Rice’s work around the creation of a slavery memorial in Lancaster, Madge Dresser and Olivette Otele’s work around Bristol’s public memory of slavery, and Michael Morris’s work on Glasgow, has analysed public memory work in British slave-trading port cities, which have historically ‘obscured’ their own histories of slavery.³² These port cities have engaged in acts of historical amnesia through the contradictory celebration of nonetheless connected

29 Ana Lucia Araujo, ‘Introduction,’ in Ana Lucia Araujo (ed.), *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 2–4. The ‘South Atlantic’ has generally received less academic attention than the north. See, however, Ana Lucia Araujo, *Public Memory of Slavery: Victims and Perpetrators in the South Atlantic* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010). Ana Lucia Araujo, ‘Introduction,’ in Ana Lucia Araujo (ed.), *Living History: Encountering the Memory of the Heirs of Slavery* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009), 1–7.

30 Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

31 See Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley, and Jessica Moody (eds), *Britain’s History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a ‘National Sin’* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016).

32 Alan Rice, ‘Naming the Money and Unveiling the Crime: Contemporary British Artists and the Memorialization of Slavery and Abolition,’ *Patterns of Prejudice* 41:3–4 (2007): 322; Alan J. Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010); Madge Dresser, *Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in Bristol*, (Bristol: Redcliffe, 2007); Olivette Otele ‘Bristol, Slavery and the Politics of Representation: The Slave Trade Gallery in the Bristol Museum,’ *Social Semiotics* 22:2 (2012); Michael Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean, c. 1740–1833* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).

The Persistence of Memory

histories; of mercantile endeavour in Lancaster, philanthropy of slave-traders and other maritime pasts in Bristol, and the enterprise of tobacco merchants in Glasgow. As this book demonstrates, acts of outright ‘forgetting’ to this extreme extent have been much more challenging for Liverpool because of its specific historical standing. Liverpool’s rise to dominance in the trade coincided with both the increasingly prominent and fraught abolition debates in Britain, and the growth of a professionalizing historiographical practice that sought out identity-building narratives through writing the histories of place and people. In this sense, Liverpool’s early *memory* of slavery was intimately intertwined with its *history* of slavery, including its broader historical and cultural context. Further, the memory of slavery in Britain emerged from a history of slavery that played out in public spheres through debate; positions over the rights and wrongs of slavery, the production of books and pamphlets, propaganda, petitions, and political posturing in Parliament, which pitted pro and anti-slavery against one another. Abolition, the side seen to have eventually won this argument (historiographical debate over the economic feasibility of slavery notwithstanding), has predominantly been the framework (reworked and misremembered through memorial mythology) that has been adopted in public memory. Liverpool, as the largest slave-trading port, rising to domination at the height of debates over the trade’s abolition, was at the contested heart of criticism and justification. Such debates lingered long after the early nineteenth-century British abolition (1807) and emancipation (1833/34 and 1838) acts had been passed, with haunting familiarity in public discourse over how important the slave trade was or was not to the city’s economy and development. Such debates contested the impact of the trade on the port and town, connections between specific individuals, buildings, and institutions, and a number of repetitive argumentative devices were drawn upon that sought ways to emphasize and connect, or downplay, displace, and distance. Liverpool’s ‘most lucrative trade’ in the eighteenth century was at one point positive and self-affirming for many of her citizens. Liverpool was the leading port in a trade Britain had masterminded; both the skill and enterprise of her people, and the importance of the trade to the town’s livelihood were stressed and celebrated within pro-slavery debates set out by political elites at the end of the eighteenth century. The coincidence of Liverpool’s rise to dominance in the slave trade, public debates around its abolition, historiographical and cultural contexts (the changing relationship between history and memory and the professionalization of history as a discipline) meant that historians began writing Liverpool’s ‘story’ in the midst of and during the fallout of these prominent contested debates over what the slave trade *meant* to Liverpool (see Chapter 1).

The Persistence of Dissonant Memory

It has been possible to trace an evolving slavery-memory across 200 years because the memory of slavery in Liverpool persists largely as a contested public debate. James Young has argued that debates over the past are preferable to tangible memorials that can restrict meaning. In his critical commentary of Holocaust memorial competitions in the 1990s he argued that,

it may be the finished monument that completes memory itself, puts a cap on memory-work, and draws a bottom line underneath an era that must always haunt Germany. Better a thousand years of Holocaust memorial competitions in Germany than any single 'final solution' to Germany's memorial problem.³³

Like the dissonant memory of the Holocaust in Germany, it is the debate over Liverpool and slavery that *is* memory, that forges *lieux de mémoire* of slavery in Liverpool, the 'shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded', to adopt Pierre Nora's phrasing.³⁴ Nora's *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, originally published in French between 1984 and 1992, was an epic seven-volume multiple author interrogation of French national identity through the history of memory; through the analysis of symbols of identity that included physical places, people, literature, music, ritual, and language amongst its topics.³⁵ Translated into a three-volume English edition as *Realms of Memory* in 1996, Nora and his colleagues' research foregrounded the idea and construction of (Republican) France as contested and plural, and it was through a varied study across multiple genres that this conclusion became all the more clear. Moreover, it was the postcolonial context in which this study was undertaken that foregrounded such identity tensions, where the torture and violence of the Algerian War of Independence stood at odds with 'the universalistic principles underlying republican memory and the humanism associated with it' that 'had come undone'.³⁶ Across its years of publication, *Les Lieux de Memoire* had developed into 'a history of

33 James Young, *At Memory's Edge: After Images of the Holocaust in Art and Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 92.

34 Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History, Les Lieux de Memoire,' *Representations* 26 (1989).

35 Pierre Nora and Colette Beaune, *Les Lieux De Mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986).

36 Lawrence D. Kritzman, 'Foreword: In Remembrance of Things French,' in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, vol. I: *Conflicts and Divisions*, ed. Pierre Nora, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xi.

The Persistence of Memory

France through memory'.³⁷ Whilst this book is not a history of Liverpool through memory, it does develop some key theoretical positions from Nora's project. Nora considered *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, not as objects of historical interest on their own, but interesting and revealing for the *meanings* they carried. As such, Liverpool's built environment, written histories, commemorative ritual, and museums, whilst significant in their own right, are here analysed for the meanings they construct and carry about Liverpool's memory of slavery over time. *Les Lieux de Memoire* and *Realms of Memory* traced an interest not in historical events but 'in the construction of events over time', not in 'what happened' but in the 'perpetual reuse and misuse' of the past in the present. This is what Nora terms 'rememoration', the 'overall structure of the past in the present'.³⁸ This book considers the past in the present over time, but focuses on a specific 'past'; 'Liverpool and slavery', which is nonetheless an integral (if contested) dimension of the city's collective identity. Whilst frequently taken too literally in anglophone scholarship adopting this idea, as actual sites of memory (physical places, spaces, and memorials), *lieu de mémoire* therefore reflected a much broader and less easily defined set of phenomena. As Nora explains, 'a *lieu de mémoire* is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community'.³⁹ The focus on tracing the memory of slavery in one city across a *longue durée* acts to recover such otherwise overlooked and less overt 'sites' of memory.

This book marks a significant departure from traditional studies of dissonant memory by analysing broader public discourse and less overt efforts to memorialize difficult pasts; not simply the work of heritage professionals, state actors, and tangible museums at the end of the millennium, but the spaces in between, beyond, and before. Public debates over dissonant histories have mostly been studied through analyses of so-called history and culture 'wars', especially as they have played out in America (in relation to the controversy the Smithsonian faced over the display of the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 Superfortress that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima) and Australia (around the extent of 'frontier massacres' of indigenous peoples,

37 Pierre Nora, 'Preface to the English Language Edition: From Lieux de mémoire to Realms of Memory,' in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, vol. I: *Conflicts and Divisions*, ed. Pierre Nora, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xviii.

38 Nora, 'Preface to the English Language Edition: From Lieux de mémoire to Realms of Memory,' xxiv.

39 Nora, 'Preface to the English Language Edition: From Lieux de mémoire to Realms of Memory,' xvii.

and the ‘stolen generations’, of aboriginal children taken away from their families).⁴⁰ Such work has largely focused on the recent past and, predominantly, on specific public history efforts. History and culture wars of this nature have not generally played out in Britain to the same scale or frequency and, in many ways, the debates over how to mark the bicentenary of the abolition act in 2007, and the debates around the toppling and removal of statues of slave traders and imperialists in 2020 have been the closest comparable examples. Again, however, scholarship around 2007 necessarily focused on overt public history efforts in that year without analysis of the longer-term development of these debates, or on areas less obviously organized around commemorative practices.⁴¹ As Alon Confino suggests, there is merit in looking for memory ‘where it is implied rather than said, blurred rather than clear.’⁴² Michael Schudson also criticizes much memory scholarship for embodying a ‘drunk-looking-for-his-car-keys under-the-lamppost phenomenon’, where research is focused only in the most obvious places, places where such memories are *expected* to emerge, which therefore miss much of the more nuanced and ephemeral interactions between past and present.⁴³ Focusing on premeditated commemorative events is useful for illuminations on the ways in which the past might be ‘used’ at particular moments, reflective of a horizontal context, but is less useful for thinking about either the linear or the everyday. This book considers organized commemorative acts *alongside* a background noise of history and memory, considering where Liverpool and slavery emerges within general historical narratives by analysing, for example, written histories, guidebooks, newspaper material, and online content.

This approach is significant because the persistent memory debate of Liverpool and slavery is an active process that has very real social and political consequences. It is enacted within (and constructs) social rules, subject positions, power relationships, racialized experiences, and historical engagements. Whilst, as Mikhail Bakhtin has argued, all utterances are *dialogic* as they respond and react to other utterances, analysing public

40 Edward Linenthal and T. Engelhardt (eds), *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1996); S. Macintyre and A. Clark, *The History Wars* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2003).

41 The exception to this general rule is Madge Dresser’s overview of changing attitudes in Bristol. See Madge Dresser, ‘Remembering Slavery and Abolition in Bristol,’ *Slavery & Abolition* 30:2 (2009): 223–46.

42 Alon Confino, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method,’ *The American History Review* 102:5 (1997): 1395.

43 Michael Schudson, ‘Lives, Laws, and Language: Commemorative Versus Non-Commemorative Forms of Effective Public Memory,’ *The Communication Review* 2:1 (1997): 3.

The Persistence of Memory

debate over dissonant pasts places a focus on the argumentative processes at work; on the emergence of attitudes, positioning and counter-positioning that occur in relation to matters of controversy.⁴⁴ As Michael Billig has set out, such 'argumentative' discourses seek to persuade from specific subject positions.⁴⁵ Even the apparent 'neutrality' of the historian, or those expressing interest in 'just the facts' of Liverpool and slavery, adopt a subject position that seeks persuasive ends. Much like Foucauldian theorizations of discourse (of a specific subject), such discursive interactions construct 'knowledge' of Liverpool and slavery; memory – like language – is representation, a 'signifying structure', which carries (and constructs) meaning.⁴⁶ The memorial debate of Liverpool and slavery, whilst working within the parameters and ideologies of its time as Foucault's discourses do, also carries meaning through its persistence. There is much about the discourse of this dissonant past over time that is eerily repetitive and familiar, even as it morphs to reflect contemporary contexts, anxieties, and concerns.

It has since been well established that people use the past within the construction of identity (at different levels; individual, collective, local, national etc.) in the present, that 'memory is the key to personal and collective identity', and that relationships with the past create meaning.⁴⁷ Work from scholars in archaeology, sociology, geography, and cultural studies has similarly theorised 'heritage' as an intangible present-day process, which is

44 Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (Austin: University of Texas, 1985), 121; Michael Billig, 'Discursive, Rhetorical and Ideological Messages,' in *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor, and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage, 2001), 214.

45 Michael Billig, *Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 174.

46 See, in particular, Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Alan M. Sheridan Smith (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972); and Stuart Hall, 'Introduction,' in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997), 4.

47 Michael Roth, *The Ironist's Cage: Memory, Trauma, and the Construction of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 8–9; Jacob J. Climo and Maria G. Cattell, 'Introduction: Meaning in Social Memory and History – Anthropological Perspectives,' in *Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Jacob J. Climo and Maria G. Cattell (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2002), 1. Such configurations of memory and identity follow on from the foundational work of French Durkheimian sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, noted for pioneering the idea that memory, far from being a process of isolated recollection undertaken by the individual mind, was first and foremost a collective process, which was influenced by the dynamics of group membership, and inherently bound up in the changing nature of society itself. See *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Memoire* (1925) and, in translation, Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Introduction

used within contemporary identity construction and meaning-making.⁴⁸ The more 'public' and collective formations of memory are generally considered essential to the construction of collective identities in particular, that people 'carry shared memories of what they consider to be "their" past', as Anthony Smith has argued.⁴⁹ However, the relationship between memory and identity is better understood as co-dependent rather than linear; it is constituted and reconstituted by conceptions of both processes. As John Gillis puts it, meaning for identity groups is sustained by 'a sense of sameness over time and space' which is in turn 'sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity'.⁵⁰ Ironically, therefore, whilst what might be constructed and projected as an image of 'sameness over time', these processes are ever in-flux; evolving through changing times and attitudes, and changing hopes and fears about the past, present, and future. It is this confluence of social practices; the ways in which people engage with the past in the construction of contemporary identities, the discursive constitution of memory, and the ongoing influences of historical memory work (including debates) that forges dissonance. 'Debate' is not only part of the texture of dissonant history, it is what constitutes it *as* dissonant. Since the emergence of the term 'dissonant heritage', coined by Tunbridge and Ashworth in their book of the same name in the mid-1990s, much scholarship has framed the inherent dissonance of engagements with the past through the prism of contemporary identity, and the 'ownership'

48 See Stuart Hall, 'Whose Heritage? Un-settling "The Heritage" Re-imagining the Post-nation,' *Third Text* 49:13 (1999); David C. Harvey, 'Heritage Pasts and Heritage Presents: Temporality, Meaning and the Scope of Heritage Studies,' *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 7:4 (2001); P. Howard, 'Resonance and Dissonance: When the Local and the Global Meet,' in *Heritage and Identity: Shaping the Nations of the North*, ed. J. Fladmark (Shaftesbury: Donhead Publishing, 2002); Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006).

49 Anthony Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 208. For a more critical consideration of this relationship, and especially the debates around differences between 'history' and 'memory', largely initiated by Pierre Nora's work above, see Kerwin Lee Klein, 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse,' *Representations* 69 (2000); John R. Gillis, 'Introduction – Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship,' in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

50 Gillis, 'Introduction,' 3. This more nuanced (and more useful) assessment of the relationship between identity and memory has been developed elsewhere. See Alan Megill, 'History, Memory, Identity,' *History of the Human Sciences* 11:3 (1998); Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (New York: First Mariner Books, 2000); Richard Handler, 'Is "Identity" a Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?,' in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

The Persistence of Memory

of the past encouraged by collective bodies (including the nation state).⁵¹ Whilst all heritage, as a 'constitutive social process' simultaneously bound up in both 'regulating and legitimizing' and 'contesting and challenging' identities is inherently dissonant, some past-to-present relationships are more publicly dissonant than others.⁵² Such outwardly 'difficult heritage', as Sharon MacDonald has argued in relation to Germany and the Second World War, is difficult precisely because it cannot support or promote 'positive, self-affirming contemporary' identities.⁵³ However, Liverpool's memory of slavery reflects both who Liverpool thinks she is at specific points in time (or, more appropriately, the projection of this put forward by particular 'voices', alongside the dissonant contestations there between), and the ways in which this past *constitutes* that assessment over time. Whilst in this sense images about the past may be about the present in a number of ways, the past's 'malleability' is not infinite; this is 'not a discursive free-for-all' as Iwona Irwin-Zarecka succinctly puts it.⁵⁴ A *longue durée* approach to the history of memory reveals the extent to which there are historically and culturally mediated restrictions on these 'uses' of the past in the present. Liverpool's public memory of slavery, informed by social, cultural, and political discourses, conventions, and parameters, is also mediated by its own specific history of slavery and, crucially, by the history of its *memory* of slavery over time.⁵⁵

In considering a range of source genres across a 200-year period, this book maps the influence and impact of memory work across time, revealing the ways in which public memory is *dialogic*. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's theorization of dialogism, Jeffery Olick analysed German commemorative events across a number of poignant anniversaries over time, and has argued that such practices are in dialogue with previous commemorations:

we must not treat these histories as successions of discrete moments, one present to-past relation after another; images of the past depend not only

51 J.E. Tunbridge and G.J. Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (Chichester: Wiley, 1996). Tunbridge and Ashworth described this dissonance as a product of the 'inheritance' of heritage; that inheritance for some implies disinheritance for others (p. 21).

52 Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 82.

53 Sharon MacDonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 1.

54 Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994), 17; Arjun Appadurai, 'The Past as a Scarce Resource,' *Man* 16:2 (1981).

55 On how far the past might 'confine' its own uses, see Schudson, 'Lives, Laws, and Language'.

Introduction

on the relationship between past and present but also on the accumulation of previous such relationships and their ongoing constitution and reconstitution.⁵⁶

This book makes an innovative contribution to the field of memory studies and our understandings of dissonant memory by foregrounding the role of the specific past in question as revealed by following this analysis from history to memory. In following this transition *and* the ongoing past-to-present relationship across a *longue durée*, this book reveals the unfolding, uneven, and contested persistence of dissonant memory. Whilst debates over how to memorialize slavery in Liverpool emerged in particular from the second half of the twentieth century onwards, the memory of slavery in Liverpool existed before (and through) this via active contestation; a debate about history that was ultimately a debate over meaning forged in the crucible of a history marred by debates concerning morality, capital, and race. The *longue durée* scope of this book, moreover, and its interrogation, which includes and crucially goes beyond better known memory moments, reveals the evolving shape this memory has taken, challenging assumptions about ‘silence’ and ‘forgetting’ made by scholars and publics alike, which have otherwise unhelpfully acted to obscure the efforts of activists intent on bringing difficult pasts to the fore, as well as the myriad active efforts and structures of power that have worked hard to misremember slavery. In understanding the uncanny persistence of dissonant histories as a public debate, the texture and substance of dissonance is revealed; dissonant pasts are not simply constituted and reconstituted through the overt efforts of commemoration or the organized ritual of memorialization, they exist and persistence beyond this in public discourse.

Recovering Memory Across a *Longue Durée*: Methodology and Book Structure

This book acts to place memory work and moments in a contextual chronology that considers change over time, and ‘recovers’ memory both where it might be expected to emerge, as well as beyond such well-considered ‘spotlight’ moments.⁵⁷ This approach has utilized an interdisciplinary mixed-methods

⁵⁶ Jeffrey Olick, ‘Genre Memories and Memory Genres: A Dialogical Analysis of May 8, 1945 Commemorations in the Federal Republic of Germany,’ *American Sociological Review* 64 (1999): 382.

⁵⁷ For example, see Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces: Artifacts of German Memory, 1870–1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); John E. Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Jan Assmann, *Moses the*

The Persistence of Memory

approach (combing historical, literary, and sociological practice) and multiple source genres focusing on both longitudinal surveys of sources across 200 years as well as more detailed contextual analysis of specific memory 'moments'. This book therefore enacts a new methodology for research into histories of public memory across a *longue durée*, especially those that consider place and identity. This process of historical memory deconstruction and analysis is an integral part of the process of facing difficult pasts in the present, by dissecting and revealing the ways in which they have been framed and 'remembered' over time (see the Conclusion chapter for more on this point). The book considers the *public* memory of transatlantic slavery in Liverpool and is therefore not primarily concerned with private or individual memory (though the actions and agency of individuals is considered where relevant to the shaping of public memory work). Neither is this an ethnography of black (or white) Liverpoolians, transgenerational or familial memory and its dissemination, though this is addressed where it emerges publicly. The focus of this book is on memory as it emerges in *public discourse*, in 'texts', commemorative action, and other instances of memory work in the public domain, from both authoritative projections and contesting voices, and indeed the spaces in between. Linguistically, this book adopts the term 'Liverpool and slavery' as short-hand for the city's connections with the whole history of the transatlantic slave trade, the institution of slavery and the broader slave-economy. However, as will become clear and through the ways in which Britain's memory of slavery has been *maritimized*, what is most often and more accurately publicly 'remembered' is Liverpool and the slave *trade*.⁵⁸

Chapter 1 maps key narratives and lines of debate across the 'discursive terrain' of Liverpool's memory of slavery over 200 years, from history to memory. Here I have set out the 'historic baseline' of the history of Liverpool and slavery, from which its memory evolves.⁵⁹ History itself

Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997). Carolyn Hamilton's work similarly follows the reimagining of the figure of Shaka in South Africa from his assassination in 1828, tracking changing public representations into the later twentieth century. See Carolyn Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

⁵⁸ I discuss the 'maritimization' of Britain's memory of slavery and how Liverpool's own local, maritime-themed civic identity narratives have further complicated this in Jessica Moody, 'Liverpool's Local Tints: Drowning Memory and "Maritimizing" Slavery in a Seaport City,' in Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley and Jessica Moody (eds), *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin'* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016).

⁵⁹ Iwona Irwin-Zarecka has advocated for the use of 'historic baselines' within the

Introduction

shaped the early memory of Liverpool and slavery, which has left discursive legacies in its wake. However, as this chapter outlines, it is crucial to consider not just the history being remembered but also the broader cultural context within which the history to memory transition takes place. As such, Liverpool's memory of slavery emerges not only at the pinnacle of the port's involvement in the slave trade but at a crucial moment in the cultural context of the history to memory relationship and the professionalization of history as a discipline at the beginning of the nineteenth century. From here the chapter maps the 'schematic narratives' and public debate that have framed and shaped engagements with this past in Liverpool over time.⁶⁰ To do this, published histories and guidebooks from 1795 to the twenty-first century have been analysed for their discourse around Liverpool and slavery (including linguistic analysis, positioning in narrative structures, and 'absence'). Using catalogue searches of copyright libraries, and Liverpool local libraries and archives, 50 published histories of Liverpool were selected and analysed, drawing on predominantly general histories but with some specialized studies (maritime and port histories and related commerce, specific areas and individuals, the few dedicated histories of Liverpool and slavery that exist). These histories generally covered the chosen time frame evenly, though not all included discourse on Liverpool and slavery. This issue marks one of the key challenges of researching the memory of difficult pasts; quite often the researcher is considering what is *not* said as much as what *is* said. A critical eye on absence and silence is therefore crucial. A similar approach was adopted for the analysis of guidebooks, which began to be published in large numbers from the early nineteenth century, with official city authority produced guides published from 1906 onwards. Several different series of guidebooks were produced, although much of the content remained unchanged for several years at a time.⁶¹ Selections from these series were taken at ten-year intervals,

study of collective memory; an understanding of the 'history' being remembered which can be used to interrogate 'biases, distortions, gaps, and contradictions in presentations of "the past"'. However, my baselines is also an exploration of the ways in which Liverpool's specific history of slavery has shaped its memory in the discursive legacies that follow. Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance*, 15.

60 James V. Wertsch, 'Collective Memory and Narrative Templates,' *Social Research* 75:1 (2008).

61 The texts considered are: *The Picture of Liverpool* (Liverpool: W. Jones/Thomas Taylor) five editions from 1805–37; *The Stranger in Liverpool* (Liverpool: Thomas Kaye), 12 editions 1807–41; *Cornish's Guide to Liverpool and Manchester* (Liverpool: Cornish & co.) four editions 1837–40; *The Picturesque Handbook to Liverpool for the Resident and Visitor* (Liverpool: Wareing & Webb/Edward Howell) 12 editions 1842–54; James Stonehouse, *Pictorial Liverpool* (Liverpool: Henry Lacey) five editions 1844–48; *Liverpool As It Is*

The Persistence of Memory

and/or around significant historical and commemorative dates (e.g. 1807, 1833/38, 1907, 1957, 2007 – explained below). Analysis of these written sources set out important ‘schematic narratives’ that have underlined and shaped Liverpool’s memory of slavery over time, appearing across other source genres. This chapter demonstrates the ways in which these narratives interacted with and co-produced general civic identity narratives of place and people, and how this changed (or not) over time. The contested discursive terrain of Liverpool’s public memory of slavery, as argued above, has been forged by a memorial debate. Whilst threads of common argumentative standing, subject positioning, points, and counter points emerge through general historical narratives, they are most clearly accessible within specific public debates as evidenced in (and often encouraged by) the local press. This chapter considers two such debates – one in 1939, which can be viewed more as a debate over the *history* of Liverpool and slavery, and another in 1999, which incorporates much more debate over Liverpool’s *memory* of slavery. Analysis of these specific debates brings to the fore common and repetitive threads of argument that persist across time and genre within the rest of this book.

One of the major challenges in adequately memorializing slavery around the Atlantic world, but especially in Britain, is the extent to which slavery is a ‘phantom industry that leaves scant traces; its capital lies in people, long since dead, not machinery.’⁶² However, in Liverpool the more human legacies of this past have left more than just ‘traces’. Liverpool built up profitable trading relationships with West Africa, which developed across the nineteenth century, long after the abolition of the slave trade. West African people (predominantly sailors) settled in Liverpool through the ‘to and fro’ of slavery, empire, and economic trade, leading to the development of Britain’s oldest and continuously settled black presence. This historic black presence, and the Liverpool black experience (including institutionalized racism) has shaped

or *The Stranger’s Complete Guide* (Liverpool: Edward Howell) possibly a continuation of *The Stranger* 1854–70; *Black’s Guide to Liverpool & Birkenhead* (Blacks: Edinburgh and London) 11 editions 1868–1900; *A Pictorial & Descriptive Guide to Liverpool and its Environs* (Ward, Lock & Co Ltd) 14 editions 1899–1931; *A New Guide to Liverpool* (Liverpool: Littlebury Brothers) 1902; *The City of Liverpool Official Handbook; published under the authority of the Corporation* (Liverpool: Liverpool Corporation) 35 editions surveyed between 1906 and 2002. Specialized guides including James Stonehouse, *The Streets of Liverpool* (Liverpool 1869, 1870, 1879); Thomas Lloyd-Jones, *Know Your Liverpool; Walks in the City Centre* (1974, 1976, 1979); Alfred Holt, *Merseyside: A Handbook to Liverpool and District Prepared on the Occasion of the Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Liverpool, September 1923* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1923).

62 A.V. Seaton, quoted in Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities*, 1.

Introduction

the city's memory of slavery in unique and dissonant ways. One of the most important 'legacies' of Liverpool and slavery, the Liverpool black presence, is the subject of Chapter 2. Liverpool's black communities have always shaped the city's memory of slavery in a number of ways and across different areas, and this involvement is by no means relegated to one chapter in this book. Instead, this chapter focuses on providing essential context to understanding the historical intertwining of Liverpool's history of slavery (and empire more broadly), and its historic black presence with a focus on the black *experience*. Institutionalized racism from authoritative institutions and services in the city, racial profiling and disadvantage and the derogatory experiences of black people (particularly that faced by Liverpool-born black people), alongside the ways in which communities have challenged this, has shaped Liverpool's memory of slavery in unique, if difficult, ways. Here, archival research around specific events significant to the history of the black experience in Liverpool, has been combined with research into published texts and pamphlets and into black organizations and interviews with key individuals who have played significant roles in shaping public memory work.

In looking for a workable methodology of assessing the changing memory of a particular past over time, anniversaries present a pertinent (albeit especially artificial) category of analysis. The public marking of round-number anniversaries is a key dimension to the cultural development of public memory across the twentieth century. Anniversaries form a defining part of the second 'memory boom' of the 1990s according to Jay Winter and are seen as symptomatic of the 'burdensome' nature of modern memory, as John Gillis suggests.⁶³ The commemoration of specific pasts at moments of round-number anniversary are artificial in that they connect to that history only in relation to how many years have passed, a point that bears more pertinence to the number of fingers we have than it does to the history itself.⁶⁴ That said, it is precisely this artificiality that merits analysis.⁶⁵ The public marking of centenaries, bicentenaries, septcentenaries, of events chosen as significant for the present, give researchers a useful lens into moments of intense organized and ritualistic activity. The tone of events, the significance drawn from historical moments, people, and places, speaks to contemporary anxieties and hopes; what is said about these pasts (and, of course, what is not said) in these moments of heightened civic focus, give some insight into perceptions of that past, its use in contemporary

63 Jay Winter, 'The Memory Boom in Contemporary Historical Studies,' *Raritan* 21:1 (2001); Gillis, 'Introduction,' 14.

64 William Johnston, *Celebrations: The Cult of Anniversaries in Europe and the United States Today* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1991).

65 See Nora, 'Between Memory and History.'

contexts, as well as counter-positions through challenges to these official narratives. In Britain's national memory of slavery, as John Oldfield has so eloquently and precisely indicated, the anniversaries of abolition (and of its 'heroes') have been integral to the construction and strengthening a 'culture of abolitionism' that has shaped Britain's memory of slavery.⁶⁶ More broadly, work around the marking of national centenaries and anniversaries has foregrounded the artificial construction of national pasts through the dissonant celebration of foundation mythologies, historic figures, and revolutions.⁶⁷ As of yet, very little work has considered instances of *coinciding* anniversaries; repeated years of round-number anniversaries that mark different pasts. Whilst 1907 may have been the 100-year anniversary of the passing of the British Abolition Act of 1807 (and 2007, of course, the bicentenary of this Act), it also marked 700 years since King John granted Liverpool a charter, making the town a free borough. In 1907 (and, interestingly, not before), Liverpool's authorities began celebrating the year 1207 in grand public ways, as Liverpool's 'birthday'. Chapter 3 charts, through largely archival research, analysis of material culture and commemorative texts, performance and press discourse, the contested coincidence and public marking of Liverpool's charter anniversary in 1907, 1957, and 2007, with the anniversaries of the passing of the British Abolition Act of 1807; a moment of key significance in Liverpool's historic 'story', which all years negotiated in different, telling ways.

Whilst, as has been previously argued, Britain's memory of slavery has been dominated by the memory of its abolition, replicating these national memorial traits in Liverpool, the 'slaving capital of the world', has been distinctly more challenging. Chapter 4 considers Liverpool's stunted attempts to foreground abolition following the construction of a 'memorial cult' of one of her few abolitionists. The memorial reframing of William Roscoe (1753–1831), whose anti-slavery stance was initially a key point of contention within debates over how best to memorialize him following his death in the 1830s, up to his clear celebration as abolitionist martyr-hero by the twenty-first century also illustrates the significance of considering the role of 'memorial cults' around individuals in relation to collective civic

66 Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*; See also Jessica Moody, 'Remembering the Imperial Context of Emancipation Commemoration in the Former British Slave-Port Cities of Bristol and Liverpool, 1933–1934,' *Slavery & Abolition*, 39:1 (2018).

67 See Lyn Spillman, *Nation and Commemoration: Creating National Identities in the United States and Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Stephen Summerhill and John Williams, *Sinking Columbus: Contested History, Cultural Politics, and Mythmaking During the Quincentenary* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2000); Patrick Garcia, *Le Bicentenaire de la Révolution Française: Pratiques sociales d'une commémoration* (Paris: CNRS, 2000).

memory. Roscoe would become, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, so much more than an individual in Liverpool's history; forming a key thread in memorial debates around slavery to be deployed strategically as counter-argument to the city's intense historic involvement in slavery. Drawing on published books, archival material, newspaper sources, tangible memorials, and online discourse, this chapter charts the changing construction of Roscoe as a figure of civic pride across key moments of memorialization; from his death in 1831 (and the centenary of his death 1931), the centenary and bicentenary of his birth (1853 and 1953) and emergence in public discourse in the twenty-first century around the 250-year anniversary of his birth (2003), Liverpool's 800th birthday and the bicentenary of 1807 (2007), and Liverpool's Capital of Culture year (2008).

Chapter 5 charts the rise of the museums and their place within Liverpool's public memory of slavery. After decades of effective silence on the matter, the bodies with managerial overview of the largest collection of national museums outside of London: National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside (NMGM, established in 1986), which became National Museums Liverpool (NML, 2003 to present), came in effect to dominate Liverpool's public memory of slavery by the end of the twentieth century. Drawing on critical analysis of the museum displays themselves, archival material, newspapers, online sources, official literature (brochures, guides, and leaflets), newsletters and journals, interviews and online sources, this chapter focuses on the announcement and opening of the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery (announced in 1991, opened in 1994) and the International Slavery Museum (announced 2005, opened 2007) as well as ongoing debates up to 2012. This chapter critically analyses public debate and discourse *around* the museums in conjunction with analysis of internal displays and source material. It is proposed that, methodologically, museums should form part of *longue durée* memory studies in conjunction with contextual analysis of broader realms outside their walls. The museums in Liverpool are part of a much longer history of slavery and memory in the city, and should be considered as such rather than in isolation, which has been the approach otherwise dominating literature on the topic.⁶⁸ Furthermore, the museums are also part of a much longer political, social and, especially

68 Whilst some excellent work has taken a longer view of slavery and memory in general (often in transatlantic perspective), this has largely not been applied to Liverpool when considering the museological developments of the 1990s and 2000s. See Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, ch. 1; Wood, *Blind Memory*, Conclusion; Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, ch. 5; Celeste-Marie Bernier, 'Exhibition Review – Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity: 'A Respectable Trade?': Bristol and Transatlantic Slavery: Pero and Pinney Exhibit,' *Journal of American History* 88:3 (2001); Patrick Hagopian, 'Exhibition Review – Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity,' *The Public Historian* 19:4 (1997); Phyllis K. Leffler, 'Maritime

The Persistence of Memory

racial contextual history that shapes their development and influences the debates and discourse around them.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, there was a flurry of memorial activity around transatlantic slavery in Europe and Africa. Activities within Liverpool aligned with this broader transnational picture but also exemplify the processes (and conflicts) of creating local meaning through global memory work; bringing to the fore the tensions between the local/global framings of this past. Chapter 6 contextualizes this pre- and post-millennial activity against the globalization of traumatic memory during the ‘memory boom’ of the later twentieth century. Focusing on the more performative and ritualistic examples of Liverpool’s slavery memory work, this chapter draws on newspapers, original interviews, and council minutes to analyse Liverpool City Council’s official apology (1999), and uses additional official literature from the museums, participant observation methodologies, video and audio recordings, in the analysis of the Slavery Remembrance Day ceremonies (marked from 1999 onwards). Set within a scholarly context that considers the plethora of political apologies for historic wrongs around this time, and the experience of ‘bodily’ and ‘embodied’ memory within ritualistic performance, this chapter seeks to consider these more performative examples of memory work within the longer context of Liverpool’s slavery memory.⁶⁹

Chapter 7 brings the focus of this book back to the tangible urban landscape of Liverpool itself. A key methodological component to *longue durée* studies of public memory in relation to place should include analysis of the built environment; buildings, street names, statues, and memorials. Close analysis of tangible memorials dedicated to the specific past in question are clearly imperative. However, Liverpool has no official public memorial dedicated to transatlantic slavery in the city. In the face of, indeed perhaps because of, this absence, numerous other *lieux de mémoire* have evolved at places deemed significant to this history. Like Nora’s *lieux de mémoire*, however, they exist between history and memory, persisting as Toni Morrison’s ‘sites of memory’ do through imaginative reconstruction. The analysis of these ‘sites’ considers their position in Liverpool’s urban terrain, aesthetic analysis of design features where relevant, and the discourse around them as gleaned from written histories and guidebooks, newspaper articles and letters, websites and forums, archival materials related to the development of designs and plans and within interview content. Such sites create close and personalized connections to an otherwise distanced,

Museums and Transatlantic Slavery: A Study in British and American Identity,’ *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 4:1 (2006): 55–80.

⁶⁹ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Introduction

often sanitized past by their discursive engagement with the bodies of the enslaved themselves. The connections between Liverpool's urban terrain and the city's involvement in transatlantic slavery are here forged through sites constructed by mythologies of the human interactions of this trade (the buying and selling of human beings), the lives and deaths of people of African descent at places where they were laid to rest, and through symbolic associations manifested within and stimulated by sculptural depictions of enslaved people that adorn Liverpool's built environment. One of the most prominent recurring points of contention within Liverpool's slavery memory discourse (which can also be seen in other port cities such as Bristol) has been the heated debate over whether there were enslaved people, bought and sold, and living in the city itself. This chapter considers what such persistent narratives mean and argues that the stories of enslaved people in Liverpool are a form of counter memory, or *guerrilla memorialization*, that has challenged official silences around this history.⁷⁰ Over time these stories have 'layered' over places that once stood at the river Mersey's edge, and particularly around the site of Goree warehouses, though, as this chapter illustrates, 'place' in relation to these stories is performative and transient, forging connections across Liverpool's cityscape through association. Many of these stories emerge from below, appear as 'hidden' knowledge, partly known secrets, through evidence underground, in tunnels, basements, and in relation to St James's Church, through the haunting stories of slave burials. St James's is a contested site of memory, the presence of bodies itself part of this contention, which nonetheless is presented by city authorities as a potential tangible site for memorialization. Sites of slavery memory in Liverpool, however, are also forged by what is physically seen. The decorative sculptures of enslaved people that so prominently adorn the city's buildings and monuments act as ambiguous mnemonic devices; both signifying and not signifying slavery, blurred by artistic symbolism and multiple meaning, which also change over time, or are lost completely. Across such sites, as with the other areas considered in the previous chapters of this book, the persistent contested debate around Liverpool and slavery, here born out at specific points across her urban terrain, is what carries and shapes meaning over time.

This book does not claim to be a comprehensive account of the memory of slavery in Liverpool across 200 years, nor should it. However, by bringing together research covering several centuries, across a variety of source genres and with a keen eye on immediate and evolving contexts, this book

⁷⁰ 'Guerrilla memorialization' is a term proposed by Alan Rice to highlight the political and activist nature challenging official narratives about slavery has taken. Rice, *Creating Memorials: Building Identities*, 11.

The Persistence of Memory

foregrounds the *history* of the memory of slavery as an integral component to more meaningful understandings of the cultural practices, social processes, and politics of remembering dissonant pasts in the present. All heritage, all past to present relationships, are dissonant because of the ways in which people engage with the past in the construction of contemporary identities, and for authorizing and legitimizing (or indeed delegitimizing) practices. However, more overtly dissonant pasts, histories of ‘trauma’, and here particularly racialized trauma such as transatlantic slavery, are specifically dissonant because of the argumentative texture of their memory and because they are haunted by their unique legacies in the present (the impact of the past on civic identity narratives and as they relate to issues of race and racism) in ways many other pasts are not. It is one of the central arguments of this book that the specific relationship between ‘place’ (and particularly place-identity) and ‘past’ (specific histories, contexts, and unfolding legacies) forge memory, especially the memory of dissonant pasts that emanate from places seen as epicentres of such trauma. As *The Persistence of Memory* shows, Liverpool’s public *memory* of slavery has been shaped by its *history* of slavery, through three major themes: dominance, timing, and the African Diaspora (black Liverpool). These themes and their impact on shaping Liverpool’s memory of slavery are the subject of Chapters 1 and 2.

This book is a history of the ways in which the largest slave-trading port city in Europe has remembered, misremembered, obscured, and tried to publicly face this past. Liverpool has successfully had more permanent and long-lasting memory work relating to transatlantic slavery than any other British city. However, as the introductory vignette illustrates, having a permanent museum (or ‘an entire floor’) dedicated to this past has not created a unified acceptance or public consensus concerning its significance in Liverpool’s historic story, or legitimate place within cultural organizations and institutions. The memorial debate has persisted, often with people of African descent, like Dorothy Kuya, at the vanguard of publicly challenging silences, omissions, misrepresentations, and denials, as white visitors and citizens, metaphorically travelling up and down in that lift, choose more comforting narratives or admire the views of a UNESCO Maritime Mercantile City once so dependent on that ‘slavery stuff’. As the concluding chapter of this book argues, researching and writing the historical memory of dissonant pasts is an integral step in more meaningful efforts to address such histories in the present. There are lessons to be learnt from history and memory as it relates to slavery and Liverpool, some more positive than others, but all worth listening to at a time of increasing public awareness, interest, and emotional engagement with the controversies of commemorating dissonant pasts of race, slavery, and empire in an era of increasing division, rising ethno-nationalism, and fracturing politics.

1

From History to Memory The Discursive Legacies of the Past

People create stories create people; or rather stories create people
create stories.

*Chinua Achebe.*¹

Introduction

The ‘exceptional’ history of Liverpool and transatlantic slavery has shaped historic identity narratives of the city in unique ways, leaving dissonant discursive legacies to persist within public discourse from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century. This chapter begins by outlining the ‘historic baseline’ of Liverpool and slavery, the history from which memory evolves. From here it charts the importance of the cultural context in which this transition takes place, from history to memory, at a crucial moment in the professionalization of history as a discipline and the use of memory in the formation of gradations of collective identities. From here the chapter maps out the key ‘framing narratives’ that have persisted throughout the evolving memory debate of Liverpool and slavery. As set out within the introduction to this book, the memory debate of Liverpool and slavery performs a public contest over meaning and identity, over what slavery means to Liverpool, past and present, and her people, collective and individual. The dissonance of memory forged through debate is discussed in the final part of this chapter, including within specific debates initially about the *history* of Liverpool and slavery in the interwar years of the early twentieth century, and within later debates concerning the *memory* of Liverpool and slavery at the end of the

¹ Chinua Achebe, *Hopes and Impediments* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 162.

The Persistence of Memory

millennium. The chapter ends by reflecting on the ways in which this past is also taken up discursively in other contexts, used within debates about other events and topics seemingly unrelated to enslavement. These factors forge the discursive dissonance of Liverpool's memory of slavery but also illustrate the persistence of memory over 200 years, appearing within public discourse across a number of different genres and areas over time, both when this might be expected and within less conspicuous moments. Whether it is stressing the enterprising spirit of her merchants in relation to slave trading, overcoming the adversity of abolition, or reiterating the unique discursive contradictions of 'celebrating slavery', these discursive legacies embody the dissonant transition from history to memory.

Liverpool, 'slaving capital of the world'

This book starts its long chronological journey in the late eighteenth century; in the midst of the 'history' whose public memory is its thematic focus.² Liverpool's *history* of slavery has shaped its *memory* of slavery long after abolition and emancipation. Of the British ports involved in the transatlantic slave trade, none transported more enslaved African people from Africa to the Americas than the port of Liverpool. Recent scholarship has estimated that the total number of enslaved African people taken in Liverpool ships to the Americas was around 1.4 million; proportionately, this means that two-thirds of the total number of African people sold on the coast of Africa between 1750 and 1807 were sold to a Liverpool ship, and 10 per cent of all Africans enslaved over the 400 years of the trade.³ In some senses this reflects a national pattern on a local frame; Britain carried more enslaved Africans across the Atlantic than any other European country (an estimated 2.5 million of close to 6.5 million in the eighteenth century alone).⁴ However,

2 See Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 206.

3 Kenneth Morgan, 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade, 1740–1807,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 15; Stephen D. Behrendt, 'Human Capital in the Slave Trade,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 86; Anthony Tibbles, *Liverpool and the Slave Trade* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018), 1. Figures adjusted using the *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database (TSTD)* www.slavevoyages.org (accessed 13 June 2018).

4 James Walvin, *Britain's Slave Empire*, 2nd ed. (Stroud: Tempus, 2007), 6; TSTD, www.slavevoyages.org (accessed 6 November 2015). Estimates of numbers in studies of transatlantic slavery vary; however recent projects have greatly benefitted from the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database, available for free through the website above.

by comparison to other British slave-trading ports, Liverpool's involvement was by far the largest. Whilst total figures indicate that ships leaving from Bristol transported an estimated 561,000 African people, and London ships transported around 813,000 from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century, neither of these other major ports broke the one million mark, which Liverpool surpassed.⁵

Several explanations for Liverpool's 'exceptional' rise to dominance in the transatlantic slave trade have been put forward. One of the common reasons cited is geography. Liverpool's northwest location in the British Isles meant that the port was well-positioned to receive goods for trade from regional manufacturing centres in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the Midlands.⁶ In this explanation, the trade between Liverpool and Manchester is especially significant, particularly following the opening of the Bridgewater Canal in 1772, which enabled greater (and cheaper) trading and communication links.⁷ Equally, Liverpool's proximity to the Isle of Man greatly aided a cheap trade in goods as this was beyond customs jurisdiction and was a frequent drop-off point for smuggled East India wares imported from Holland.⁸ Kenneth Morgan has argued that Liverpool's position in the northwest of England aided cheaper and easier transatlantic transportation.⁹ This in turn meant that insurance costs were lower due to the lower levels of risk compared to ships leaving Bristol or London.¹⁰

Beyond the happenstance of geography, however, several interpretations circulate that focus on much more *active*, human, explanations for Liverpool's 'success' in slave-trading; through expertise, effort, and the 'enterprising spirit' of the town's citizens. Kenneth Morgan suggests that it was 'Liverpudlians' business acumen' that gave the port its most significant advantage, through which merchants and traders sought out new markets along the African coast, and new financial transactions.¹¹ Paul Lovejoy and David Richardson have similarly argued that the close business and trading relationships

5 Estimates taken from TSTD <http://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/search> (accessed 13 June 2018).

6 Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 89.

7 The canal cut the cost of transport from 40 shillings by road to just six shillings. Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440–1870* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 249.

8 Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy*, 89; 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade,' 21.

9 Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy*, 88.

10 Morgan, 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade,' 20.

11 Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy*, 89; 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade,' 29.

Liverpool merchants established with African traders, and members of the African elite, who would send their sons to Liverpool for education, played a significant role.¹² Such established networks of trust, whilst benefitting the Liverpool slave traders, stood as obstacles for merchants from other ports.¹³ Much of the remaining arguments surrounding human agency in Liverpool's 'success' in slave-trading concern ships and shipping, both in construction and labour. Shipbuilding thrived on Merseyside where new construction techniques were developed, such as the use of copper sheathing to protect against rot, and ever larger, sleeker vessels were designed and built across the eighteenth century.¹⁴ Liverpool's shipbuilding industry developed in large part because of an impetus set by increasing activity in slave trading, and between 1701 and 1810 2,120 British slave ships were constructed in Liverpool compared to a total of 541 between London and Bristol within the same time frame.¹⁵ In terms of labour, there was also a ready population of skilled workers on hand in the port meaning, as Stephen Behrendt argues, that ships could be fitted out much more swiftly and economically than in other ports, and during most months of the year as opposed to seasonally.¹⁶ However, not all arguments are based on such 'constructive' enterprise. Hugh Thomas suggests that because many Liverpool slave merchants paid their crews far less than those operating out of Bristol and London their 'cargoes' could be sold at around 12 per cent less for a greater profit.¹⁷

The precise level of Liverpool's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, and the impact of this on the port and town, is an area of considerable debate. There is some ambiguity when it comes to geographical interpretation; for example Lancaster slave traders were required, by legislation passed in 1799, to clear from Liverpool – and a number of traders in the surrounding area operated out of the port without residing there.¹⁸ There are, therefore, some grey areas relating to what constitutes 'Liverpool' and 'Liverpool's slave trade' in the eighteenth century. The numbers game, a central aspect of the historiographical study of the transatlantic slave trade

12 Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson, 'African Agency and the Liverpool Slave Trade,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 53.

13 Lovejoy and Richardson, 'African Agency and the Liverpool Slave Trade,' 53.

14 James Walvin, *Black Ivory: A History of British Slavery*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 37.

15 Morgan, 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade,' 19.

16 Behrendt, 'Human Capital in the Slave Trade,' 68–69.

17 Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, 247.

18 Melinda Elder, 'The Liverpool Slave Trade, Lancaster and Its Environs,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 118, 133.

generally, is, necessarily, also one that is open to multiple calculations and varying levels of interpretation and revision. Estimates in nineteenth-century historiography were largely crudely calculated or poorly supported, and yet came to be repeated within twentieth-century scholarship.¹⁹ The perceived over-inflation of Liverpool's slave trading profit margin became the focus of efforts to reduce such figures by the middle of the twentieth century, though such efforts themselves often relied on narrow interpretations of data.²⁰ The use of 'tonnage' for calculating profit and value, for example, is problematic as low levels of 'tonnage' can still have a high value.²¹

However, most recent studies, statistical and more 'qualitative' do suggest that the impact of the transatlantic slave trade and the value of goods produced by enslaved people on Liverpool – both direct and indirect, was substantial. Jane Longmore has posited that, through a number of routes of employment, one in eight Liverpool families were dependent on the slave trade by 1790 (including roughly 10,000 tradesmen, craftsmen, and seamen).²² As well as employment and financial involvement in outbound slave voyages, Liverpool was also central within the importation of slave-produced goods from the Americas. Liverpool was the second largest importer of tobacco by 1738, overtaken only by Glasgow by 1776, yet regained its second-place position by the mid-1790s.²³ Similarly, sugar imports amounted to 580 metric tons in 1700 and stood at 25,395 metric tons in 1800, making Liverpool the second principal port for the importation of sugar into Britain at the end of the eighteenth century.²⁴ Beyond the movement of ships and their produce, Liverpool also benefitted from the transatlantic slave trade through the large

19 Such as Gomer Williams's suggestion that slave voyages incurred a 30 per cent profit, which was later repeated by Eric Williams in his nonetheless crucial study *Capitalism and Slavery* in 1944. Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy*, 38. See Gomer Williams, *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque: With an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade, 1744–1812* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1897, reprinted 2004). Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

20 For example, in the 1950s, Hyde, Parkinson and Marriner sought to provide a reduced figure of profit through the papers of William Davenport (between 1757 and 1784); however it is equally problematic to base general assumptions on singular cases. Francis Edwin Hyde, Parkinson B. Bradbury, and Sheila Marriner, 'The Nature and Profitability of the Liverpool Slave Trade,' *The Economic History Review* 5:3 (1953).

21 Jane Longmore, "'Cemented by the Blood of a Negro?'" the Impact of the Slave Trade on Eighteenth-Century Liverpool,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 237.

22 Longmore, "'Cemented by the Blood of a Negro?'" 243.

23 Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy*, 88.

24 Morgan, 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade,' 17.

and burgeoning banking and insurance industry, and the town's insurance offices came to be dominated by 'African merchants'.²⁵ Interestingly, David Pope has mapped changes of a more social nature in the town, through the changing 'social aspiration' of those involved in the trade, arguing that, although Liverpool's slave merchants rarely came from abject poverty, they equally rarely came from aristocracy, and their involvement in the slave trade led to some degree of 'social elevation'. Such 'social elevation' is evidenced through property purchases, relocations to outlying townships such as Everton, and marriage to partners from families of similar maritime professional backgrounds.²⁶ Pope also argues that greater levels of 'social elevation' were more visible in the following generation, when the sons of 31 slave merchants sampled were sent to Cambridge or Oxford.²⁷ This indicates an on-going impact and legacy of slave trading beyond immediate and direct involvement.

Whilst the finer details and 'numbers' surrounding Liverpool's involvement in transatlantic slavery, and indeed the impact of this, are subject to debate, it is clear that concurrently with its explosive involvement in the trade, the port changed dramatically. Over the course of the eighteenth century, Liverpool's population rose from around 7,000 in 1708 to over 77,000 in 1802, predominantly through in-migration from surrounding regions of Lancashire and Cheshire, but also from Wales, Ireland, and Scotland.²⁸ Crucially, the exceptional level of Liverpool's involvement in the trade, alongside the accumulative and on-going impact of this on port infrastructure, population growth, and civic change, had a dramatic impact on who 'Liverpool' was, both in relation to local civic identity and external perception. This book argues that the extent of this involvement, its impact and legacy, has shaped Liverpool's public memory of this past from the eighteenth century onwards, and was particularly influenced, not only by the city's dominance

²⁵ Five out of six such offices were run by the slave-trading interest by 1752. Longmore, "Cemented by the Blood of a Negro?", 236.

²⁶ David Pope, 'The Wealth and Social Aspirations of Liverpool's Slave Merchants of the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 165.

²⁷ Pope, 'The Wealth and Social Aspirations of Liverpool's Slave Merchants,' 170–74.

²⁸ M.J. Power, 'The Growth of Liverpool,' in *Popular Politics, Riot and Labour: Essays in Liverpool History 1790–1940*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), 22. Colin Pooley has estimated that around 70–80 per cent of growth was through migration rather than natural increase, since mortality rates remained consistently high. Colin G. Pooley, 'Living in Liverpool: The Modern City,' in *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 175.

From History to Memory

in the trade, but the *timing* of this rising involvement towards the end of the eighteenth century, when abolition was increasingly becoming a matter of public and political debate.

From History to Memory

Liverpool rose to its position of dominance in the transatlantic slave trade towards the end of the eighteenth century. Between 1801 and 1807, a total of 790 ships were deployed, and figures from 1807 show that the city invested its largest amount of money into the slave trade at this time – a staggering £2.6 million, roughly equivalent to £231.5 million in 2019.²⁹ Whilst other British port cities' investments in the trade had waned, Liverpool's grew, reaching its peak in the decade before the Abolition Act was passed. The growth of the abolition movement and subsequent public debates marked a distinct shift in public popular discourse over the subject of slavery. Britain was embroiled in a public debate, and pro- and anti-slavery rhetoric flooded the public sphere. Liverpool, as Britain's pre-eminent slave-trading port at this time, found itself in the midst of – and the target of – much of the abolitionist ire. Around this time, Manchester denounced Liverpool for selling shackles in its shops, and similar criticisms were aired publicly in the *Leeds Mercury*.³⁰ In retaliation, Liverpool's elite enacted rituals of solidarity by toasting its slave trade at functions and ringing the bells of churches following the defeat of the first Abolition Bill in 1791.³¹ Indeed, Liverpool's mercantile, commercial, and political elite (a large proportion of whom had direct vested interests in the transatlantic slave trade, including 25 of the town's lord mayors between 1700 and 1820, and numerous MPs) made great efforts to show support for their town's most lucrative trade.³² Further, during debates over abolition, more detailed evidence in support

29 Morgan, 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade, 1740–1807,' 15. 2019 figure calculated using the Bank of England inflation calculator. See <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> (accessed 26 June 2020). Other calculations could put this figure at anything between £199.7 million for the 'real cost' of investment up to £14.5 billion when considered as a percentage of the total output of the economy. See <https://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/ukcompare/> for these alternatives.

30 Seymour Drescher, 'The Slaving Capital of the World: Liverpool and National Opinion in the Age of Abolition,' *Slavery & Abolition* 9:2 (1988): 133.

31 Drescher, 'The Slaving Capital of the World,' 133.

32 'Liverpool and the Slave Trade,' *International Slavery Museum*, 2014, www.liverpool-museums.org.uk/ism/srd/liverpool.aspx (accessed 12 January 2014).

The Persistence of Memory

of the slave trade was provided by Liverpool than from anywhere else between 1787 and 1807.³³

Liverpool's historic identity discourse at this time was shaped by the pro- and anti-abolition debates so publicly fought in and often aimed at the city. Seymour Drescher, in his analysis of some of the late eighteenth-century historical discourse of Liverpool, suggests that James Wallace's history of 1795 sought to inspire pride in the city's livelihood, and the sheer scale of Liverpool's slave trade was presented as its 'raison d'être'.³⁴ This is perhaps most clearly illustrated through Wallace's emphasis of this dominance through fractions:

First. That one-fourth of the ships belonging to the port of Liverpool are employed in the African trade Second. That is has five-eighths of the African trade of Great Britain Third. That it has three-sevenths of the African trade of all Europe. Fourth. That it navigates one-twelfth part of all the shipping of Great Britain. Fifth. That it has one-fourth part in all foreign trade of Great Britain. Sixth. That it has one-half the trade of the city of London. Seventh. That it has one-sixth part of the general commerce of Great Britain. Eighth. That 584 ships belong to the port, whose burthen is 92098 registered tons.³⁵

This historical timing has left discursive legacies in Liverpool's public discourse well beyond the late eighteenth century.

However, Liverpool's early memory of transatlantic slavery has also been shaped by concurrent developments within the professionalization of the discipline of history and shifts in constructions of 'memory'. The history of memory is, therefore, ultimately intertwined with the history of history.³⁶ History, as an increasingly professional and scholarly discipline, as something more and more seen as verging on the scientific – the 'objective', was developed in opposition to, and indeed to counter, the 'subjectivity' of the *memory* of the pre-modern era. For Pierre Nora, this moment marked the increasing need for *lieux de mémoire*. The end of the eighteenth century marked a break in the French context by 'the disappearance of peasant culture', which carried 'real' memory, and into a post-Revolutionary context of *history*, 'which is how our hopelessly forgetful modern societies,

33 Walvin, *Black Ivory*, 260.

34 Drescher, 'The Slaving Capital of the World,' 136.

35 James Wallace, *A General and Descriptive History of the Ancient and Present State of the Town of Liverpool* (Liverpool: R. Phillips, 1795), 238–39.

36 Liliane Weissberg, 'Introduction,' in *Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity*, ed. Dan Ben-Amos and Liliane Weissberg (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1999), 12.

propelled by change, organize the past'.³⁷ Nineteenth-century 'History' was, across much of western Europe, increasingly viewed and understood as the collective memory of society, as 'the discipline of memory', emerging from progressivist views and in line with changing mechanisms for the conservation of the past through increasingly institutionalized organization.³⁸ As Richard Terdiman argues:

the functioning of memory itself, the institution of memory and thereby of history, became a critical preoccupation in the effort to think through what intellectuals were coming to call the 'modern'. The 'long nineteenth century' became a present whose self-conception was framed by a disciplined obsession with the past.³⁹

Following the seismic political shifts of late eighteenth-century Europe, and the dramatic break from old structures of power, there was a need to 'remember' a pre-revolutionary world in order to underpin the 'new'. Here 'memory' and 'history' had significant roles in the formation of the nation state, and nations sought to 'worship themselves through their pasts'.⁴⁰ Memory came to play an increasingly significant role in the construction and maintenance of such 'imagined communities' (to borrow Benedict Anderson's much-used term).⁴¹ Crucially, memory was also drawn on by smaller 'imagined communities' for similar ends, where the rapid growth of urban centres across the period necessitated a need for people to 'reconstruct the prehistory of their new environment in the effort to naturalize it'.⁴² The rise of local and regional centres seeking greater distinction from the broader identity of the 'state' saw towns and cities such as provincial Liverpool establishing their own unique identities through 'History'.⁴³ With the exception of Enfield's 1774 *Essay towards the History of Liverpool*, general

³⁷ Nora, 'Between Memory and History,' 7–8.

³⁸ Richard Terdiman, *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 30–31; Peter Burke, 'History as Social Memory,' in *Memory: History, Culture and the Mind*, ed. Thomas Butler (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 106.

³⁹ Terdiman, *Present Past*, 5.

⁴⁰ John R. Gillis, 'Introduction – Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship,' in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 7, 19.

⁴¹ Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁴² Terdiman, *Present Past*, 6.

⁴³ Jose Harris, 'Introduction: Civil Society in British History,' in *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions*, ed. Jose Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

histories of the town do not appear until the very end of the eighteenth century, emerging with James Wallace's text in 1795. Similarly, guidebooks designed to be carried by visitors, which contain historic overviews, begin to be published in significant numbers at the very beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴⁴ The writing of Liverpool's 'story' therefore emerges from the midst of debates over its most lucrative yet contested trade whilst it was at the height of its involvement.

Scouse Boasting, an Enterprising Sprit and the Competition

Narrative is one of the key 'cultural tools' through which the past is ordered within processes of collective memory, shaped and reshaped within the construction and reconstruction of identities over time.⁴⁵ Whilst the historic discourse of Liverpool and slavery has received some critical attention previously, with a focus on the work of historians, much of this has considered absences and strategies of avoidance and justification undertaken by historians. Gail Cameron and Stan Crooke have argued that the way Liverpool's historians have handled transatlantic slavery has been a key obstacle in understanding and facing this past. Much of their critical attention focused on the way written histories have focused on 'defending' the city by celebrating 'Liverpool's insignificant band of abolitionists' or outright denial and downplaying of the significance of slavery to the city.⁴⁶ These criticisms have been echoed by Murray Steele, who suggests that there has been an 'historical airbrushing' by Liverpool's historians.⁴⁷ However, as this chapter argues, the broader structures of framing this past undertaken through the adoption of particular narratives of history underlies the public memory of Liverpool and slavery in ways that reach further and persist longer; shaping engagements with this history over time. Ultimately this is possible because the past is recounted, transferred, and engaged with dialogically, through language, and such linguistic articulation is 'framed as stories, narratives which structure their telling and influence their reception'.⁴⁸ Collective memory, as James Wertsch

44 John Davies, 'Liverpool Guides, 1795–1914,' *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 153 (2004): 63.

45 James V. Wertsch, 'Narrative Tools of History and Identity,' *Culture and Psychology* 3:1 (1997).

46 Gail Cameron and Stan Crooke, *Liverpool – Capital of the Slave Trade* (Liverpool: Picton, 1992), 99–107, 100.

47 Murray Steele, 'Confronting a Legacy: the Atlantic Slave Trade and the Black Community of Liverpool,' in *Historical Perspectives on Social Identities*, ed. Alyson Brown (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006), 137.

48 Ron Eyerman, 'The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory,' *Acta Sociologica* 47:2 (2004): 162.

has argued, is ‘fundamentally organized by the “textual resources” it employs’, and, of these resources, narratives are especially significant.⁴⁹ This is a selective and active process; as Vinitzky-Seroussi suggests, narratives are ‘never mere lists – assemblages of dates or facts – put together without logic or motivation’. They convey meaning through structure, through their beginnings, middles, and ends, organize and reorganize events, present certain ‘realities’, imply continuity or change, create a certain sense of order.⁵⁰ James Wertsch has identified both ‘specific’ and ‘schematic’ narratives within collective memory. ‘Specific’ narratives are organized around individual dates and actions, and ‘schematic’ narratives refer to the broader frameworks overarching these, the ‘structures used to generate multiple specific narratives with the same basic plot’.⁵¹

The specific and schematic narratives of Liverpool and slavery, like the master narratives and ‘myths’ of Israeli collective memory as analysed by Yael Zerubavel, have at their core processes of ‘forgetting’ as much as they do ‘remembering’.⁵² Information, events, and phenomena that do not easily align with established narrative templates are ‘routinely distorted, simplified, and ignored’.⁵³ Through their overarching framework, narrative templates necessarily silence aspects that do not fit the narrative integrity of their own structures. This includes but crucially goes beyond the narrativity inherent within the writing of history, the ordering of the past in the work of historians, and is evident across a range of source genres and public discourse.⁵⁴ As Wertsch argues, this is an intertextual process; texts used to produce narratives have ‘a history of use by others’, and the impact and influence of this can present itself in interesting ways.⁵⁵ As such, whilst much of the ‘mapping’ of narrative structures of Liverpool and slavery has drawn upon an analysis of written histories, this chapter also draws upon other outlets of public discourse such as guidebooks and promotional material, journals, and articles and letters within newspapers.

49 James V. Wertsch, ‘The Narrative Organization of Collective Memory,’ *ETHOS* 36:1 (2008): 122.

50 Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, ‘Commemorating a Difficult Past: Yitzhak Rabin’s Memorials,’ *American Sociological Review* 67:1 (2002): 34.

51 Wertsch, ‘Collective Memory and Narrative Templates,’ 140.

52 Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 8.

53 Wertsch, ‘Collective Memory and Narrative Templates,’ 142.

54 On narrativity, the writing of history, and meaning, see Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

55 Wertsch, ‘The Narrative Organization of Collective Memory,’ 122.

The Persistence of Memory

Such narrative templates are historically situated and culturally constituted. Liverpool's historic story began to be 'narrativized' at the height of its involvement in the transatlantic slave trade. Having expanded rapidly across the eighteenth century, Liverpool was a substantial global city by 1801.⁵⁶ This accelerated rise is reflected in narrative arcs that foreground a 'rags to riches' schematic narrative within written histories.⁵⁷ Here, a baseline trajectory of, in Liverpool's maritime identity themed case, the story of 'small fishing village to mighty seaport', is a common schematic narrative trope. The familiarity of this schematic narrative is evident in the way it is adopted in satire, coming to be combined with slave trading as the reason for this meteoric maritime-themed rise. In a 1824 satirical history of Liverpool written by the Unitarian Reverend William Shepherd (1768–1847) under the pseudonym 'Timothy Touchstone' the main character, 'Dick Liver' (a personification of Liverpool), begins as a humble fisherman, rising to become a 'man of substance' via his practice of 'kidnapping'; 'having been accustomed to catch black men on the coast of Africa, and sell them by auction to the best bidder.'⁵⁸

The negotiation of slavery within written histories of Liverpool around the turn of the nineteenth century maintained the influence of the city's pro-slavery discourse by stressing the importance of the trade to the city, alongside efforts to imbue a sense of civic identity and pride through this. This process began and continued with a positive endorsement of maritime mercantile endeavour, and a celebration of the city's seafaring expertise, which flourished through the 'enterprising spirit' her people demonstrated in relation to slave trading. This was commonly expressed competitively, where Liverpool's 'successes' were greater than her rivals, London and Bristol. Throughout the nineteenth century, however, these identity narratives were awkwardly reworked against an increasingly prominent national anti-slavery discourse, a process that left discursive legacies and contradictory statements in its wake; the ghosts of an enterprising spirit haunting a dissonant past.

In 1795, James Wallace suggested that Liverpool's 'avidity and sagacity' was the reason behind the city's success in the transatlantic slave trade.

⁵⁶ Pooley, 'Living in Liverpool,' in *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 171.

⁵⁷ Wertsch, 'Collective Memory and Narrative Templates,' 140.

⁵⁸ Shepherd was involved in anti-slavery activity in Liverpool and part of the 'Roscoe Circle' (see Chapter 4). Timothy Touchstone, *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver: Shewing How From Small Beginnings He Became a Man of Substance; and How He Was Robbed While He Was Asleep; and Relating His Ineffectual Attempts to Get into His Own House and Recover Property*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: Rushton and Melling, 1824). University of Liverpool Special Collection. Liverpool pamphlets, 1766–1849. Miscellaneous. 14 (SPEC G35.14 (10)).

He presented this against Bristol's 'short-sighted' even arrogant focus on plantations, that Bristol had become 'too secure' in having no rivals but London.⁵⁹ This competitive and derisory tone persisted throughout later histories in relation to Liverpool and Bristol.⁶⁰ John Corry's 1810 *History of Liverpool* similarly suggested that it was 'that adventurous spirit which has since distinguished the merchants of Liverpool', and that, furthermore, it was the 'perfect knowledge of the commerce of the British West India Islands' which meant that 'the traffic to the coast was engrossed by Bristol, till Liverpool, advancing in wealth, population, and enterprise, endeavoured to participate in a species of commerce, which however repugnant to the feelings of humanity, was productive of opulence'.⁶¹ Liverpool is presented here as clearly 'beating' Bristol in competition for this trade, due to its enterprise; however, the inclusion of the end clause reflects the problematic nature of deriving pride from 'success' in slave trading, where the author brushes aside moral arguments against it, instead falling back onto highlighting the unquestionable amounts of wealth the trade generated.

The frequent deployment of the enterprising spirit motif and competition with Bristol and London was later derided through satire in the satirical journal *Porcupine* (1863):

In 1720 this traffic had been abandoned by London. The London dog, grasping at the shadow which he saw in the depths of the South Sea, let fall the piece of black flesh which he had been carrying in his mouth. Bristol would have seized the tempting morsel gladly and run away with it; but Liverpool was then, as she is now, energetic and enterprising. So she

⁵⁹ Wallace, *A General and Descriptive History of the Ancient and Present State of the Town of Liverpool*, 220, 15.

⁶⁰ See also John Corry, *The History of Liverpool from the Earliest Authenticated Period Down to the Present Time* (Liverpool: William Robinson, 1810), 209, and 111 for Liverpool overtaking Bristol; 'Bristol had been beaten in the race,' Ramsay Muir, *History of Liverpool* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1907), 192; Bristol was beaten by Liverpool's 'superior skill and industry,' Matthew Anderson, *The Book of Liverpool. Civic Week, September 22nd to 29th, 1928* (Liverpool: Liverpool Organization Ltd, 1928), 8; for a discussion on the competition between Liverpool and Bristol and yet also their shared disgust of state monopolies see C. Northcote Parkinson, *The Rise of the Port of Liverpool* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1952), 93. And general reference to the competition between the two cities in George Chandler, *Liverpool* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1957), 305. Peter Aughton, *Liverpool: A People's History* (Preston: Carnegie, 1990), 75. Alexander Tulloch, *The Story of Liverpool* (Stroud: History Press, 2008), 61 and 63.

⁶¹ Corry, *The History of Liverpool*, 111.

The Persistence of Memory

cut in and cut Bristol out; and Bristol has scarcely ever held up her head in a decent way since Liverpool carried off the slave trade.⁶²

Critical of Liverpool's contemporary support for the Confederate states and staunchly anti-slavery, *Porcupine's* formidable editor and author Hugh Shimmin drew out the curious clichés of Liverpool's historic narrative of slavery for ridicule, presenting her competition with rival ports as the fighting of dogs over scraps of meat. This transition into parody, itself reflective of the familiarity and repetitive nature of this narrative, marks a turning point, and the 'enterprising spirit' motif fades somewhat over the rest of the nineteenth century within official histories.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the enterprising spirit motif re-emerges as part of the overt performances of civic identity surrounding Liverpool's 700th birthday. In a commemorative text published for 1907, Ramsay Muir, Professor of History at the University of Liverpool, presented Liverpool's dominance in the slave trade against other port cities in a highly competitive tone, where 'Bristol had been beaten in the race, London was far behind; and in the second half of the century, Liverpool was beyond all competition the principal slaving port, not only in England but in Europe.'⁶³ The spirit of enterprise was once again revived alongside the suggestion that Liverpool's slave-trading success was something to be revered by all: 'In the eyes of the Liverpool merchants, and in the eyes of all the world, the success of Liverpool was a thing to be envied, the legitimate reward of enterprise which everyone would have been delighted to share.'⁶⁴

Official, city authority-produced guidebooks to Liverpool begin to be published in 1906, and their negotiation of slavery within the city's historic narrative foregrounded this successful competition. Whilst the guide from 1907 began vaguely by suggesting that 'Shipping' was the primary reason for Liverpool's wealth, when slavery was briefly mentioned within this text, the 'successful' competition with Bristol was the main point of emphasis: '[b]y far the larger number of the ships were employed in the West Indian

62 Hugh Shimmin, 'The Comic History of Liverpool: Chapter XXII,' *The Porcupine*, 5 December 1863. Hugh Shimmin (1819–79) was born on the Isle of Man and moved to Liverpool in his teens, working as a book binder then finding some public recognition as a writer. Shimmin's topics of choice were exposes of Liverpool's 'iniquities', of drinking dens and dog-fighting taverns (later republished as *Liverpool Life* in 1857). In 1870 he was imprisoned for libel following his accusations of insurance fraud against maritime interests in the city. 'Shimmin, Hugh (1819–79),' John K. Walton in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50352 (accessed 3 March 2014).

63 Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 192.

64 Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 193.

trade which had grown to importance. Out of this trade sprang the slave trade which was wrested from Bristol.⁶⁵ Here, the imagery of the slave trade 'springing' from a more generalized West Indian trade gives the 'trade' itself a sense of agency. The representation of slavery within official guides to Liverpool in the twentieth century maintained the precedent set within this commemorative guide, and the line concerning the 'springing' of the slave trade and its 'wresting' from Bristol, was retained word for word until the 1970s.⁶⁶ In another commemorative guidebook published to mark the 1928 Civic Week, the editor reminded the reader of Liverpool's 'enterprising spirit' in line with the slave trade, and expressed this through competition with its rival ports, that '[i]t must be remembered that it was our superior skill and industry which beat Bristol and London out of the slave trade, then a perfectly legitimate and praiseworthy occupation in everybody's estimation.'⁶⁷

Post-war histories continued this focus on successful competition. In 1952 one text suggested that the act of slave trading was itself something to be proud of. It was acknowledged that '[e]veryone who worked in Lancashire and the Midlands, everyone even who smoked a pipe or (being a sailor) chewed tobacco, everyone who took snuff, and everyone using sugar in tea, was encouraging the Slave Trade and benefitting from it.'⁶⁸ A reasonable point is here made about the broader cultural and economic impacts of transatlantic slavery and national involvement; however, the author then defended the crew aboard slaving vessels by stating that '[w]e need not be unduly ashamed of our ancestors who sailed in the Guineamen. They were no worse than their neighbours and in one respect they were better; for we know at least that they were *men*.'⁶⁹ Here, the physical act of working aboard a slave ship is presented through a gendered lens, the distinct masculinity of such *men*, was better, through its active as opposed to perhaps 'feminized' passive nature, than simply consuming slave-produced goods from the

65 Liverpool Corporation, *City of Liverpool Official Handbook (Published Under the Authority of the Corporation)* (Liverpool: Littlebury Brothers, 1907), 82.

66 This line is included in the following guides: Liverpool Corporation, *Official Handbook (1950)*, 31–32; Liverpool Corporation, *Liverpool Official Handbook (published under the authority of the Corporation)* (Liverpool: Littlebury Brothers, 1957), 19; Liverpool Corporation, *Liverpool Official Guide (published under the authority of the Corporation)* (Liverpool: Littlebury Brothers, 1967), 19; Liverpool Corporation, *Liverpool Official Guide (published under the authority of the Corporation)* (Liverpool: Steel House Publications, 1971), 14.

67 Anderson, *Book of Liverpool*, 8.

68 Parkinson, *The Rise of the Port of Liverpool*, 102.

69 Parkinson, *The Rise of the Port of Liverpool*, 102. Original emphasis.

The Persistence of Memory

return journey. Crucially, this was reworked as something for Liverpoolians to take pride in.

The narratives outlined above appear across the nineteenth and twentieth century in different discursive contexts. Although outlined largely in regard to written histories, guidebooks and discourse around commemorative texts, Liverpool's distinctive identity narrative of beating other port cities is strong and persistent in relation to discussion around Liverpool and slavery, appearing in response to discourse surrounding other memory work. Old narrative habits die hard, and, accordingly, within reporting concerning the opening of the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery in 1994, the local press reported that, 'Liverpool beat competition from London and Bristol to house the gallery.'⁷⁰

'The Glory and the Shame'

Expressions of civic pride in Liverpool's slave-trading past created contradictions, which came to be expressed in increasingly succinct discursive forms from the nineteenth into the twentieth century. Eviatar Zerubavel has suggested that it is the 'sociobiographical' nature of memory, the extent to which people collectively identify with the past, which 'accounts for the sense of pride, pain and shame' experienced.⁷¹ This sense of 'pride, pain and shame' is captured within contradictory phrasing that embodied oppositional expressions throughout Liverpool's slavery memory discourse.

These discursive traits emerged out of and alongside expressions of pride in the 'enterprising spirit' of Liverpool slave-trading merchants as outlined above and were expressed particularly strongly within publications aimed at external audiences and by Liverpool's more liberal commentators. In *The Stranger*, an early Liverpool guidebook published in 1807, the broadly positive tone of the text complicated the discussion around Liverpool and the slave trade, and emphasis was instead placed on its imminent abolition:

It is, however, a very considerable abatement of the pleasure which arises from the view we have taken, to reflect that so considerable a part of the opulence of this flourishing port is to be ascribed to a trade, so degrading to the national character, and so much at variance with sound policy, humanity and religion, as the African. This is a page in our history upon which benevolence lets fall a tear of pity, and which, were it possible, it would expunge. But what is past cannot be recalled; the alleviation is, that

⁷⁰ David Hope, 'Gallery Puts Roots of Racism on Show,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 8 June 1994.

⁷¹ Eviatar Zerubavel, 'Social Memories: Steps to a Sociology of the Past,' *Qualitative Sociology* 19:3 (1996): 290.

the time is hastening, when a British invoice shall no longer enumerate as articles of commerce, '*slaves and souls of men*.'⁷²

Whilst the pending Abolition Act was used here as a comforting device, after 1807 this entire section was removed from this series and, by 1815, it was replaced with a familiar expression of Liverpool's successful competition against Bristol, that 'Bristol and Liverpool, as we have seen, were at an early period rival ports; but the latter, though she started late, has not only overtaken but surpassed her rival.'⁷³ Similar discursive contradictions were expressed in mid nineteenth-century histories of Liverpool. Thomas Baines (1806–81), the liberal proprietor of the *Liverpool Times*, expressed a sense of civic pride in the 'success' of Liverpool's African merchants. However, this celebration sat awkwardly against the author's desire to morally distance himself from the slave trade. He stated that of the '814,000 negroes, conveyed from Africa to the West Indies in 11 years, Liverpool had the *profit and disgrace* of conveying 407,000.'⁷⁴ His use of 'profit' acknowledged Liverpool's dominance in the trade and financial benefit from it, yet clashed with the 'disgrace' expressed in relation to the nature of its commercial venture. This is similar to the phrasing of Richard Brooke's 1853 history, which described the rise in the number of ships involved in the slave trade from 1775 to 1799 as a 'striking but lamentable increase'.⁷⁵

72 Within a footnote following this statement it is acknowledged that '[s]ince this was written, an act for the abolition of this traffic has passed the legislature of the country.' Anon, *The Stranger in Liverpool or. An Historical and Descriptive View of Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool: Thomas Kaye, 1807), 25–26. Davies, 'Liverpool Guides, 1795–1914,' 67.

73 Anon, *The Stranger in Liverpool or. An Historical and Descriptive View of Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool: Thomas Kaye, 1815), 28–29. The text remains the same in 1825, Anon, *The Stranger in Liverpool or. An Historical and Descriptive View of Liverpool and its Environs* (Liverpool: Thomas Kaye, 1825).

74 Thomas Baines, *History of the Commerce and Town of Liverpool and of the Rise of Manufacturing Industry in the Adjoining Counties* (London: Longman Brown Green and Longmans, 1852), 719. Emphasis added.

75 Richard Brooke, *Liverpool as it was During the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century, 1775–1800 (a 2003 reprint by Liverpool Libraries and Information Services)* (Liverpool: J. Mawdsley and Son, 1853), 233. Richard Brooke (1791–1861) was a Liverpool-born antiquary who also practised as a solicitor and notary within the city. He was a founding member of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire and joined the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society in 1855, later becoming a council member (1860). See C.W. Sutton, 'Brooke, Richard (1791–1861).' Rev. Simon Harrison, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

The Persistence of Memory

Into the later nineteenth century, the ‘celebration’ of Liverpool’s ‘success’ in slave trading, became increasingly problematic against the backdrop of an evolving imperial national identity focused increasingly on anti-slavery.⁷⁶ Authors in the 1870s and 1880s expressed a more psychologically reflective tone when addressing the subject of the slave trade, and were concerned by the effects of this history on consciousness and thought, past and present. James Picton considered the psychologically dissonant effect of the slave trade on Liverpool people:

The secret consciousness that the trade would not bear the light either of reason, scripture, or humanity, combined with the conviction that the prosperity of the town depended upon its retention, produced an uneasy feeling of suspicion and jealousy, and a dread of all change, which could not but impart a peculiar character in those at least connected with the occupation.⁷⁷

Picton’s reflection on Liverpoolian’s psychological state created by the slave trade, rested on an acknowledgement that those who were a part of it knew their profits came at great human cost. In 1884, the author of *Liverpool and Slavery*, who used ‘Dicky Sam’ as a pseudonym, emphasized this emotional complication, asking what his contemporaries should think, ‘when we consider that the wealth produced by this iniquitous trade, the stamping out of the negro’s life, and filling the cup of misery to the very brim, yet it made many rich and happy, and their society sought and courted’.⁷⁸ The author also made an interesting link between these riches and charitable work within the city, which he suggested was done out of ‘a troubled conscience’.⁷⁹ In 1907, 100 years after the abolition of Liverpool’s most lucrative trade, and during the city’s 700th anniversary celebrations, Ramsay Muir’s ‘unconcealed liberal discomfiture at the undeniable inhumanity’ of slavery, as John Belchem categorized it, was awkwardly juxtaposed against a

⁷⁶ Richard Huzzey, *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

⁷⁷ James Allanson Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool, Historical and Topographical*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, Greens & Co., 1875), 226.

⁷⁸ Anon, *Liverpool and Slavery: An Historical Account of the Liverpool-African Slave Trade. By a Genuine Dicky Sam* (Liverpool: A. Bowker & Son, 1884), 14. The author explains his use of a pseudonym as being for his own protection, that should he ‘have the audacity’ to publish anything on the subject of Liverpool and slavery people would want to know who he is. ‘Dicky Sam’ is a predecessor to ‘Scouser’ and means ‘a native-born inhabitant of Liverpool.’ See Ivor H. Evans, *Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, 14th ed. (London: Cassell Publishers Ltd, 1990), 328.

⁷⁹ Anon, *Liverpool and Slavery*, 15.

desire to foster a coherent narrative of civic pride.⁸⁰ Muir stressed the ‘proud and shameful eminence’ Liverpool had in the slave trade, and described this as both ‘the glory *and* the shame’ of the city.⁸¹ After the First World War, however, this particularly contradictory framing is less frequently drawn upon, with efforts turning towards justifying the horrors of the slave trade through a distinctly racialized discourse (see Chapter 2).

Overcoming Abolition

The rags to riches plotline of Liverpool’s historic narrative is also one that fits the ebbs and flows of the city’s economic fortunes. These have frequently been presented as including a central ‘crisis’ to be overcome, through which the city becomes all the ‘richer’ for having done so. The lists of these ‘crises’ in Liverpool’s historic discourse frequently included the abolition of the slave trade, as well as later events and disasters such as bombing during the Second World War, decline in shipping, the end of empire and subsequent deindustrialization and unemployment. The ‘overcoming abolition’ narrative can be understood as a version of a broader ‘schematic narrative’, which John Belchem has identified as ‘Liverpool [being at] its best when overcoming adversity.’⁸² This narrative plays out in relation to a number of key ‘adversities’ that the city has had to overcome, such as the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal.⁸³ However, the beginnings of this narrative emerged much earlier than during the period of Edwardian confidence, as Belchem has suggested; within years of the Abolition Act having been passed. Furthermore, the use of the ‘overcoming abolition’ narrative in the twentieth century is also drawn upon as a device with which to downplay the

80 John Belchem, ‘Liverpool’s Story is the World’s Glory,’ in *Merseypride: Essays in Liverpool Exceptionalism*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 9.

81 Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 184. Emphasis added. Similarly, in a sermon given by the Archbishop of York, Dr Arthur Michael Ramsey, 50 years later during Liverpool’s 750th Charter celebrations, Ramsay asked, ‘[w]hat is man? He did not shrink from enslaving his African fellow men and transporting them to America. So man’s shame as well as man’s glory was part and parcel of your history.’ ‘Primate: The City’s Glory is God’s Gift. Shame, too, in History,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 17 June 1957. Interestingly, this section is omitted from the official programme of the service and within all other press coverage of the event.

82 Belchem, ‘Liverpool’s Story is the World’s Glory,’ 10.

83 In response to which Louis Lacey in 1907 suggested, ‘Pessimists predicted serious injury to the port of Liverpool, because of the Canal competing, but somehow, the pessimists have been wrong, and the port is busier than ever.’ Louis Lacey, *The History of Liverpool From 1207 to 1907. Some Notes. 700th Anniversary Souvenir* (Liverpool: Lyceum Press, 1907), 64.

The Persistence of Memory

significance of the slave trade to Liverpool's development – i.e. that the city easily overcame abolition simply because the slave trade was not that integral to its commercial workings. Crucially, Liverpool's own declaration of having 'overcome abolition' breaks its links to post-1807 enslavement systems. As such, the framing of Liverpool's show of success through having 'overcome abolition' is a discursive device that allows other events and activities in relation to slavery (such as the trade in slave-produced goods, plantation investment by Liverpool families, or other general economic dimensions), to be obscured.

The 'overcoming abolition' narrative had its roots in the pro-slavery debates of the late eighteenth century, where the potential dire impact of abolition on Liverpool's economy and her citizens' livelihoods was foregrounded as a key argument against abolition. The importance of the slave trade to the city and the economic perils of its abolition continued to dominate public discourse in early nineteenth-century Liverpool. Following the Abolition Act of 1807, the suggestion that Liverpool had made 'a great sacrifice' in the loss of its slave trade was presented in a town hall meeting discussing the upcoming visit of the Prince Regent in 1814.⁸⁴ Ten years after this town hall meeting, Edward Baines's *History of Lancashire* included the overcoming abolition narrative structured in the way it was to be repeated within histories well into the twentieth century; with an initial outline of fear and anxiety in line with the 'supposed' integral place of the trade to Liverpool, that '[t]he abolition of so lucrative and extensive a branch of commerce, it was generally supposed would have given a severe shock to Liverpool', followed by the 'reality' contradicting this, and a statement of distaste with the trade, 'but these gloomy forebodings were not realized [*sic*]; the foreign trade of the port was rooted too deeply to be materially impaired by lopping off one of its least desirable branches'.⁸⁵ What seems important in this statement is the extent to which this is presented as a triumph – that Liverpool prospered significantly in spite of the threat of economic hardship.

However, it was during the twentieth century that the 'overcoming abolition' motif was most actively and frequently drawn upon in ways that sought to downplay the significance of the slave trade to the city. One of

84 'Mr S said it was far from his habits, or his wish, to enter upon unpleasant retrospections – but thus much he might be permitted to say, that the trade in question had some years ago been prohibited by the British Legislature – that, on that occasion, many respectable individuals, and the town of Liverpool at large, had been called upon to make great sacrifices...' 'An Address Read to the Prince Regent,' *Liverpool Mercury*, 13 May 1814. 'Mr S' is the Reverend William Shepherd (1768–1847).

85 Edward Baines, *History, Directory and Gazetteer, of the County Palatine of Lancaster*, vols 1 and 2, ed. Owen Ashmore (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Publishers, 1824), 188–89.

From History to Memory

the major ways in which the ‘overcoming abolition’ narrative was constructed was by representing an increase in trade after 1807 as evidence of the insignificance of the slave trade. For example, in 1910 James Touzeau stated that

the predicted ruin did not follow, although the trade of the port naturally suffered for some years, after the year 1807 Liverpool and its dependencies experienced a more rapid general commercial improvement and prosperous increase in trade than at any former period in its history.⁸⁶

The omission of any discussion of the details of such trade after 1807 cloaks continuing connections to the slave economy with a rhetorical vagueness. Similarly, in 1946, William Tyndale Harries outlined the anti-abolition arguments of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries rehearsed in the city, which included the supposed threat to Liverpool, that, ‘[g]rass would grow between the stones in Castle Street; the docks would be turned into fish ponds; Bootle organs would sing in the mansions of the wealthy merchants. In a word Liverpool would be ruined.’⁸⁷ Dramatic hyperbolic statements of doom and gloom are here presented in contrast to the outcome, that ‘happily they were proved wrong’ and the tonnage entering the port increased – ‘in 1811 it had risen to 611,190’ – though what this tonnage consisted of is not here detailed. Moreover, it was a moral advantage as well as an economic one, yet one that would not be complete until the 1830s according to Harries, ‘more than that a great wrong had been righted, although it was not until 1833 that slaves in the British Empire were set free’.⁸⁸ An acknowledgement perhaps made in the light of pervasive national celebrations of the centenary of the Emancipation Act in 1933 and 1934.

Explicit links between the increase in tonnage of importation and connections to an ongoing slave-economy through the origin of those goods was rarely incorporated into this narrative, even when origin of produce was noted. In the ‘Liverpool and Shipping’ chapter of a guide to the city produced in 1950 by Liverpool City Council, imperial trade with India and,

86 James Touzeau, *The Rise and Progress of Liverpool from 1551 to 1835* (Liverpool: Liverpool Booksellers Co, 1910), 744.

87 William Tyndale Harries, *Landmarks in Liverpool History* (Liverpool: Philip Son & Nephew, 1946), 64. ‘Bootle organs’ is Merseyside dialect for frogs, a reference for which can be found in the *Magazine of Natural History*, 1834, where one correspondent discussed the ‘Natterjack’, a variety of toad seen in the Bootle area with a distinctive and loud croak from which the name Bootle Organs is said to have derived. Henry Berry, ‘Letter,’ *The Magazine of Natural History, and Journal of Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, Geology, and Meterology* 9 (1834).

88 Tyndale Harries, *Landmarks*.

The Persistence of Memory

notably, the cotton imported from the southern states of America is used as proof of Liverpool overcoming abolition:

The abolition of the trade in slaves was thought to presage Liverpool's ruin, but within 10 years her maritime commerce was bigger than ever before. Trade with the East Indies and with India had been sought with success by Liverpool merchants and, as early as 1811, 250,000 bales of cotton were imported in one year from the West Indies and America.⁸⁹

No contradiction is here seen between abolition not ruining Liverpool, and celebrating the port's increase in trade through slave-grown cotton from America, potentially grown by the descendants of the enslaved Liverpool ships transported. The continuing connections between Liverpool's trade and enslavement after 1807 were also discursively displaced by processes of substitution. In a themed guide to Liverpool from 1986 outlining Liverpool's links with America, Ron Jones presented Liverpool 'overcoming abolition' not through the importation of goods, but through its role in emigration:

The merchants of Liverpool wrung their hands in despair when the evil but lucrative slave trade was brought to an end by Parliament in 1807. The previous year had been a good one and the holds of their ships had carried nearly 50,000 slaves. Ruin was forecast but they need not have been unduly worried. Soon they would be carrying a profitable human cargo of a different kind – emigrants.⁹⁰

Here, Jones quite literally substituted one 'human cargo', as he puts it, for another.

At times this narrative was also drawn upon in ways that sought to invoke a sense of civic pride, or at least collective reassurance, against a troubled contemporary context. The guidebooks produced by Liverpool City Council in the post-war mid twentieth century drew on the 'overcoming abolition' narrative in ways that sought to invoke contemporary resilience against post-war economic decline. Here, abolition was placed in direct comparison to previous economic adversities, such as in 1930 when:

89 Liverpool Corporation, *Official Handbook (1950)*, 129. This line of reasoning is also seen within a school textbook in 1935 in which it is stated that the 'old established businesses such as tobacco and sugar' continued to prosper after abolition alongside 'new developments', which 'more than made good expected loss'. Charles L. Lamb and Eric Smallpage, *The Story of Liverpool* (Liverpool: Daily Post Publishers, 1935), 46.

90 Ron Jones, *The American Connection: The Story of Liverpool's Links With America From Christopher Columbus to The Beatles* (Moreton: Ron Jones, 1986), 69.

From History to Memory

Liverpool was facing a crisis as big as that of 1807, when the British Maritime Slave Trade was stopped and people said grass would grow in Liverpool's streets. This time the changes were international ones. Versailles had created new nations eager to be self-sufficient. British tariff policy had altered. The 1929 crash had cut down international trade. Everything combined to knock the bottom out of Liverpool's staple industry – sea transport.⁹¹

The juxtaposition of the 1929 crash and the abolition of the slave trade aligned apparently comparative moments of challenge in Liverpool's 'sea transport' history. If Liverpool could overcome abolition, then the city would, it was implied, pull through any crisis facing it in the 1930s, or, more significantly, post-war 1950s.⁹²

The 'overcoming abolition' motif, repeated over 200 years, came to be used more and more into the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries as a discursive device to downplay the significance of the slave trade to Liverpool's economy. In 2008 Alexander Tulloch succinctly encapsulated the discursive abuse of the overcoming abolition narrative to downplay the significance of the slave trade to Liverpool, stating bluntly that, '[s]lavery ended in 1807 and Liverpool did not fall apart.'⁹³ The focus given over the past 100 years to Liverpool overcoming abolition was, as John Belchem has identified, part of a broader discourse of 'Merseypride' in which Liverpool defined itself as being at its best when succeeding in the face of economic challenge and hardship. However, this narrative also crucially worked to both instil hope from a display of resilience *alongside* minimizing the significance of the slave trade to Liverpool, keeping connections to the slave economy confined to the activities of ships; breaking connections to Caribbean and American plantation slavery after 1807.

The Memorial Debate of Liverpool and Slavery

The schematic and specific narratives outlined above have framed and shaped Liverpool's public memory of slavery, forming distinct discursive

91 Liverpool Corporation, *Official Handbook (1950)*, 123.

92 The motif also appears in discourse at this time around the 750th city anniversary celebrations, where increased prosperity was particularly stressed in one press article, which suggested that 'when Parliament finally passed the Abolition Bill there were those who presaged the ruin of Liverpool's prosperity. It was not so, of course. Within ten years of the abolition of slavery Liverpool's maritime trade was greater than it had ever been.' Thomas Whitford, 'Seven Centuries of Mersey Shipping,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 19 June 1957.

93 Tulloch, *The Story of Liverpool*, 68.

The Persistence of Memory

legacies that have influenced engagement with this past over time. Whilst these narratives form an overall ‘memorial debate’, part of the dialogic discursive exchange and contestation of the meaning of slavery to Liverpool, much of Liverpool’s public memory of slavery has also played out through more literal public debates over this history, its meaning, and its memory. These have frequently been prompted, unsurprisingly perhaps, by specific points of ritualistic commemorative activity (see Chapter 3), around anniversaries, public history efforts, and ‘memory work’. However, they also emerge within more general ‘everyday’ discursive exchanges, at unexpected and unpredictable times. Such ‘triggers’ for debate can seem inconsequential, as Michael Rothberg has suggested, and reflect the ‘violent instability’ of the slavery archive, its propensity to fluctuation and emergence over time, as Marcus Wood has argued.⁹⁴ For dissonant pasts, histories of trauma, and especially those without a tradition of public exposure or acceptance, debates bring both history and memory to the fore through performative contestations over meaning.

In August 1939, a public press debate consisting of two articles and 15 responding letters to the editor within the *Liverpool Evening Express* (*Express*) and *Liverpool Daily Post* (*Post*) was prompted, not by an anniversary or museum exhibition, but by a report of an address given by Mr D.C.W. Peacock, headmaster of St Christopher’s Preparatory School for Boys at the Liverpool Round Table Luncheon on 9 August. Initially, critical responses were provoked in particular by Peacock’s claim that ‘Liverpool was probably the only place in the world whose inhabitants earned their living by means of a trade which even people of their own day looked upon with horror.’⁹⁵ Responses debated the extent of the ‘acceptability’ of the slave trade at the time, with assertions of its legality, and calls not to apply modern standards to the past, complicated as this statement always has been by the celebration of the anti-slavery stand taken by abolitionists.⁹⁶ Class-based counter-points suggested that ‘there was always a revulsion against the slave trade by the ordinary rank and file of the city’, though many feared repercussions – the brutal massacre of those at Peterloo cited in support of the danger of speaking out.⁹⁷ Most of the debate consisted of an

94 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 17; Marcus Wood, *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4.

95 ‘Slave-Trading Shares: Liverpool and its “Trustee Security”,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 August 1939.

96 ‘L’Pool’s Slave Trading Days,’ *Evening Express*, 9 August 1939; ‘Slave-Trading Shares: Liverpool and its “Trustee Security”,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 August 1939; George Lascelles, ‘Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 18 August 1939.

97 Herbert Feilden, ‘Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade – The Triangular Voyages,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 22 August 1939.

exchange between Peacock and Arthur C. Wardle (Honorary Secretary of the Nautical Society). However, a number of other voices joined the debate, including historian Robert Gladstone (1870–1940, great-nephew of Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone). The debate, prompted by contestation over the above statement, focused on the uniqueness (or not) of Liverpool's history of slavery and, ultimately, what the slave *trade* (specifically, rather than the institution of slavery and its broader impacts) meant to Liverpool; economically – revolving around a familiar debate over numbers, but also 'psychologically', about attitudes, awareness, and understanding at the time, which ultimately focused on issues of guilt and culpability of Liverpool's citizens historically and, by extension, contemporarily.

These two common and repeated points within Liverpool's slavery memory discourse played out within this debate through familiar discursive devices, including the narratives discussed earlier in this chapter. In reaction to Peacock's statement that 'the slave trade was the most important trade in Liverpool', Wardle drew upon both a national, comforting British 'culture of abolition', 'localising' this national identity narrative, alongside the 'overcoming abolition' motif to downplay the significance of the slave trade to the city and the 'enterprising spirit' motif to explain how Liverpool overcame adversity:

and the fact that the abolition of slavery (largely due to Liverpool energy) made no difference to the mercantile and employment progress of the town is sufficient to demonstrate that Liverpool – no more than the manufacturing towns of England – was not dependent upon the slave trade for its livelihood.⁹⁸

One author countered this suggestion, noting post-abolition industry was dependent on 'private fortunes of those drawing their wealth from the slave trade'.⁹⁹

The framing of this press debate illustrates both the underlying awareness of the dissonance of this history as well as an awareness of previous debates. The local press explicitly described the issue as 'controversial' especially in relation to the familiar and repeated debate over whether enslaved people were brought to Liverpool (see Chapter 7).¹⁰⁰ Peacock himself expressed some regret in having done 'a very unwise thing in ever

⁹⁸ Arthur C. Wardle, 'Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 August 1939. Wardle also argued in this letter that Liverpool's rise to dominance in the slave trade was 'not because of the Liverpoolians' propensity for slaving, but by reason of the enterprize of local merchants,' using the 'enterprising spirit' motif.

⁹⁹ John F. Chambers, 'Letter,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 22 August 1939.

¹⁰⁰ 'Slave-Trading Shares: Liverpool and its "Trustee Security".'

The Persistence of Memory

raising the question of slavery', that 'the very mention of the subject is an anathema'.¹⁰¹ However, the partial apology he extended to Wardle and his fellow critics nonetheless mocked their reaction. He stated that he meant no offence to them or to their ancestors, and was 'prepared to believe that both he and they are the descendants of a blameless line of church wardens – anything he chooses to say'.¹⁰² The subtext within the public discourse of Liverpool and slavery has often been framed around an awareness of the long history of debate around the subject matter.¹⁰³ Peacock addressed these debates critically, specifically querying whether enslaved Africans were treated well and had better experiences in America than in Africa, though acknowledging the hardship of cotton workers of England, a point echoed by another letter writer who drew on the harsh conditions of the working poor of England to suggest that Peacock 'overestimates the susceptibilities of those times'.¹⁰⁴

Several of the points raised across this debate are common with debates over the history of slavery nationally, and appear across Liverpool's long historic memory-discourse of slavery. The familiar image of the 'triangular' trade was here, as elsewhere, used to point enslaved people away from the city and, in one instance, was drawn upon to suggest that it was only 'goods' that Liverpool ships transported, her human cargo largely incidental. George Lascelles argued in his letter that 'Liverpool ships were not slavers, but engaged in the innocent trade of manufactured goods outwards, raw material inwards and the intermediate voyage being as a passenger boat and merely incidental'.¹⁰⁵ However, Robert Gladstone presented the same shape

101 D.A.W. Peacock, 'Letter: Mr Wardle's Statistics,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 15 August 1939. The Press include a 'C.' in Peacock's initials where letters from Peacock have an 'A'.
102 Peacock, 'Letter: Mr Wardle's Statistics'.

103 At one point, Peacock compares Wardle's arguments to those of nineteenth-century US slave-owner John C. Calhoun, arguments that he suggests have been 'trotted out' repeatedly since 1848. D.A.W. Peacock, 'Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade – Our "Main Industry"', *Liverpool Daily Post*, 12 August 1939.

104 John F. Chambers, 'Letter,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 22 August 1939. Robert Gladstone equally draws comparisons between differing historic trauma, in this instance between slaves and emigrants, justifying that '[t]he slaves unquestionably were stowed on board in a way quite intolerable according to modern notions; yet we must remember that the emigrants on the emigrant ships were packed just as tightly at that time', and that captains had a financial incentive for keeping slaves healthy. Robert Gladstone, 'Letter,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 16 August 1939. This point is also made by Ron Jones in his later twentieth-century guide, 'Their journey was no picnic. It has even been suggested that conditions were often worse for them than for slaves. At least the captain of a slaveship had a money incentive for keeping his "cargo" alive and in good condition.' Jones, *The American Connection*, 69–70.

105 George Lascelles, 'Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade,' *Liverpool Daily Post*,

From History to Memory

to emphasize the importance of the trade to the city.¹⁰⁶ Familiarly, it was stated that other places (countries) started the slave trade and other ports were involved, 'Bristol, London, Exeter, Lancaster, Hull and other ports had ships engaged in the trade.'¹⁰⁷ In fact, a 'foreign' influence from rival ports was presented as being behind this, that the slave trade 'was an "industry" imported into Merseyside by "foreigners" from Bristol and other declining ports'.¹⁰⁸

Later prominent public debates over Liverpool and slavery towards the end of the twentieth century and beyond have tended to incorporate, or overtly focus on, issues of *memory* as much as *history*, prompted by and reacting to overt acts of memory-work. In 1999, almost exactly 60 years after the Peacock debate of 1939, a more memory-focused slavery debate took place across the letters pages of the local press, which was initiated by combined press coverage of Liverpool's first Slavery Remembrance Day (SRD) and the unveiling of a commemorative plaque on the waterfront, later merging into public debates over the announcement that Liverpool City Council were to give an official apology for the city's role in the slave trade in December 1999 (see Chapter 6). In the first part of this debate, which was familiarly encouraged by the press calling for views on the topic, none of the letters or commentary took exception to the instigation of a repeated annual day of remembrance, and criticism focused solely around the more tangible memorial artefact of the plaque – its text and the reporting of it.¹⁰⁹ The debate prompted by the memorial plaque revolved partly around connections created by memorial processes between Liverpool and the built environment, a key recurring point of contention, and carried distinctly racialized overtones directed towards people of African descent who were involved. The plaque was unveiled by Tottenham Labour MP Bernie Grant, a recurring figure in Liverpool black history and in relation to the city's memory of slavery (Grant was the first patron of the Charles Wootton College (see Chapter 2) and was involved in the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery (see Chapter 5)). The text of the plaque read: 'Attention, Listen!!! Remember: Do not forget!!! Millions of African people

18 August 1939. The author has a Liverpool address and, although it is possible that he is a relative of the Lascelles family (of Harewood House in Yorkshire, who benefitted from plantation slavery in the Caribbean), it seems this is a coincidence.

106 'The slave trade was undoubtedly of great value to Liverpool, especially as it formed part of a system of three-cornered voyages by means of which colonial produce was brought to Liverpool.' Robert Gladstone, 'Letter,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 16 August 1939.

107 Chambers, 'Letter'; Wardle, 'Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade – Participation of Other Ports.' The inclusion of Hull is rare in this otherwise familiar list.

108 Wardle, 'Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade.'

109 See Chapter 6 for an analysis of Slavery Remembrance Day.

The Persistence of Memory

lost their lives in slavery. Millions worked in the plantations. African's blood sweat and toil is the cement that gave rise to the great seafaring ports like Liverpool.'¹¹⁰ The wording of the plaque read like a performed speech, making an animated command to listen and a conscious call to remember and 'not forget'. The plaque's wording made no claims that any of the numerically vague 'millions' of enslaved people were shipped from Liverpool itself, yet much of the following press debate concerned the familiar theme of enslaved people in Liverpool, largely in reaction to *press* reporting that the plaque was unveiled for the 'memory of the slaves who passed through Liverpool on their route to the New World'.¹¹¹ Although one letter pointed out that the plaque itself did not make this claim, the following letters went to great lengths to direct enslaved people away from the city, by familiarly drawing triangles across the ocean, and by severing connections to the cityscape and built environment.¹¹² One author conceded that 'Liverpool was the worst port for this loathsome trade for at least 150 years' but immediately disputed that enslaved African people ever set foot in the city.¹¹³ Most letters also familiarly disputed the significance of the slave trade to Liverpool, largely by minimizing its importance through ambiguous interpretations of time:

The slave trade was one of the important factors in the development of the port of Liverpool for only about 50 years, from about 1750 until William Wilberforce and others brought about its abolition in 1807 – hardly something 'happening in Liverpool for so many generations'.¹¹⁴

110 Quoted in David Charters, 'Port's Shameful History Told in Black and White,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 24 August 1999. Bernie Grant, Guyanese Labour MP for Tottenham, was described as a 'red rag to the bulls of rightwing politics,' for his controversial statements over racism, particularly in relation to policing, having commented that Tottenham youths considered the police had received 'a bloody good hiding' in the 1985 riots in Broadwater Farm, in which a police officer was murdered. Mike Phillips, 'Bernie Grant: Passionate Leftwing MP and Tireless Anti-Racism Campaigner,' *The Guardian*, 10 April 2000.

111 David Charters, 'Port's Shameful History Told in Black and White,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 24 August 1999.

112 'I MADE a point of viewing the "slave memorial" plaque by the Canning graving docks mentioned by David Charters (Daily Post August 24th). The plaque records that the docks were used by slave ships, but nowhere does it claim that African slaves were shipped from there because very few slaves even came near Liverpool,' M.F. Dinsmore, 'Letter: Ships Not Slaves,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 1 September 1999; M. Young, 'Letter: Trading Facts,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 2 September 1999.

113 Dinsmore, 'Letter: Ships Not Slaves.'

114 Young, 'Letter: Trading Facts.'

By compartmentalizing Liverpool's involvement in transatlantic slavery to a period of 'only about 50 years' the author disputed that it occurred for 'so many generations' as suggested by Bernie Grant. However, Grant made this statement in relation to the psychological impact of enslavement, that '[y]ou can't have something like that happening for so many generations without it leaving a lasting impression somewhere.'¹¹⁵

The memorial debate at the end of the millennium was distinctly racialized within its expression. African complicity in the slave trade was raised repeatedly, that 'far from being a European idea, [slavery] was an age-old trade of the African kingdoms'.¹¹⁶ One author was specifically 'extremely irritated when lectured by the likes of MP Bernie Grant' about Britain and slavery, and suggested that '[Grant] conveniently forgets the part played by tribal leaders in Africa at that time. Without their enthusiastic participation (i.e. selling their own people for gain) the scale of the whole sorry business would not have been possible.'¹¹⁷ The 'Africans enslaving Africans' motif reflects templates of racist discourse, encompassing what Stuart Hall terms a '*binary* form of representation', where the 'other' occupies two opposed extremes.¹¹⁸ Here, the 'other' is both enslaved and enslaver, victim and perpetrator.

Much adverse reaction also concerned statements Grant was reported to have made about contemporary racism in Liverpool. Grant made a number of positive statements about enjoying coming to Liverpool and around the significance of Liverpool undertaking actions to 'remember slavery', and suggested that SRD and the plaque acted as a form of acknowledgement:

Liverpool is the only place in Britain that I know which is remembering slavery today. The plaque shows that people are beginning to recognise that part of Liverpool is tied up with African enslavement. But if people acknowledge that, as Liverpool Council has, it begins to heal the bad feelings that have been around for generations.¹¹⁹

Grant further illustrated the direct link he saw between slavery and racism, that '[t]he big part Liverpool played in the slave trade must have made an impact on the consciousness of white people.'¹²⁰ Response to Grant's statements presented him as an outsider 'causing trouble' where

115 Bernie Grant, quoted in Charters, 'Port's Shameful History.'

116 Laurence Keen, 'Letter: Slave Points,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 7 September 1999.

117 I.L. Marshall, 'Letter: Sorry Trade,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 7 September 1999.

118 Stuart Hall, 'The Spectacle of the Other,' in *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, S. Taylor, and S.J. Yates (London: Sage, 2001), 326.

119 Bernie Grant, quoted in Charters, 'Port's Shameful History.'

120 Charters, 'Port's Shameful History.'

The Persistence of Memory

none previously existed, presenting the common argument that speaking out against racism is somehow causing it, that it was ‘nice of Bernie Grant to come up to Merseyside, and, in his true fashion, seek to whip up racial hatred and tension’.¹²¹ The history of transatlantic slavery was distanced through time, that Grant should ‘stop bleating on about events 200 or more years ago’ and instead turn his attention to worse situations now, such as ‘the anarchy and bloodshed being waged by Yardies in his homeland, Jamaica’.¹²² This statement positioned Grant’s assumed identity group as the ‘real’ problem – though Grant was born in Guyana, not Jamaica.

Whilst debates *about* Liverpool and slavery, and its memory, have constituted the persistence of memory over time, it is important to consider the broader ‘use’ of this dissonant past in public discourse as a key component of memory’s contested texture. The history of Liverpool and slavery has long been ‘used’ in acts of discursive persuasion, in arguments over sometimes related, though often unrelated, topics. In the mid nineteenth century, when Liverpool’s elite outwardly supported the Confederacy during the American Civil War, Hugh Shimmin used Liverpool’s history in the transatlantic slave trade to criticize his town’s position in a war fought in large part over the ‘peculiar’ institution of slavery in the American South. In his ‘Comic History of Liverpool’, Shimmin stated that the (current) older merchants of Liverpool had ‘derive[d] their hereditary fortunes from trading in black flesh’, and compared his own anti-slavery position this against attitudes of Liverpool’s contemporary ‘good society’:

But the chronicler forgets himself. Anti-slavery sentiments are not at all the tone in good society to-day – and we will be fashionable though we perish for it. Therefore we throw up our hats for life-hire, (what a very much prettier word than slavery!) and we hope some day to be invited to dinner by the Southern Club.¹²³

Shimmin suggested that Liverpool’s contemporary support for the South could indicate a return to its past, that ‘the good old trade may be opened again in Liverpool, now that we are getting rid of foolish sentimentalities and nigger on the brain’.¹²⁴ Shimmin’s last word on the matter in his comic history series again compared Liverpool’s historic involvement in the transatlantic slave trade to its support for the Southern states, this time

121 Geoff Markland, ‘Letter: Stop Bleating,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 1 September 1999.

122 Markland, ‘Letter: Stop Bleating.’

123 Hugh Shimmin, ‘The Comic History of Liverpool: Chapter XVIII,’ *The Porcupine* 31 October 1863. The Southern Club was a club for members of Liverpool’s elite who supported the Confederacy.

124 Shimmin, ‘The Comic History of Liverpool: Chapter XVIII’.

moving through the guise of abolition and ending in the symbolic site of what he saw as the crux of the matter: Liverpool's Cotton Salesroom:

Weak notions on this subject marred this splendid source of wealth. Some ridiculous nonsense about humanity and Christian brotherhood and the rights of the black began to get abroad – dangerous and revolutionary doctrines, which, unhappily, prevailed for a while and stopped the slave trade. Better times, however, seem coming round again, and if public opinion only progresses in the direction it is now taking, we have good hope to see black men and women knocked down by auction at the Cotton Salesroom.¹²⁵

Shimmin placed American-style slave auctions centrally within Liverpool's own physical urban landscape, at the financial heart of the city's contemporary connections to the Southern states.

'Liverpool and slavery' is a powerful argumentative device; drawn upon for the exceptional extent of the city's involvement and for the known tensions around its memory; the internal as well as 'external' perceptions of Liverpool's historic 'shameful' past. Its emotive power made it a particularly powerful device in propaganda just before the outbreak of the Second World War. In August 1939, Joseph Goebbels, German Minister for Propaganda, drew upon Liverpool's exceptional involvement in the transatlantic slave trade within the 'German Newsletter Controversy', a heated exchange of correspondence between the Reich Minister and ex-British Naval Commander, Stephen King-Hall. King-Hall had distributed a series of newsletters to individuals in Germany seeking to challenge information presented by the Nazi regime. The German Government responded through its own publication *Völkischer Beobachter* and other national publications with pieces concerning King-Hall's newsletter and this 'English Propaganda'. One of the responses was a 4,000-word essay written by Goebbels and sent to thousands of addressees across Britain – though notably not to King-Hall – which was designed to put the British Government 'on the defensive'.¹²⁶ Following accusations of censorship from Germany, King-Hall personally paid for a full-page reprint of Goebbels's response within the *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*.¹²⁷ A large proportion of the introductory section to Goebbels's response centred on 'brutal methods which the British Empire

125 Shimmin, 'The Comic History of Liverpool: Chapter XXII'.

126 See Aaron Goldman, 'Stephen King-Hall and the German Newsletter Controversy of 1939,' *Canadian Journal of History* 10:2 (1975), 215.

127 Stephen-King Hall, 'A Letter to Dr. Goebbels,' *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 12 August 1939. The text of Goebbels's essay in the newspaper was a verbatim reprint of his original text, as compared with an original. Churchill Archives Centre,

The Persistence of Memory

employed against defenceless people'. One point in particular was picked up by the Liverpool local press:

Was your attention not drawn to the fact that in 1771 Liverpool was singled out as the principle port for shipments of coloured human cargoes to all parts of the world? Also to the fact that Liverpool in those days possessed 105, London 58 and Bristol 25 slave-carrying ships? That in those days and under the English flag, 30,000 blacks were annually shipped, and that this fact accounts for a good deal of British wealth today?¹²⁸

National responses within the *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, whilst drawing some attention to 'misconceptions' about the history of the British Empire, did not take exception to the use of Liverpool's historic involvement in the transatlantic slave trade.¹²⁹ This was, however, the only point to be discussed in the Liverpool local press. K. Bradshaw quoted the section above and suggested that this was stating the obvious, that 'Yes, Liverpool and the world is fully aware of this', and that furthermore Liverpool's own citizens were aware of this history because '[u]nlike the Nazis we do not hide unpleasant facts of history.' The author turned to more comforting areas of British abolition as a form of argumentative defence:

But Liverpool is also proud of the fact that free men in England and Liverpool could, without fear of secret police, openly protest against the evil in pulpit, platform and Press until the infamous traffic was ended. Would Dr Goebbels equally permit the Czech and German Oppositions openly to organize against the evils of Naziland?¹³⁰

The author ended their letter with an emancipatory tone, that '[i]t was a period of horrors and profits. But it roused the wrath of Britons and was suppressed over a century ago', an endorsement of such a positive support for liberation would come to be fitting in national perceptions of warfare in the coming months and years. However, not everyone was so quick to accept Goebbels's assessment of Liverpool and slavery and, ink still wet from his engagement in the Peacock Debate concurrently taking place over

Cambridge, *The Papers of Baron King-Hall of Headly*, STKH 3, Dr J. Goebbels, The Reply to British Propaganda, August 1939.

128 Dr Joseph Goebbels, 'The Reply to British Propaganda,' *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 12 August 1939.

129 'Dr. Goebbels at Length,' *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 12 August 1939; John Jarvis, 'Letter: Answering Dr. Goebbels,' *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 15 August 1939; Stephen King-Hall, 'Letter: Fabrications May do More Harm,' *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 17 August 1939.

130 K. Bradshaw, 'Letter: Yes, We Know!,' *Liverpool Echo*, 14 August 1939.

in the *Daily Post*, Arthur Wardle joined in this reaction by suggesting that both the German minister and the Liverpoolian letter-writer were spreading untruths, suggesting familiarly instead that, ‘Dr Goebbels, Mr Bradshaw, and every Liverpool school boy should be told immediately that not a single slave shipment was ever made from the port of Liverpool.’¹³¹ Whilst neither author made such a claim (although Goebbels text could be interpreted this way, it seems unlikely), this theme nonetheless returned as a familiar point of contention. Underneath Wardle’s letter, the editor of the *Liverpool Echo* drew a link between the slavery debates happening concurrently across the two papers by reprinting Robert Gladstone’s outline of the process of the triangular trade.¹³²

In the later twentieth century, Liverpool and slavery was also drawn upon as an argumentative device to emphasize perceived financially minded callousness of particular figures. On the cusp of the ‘winter of discontent’ of the late 1970s, a “‘Slave trade’ jibe’, as the *Daily Post* headline stated, was issued by a trade union leader in relation to job losses at a Leonard Cheshire care home in November 1978. Colin Barnett, the northwest chief of union NUPE (National Union of Public Employees) also allegedly accused managers of exhibiting a ‘medieval antediluvian’ attitude, though these periods of more ancient history were of less interest to the local press.¹³³ Instead, it was the comment, quoted in the article as being made in response to the sacking of striking workers that ‘[t]he management’s attitude is worthy of the forefathers of the City of Liverpool who supported the slave trade’, which was given headline status.¹³⁴ The line was used very deliberately by the speaker as a powerful condemnation in this dispute, set on highlighting the perceived archaic, outmoded, and unjust actions

131 Arthur C. Wardle, ‘Letter: All Wrong,’ *Liverpool Echo*, 16 August 1939.

132 ‘What happened was this; the ship sailed from Liverpool with a cargo of miscellaneous goods for barter with African native chiefs in exchange for slaves. The captain, having got his cargo of slaves, sailed for the plantation, such Demerara, Jamaica, Virginia, &c., and disposed of slaves in the slave markets there. With the proceeds he bought a return cargo of colonial produce such as cotton, tobacco, sugar, rum, &c., and sailed back to Liverpool.’ Quotation taken from Gladstone, ‘Letter’. Printed on the same day.

133 Colin Barnett was heavily involved in trade union activities during the ‘winter of discontent’ strikes of 1978 to 1979 and subsequently the centre of much press attention, taking a ‘hard left’ line in politics and advocating for the dismissal of Merseyside Police Chief Constable Kenneth Oxford. Ray Mariott, ‘Colin Barnett Obituary,’ *The Guardian*, 27 February 2011.

134 Lynn May and Charles Nevin, “‘Slave Trade’ Jibe as Home Sacks 20 Strikers,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 November 1978. An almost identical article was also published in the *Echo* with the same authors, Lynn May and Charles Nevin, “‘Slave Trade’ Jibe After Sackings at Charity Home,’ *Liverpool Echo*, 11 November 1978.

The Persistence of Memory

of the home's management by drawing a deliberate, if awkward, relational link between mistreated workers and slave labour. Barnett used Liverpool's historic involvement in the transatlantic slave trade as a discursive device equating contemporary injustice with historical human rights abuse. This form of short-hand has been repeatedly used by speakers because of the sensitivity around slavery and, specifically, around highlighting Liverpool's exceptional involvement within it. Similarly, some ten years later, critics of the Thatcher Government's Employment Training Scheme, 'ET' (which would see the unemployed work close to full time for around £10 in additional benefits) drew on Liverpool's history of slavery within their protests. 'The slave trade returned to Liverpool yesterday' press reporting stated, where performers in Williamson Square were 'bought and sold' in supermarket trolleys, though as a *Post* article reminded its readers 'In the 17th century the slaves had to walk, if they could.'¹³⁵ Protest organizer Terry Egan was reported as describing ET as 'slave labour' and Kevin Coyne, co-ordinator of the Merseyside Trades Union and Unemployed Centre, was quoted as saying '[b]y this piece of theatre, Liverpool will be returned to its terrible past' claiming that ET was 'quite clearly a contemporary slave trade'.¹³⁶

The history of 'Liverpool and slavery' has long been used as an argumentative device across a diverse range of subject matter, from workers' rights and labour schemes in Liverpool as above, and more recently to protest over international football partnerships. One response to news that a Chinese Government fund was bidding to buy Liverpool football club claimed sarcastically that, 'GIVEN Liverpool's history of involvement in the slave trade, I would think China with its human rights record would make a perfect partner for the Anfield club.'¹³⁷ The author, Gerry Connors, of 'West Yorkshire', received a reply from Liverpool 8 resident, P. Saeed responding to 'his jibe about Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade', which focused on how Yorkshire had also benefitted from transatlantic slavery. 'If he doesn't believe me' wrote Saeed, 'ask Professor David Richardson, director of WISE', referring to the Wilberforce Institute for the Study and Slavery and Emancipation at the University of Hull. The author drew on regional stereotype in his rebuttal, suggesting that Connors should visit 'the International Slavery Museum here in Liverpool. It has over 2.5 million visitors each year, is open daily and all exhibitions, events and activities at National Museums of Liverpool are free. That should appeal to a Yorkshireman!'¹³⁸ Whilst Connors's initial statement may have been a cutting point about

135 'Slavery is the Price of ET,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 14 December 1988.

136 'Slavery is the Price of ET'.

137 Gerry Connors, 'Letter,' *Liverpool Echo*, 25 August 2010.

138 P. Saeed, 'Letter: A Nationwide Blight,' *Liverpool Echo*, 31 August 2010.

the global football market that drew on Liverpool's historic involvement in transatlantic slavery for emphasis, the response that followed focused entirely on the latter and bypassed Connors's points in relation to human rights in China.

Conclusion

The persistent discursive terrain of Liverpool's slavery-memory is conflicted and contested. In *The Atlantic Sound*, novelist Caryl Phillips drew out the 'exceptional' unease of the way this past-to-present relationship played out in what he saw as the contradictory co-existing presence and absence of 'history' in 1990s Liverpool, and indeed within the consciousness of Liverpudlians. Whilst this history may have been largely 'absent' from official and authoritative public institutions for much of the 200-year period considered, it has nonetheless been notably present within public discourse, in ways that have emerged at 'obvious' and 'less obvious' points in Liverpool's history. Whilst the city's expression of history seemed unique, Phillips questioned how far this predicament was simply a magnified response to a universal 'modern condition':

A history hitched to tragedy. A train pulls in and I can hear the uncivilised braying of football fans readying themselves for a Saturday afternoon of revelry. I am glad that I am leaving. It is disquieting to be in a place where history is so physically present, yet so glaringly absent from people's consciousness. But where is it any different? Maybe this is the modern condition, and Liverpool is merely acting out this reality with an honest vigour. If so, this dissonance between the two states seems to have engendered both a cynical wit and a clinical depression in the souls of Liverpool's citizens.¹³⁹

Whilst it may be that the nature of the expression of these 'legacies' is exceptional to Liverpool, the 'honest vigour' Phillips alludes to, yet comparable in some ways to other places, these are nonetheless historically specific processes – products of Liverpool's particular past, or, more tellingly, the *memory* of this past. Liverpool's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade was, in a number of important ways, exceptional and this has impacted upon an evolving slavery-memory discourse within the city. The rise to dominance of this 'slaving capital of the world' occurred at the end of the eighteenth century, against the public debates concerning the slave trade's abolition, and in the midst of cultural developments in the professionalization of History. This unique *history* has shaped an equally unique *memory*

139 Caryl Phillips, *The Atlantic Sound* (London: Faber, 2000), 93.

The Persistence of Memory

of this past through the creation of a number of framing narratives that repeat across historic discourse from the beginning of the nineteenth century through to the twenty-first century. Liverpool's historic discourse began by instilling a sense of civic pride through emphasizing her citizen's enterprising spirit in relation to slave trading and the successful competition won by Liverpool is a curious point of discursive repetition that persists well into (and in reaction to) the economically fraught twentieth-century post-war context. However, narratives of pride, like the 'overcoming abolition' motif, can act to obscure aspects of the past as much as (and whilst) they boast about it – and have been used to downplay and deflect attention through their raucous celebration. The contradictory nature of 'celebrating' slavery, or indeed of 'overcoming' its abolition, has created dissonant expressions of what was historically both the 'glory and the shame' of Liverpool.

Moreover, it is the persistence of memory through a contested debate that has shaped a particular kind of dissonance over time. Liverpool's memory of slavery is contested both in the way it emerges and persists through public debates about this specific history and what it means to Liverpool, and of course how it should be remembered and who should or should not have a voice within such memory processes. However, the extent to which Liverpool and slavery is a 'usable past' that is taken up, used, and abused, by a number of different historical agents in different contexts should form part of the broader understanding and analysis of the dimensions of this dissonant memory. People have mobilized a memory of 'Liverpool and slavery' (or, rather, a particular version of it) for the power it carries, the known and acknowledged controversy around a traumatic past of enslavement and profit from human misery. Within such public debates, the press have continually played an integral role as mediators of memory, provoking reaction, initiating conflict for the known response it will receive. Dissonant pasts are dissonant because of this contested discursive process, the battle over meaning, and the parameters of use and abuse in public discourse.

2

Black Liverpool

Living with the Legacy of the Past

Introduction

Liverpool has the oldest black community in Britain. Whilst the previous chapter considered the key cultural contexts and discursive legacies of Liverpool's history of slavery within its memory, this chapter explores its more human legacies through the city's long-standing black presence. Liverpool's unique, historically situated black presence has shaped the city's memory of slavery in three key ways. Firstly, the historic black presence should itself be understood as a legacy of Liverpool and slavery; of trading relationships developed along the west coast of Africa through the years of slavery and into the later nineteenth century. The black presence in Liverpool, fostered by this ongoing trade and employment, its continuity and visibility across centuries, has kept the city's history of transatlantic slavery to the fore of (white and black) public consciousness. Secondly, the historic black *experience* in Liverpool is crucial to understanding the social and political contexts of the city's public memory of slavery. This experience, comprised largely of racism, riot, and resistance, was itself forged through ideologies and racial discourses of slavery and colonialism, and it is the complex legacies of this, as well as unfolding histories since and challenge to this, that have shaped public memory work around Liverpool's role in the mass enslavement of African people. Finally, members of Liverpool's black communities have consistently played key roles in developing public memory work around transatlantic slavery and challenging authoritative narratives, omissions, silences, and justifications through debate, protest, and 'guerrilla public history' work across time. Alan Rice has coined the term 'guerrilla memorialization' to focus attention on the distinctly *political* and activist nature of acts of public memorialization and challenge to 'official' memory

The Persistence of Memory

and its silences undertaken, in particular, by black British artists in relation to the history of slavery.¹ Black memory activists in Liverpool have similarly undertaken acts of ‘guerrilla public history’ focusing less on memorialization as it relates to places and sites of memory, and more on education, the recovery of the past through historical practice, and the placement and displacement of historical narratives for social activism; to challenge contemporary racism, prejudice, and inequality.² Black public history around Liverpool and slavery has both worked along the grain of ‘traditional’ and established public history genres *and* subverted them, finding new avenues of engagement and communication of this past; through further and alternative forms of education, books and other literature, but also walking tours, protest, and political dialogue connecting past and present black experiences.

It is worth considering the ‘legacies’ of difficult pasts critically here. When it comes to histories of colonialism and empire, there has, as Ann Laura Stoler has argued, been a tendency on the part of academics to talk somewhat romantically about ‘traces’ of the imperial past; the ‘pale filigrees, benign overlays with barely detectable presence’.³ However, the ‘legacies’ of slavery as borne out by the Liverpool black experience, are more pressing, real, and ‘lived’ – part of the continuing, though not unchanging, cultural violence of slavery and empire. Stoler’s critical examination and rethinking of the connections between past and present experiences of colonialism problematizes the linearity or ‘breaks’ in conceptions of these processes. She argues that there are in general two positions on this issue. First, a conception of ‘rupture’ – that there is an identifiable break in colonial to postcolonial experience, easily identifiable differences in historical and present-day experiences. Second, that there is a sense of ‘continuity’; no such clear break and a more ‘seamless continuation of colonial practices that pervade the present’ in ways which present vague analogies, through phrases such as ‘colonial attitudes’ as derogatory categorization.⁴ Instead, Stoler proposes (drawing on Foucault’s work around ‘recursive analytics’) that we view ‘history as recursion’, a continuing experience ‘marked by the uneven, contingent quality of histories that *fold back on themselves* and, in that

1 Alan Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 11, 13–14.

2 For more on ‘memory activism’ see Yifat Gutman, *Memory Activism: Reimagining the Past for the Future in Israel-Palestine* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2017).

3 Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (London: Duke University Press, 2016), 5. Stoler began this critical work in the 1990s with *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995) but has developed these ideas more fully in her more recent book, *Duress*.

4 Stoler, *Duress*, 25.

refolding, reveal new surfaces, and new planes'.⁵ The ongoing experiences of black Liverpool are connected to the colonial past, but not in an even or directly linear and unproblematically replicated way. The refolding of historical (and contemporary) experience creates new engagements – new histories and experiences of racism and prejudice in the city, which become part of its twisted origami. Moreover, despite Stoler's hesitance to engage with 'memory' as an organizing concept, suggesting that this implies the existence of the past only in 'how we find to remember it' rather than experience, the memory; the perceived past-to-present relationship of the folding layers of Liverpool and slavery, of slavery and racism, of the Liverpool black experience, of moments and histories of race in Liverpool, *are* the seams of this experience. This is part of the persistence of difficult pasts. This persistence holds history and memory in its folds; like the persistence of memory, the persistence of racialized experiences are not stable; they can and do evolve whilst maintaining shadowed connections to their histories, as well as accumulating experiences along their trajectory.

Exceptional Legacies: The Liverpool Black Presence in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Liverpool has the oldest established and continuously settled black community in Britain and one that by comparison to other British black communities is comprised of a significant proportion of people of West African rather than Caribbean descent.⁶ Detailed empirical demographic research into the Liverpool black presence is patchy and underdeveloped, as with a great deal of black history in Britain. However, several studies have attempted to estimate figures based on compilations of sources consisting largely of parish records, criminal and court sources, and newspapers.⁷ Early demographic

⁵ Stoler, *Duress*, 26.

⁶ Ray Costello, *Black Liverpool: The Early History of Britain's Oldest Black Community, 1730–1918* (Liverpool: Picton Press, 2001), 8. Diane Frost, 'Ambiguous Identities: Constructing and De-constructing Black and White "Scouse" Identities in Twentieth-Century Liverpool,' in *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'The North' and 'Northermness'*, ed. Neville Kirk (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 196. Frost states that 'Liverpool boasts one of the older-established and largest indigenous black communities in the country'.

⁷ As reported by Carl Bernhard Wadström in *An Essay on Colonization*, 2 vols (London, 1794), vol. 1, 94–95. Cited in David Killingray, 'Africans in the United Kingdom: An Introduction,' in *Africans in Britain*, ed. David Killingray (Ilford: Cass, 1994), 7. Estimating black populations in British history is challenging. Even when census records begin in 1801 these recorded little personal information until 1841, after which only place of birth was included as a relevant category, which does not always

The Persistence of Memory

scholarship on Liverpool's black presence is likely to be fairly conservative in its estimates. In the 1970s, Paul Laxton's study of parish records, largely reiterated by later historians of black British history such as Norma Myers, estimated that Liverpool's black population may have numbered around 500 in 1801, representing 1.5–2 per cent of Liverpool's overall population.⁸ This necessarily does not capture all people of African descent living within (and moving around) the town, or not captured by these records (as not all burials for example are), and much more comprehensive research is desperately needed in this area. Most studies, whilst varying in emphasis, do indicate that there was a notable black presence in the eighteenth century. These include references to advertisements in the local press placed by black people seeking employment in the city and through connections to education, supported by contemporary estimates of there being 50–70 African school children in and around the city in 1794.⁹ Newspaper sources overwhelmingly foreground the connections between Liverpool's black presence and its slave trade. Eighteenth-century newspapers in Liverpool frequently included 'for sale' or 'wanted' advertisements for black 'servants' and notices of runaways in the area.¹⁰ Some adverts originated from other areas of the country, and

indicate ethnicity. 'Ethnicity' was not explicitly included as a category until 1991. Some attempts have been made, however, to estimate population sizes. See, for example, Kathleen Chater, *Untold Histories: Black People in England and Wales During the Period of the British Slave Trade, c. 1660–1807* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); and Ian Duffield's use of convict transportation records to estimate basic demographic characteristics of the black presence in Britain and skill sets. Ian Duffield, 'Skilled Workers or Marginalized Poor? The African Population of the United Kingdom, 1812–52,' *Immigrants & Minorities* 12:3 (1993): 49–87. See Ryan Hanley, *Beyond Slavery and Abolition: Black British Writing c.1770–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), Introduction, for a fuller discussion and detailed overview of this work.

8 Paul Laxton, 'Blacks in Eighteenth-Century Liverpool: Some Notes on the Evidence of Parish Registers,' unpublished paper, University of Liverpool (1985).

9 Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto, 1984), 60. See also Paul Lovejoy and David Richardson, 'Letters of the Old Calabar Slave Trade, 1760–1789,' in *Genius in Bondage: Literature of the Early Black Atlantic* ed. Vincent Carretta and P. Gould (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 122 n.8; James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro in English Society, 1555–1945* (London: 1973), 51.

10 The University of Glasgow's *Runaway Slaves in Britain Database* lists 23 runaway notices within the *Gore's Liverpool Commercial Pamphlet* and *Liverpool General Advertiser* and a number of adverts in other regional newspapers list Liverpool as the 'master's' contact or business place, and the place the enslaved ran away from. See 'Runaway Slaves in Britain: Bondage, Freedom and Race in the Eighteenth Century,' Online Database, www.runaways.gla.ac.uk (accessed 4 July 2018). See also wanted adverts, e.g. 'WANTED IMMEDIATELY: A Negro Boy. He must be of deep black complexion, and a lovely Humane disposition, with good features and not above 13, nor under 11 years of age,' *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, 20 August 1756; advert for Negro Boy

their placement within Liverpool newspapers may indicate awareness of the presence of a black community to which enslaved runaways could run *to*.¹¹

Whether the current (twenty-first century) black community can be safely and continually dated back to these eighteenth-century populations is an area of debate amongst historians. Jane Longmore has suggested that there is insufficient evidence to suggest a sizeable and continuous community from this time, whilst Colin Pooley suggests that there may have been some second-generation African-Caribbean descended people living in Liverpool by the mid nineteenth century.¹² However, as Ray Costello has argued, Liverpool's black population is unique in its continuity, as some families *have* traced ten generations of settlement in the city. Ray Costello's history of black Liverpool places the origins of the community firmly in the context of the transatlantic slave trade. He states that the Liverpool black community is 'both a direct and indirect result of the Slave Trade', that black people entered Liverpool through the 'to and fro of commerce' and the desire of wealthy merchants to own 'highly fashionable black servants'.¹³ Connections to Africa were facilitated through this 'to and fro', and people of African descent came to Liverpool for a number of reasons; free and enslaved, as servants, and as the children of white plantation owners and African women. The Liverpool black presence has historically had a strong connection to economic relationships in the port. Ian Law has argued that, because so much of Liverpool's eighteenth and early nineteenth-century trade was dependent on Africa and the Caribbean, on enslaved people and goods produced through their labour, 'the question of race became bound up inevitably with economic life in the port'.¹⁴ In Liverpool, a place whose civic narratives so often embody the maritime life of the town, the connections

aged between 11 and 13, *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, 20 August 1756; Negro lad aged 17, *Liverpool Chronicle*, 10 December 1767; advert placed for barber/useful with horses, *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, 23 January 1767. Cited in Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past: Blacks in Britain c. 1780-1830* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), 122, 147.

11 For example, 'Ran Away from Captain John Chilcott, of Bristol, the 4th instant, a Negro man named James Smith, about 25 years of age, well set, speaks good English, is about 5 feet 8 inches high, a smooth face and good even teeth,' *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser*, 25 July 1776. Cited in Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past*, 120.

12 See Jane Longmore, 'Civic Liverpool: 1680-1800,' in *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character & History*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 161; Pooley, 'Living in Liverpool,' 189. Peter Fryer, however, gives the account of African school children and Ian Law suggests there has been a continual black presence in Liverpool since the seventeenth century. Ian Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool, 1660-1950*, ed. June Henfrey (Liverpool: Merseyside Community Relations Council, 1981), v.

13 Costello, *Black Liverpool*, 8-9.

14 Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 1.

The Persistence of Memory

between its cosmopolitan populations and seafaring emerge through cultural sources. An 1860 account by Charles Dickens is frequently quoted in Liverpool histories, whereby Dickens describes 'Dark Jack' as a black sailor in a Liverpool public house alongside British, Scandinavian, Spanish, Maltese, Finnish Jacks, and 'Loafing Jack of the Stars and Stripes'.¹⁵

Across the nineteenth century, Liverpool's black community continued to develop through further immigration and employment, and marriage. African men were employed in the trade with West Africa in natural resources such as iron ore, cocoa, and especially palm oil, and were also subsequently brought to Liverpool through employment by shipping firms such as the Elder Dempster Company (founded 1868).¹⁶ For example, during the late nineteenth century, African seamen from Sierra Leone, known as the 'Kru', were settling and marrying in the south side of the city, contributing to a mixed and growing black community.¹⁷ Liverpool's nineteenth and early twentieth-century 'black community' was a mixed community, comprised of people from different nationalities and ethnicities, and shaped in particular through imperialism and colonial maritime trade. The three introductory anecdotes in Gretchen Gerzina's edited collection *Black Victorians, Black Victoriana* all concern Liverpool's black and mixed population. Gerzina begins by outlining J.B Priestley's musings from the 1930s on the children he saw in the city, which, he suggested, indicated that 'Port Said and Bombay, Zanzibar and Hong Kong had called here'.¹⁸ As a major port of empire, Liverpool's population (especially those resident

¹⁵ 'Jack' is a colloquial name for sailors. Charles Dickens, *The Uncommercial Traveller* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1860). Referenced in Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*.

¹⁶ Laura Tabili, *We Ask for British Justice: Workers, and Racial Difference in Late Imperial Britain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 25; Diane Frost, 'Racism, Work and Unemployment: West African Seamen in Liverpool,' in *Ethnic Labour and British Imperial Trade: A History of Ethnic Seafarers in the UK*, ed. Diane Frost (London: F. Cass, 1995), 24–25.

¹⁷ Diane Frost has researched and published extensively on the Kru in Liverpool. See Diane Frost, *Work and Community Among West African Migrant Workers* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999); Diane Frost, 'Ethnic Identity, Transience and Settlement: The Kru in Liverpool Since the Late Nineteenth Century,' in *Africans in Britain*, ed. David Killingray (Ilford: Cass, 1994) 88–106; Diane Frost, 'Diasporan West African communities: the Kru in Freetown & Liverpool,' *Review of African Political Economy* 29:92 (2002): 285–300; Diane Frost, 'Racism and Social Segregation: Settlement Patterns of West African Seamen in Liverpool Since the Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 22:1 (1996): 85–95; Frost, 'Racism, Work and Unemployment'.

¹⁸ Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, 'Introduction,' in *Black Victorians, Black Victoriana*, ed. Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003).

Black Liverpool

in the dock area) became increasingly diverse across the Victorian period, with twice the proportion of people originating from across the empire than in neighbouring city Manchester.¹⁹ Communities comprising black peoples of diverse African backgrounds, as well as those from the Caribbean and Americas, lived alongside other immigrant groups from across the British Isles and the empire, including Welsh, Scottish, Scandinavian, and Jewish immigrants, Lascar (seamen from the Indian subcontinent) and, notably, a large Chinese population (nearly double the numbers in Liverpool (403) compared to London (247) by 1911).²⁰ The largest ethnic minority immigrant group in Liverpool in the nineteenth century was the Irish. This was particularly the case following the Great Famine of the 1840s, though the number of Irish-born recorded on the census of 1841 was already 17.3 per cent of the population (49,639).²¹ Ninety per cent of the Irish emigrants heading to America passed through Liverpool during this time, however many stayed on in the 'last seaport of the Old World'.²² Liverpool's twentieth-century racialized geographic boundaries originate in this pattern of nineteenth-century immigration and settlement, where the area around the South Docks housed different elements of the black community as well as a substantial number of white working class, particularly Irish and other migrant settlers, dock workers and sailors, including Scandinavians and Russians.²³ The slum clearances after the Second World War, however, moved much of this mixed population from the central South Docks into the Granby/Toxteth area, into what would become known in the later twentieth century by its postcode, 'Liverpool 8'.²⁴

Liverpool's early black presence has influenced the city's collective memory of slavery in myriad ways; informed and impacted by national discourses of empire and colonialism that held race and racialized discourse at their heart. In a major, perhaps obvious, way, the Liverpool black presence has, at its simplest, and particularly for local white commentators, acted as a living memorial to the city's historic involvement in transatlantic slavery. In 1884,

19 John Belchem and Donald M. MacRaïld, 'Cosmopolitan Liverpool,' in *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character & History*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 312.

20 Belchem and MacRaïld, 'Cosmopolitan Liverpool,' 315.

21 John Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse: The History of the Liverpool-Irish 1800–1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007) 6–7.

22 John Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse*, 4, xi.

23 Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 19; Andrea Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto: Racism and Reaction in Liverpool, 1918–1948* (Birkenhead: Liver Press, 1995), 5.

24 Marij van Helmond and Donna Palmer, *Staying Power: Black Presence in Liverpool* (Liverpool: National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside, 1991), 6.

The Persistence of Memory

the anonymous author of *Liverpool and Slavery* stated that they were initially prompted to think about Liverpool's role in the slave trade after seeing black African people in the city, that

[n]ot long ago, as I was strolling on Mann Island, in a musing mood, a batch of negroes passed by me, this turned my thoughts on niggers, slaves, and Africa, then came the climax: Liverpool and Slavery; or, what part did Liverpool take in those wealth-getting times?²⁵

The author here makes mnemonic connections through the visible black presence, the black people who walk the streets of Liverpool are the starting point, building these connections up in scale from the derogatorily racialized low status of 'niggers, slaves' up to the continent of Africa. The top of this point, the climax, is the historic connection between these points and place; Liverpool and slavery.

The longevity of this black presence in the city, and its continuity through marriage, family, and settlement across the nineteenth century, created unique expressions of black identity in the twentieth century. Diane Frost has suggested that Liverpool black identity in the twentieth century was forged as a mechanism for showing solidarity against common experiences of racism expressed through the 'microculture' of 'Scouseness', which is consistently presented as white and working class.²⁶ The distinct historic composition of the Liverpool-born black community has been determined by economic marginalization, geographic separation, and shared experiences of discrimination, leading many white women living in Liverpool 'black areas' to identify as part of the 'black community', a point that emphasizes the significance of family networks and social identity.²⁷ A particular language evolved into the later twentieth century in an attempt to confront the

²⁵ Anon, *Liverpool and Slavery: An Historical Account of the Liverpool-African Slave Trade. By a Genuine Dicky Sam* (Liverpool: A. Bowker & Son, 1884), 1. In the preface of this text, however, the author also suggests that this research was prompted by recent discussions in relation to Bristol and Liverpool. It is likely that these would have arisen around the 50-year anniversary of the Emancipation Act and its passing in 1883 and 1884 when this text was published.

²⁶ Frost, 'Ambiguous Identities.' See also John Belchem, 'An Accent Exceedingly Rare,' in *Merseypride: Essays in Liverpool Exceptionalism*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000). This point is also argued in Stephen Small, 'Racialized Relations in Liverpool: A Contemporary Anomaly,' *New Community* 17:4 (1991), 517.

²⁷ White women in Diane Frost's interviews referred to themselves as 'we, the Black community'. Frost, 'Ambiguous Identities.' See also Mark Christian, 'Black Identity in Liverpool: An Appraisal,' in *Black Organisation and Identity in Liverpool: A Local, National and Global Perspective*, ed. William Ackah and Mark Christian (Liverpool: Charles Wootton College Press, 1997), 68.

specificity of place and people through the use of the identifier ‘Liverpool-born black’.²⁸ In an interview, ‘Stephen’, a Liverpool-born black man who featured in Caryl Phillips’s *The Atlantic Sound*, stressed the need for unique terminology to reflect the uniqueness of Liverpool black people. In response to a question over the term ‘Liverpool-born black’ Stephen explained:

Well, it became a term simply because again, because Liverpool has this old, this long history of black settlement it became an issue because in the seventies after things like the Race Relations Act, and the advent of multiculturalism, there was a lot of initiatives put into dealing with the people who were obviously non-white and born in other places. So in Liverpool we had things like the Igbo Centre, the Nigerian Centre, The Caribbean Centre, the Pakistani Centre, but if you’re a Liverpool-born black person, and your family has been living here you know, in my case for 200 years, you don’t fit into any of those categories. And it was almost like, people who were born here, were kind of forgotten about in this rush to try and provide these er, benefits to people who come from these other diverse communities, where did the Liverpool-born black community fit in?²⁹

However, William Ackah argued that forging such a unique identity had acted to separate as much as it united; whilst binding those who identify as ‘Liverpool-born black’, it also created a barrier to engagement with those outside this identity group. Indeed, in a speech made by Liverpool-born black activist Eric Lynch in 1980, the term was used to highlight disproportionate discrimination against this group, that ‘Liverpool-born blacks, can no longer tolerate the situation that we are forced to live in’. Lynch laid critical attention against black people from elsewhere through a slavery

²⁸ Mark Christian stresses the ‘uniqueness’ of this term through noting that other towns and cities do not replicate this phrasing, i.e. there are no ‘Birmingham-born Blacks’. Christian, ‘Black Identity in Liverpool: An Appraisal’, 72. The earliest reference I have found so far to the use of this term has been in Gideon Ben-Tovin and Rashid Mufti, *Merseyside Against Racism – First Annual Report of MARA – Merseyside Anti-Racist Alliance* (Liverpool: Merseyside Anti-Racist Alliance, 1979).

²⁹ ‘Stephen’, Question and Answer Discussion Between Undergraduate Students and Stephen. Liverpool, 28 April 2012. This was a discussion organized by the author with ‘Stephen’ (who featured as Phillips’s guide to Liverpool in Caryl Phillips, *The Atlantic Sound*, 2001) and University of York second-year undergraduate students undertaking Dr Zoe Norridge’s *Slavery in the Transatlantic: Cultures, Representations, Legacies* module as part of the BA English and Related Literature module. Within *The Atlantic Sound*, Phillips visits three key places in the Atlantic slave trade triangle, Liverpool, Elmina in Ghana, and Charleston, US. Phillips is taken around Liverpool by ‘Stephen’, who discusses Liverpool’s denial of its slave-trading past and the contemporary racism black people in the city endured.

metaphor: ‘we will no longer put up with politicians and so-called Black West Indians put in places of authority above us. In the same way that 100 years ago the White slave owners put Black over-seers over the slaves.’³⁰ In her ethnographic study of black Liverpool, Jacqueline Nassy Brown argued that Liverpool-born black people used a largely nineteenth-century historic and gendered ‘origin story’ within this identity construction. The long history of Liverpool’s black presence, and specifically the settlement of African seamen who predominantly married white English and Irish women in the city, has been used to create geographies of race to negotiate nationalism, racism, and localism.³¹ Further, and in support of Ackah’s point above, Brown suggests that through the racial exceptionalism articulated through the ‘local’, the *Liverpool*-born black identifier constructs other black people in the city as immigrants by comparison. Stephen correspondingly recalled hearing ‘Affo’ used as derogatory term against first-generation African immigrants.³² The deployment of ‘Liverpool-born black’ has acted to root people to place, actively legitimizing the civic citizenship of Liverpool black people. Its use is therefore a distinctly *political* act forged in part to acknowledge a history seen to be largely unacknowledged by broader (white) society, and against a common experience of racism, as a way of challenging this through *history*.

Racism, Riot, and Resistance: Living with the Legacy of the Past

The black experience in Liverpool, particularly across the twentieth century, has been framed by ongoing experiences of racism, and punctuated by specific extreme milestone events, riots, and resistance to such episodes. Liverpool’s historic involvement in transatlantic slavery never sat too far from the surface of these events, frequently emerging – overwhelmingly through black voices – within discourse around racism, and resistance, and increasingly becoming part of a language of protest. Increasingly towards the 1980s and 1990s, slavery also became part of the historic explanation for structural racism in Liverpool. Running alongside this context, Liverpool’s relationship with empire and, increasingly across the twentieth century, decolonization, deindustrialization, economic decline, and immigration,

30 Eric Lynch, quoted in Lord Gifford QC (Chair), Wally Brown, and Ruth Bunday, *Loosen the Shackles: First Report of the Liverpool 8 Inquiry into Race Relations in Liverpool* (London: Karia Press, 1989), 247.

31 Jacqueline Nassy Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 5.

32 William Ackah, ‘The Fact of Blackness: Identity in Context,’ in *Black Organisation and Identity in Liverpool: A Local, National and Global Perspective*, ed. William Ackah and Mark Christian (Liverpool: Charles Wootton College Press, 1997), 57; Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 5; Stephen, Question and Answer Session.

underlay much of the increasingly racialized and racist tone that authoritative memory work around the city's involvement in slavery took.

Early twentieth-century imperial contexts forged ideological racial hierarchies in Liverpool, as a space where 'the metropole first met the colonies', a contact zone of empire, structuring racist attitudes and actions in response to war, work, and social relations.³³ During the First World War black soldiers from Caribbean colonies supported the British war effort both as soldiers, and through work in Britain; their labour enabling white British men to leave for military service.³⁴ After the war, however, resentment against this enlarged black population grew.³⁵ It was against this context that 'race riots' (or 'racist riots' as Michael Rowe terms them), erupted across a number of British port cities, and those in Liverpool, which also combined with pre-existing racial tensions, were particularly extreme.³⁶ Post-war competition over scarcer jobs between demobilized soldiers and sailors (which included large numbers of black men) and apparent 'sexual jealousy' over relationships between black men and white women were held up as catalysts.³⁷ Up to 10,000 white rioters attacked black homes and, in June 1919, 700 black people were held in police cells 'for their own safety'.³⁸ However, this was not initially how the riots were represented in the press, where the events were portrayed as a white reaction to 'unprovoked' black violence.³⁹ The riots led to the death of one black sailor who had served as a fireman in the navy, a 24-year-old Trinidadian called Charles Wootton (also spelt 'Wotten' in the press and reports), who drowned in the Queen's Dock after being chased and beaten.⁴⁰ The head constable of Liverpool

33 Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 20–24.

34 Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 30.

35 The Liverpool local press ran a series of articles titled *Black and White*, which reported specifically on court appearances by black people with headlines such as 'Coloured man sent to gaol for desertion.' Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto*, 11.

36 Other disturbances occurred in Manchester, London, Newport, Cardiff, and Barry. Michael Rowe, 'Sex, 'Race' and Riot in Liverpool, 1919,' *Immigrants & Minorities* 19:2 (2000): 58. See also Roy May and Robin Cohen, 'The Interaction Between Race and Colonialism: A Case Study of the Liverpool Race Riots of 1919,' *Race and Class* 16:2 (1974); Jacqueline Jenkinson, *Black 1919: Riots, Racism and Resistance in Imperial Britain* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009); John Belchem, *Before the Windrush: Race Relations in Twentieth-Century Liverpool* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014), ch. 2.

37 Michael Rowe, 'Sex, "Race" and Riot in Liverpool, 1919,' 53.

38 Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 31; Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 21; Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto*, 11.

39 Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto*, 13.

40 'Racial Rioting,' *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 11 June 1919; Rowe, 'Sex, "Race" and Riot in Liverpool, 1919,' 55.

police called on the Home Office to provide ‘compulsory repatriation’ of 2,000–3,000 members of Liverpool’s black population as a solution, a suggestion supported by some local civic religious leaders, whilst editorial opinion in the *Liverpool Post & Mercury* advocated for differential treatment for [c]oloured workers who were established here before the war.⁴¹ Whilst connections between this contemporary racial violence, the citizenship of Liverpool’s black population, and the city’s historic involvement in transatlantic slavery, were not made publicly by white commentators, this was seen as a relevant point of defence and context by a prominent figure of African descent. Speaking in defence of the ‘coloured men in Liverpool’, African merchant D.T. Aleifasakure Toummanah, secretary of the Ethiopian Hall, reminded officials that ‘Liverpool owes a great debt to African negroes. The docks were built by negro labour.’⁴² In not directly naming the institution of slavery, this comment raises implied connections between the ‘debt’ of slavery through forced and unpaid labour, poignant in a racial discourse developing about the meaning of the 1919 riots, which apparently held ‘economics’ close to their core. Toummanah juxtaposed the metaphorical ‘building’ of Liverpool’s docks (focusing, for the more direct relevance of the contemporary debates, on the profits derived from enslaved labour of African people in the Americas rather than the trading of human beings taken from Africa by Liverpool slave traders) – the symbolic heart of Liverpool identity, and, of course, the site of the violent death of one of her black residents, Charles Wootten, at the hands of a mob of her white residents. Whilst there was a key concern expressed over the need to contain this violence so that it did not ‘develop into an Imperial problem’ (by leading to counter-action in the colonies), in many ways the 1919 riots were precisely an ‘imperial problem’ from their outset, or, moreover, an imperial contradiction.⁴³ This was racialized discrimination forged in the ideological rhetoric of empire, against people who *were* British subjects.

During the interwar period, a series of discriminatory policies, acts, and reports negatively impacted on Liverpool’s black community. Following demonstrations by the Discharged Sailors and Soldiers Federation, appeals were made for employers to give preference to white seamen who had served in the war, in effect creating a ‘colour bar’.⁴⁴ The issue of employment was

41 Liverpool Head Constable to Secretary of State, 10 June 1919. Quoted in Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 44; ‘The Bishop and the Race Riot,’ *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 21 June 1919; ‘Black and White,’ *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 7 June 1919.

42 ‘The Negroes Case,’ *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 11 June 1919.

43 May and Cohen, ‘The Interaction Between Race and Colonialism,’ 113, 21–22.

44 Diane Frost, ‘West Africans, Black Scousers and the Colour Problem in Inter-War Liverpool,’ *North West Labour History* 20 (1995/96): 54.

also taken up by the trade unions and the Aliens Order and Coloured Alien Seaman Order was passed in 1920 and 1925 respectively, giving police powers to remove ‘aliens’ without (and indeed also with) proof of identification.⁴⁵ Such discriminatory attitudes affected Liverpool’s mixed black population in particular, and were supported and worsened by other authoritative institutions, including the university. In 1929, under the chairmanship of Professor Percy Maude Roxby (School of Geography, University of Liverpool), the white, liberal, and paternalistic Association for the Welfare of Half-Caste Children sponsored a *Report on an Investigation into the Colour Problem in Liverpool and Other Ports* (1930) conducted by Muriel E. Fletcher (*Fletcher Report*).⁴⁶ The report’s conclusions presented ‘half-caste’ children and their black and white parents as a ‘problem’ without any focus on the structuring of British society.⁴⁷ The report strengthened pre-existing stereotypes, which extended to white women who married black men as being ‘mentally unstable and sexually loose’, and concluded that the fate of mixed-race girls was particularly ‘hopeless’.⁴⁸ Although there had been previous similar reports and investigations into children of mixed racial parentage in Liverpool, including one carried out by Rachel Fleming at the direction of the Eugenics Education Committee in 1924, the *Fletcher Report*, in particular, has haunted Liverpool’s black community.⁴⁹ Whilst largely dismissed by academic audiences, Mark Christian has argued that the *Fletcher Report* nonetheless had a huge and long-lasting detrimental impact on Liverpool’s black community, marking the beginning of further castigation of children of mixed racial parentage in Liverpool as a ‘problem’, giving authority to the derogatory label ‘half-caste’, and to broader discriminatory perceptions of black people (or, more specifically, mixed black people and their families) through the legitimacy of this official, academic report.⁵⁰ As Jacqueline Nassy Brown has argued, the ‘ghost of Muriel

45 Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 32; Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto*, 66.

46 The Association had, before this time, concerned itself with the plight of Liverpool’s working classes. Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 32; Frost, ‘West Africans, Black Scousers,’ 54.

47 Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 28.

48 Frost, ‘West Africans, Black Scousers,’ 54–55.

49 This report initially concerned the children of Anglo and Chinese relationships, but Fleming extended her studies to other mixed Liverpool families. R.M. Fleming, ‘Anthropological Studies in Children,’ *Eugenics Review* 18 (1926–27): 294–301. See Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 60–61.

50 Mark Christian, ‘The Fletcher Report 1930: A Historical Case Study of Contested Black Mixed Heritage Britishness,’ *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21:2/3 (2008). The association changed their name to the Liverpool Association for the Welfare of

Fletcher' has haunted black Liverpool, through processes that rendered localization as racialization, complicating and contradicting personal and familial engagements with gender, race, and place.⁵¹

Fletcher reportedly collaborated with local white religious institutions that focused on Liverpool's black population in the compilation of her report, including Pastor Ernst Adkin's Wesleyan African Mission, Templar Hall, Mill Street (which, when founded in 1923, had separate entrances for 'white' and 'coloured').⁵² Adkin publicly criticized the report and denied support. However, its findings were more fervently taken up by Sir John Harris, secretary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society (ASAPS), who attempted to use the report to limit black immigration.⁵³ ASAPS were at this time also busy using the centenary of the British Emancipation Act of 1833 to further their own campaigns against 'modern-day slavery'. Religious institutions around the country echoed the language of the society's publicity materials, which celebrated white Christian heroes of abolition, especially William Wilberforce, whose centenary of death was also concurrently being celebrated in grand public ways.⁵⁴ In contrast to racialized paternalistic white philanthropic religious interventions, and against the dominant tone of the emancipation centenary discourse in 1933 and 1934, Nigerian-born Pastor George Daniels Ekarte of the black-led African Churches Mission in Liverpool had altogether different things to say about slavery during the centenary. Ekarte's commemorative sermons and published pamphlets laid bare the history of transatlantic slavery, and foregrounded the suffering and experience of African people as the continuing legacy of slavery, omitting any discussion of ASAPS's 'modern-day slavery' campaign. African people, he argued 'have already suffered most terribly from the greed, lust and viciousness and injustice of others of the human race, who have for centuries imposed upon us the

Coloured People in 1937, following the lead of the National League of Coloured Peoples led by Dr Harold Moody, and focused instead on carrying out research and campaigning against racial discrimination. This new organization carried out a further investigation, this time less subjectively titled, Caradog Jones, *The Economic Status of Coloured Families in the Port of Liverpool*. The report distanced itself from the *Fletcher Report* and acknowledged the difficulties in 'making contact with representative coloured families', perhaps because of the reaction over the *Fletcher Report* and the memory of representation from this. Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool, 1660–1950*, 34, 10.

⁵¹ Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 189.

⁵² Marika Sherwood, *Pastor Daniels Ekarte and the African Churches Mission* (London: Savannah Press, 1994), 11–14; Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto*, 80.

⁵³ Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 63.

⁵⁴ See Oldfield, 'Chords of Freedom'.

horrors of slavery – chattel and industrial'.⁵⁵ In Ekarte's sermon, the past meets the present, not through the imperially framed drive to continue white paternalistic humanitarian action, but through the ongoing exploitation and suffering of black African people, from 'chattel' slavery of the past, to 'industrial' slavery of the present. The naming of 'industrial' slavery echoes a language that reflects the anti-capitalist, Marxist tone of much transnational black politics during the 1930s and 1940s.⁵⁶ Ekarte's sermons and writings about this national anniversary align far more closely with international contemporary black political discourse than to anything being said by his white religious missionary neighbours, ASAPS, or even the more 'middle-ground' language of Dr Harold Moody and the League of Coloured Peoples, focusing strongly on the contemporary black experience of racism as a legacy of slavery and colonialism.⁵⁷

As the *Fletcher Report* illustrates, there was an increasingly hostile, gendered expression of racism in the interwar years that echoed earlier nineteenth-century pseudo-scientific and imperial discourses.⁵⁸ Under this context, a particularly racialized and racist discourse around Liverpool and slavery emerged, honouring white slave captains as heroic figures of civic pride, and castigating enslaved African people as animalistic, 'savage' and child-like. The opening editorial of the 1928 *Book of Liverpool*, produced to commemorate Liverpool Civic Week (22–29 September) celebrated Liverpool's involvement in slavery, proudly stating that '[w]e produced slave

55 Bodleian Library, Oxford, British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society Papers (BFASS) Mss Brit Emp, S23 H1 21, African Churches Mission Pamphlet, August 1933. Ekarte does however draw on abolitionist language to emphasize his points, describing such conditions as the 'horrors of slavery', a phrase used by, amongst others, William Wilberforce in 1789, black Scottish-West Indian radical Robert Wedderburn in the early nineteenth century and later Frederick Douglass. William Wilberforce, 'On the Horrors of the Slave Trade,' Speech, www.bartleby.com/268/4/8.html (accessed 8 May 2013), Robert Reverend of Jamaica Wedderburn, *The Horrors of Slavery exemplified in the life and history of the Rev. Robert Wedderburn ...; with remarks on, and illustrations of the treatment of the blacks, and a view of their degraded state, and the disgusting licentiousness of the planters* (London, 1824). Frederick Douglass, 'The Horrors of Slavery and England's Duty to Free the Bondsman: An Address Delivered in Taunton, England, on September 1, 1846,' *Somerset County Gazette*, 5 September 1846. John Blassingame et al. (eds), *The Frederick Douglass Papers: Series One – Speeches, Debates, and Interviews* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), vol. I, 371.

56 See Kennetta Hammond Perry, 'Black Britain and the Politics of Race in the 20th Century,' *History Compass* 12:8 (2014): 655.

57 I discuss the emancipation centenary of 1933 and 1934 in more detail here: Moody, 'Remembering the Imperial Context of Emancipation Commemoration in the Former British Slave-Port Cities of Bristol and Liverpool, 1933–1934.'

58 Frost, 'West Africans, Black Scousers,' 50.

The Persistence of Memory

captains who taught their miserable cargoes of savages the fear and love of the white man's God as part of the ship's discipline'.⁵⁹ Liverpool Civic Week, and this accompanying book, was organized and produced by the Liverpool Organisation, a group of Liverpool businessmen who were behind a number of promotional and business-orientated 'civic weeks' in the 1920s.⁶⁰ This statement was made in one of a series of sections outlining aspects of Liverpool's character, this one focusing on the 'toughness of the Liverpool fibre, a toughness bred through centuries of struggle'. The 'toughness' of slave captains is here invoked as something to take pride in (or something to align with similar business-minded attributes of contemporary companies and leaders), and distinctive to Liverpool identity, the 'struggle' one of religious conversion, part of a civilizing narrative, a tough ship-specific white English Christianity. The paternalistic, if more philanthropic, credentials of slave captains were also stressed in *The Story of Liverpool* (1935), a textbook produced for use in Liverpool's schools. Here, slave captain Hugh Crow

gave his 'cargo' three meals and a bath daily dosed them with lime-juice to keep off scurvy, allowed them a pipe of tobacco, and, if sick, a nip of brandy, and (except in the worst weather) insisted on daily cleaning of the 'tween decks, while the blacks were allowed to dance on deck beneath a cover, which was rigged up to give them shelter from the blazing sun. On at least one occasion, when his ship was in harbour in the West Indies, some of his former passengers came aboard to thank him for his kindness and care.⁶¹

The 'dancing of the slaves', as this practice is often known, is much more widely recognized as an inhumane, gruelling, and humiliating attempt by slave captains to keep enslaved Africans alive during the middle passage. The presentation of 'kind' slave captains, like Hugh Crow, is an expression of overt racialized paternalism, which acts to present only passive gratitude as the reaction from enslaved African people, with no hint of resistance to their enslavement. In 1946, William Tyndale Harries suggested that Hugh Crow, having saved a sinking ship, earned the 'gratitude of even the slaves who crowded round their saviour like so many children', in an even less nuanced expression of racialized 'paternalism'.⁶²

59 Anderson, 'Liverpool', 9.

60 John Belchem, 'Introduction: Celebrating Liverpool,' in *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, ed. John. Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 30.

61 Lamb and Smallpage, *The Story of Liverpool*, 36–37.

62 Tyndale Harries, *Landmarks in Liverpool History*, 63. The first edition of this text (1934) does not include this line.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War, the Ministry of Labour and the Colonial Office responded to labour shortages by initiating a volunteer worker scheme for West Indians. Liverpool was chosen to take these volunteers initially because of its pre-existing black population.⁶³ Rising racial tensions towards the black population (which also included black American GIs) at this time were apparently exacerbated by the presence of white American soldiers used to segregation. In attempts to address this, Dr Harold Moody (head of the national League of Coloured Peoples) met with the Bishop of Liverpool, and a community centre was established in 1946 called Stanley House.⁶⁴ Mark Christian has argued that Stanley House's support for the Pan-African Federation demonstrates that it was a predominantly black social institution, yet its increasingly paternalistic (white) management style persisted into the 1950s and led to a number of tensions.⁶⁵ Peacetime Liverpool, again besieged by high unemployment and economic dire straits, saw further post-war 'race' riots break out in 1948 (during which around 50 black men were arrested compared to ten white) and policies for repatriation were again advocated, including the removal of 25 per cent of colonial seamen from the shipping register.⁶⁶

Liverpool, as a diasporic space, was the setting for a wartime cultural exchange of black Atlantic culture. One of Liverpool's historians, writing in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, suggested, quite bizarrely, that part of this cultural exchange acted as a form of black revenge for slavery: '[a]s for the poor African, we may fairly conclude that, with the coming of the modern dance band, he has been only too horribly avenged.'⁶⁷ The author's reference to the 'modern dance band' most likely refers to the early 1950s British dance music influenced by American jazz. Jazz, which had its roots in African-American music and culture, is presented as the medium through which 'Africans' (and their descendants) are reaping revenge on (white) British cultural norms.⁶⁸ Other impacts of

63 Murphy, *From the Empire to the Rialto*, 106.

64 Law, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool, 1660–1950*, 34.

65 Mark. Christian, 'An African-Centered Approach to the Black British Experience: With Special Reference to Liverpool,' *Journal of Black Studies* 28:3 (1998): 302; Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 161.

66 Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 122, 130, 140.

67 Parkinson, *The Rise of the Port of Liverpool*, 102.

68 See Laura E. Cooper and B. Lee Cooper, 'The Pendulum of Cultural Imperialism: Popular Music Interchanges Between the United States and Britain 1943–1967,' *Journal of Popular Culture* 27:3 (1993). For the significance of jazz, 'America's most important indigenous artistic form' on black literature see Alan Rice, 'Jazzing It Up A Storm: The Execution and Meaning of Toni Morrison's Jazzy Prose Style,' *Journal of American Studies* 28:3 (1994).

The Persistence of Memory

this black Atlantic exchange were more overtly political in their nature. Younger black people in particular were influenced by contemporary American civil rights movements in the decades following the war.⁶⁹ A youth branch of the Black Panthers (the 'Young Panthers') emerged in Liverpool in the 1960s. Whilst Timeri Murari suggested this was more about fashion than philosophy, it was also certainly about comparative history and experience, that in America there was '[a] black population, like themselves, the descendants of slaves, besieged in a white country, with no country of their own to return to.'⁷⁰ A similar 'black experience' was more broadly perceived across Liverpool and America; in history, oppression, and segregation, and local black people drew on a language and culture of black Atlantic politics to confront the oppression they experienced in their own city.⁷¹ Further 'race riots' in Liverpool in 1972 predominantly involved black and white youth, but were perceived more as 'skirmishes' over territories than holding 'race' or racism at their heart as previous riots had.⁷²

Emerging from a revolutionary context of 1960s civil rights movements, post-war immigration, demographic change and the development of a number of race relations organizations, an increasingly active and vocal black politics emerged in Liverpool. Alongside local and national anti-racism movements, Liverpool's black community spoke out against immigration and nationality acts, discriminatory policing tactics, and the growth of far-right groups like the National Front.⁷³ Protests surrounding race relations work and contemporary racism drew on a discourse of slavery and colonial exploitation, often in direct contrast to the racist castigations of the black community that were more often than not ahistorical and erroneous. One of the stated aims of the Merseyside Anti Racialist Alliance (MARA, 1979) was to counter racist ideology through education, to challenge 'a reservoir of myths and stereotypes which in the past helped to justify the economic

69 Christian, 'An African-Centered Approach to the Black British Experience,' 302; William E. Nelson and Gideon Ben-Tovin, 'Race, Class, Equal Opportunity Policies and Local Government: The Case of Liverpool,' *The National Political Science Review* 7 (1999): 56.

70 Timeri Murari, *The New Savages: Children of the Liverpool Streets* (London: MacMillan, 1975), 29 quoted in Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 211.

71 Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 48–54.

72 Belchem, *Before the Windrush*, 215.

73 This also extended to police oppression and the deployment of SUS laws, an abbreviation of 'suspected person' which permitted police to arrest anyone they thought might commit a crime. Ethnic minorities were disproportionately targeted using these laws. William E. Nelson, *Black Atlantic Politics: Dilemmas of Political Empowerment in Boston and Liverpool* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 201.

Black Liverpool

exploitation and political and military control exercised by Britain during the periods of the slave-trade and colonialism.⁷⁴ A particular focus of such groups was racism in the media. In 1978, the day before a television series aired about the Merseyside police called *On the Mersey Beat*, an article about the programme was published in the BBC background magazine *The Listener*. Reporter Martin Young, echoing the language of the *Fletcher Report* of nearly 50 years previously, suggested that the ‘major social problem’ for the Merseyside police was ‘the half-caste problem’ of Liverpool. He described children and young adults of mixed racial parentage as follows:

Many are the product of liaisons between black seamen and white prostitutes in Liverpool 8, the red light district. Naturally, they do not grow up with any kind of recognisable home life. Worse still, after they have done the round of homes and institutions they gradually realise that they are nothing. The Negroes will not accept them as blacks, and the whites just assume they are coloured. As a result, the half-caste community of Merseyside – or, more particularly, Liverpool – is well outside recognised society.⁷⁵

Young creates a context of temporariness. The children of mixed racial parentage are the product of ‘liaisons’, brief moments of interaction rather than any more permanent forms of relationships. These moments are themselves ‘maritimized’: the fathers are specifically black *seamen* who presumably like other seamen, exist in a seabound life, moving between ports and across oceans without settlement. Young’s framing of ‘half-caste’ people as a ‘problem’ within (and perhaps *for*) Liverpool, omits recognition of the long underlying historical context that would otherwise rationalize and indeed legitimize both the demographics of the city and the status of Liverpool-born black people and, instead, places them ‘well outside’ society. A few weeks later, MARA organized a protest in response to *The Listener* article and against the Merseyside police for their part in supplying statements. Around 300 people met at Stanley House and marched to the offices of BBC Radio Merseyside in the city centre to deliver a petition calling for a public apology and investigation into police chief Kenneth Oxford and his force. One banner at this protest asked, ‘400 years of race hatred, where will it end?’ placing the article’s statements in a longer history of discrimination spanning the years of slavery and colonialism.⁷⁶ The *Listener* incident has gone down as a milestone moment within a chain reaction instigated through black protest against racism, seen to culminate in the riots of 1981. Around the

⁷⁴ Ben-Tovin and Mufti, *First Annual Report of MARA*.

⁷⁵ Martin Young, ‘On the Mersey Beat,’ *The Listener*, 2 November 1978.

⁷⁶ ‘March Over “Racist Slurs”,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 27 November 1978.

The Persistence of Memory

time of the *Listener* affair, the Liverpool Black Organisation was formed, the leaders of which went on to forge a number of key political organizations in the 1980s including the Race Relations Liaisons Committee, the Black Caucus and the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee.⁷⁷

The riots of 1981, referred to in the press as the ‘Toxteth riots’ (even though the events occurred mostly in Upper Parliament Street, the ‘Rialto’ area, and Lodge Lane), were a milestone moment in Liverpool’s social and political history. Prompted by the arrest of a young black man in Liverpool 8, the riots themselves, though ill-classified in the media as ‘race riots’, equally concerned issues of class, brutal policing tactics, deprivation as well as institutionalized racism more generally.⁷⁸ Speaking after the events of summer 1981, local councillor Margaret Simey was quoted as saying that, in light of the living conditions of local people, she too would have rioted.⁷⁹ Whilst other riots had occurred around the country in urban areas at this time (starting in St Paul’s, Bristol, in 1980, and then in Brixton in 1981), those in Liverpool in 1981 were the largest.⁸⁰ The police were heavily criticized for their conduct, especially following the death of David Moore, a disabled man, who died after he was hit by a police van.⁸¹ Only the year before the riots in Liverpool, evidence had been submitted to a Home Affairs Committee’s investigation into racial disadvantage, which explicitly drew on the history of Liverpool and slavery in discussions around the Liverpool black presence. In answer to a question posed about why the long-standing black community in Liverpool had not established businesses, Ms McCowen responded:

You have to look into the history of the way in which black people first came to this city [...] black people were largely brought into this city as slaves and then as seamen in a much later period. This is part of the explanation why business attitudes have not developed amongst the Liverpool born black community.⁸²

⁷⁷ Nelson, *Black Atlantic Politics*, 242; Nelson and Ben-Tovin, ‘Race, Class, Equal Opportunity Policies and Local Government: The Case of Liverpool,’ 57; Christian, Mark, ‘An African-Centred Approach to the Black British Experience: With Special Reference to Liverpool,’ 303.

⁷⁸ For recent oral histories of this period, see Diane Frost and Richard Phillips, *Liverpool ‘81: Remembering the Riots* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011).

⁷⁹ ‘I’d Riot Myself, Simey,’ *Liverpool Echo*, 28 July 1981.

⁸⁰ Nelson, *Black Atlantic Politics*, 202.

⁸¹ This police van disappeared mysteriously prior to investigation over the incident. Nelson, *Black Atlantic Politics*, 206.

⁸² Ms McCowen quoted in House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Race Relations and Immigration Sub-Committee. Racial Disadvantage. Minutes of Evidence (Liverpool), 14 October 1980.

Black Liverpool

Further documentary evidence provided to the committee drew historic connections between the contemporary black presence and Liverpool's involvement in slavery, through the longevity of the black population, and in connection to the physical fabric of the city, that '[m]any Liverpool streets are called after merchants who made their fortunes out of the slave trade.'⁸³ This comment, from the memorandum provided by the Liverpool Black Organisation, also drew attention to the content of school textbooks, in which young black children were confronted daily by 'stereotyped and negative images of black people – as slaves, always servile and "uncivilised"'.⁸⁴

Following (and largely in response to) the riots of 1981 a number of new politically orientated black organizations were formed, including the Liverpool 8 Law Centre and the Immigration Advice Unit. Old and new black organizations and groups in Liverpool became embroiled in further tensions across the 1980s between police and the local authority, particularly in response to the Militant Labour Council's staunch colour-blind workerist ideology, which led to community divisions, exacerbated by the appointment of London-born black Principal Race Relations Advisor, Samson Bond. As someone not from the Liverpool (and, as black groups would argue, someone apparently without any previous experience or credentials to his name, barring his support for Militant), this was considered a purely political appointment, which was subsequently boycotted and protested against.⁸⁵ A banner used within such a protest by the Liverpool Black Caucus decried 'No More Bondage', drawing deliberate, if unsubtle, allusions between Bond's surname and the 'bondage' of slavery.

Whilst early commentary and discourse around anti-racist activity discussed Liverpool and slavery mainly to emphasize the long history of black settlement, and thereby legitimize citizenship and belonging within the

83 Appendix 11: Memorandum Submitted by the Liverpool Black Organisation. House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Race Relations and Immigration Sub-Committee. Racial Disadvantage. Minutes of Evidence (Liverpool), 14 October 1980, 610. Also, 'Liverpool has had a black population since the slave-trading days of the mid-eighteenth century,' Appendix 8: Letter to the Clerk of the Sub-Committee from the Jamaican Merseyside Association. House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Race Relations and Immigration Sub-Committee. Racial Disadvantage. Minutes of Evidence (Liverpool) 14 October 1980.

84 Memorandum submitted by the Liverpool Black Organisation, 610.

85 For an overview of this episode from the point of view of the Liverpool Black Caucus, see Liverpool Black Caucus, *The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool: The Black Community's Struggle for Participation in Local Politics 1980–1986* (Liverpool: Merseyside Area Profile Group and Runnymede Trust, 1986). And from the militant labour perspective see Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn, *Liverpool: A City That Dared to Fight* (London: Fortress, 1988).

city, post-1981, Liverpool and slavery became much more prominently part of the *explanation* of Liverpool and race and, more importantly, Liverpool and racism. This was also a perspective that focused as much on the public memory of Liverpool and slavery as its history. Writing his foreword to the Commission for Racial Equality funded *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool 1660–1950*, Wally Brown (Chair of the Merseyside Community Relations Council (MCRC)) described the ‘forgetting’ of the history of both the black presence and the history of racism within Liverpool’s otherwise proud historic identity narratives as a ‘conspiracy of silence’.⁸⁶ Within this text, the chapter addressing the ‘growth of racism’ concerned Liverpool’s slave trade and the ‘ideological’ background of racial values against which this took place.⁸⁷ A now much-quoted Liverpool City Council commissioned report into race relations in Liverpool 8, particularly post-1981 (and 1986) riots, was titled *Loosen the Shackles*, connecting from the outset experiences of racism and Liverpool’s historic involvement in slavery through a ‘shackle’ metaphor.⁸⁸ This report’s second chapter, ‘The Legacy of the Past’, juxtaposed Liverpool as ‘A City Built on Slavery’ against the silences, omissions, and justifications within the city’s official authoritative narratives of this past. There is a distinct dissonance and contradiction here, whereby ‘[m]odern Liverpool, while being aware of this shameful history, appears to try hard to gloss it over, if not forget it.’ This was achieved within the Merseyside Maritime Museum (opened 1980), the report suggests, through panel text that read like a ‘lawyer’s plea for mitigation for Liverpool’. The only discussion of slave trading within the entire Maritime Museum was a small panel accompanying an image of a slave ship, which nevertheless glossed over Liverpool’s role by stating that ‘Liverpool’s trading wealth was firmly established before it began to dominate the slave trade from 1760s.’⁸⁹ The report framed criticism of the poor public memory of transatlantic

86 Wally Brown, ‘Foreword,’ in *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool, 1660–1950*, Ian Law, ed. June Henfrey (Liverpool: Merseyside Community Relations Council, 1981).

87 Law and Henfrey, *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool*, 3.

88 Lord Gifford QC (Chair), Wally Brown, and Ruth Bunday, *Loosen the Shackles: First Report of the Liverpool 8 Inquiry into Race Relations in Liverpool* (London: Karia Press, 1989).

89 Full panel text: ‘The slave trade did make a significant contribution to Liverpool’s prosperity. However, Liverpool’s trading wealth was firmly established before it began to dominate the slave trade from the 1760s. Between 1783 and 1793, 878 Liverpool ships carried 303,737 slaves. Sailings to Africa represented only 10% of outward bound tonnage from Liverpool. On the other hand slaves produced the sugar and tobacco which were Liverpool’s most important imports.’ Quoted in Lord Gifford QC (Chair), Brown, and Bunday, *Loosen the Shackles*, 26.

slavery in Liverpool through a language of familial connections to history, through ‘generations’ that forge links across time. It is ‘important to today’s generation that the crimes of previous generations should not be suppressed’. The slave trade was ‘a crime against humanity comparable to the genocide of the concentration camps, but stretching over centuries. It was justified by the arguments of racial superiority which still are voiced today.’ Poignantly here, transatlantic slavery is compared to the Holocaust with an emphasis on slavery having lasted longer, a key rhetorical tactic in the legitimization of public discourse around slavery from racial perspectives. Further this matters precisely *because* the same arguments that enabled the justification of slavery, those of ‘racial superiority’, are still ‘voiced’ (or rather, enacted in policy, policing, education, and employment). The report received some criticism for not having gone far enough, and not acknowledging black education efforts already in place in Liverpool 8. An editorial within the Charles Wootton Centre’s newsletter responded to what was perceived as a weak metaphor within the report’s title: ‘What Black People Want Is Not Merely to Loosen But to Cut Into Pieces and Melt Down All The Shackles Around Them.’⁹⁰

Race relations and black political action in the 1980s was both a watershed in Liverpool’s history generally and within contemporary and future developments within its public memory of slavery. In papers released in 2011, it emerged that, following the riots of 1981, some members of the Thatcher Government had proposed leaving Liverpool to a state of ‘managed decline’.⁹¹ However, more proactive steps were instead taken. Michael Heseltine was appointed the ‘Minister for Merseyside’, and established the Merseyside Development Corporation as part of a drive for economic regeneration in the city, which he considered would go some way to alleviating social issues.⁹² These initiatives included the regeneration of the Albert Dock (where the Merseyside Maritime Museum, and later the International Slavery Museum are located), the International Garden Festival in 1984 and the Tate Gallery (also housed within the Albert Dock). These initiatives, though beneficial to some dimensions of Liverpool’s economic and cultural life, were criticized for not employing local black people and ultimately not benefitting anyone living in Liverpool 8.⁹³ The International Garden Festival in particular was

90 ‘Charles Wootton Centre responds to Gifford’ reprint of 1990 article in *Charles Wootton News* 25, June 1999.

91 ‘Toxteth Riots: Howe Proposed “Managed Decline” For City,’ *BBC News*, www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-16355281 (accessed 15 March 2014).

92 Jon Murden, “City of Change and Challenge”: Liverpool since 1945,’ in *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, ed. John Belchem (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 445.

93 Belchem, ‘Introduction,’ 53. Nelson and Ben-Tovin, ‘Race, Class, Equal Opportunity

The Persistence of Memory

singled out for both its lack of black employment and engagement, and for its 'Jam Garden' sponsored by Robertson's Jam Company, which was to include Golliwogs as part of its design, and even costumed performers dressed as Golliwogs.⁹⁴ After official complaints spearheaded by Keva Coombes, leader of Merseyside County Council, the designs, described as a 'prime example of institutionalized racism' by community relations officer Alex Bennett, were dropped.⁹⁵

The riots, unrest, and organized protest of black Liverpool were the catalysts for projects of urban regeneration and cultural development in the 1980s. Black resistance to racism threw into stark relief, and brought into public dialogue, the history of black Liverpool, issues around identity and belonging, and historic ways of understanding contemporary social experiences. The ways in which the city's historic involvement in transatlantic slavery had been publicly 'remembered', represented, and talked about received a central spotlight because of this. However, as Chapters 5 and 6 will discuss in further detail, the slavery memory work that began to develop apace in the 1990s and beyond, particularly that instigated by museums and the city council, bore the legacy of this past, of Liverpool's history of racism, riot and black resistance.

Guerrilla Public History: Education and Activism

The black experience in Liverpool, as explored above, particularly the experience of Liverpool-born black people, and more importantly the *memory* of this experience, has shaped and influenced black public memory work around slavery. Much slavery memory work initially sought restorative education – rewriting the history of Liverpool and slavery against the grain of more mainstream historical texts that omitted information, downplayed the significance of this history, or justified slavery through a racialized, and frequently racist, discourse. This restorative public history education took place in classrooms, through published texts and qualifications, but also, crucially, outside such spaces – on the streets of the city itself. Descended from enslaved people of African descent in Barbados, and born in Liverpool in 1932, Scott has been conducting slavery walking tours in Liverpool since the 1970s. His tours foregrounded the city's large involvement in the trade against the tone of contemporary official histories at this time, which largely

Policies and Local Government: The Case of Liverpool,' 59; Liverpool Black Caucus, *The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool*.

94 'Gollywog Garden,' *Black Linx*, June 1984.

95 'Golliwogs Ban in Festival "Racism" Fury,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 1 May 1984.

sought to downplay its significance.⁹⁶ Scott recounts how, after marrying and having children, he would take his family walking around the city and tell them the history of buildings and the trading history of the city. From here word spread through gendered networks – it was ‘especially women, the mothers’ who asked to go on these tours with their children and Scott began to conduct tours more regularly, eventually charging a small fee.⁹⁷ Local Liverpool-born black historian and educator Ray Costello, author of *Black Liverpool*, similarly attributed his interest in history to the women in his family. He framed this interest through time measured in life spans, that the women in his family lived very long lives (his mother died at 91, great aunt at 96). Through stories of their own lives, they shared *historical* experience but they also forged a closer, and more direct connection to the time of slavery and colonialism in Bermuda where a number of his ancestors lived in the early nineteenth century.⁹⁸ Scott attributes his own engagement with history and education to women and familial networks of informal learning, ‘if you educate a woman, you educate a village’, through dialogue between mothers, aunts and grandmothers, and children.⁹⁹

For Scott, as with much black discourse in relation to the city’s history, there is also no division between Liverpool and slavery and Liverpool and racism. In answer to an interview question concerning how he first learnt about Liverpool and slavery, Scott responded with anecdotes outlining examples of racial disadvantage, racist language, and treatment of black people of African descent (and specifically Liverpool-born black people) in the city, from childhood to adulthood. He did not mention slavery in his response and, in effect, racist experience, the Liverpool-born black experience, was the answer to this question. The legacy of Liverpool and slavery is how he knew about Liverpool and slavery. However, when asked how he first learnt about the history of slavery generally, Scott created links across the black Atlantic through the experiences of African-Americans in the American South:

96 ‘To some extent the image of the Liverpool merchant in the eighteenth century has been distorted by his association (very often erroneously) with the slave trade’ (25) and ‘In the cold light of financial gain, the business was far less remunerative than has generally been supposed’ (32): Francis Edwin Hyde, *Liverpool and the Mersey: An Economic History of a Port 1700–1970* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971); ‘Liverpool was more important for the slave trade than the slave trade was for Liverpool,’ Roger Anstey and P.E.H. Hair, ‘Introduction,’ in *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade and Abolition: Essays to Illustrate Current Knowledge and Research*, ed. Roger Anstey and P.E.H. Hair (Widnes: Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1976), 5.

97 Scott, Interview with author, Liverpool, 5 February 2012.

98 Ray Costello, Interview with author, Liverpool, 13 January 2013.

99 Scott, Interview with author, Liverpool, 5 February 2012.

The Persistence of Memory

I knew about slavery because of the southern states. Through the stories of the seamen. Because, this is, this is it. Black people in Britain, black seamen, err, uncles, even Liverpool born black men would always meet on ships. So, if they went to the Southern States, Charleston, great ports to pick up the cotton to bring into Liverpool – they saw what was going on.¹⁰⁰

Here, it is the stories of black seamen, brought back via trade routes that once sustained the institution of slavery, that spread knowledge not widely known, through black men who ‘saw what was going on’. Such narratives form an unofficial and layered memory of slavery, where stories of historical enslavement are passed down through black seamen from the nineteenth century, but are framed alongside more contemporary black Atlantic experience as a *legacy* of slavery; through stories and witnessing of the Jim Crow era of racial oppression and segregation (often fittingly referred to as ‘slavery by another name’).¹⁰¹ Following this explanation, Scott recounted another black seamen’s racist experiences in Australia when he was mistaken for an Aborigine and shifted seamlessly into discussing racial apartheid in South Africa and the treatment of India by British soldiers. Here, a global network of racial oppression and white supremacy maps across Scott’s response, which draws focus to the ‘knowledge’ of slavery; that he, and others, *know* about slavery because it is not ‘past’; these are different chapters in the same historical story of racial oppression, the folding and refolding lines and planes of racialized colonial oppression from past to present, as discussed within the introduction of this chapter. Discussion of these themes emerged within Scott’s tours, which were used as part of race relations and educational initiatives through the city council, local education authorities, the police and prison service, and the museums in the wake of the riots and tensions of the 1980s. Scott credits his involvement with trade unions (he was a shop steward) for his ability to communicate with different people and ‘have the confidence to stand up and talk’ with the ‘mainly white men, who came on the tour and wanted to have an argument with’ him, who would, like so many of Liverpool’s historians, journalists, and figures of authority, downplay the significance of the slave trade, or divert attention to slavery in America.

Many black organizations stressed education as a medium through which racism and disempowerment could be challenged. This was a particularly clear objective for the black-led Charles Wootton College,

¹⁰⁰ Scott, Interview.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War Two* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008).

Black Liverpool

set up initially in 1974 and renamed in 1978 to memorialize the black seaman killed during the riots in 1919.¹⁰² Staff from the college located Wootton's grave in Anfield and added a gravestone in 1989 with the inscription 'Charles Wootton / 1890-1919 / The Inspiration We Feel / RIP / Charles Wootton Centre.'¹⁰³ The 'Charlie', as it was affectionately known, was officially given college status in 1992, and British-Guyanese Labour MP Bernie Grant became the college's first patron in 1997.¹⁰⁴ Alongside a number of different standard educational, technical, and vocational courses, the college ran a Black Studies course, the aims of which included 'analysing the continuities and changes that have emerged as a result of Africans being torn out of Africa via the infamous "Atlantic Slave Trade"'.¹⁰⁵ Emerging alongside the broader national history workshop movement of the 1970s instigated by radical Marxist historian Raphael Samuel and colleagues working especially in further, alternative, and adult education, a local Black History Workshop was established in Liverpool after 1981, which set out to 'rewrite the distorted history of Black People in Liverpool'.¹⁰⁶ Such activism around history (and memory) took place alongside broader political activism at the college. The college was involved in establishing a number of avenues for black empowerment including the Liverpool 8 Law Centre, the Black Media Group, and the Black Sisters, and went on to concentrate its efforts in the area of black education. Following the 1981 riots, the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee

102 'The College decided to honour him in recognition of his bravery in the face of hostile racism, so that his deeds would not be forgotten.' Chief Ben Agwuna, 'Foreword,' in *Black Organisation and Identity in Liverpool: A Local, National and Global Perspective*, ed. William Ackah and Mark Christian (Liverpool: Charles Wootton College Press, 1997), iii. The college was initially housed in the Adult Education Centre based in the Rialto buildings, one of the sites to be predominantly destroyed during the 1981 riots. The college moved to 248 Upper Parliament Street in March 1978. 'Further Information on the College Management and Staffing,' *Charles Wootton College – Special 20th Anniversary Report* (1994).

103 *Charles Wootton News* 5, June 1989 (Front Cover).

104 'Guests Toast College Status,' *Charles Wootton News*, December 1992.

105 Topics of the Black Studies course included African Contribution to the Development of European Civilization; the Atlantic Slave Trade, Slavery and its Abolition; Events & Issues in Modern Africa and African Diaspora History 1850-1990; Religion and Identity in the Africana and African Diaspora Experience; Black Creative Production; Black Politics; Black Women; and Education from a Black Perspective. William Ackah, 'Black Studies Curriculum at the Charles Wootton College,' *Charles Wootton College – Special 20th Anniversary Report* (1994).

106 Chief Ben Agwuna, 'Charles Wootton Centre for Further Education,' *Charles Wootton News*, 1987, 2. 'Black History Workshops,' *Charles Wootton College – Special 20th Anniversary Report* (1994).

The Persistence of Memory

(a support unit for members of the black community) was located in the basement of the college, where the Media Unit later resided.¹⁰⁷ The college also contributed to the Grove Street Access to Higher Education course ('Black Access') which became part of Liverpool Community College, arranged in partnership between the Charles Wootton College, Sandown College, and Liverpool Education Authority, with the college setting the curriculum guidelines, which included the requirement of having a Black Studies course and the employment of an all-black staff.¹⁰⁸ At one of the college's annual open days in June 1990, Visiting Fulbright Research Scholar to the University of Liverpool, William E. Nelson (Ohio State) gave a speech about the importance of the Charles Wootton College in relation to a lack of provision in the standard education system for black children who were not educated about:

Oludah Equiano, an Ibo from Nigeria who led the fight against the slave trade in Britain in the 1770s, in the process of becoming Britain's first Black political leader. The English history that they are taught is a distorted, useless history that does not tell them who they are, why they are here, how they got here, and what role their ancestors have played in the building of this society.¹⁰⁹

Whilst stressing the importance of understanding history, Nelson argued that 'Black children must know the bloody pages of English history so that they will not be condemned to relive them. They must know about the race riots of 1919 that took the life of Charles Wootton.' Stressing that racism was the underlying cause of white violence in the 1919 riots, Nelson argued that rather than this being 'Black history, this is British history' – it is 'the history of a country whose economy in the 18th and 19th centuries was developed on the back of the slave trade.' Crucially, places like the Charles Wootton College needed to tell this history.

In addition to its own newsletter, the college, in partnership with the Merseyside Community Relations Council and with partial funding from Merseyside County Council until 1986, also published a black community magazine called *Black Linx*.¹¹⁰ *Black Linx* published a number of pieces

107 'Charles Wootton College – A Brief History,' *Charles Wootton College – Special 20th Anniversary Report* (1994).

108 'Charles Wootton College – A Brief History'; Chief Ben Agwuna, 'Director's Report – education from Rialto, twenty years on,' *Charles Wootton College – Special 20th Anniversary Report* (1994).

109 William E. Nelson, 'Speech Given for June 1990 Open Day,' *Charles Wootton News*, December 1990.

110 Editors, 'Editorial,' *Black Linx*, 1986. The magazine was published at irregular

Black Liverpool

concerning slavery, which, like material from the Charles Wootton College, approached the history of slavery through the prism of contemporary racism. In an article as part of a series titled 'Black Studies', racism is discussed as taking shape largely during the nineteenth century, but earlier origins are noted:

There had been plenty of white racism during the time of the slave trade. The slave trade itself helped to stir it up, that was another way in which the slave trade did its damaging work. For a long time Europeans in Europe, or white Americans across the Atlantic, saw Africans as only slaves. Many came to believe Africans were 'natural slaves' who scarcely minded their suffering. These Europeans conveniently forgot Europe's own history of slavery in the past. They also forgot that it was the Europeans who had started the slave trade with Africa.¹¹¹

Black Linx advertised the publication of Ian Law and June Henfrew's *Race and Racism in Liverpool*, within an article that argued that '[t]his pamphlet proves that the black and racist history of Liverpool can be ignored no longer.' The opening paragraph focused on the resulting racism produced by Liverpool's own colonial history, that '[f]or over three centuries white racism has infested local society in Liverpool. It grew from the experience of racial exploitation in the colonies and via the crude racism of the slave trade.'¹¹² A few years later, *Black Linx* published a study column on British black history, which posed questions for readers to answer based on a passage of text, with prizes on offer for correct answers. Information within the section concerning slavery included young black people in Britain enslaved in domestic contexts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, black servants by 1590, and in relation to Liverpool:

The first recorded 'slaving' by Liverpool ships took place in September 1700 when the 'Liverpool Merchant' was recorded as being in Barbados with a cargo of 200 African slaves for £4,329. In October of the same year the goods ship 'Blessing', set sail from Liverpool bound for Guyana. Liverpool soon outshipped Bristol and remained the top slaving port until the abolition of slavery in 1807.¹¹³

intervals between 1983 and 1986, however earlier versions of a newsletter were circulated from 1976. This editorial also suggested that the magazine reached at least 2,000 people based on sales, and more if these were being shared.

¹¹¹ 'Black Studies: Growth of Racism,' *Black Linx*, November 1983.

¹¹² 'Liverpool's Racist Past,' *Black Linx*, December 1984.

¹¹³ 'Early Historical Background of Black People in Britain: Part One,' *Black Linx*, 1986. The authors drew on information from Law and Henfrew's *Race and Racism in Liverpool*, and Peter Fryer's *Staying Power*, published that year.

The Persistence of Memory

Both *Black Linx* and the *Charles Wootton Newsletter* published black history articles, articles on the history of slavery generally, pieces calling out and challenging racism, and a number of more creative responses such as poetry, which often meditated on the contradictions of Liverpool's history and was critical of the lack of public history efforts surrounding slavery. Some of this focused on Liverpool's heritage tourism sites, concurrently gaining investment and regeneration in the years after the 1981 riots: 'Yet, when I visited the Albert Dock / a short while ago / there's no mention of slavery / in their cosy little show', whereas others considered absences in more formal education, 'The Charlie really educated me about my black history / The past and why it's really hidden / slavery wasn't told in the school / when conquering Africa with colonial rule / We now know why you were so cruel.'¹¹⁴

Black-led organizations began to work with more mainstream outputs in public history and educational efforts surrounding Liverpool and slavery into the 1990s and 2000s. Students of the Charles Wootton College itself went on to shape Liverpool's memory of slavery, going on to higher education and into academic careers.¹¹⁵ It was a former student of the college who in 1999 proposed the motion that the city council issue an official apology for Liverpool's role in the slave trade. However, this was also the final year the college would be open, having suffered significant funding cuts and criticism over its management. As Liverpool-born black academic and former pupil of the college Mark Christian remarked, 'in 1999 the City Council apologizes for the slave trade. The next year they close down our college.'¹¹⁶

For a number of black-led organizations, emphasis on acknowledging contradictions in Liverpool's civic life, acknowledging an under-acknowledged (or downplayed, denied, silenced) history, the connections between slavery and racism, and African agency and resistance remained paramount in public memory work. The Black History Resource Working Group's book *Slavery: An Introduction to the African Holocaust* produced between 1995 and 1997 was designed from the group's own experiences of racism and

¹¹⁴ 'The Port of Liverpool' (Poem) *Charles Wootton News*, 1987; Ann Lopez, 'Lost and Found (Poem),' *Charles Wootton News*, June 1997. Ann Lopez was a pre-higher education student of the Charles Wootton College. In 1986 a poem from a white reader, signed 'A Freedom Fighter,' was published: 'My ancestors did it to you / I see pain / I do want to help though, I / Cry with shame,' 'Sugar and?' *Black Linx* 7, March 1986.

¹¹⁵ Academic sociologists Professor Stephen Small and Dr Mark Christian were both students of the college. Small was an academic advisor on both the TSG and the ISM and Mark Christian has spoken at a number of commemorative events at the museum, including SRD in 2005.

¹¹⁶ Mark Christian, verbal remark made during introductions to the 'Liverpool Black Atlantic Conference', ISM, May 2012.

Black Liverpool

anti-racist activism in Liverpool, and was designed to both 'explore the ways in which Africans liberated themselves from slavery and to look at how the history of slavery and the slave trade could be placed firmly within the context of the National Curriculum for History' at key stage 3 level.¹¹⁷ The working group was comprised of teachers and educators, librarians, outreach workers and researchers from the city council, museums and LARCCA (Liverpool Anti-Racist and Community Arts Association), and the book was edited by Lenford White, education officer within the council's Race Equality Management Team.¹¹⁸ The political deployment of the term 'Holocaust' within the book's title is explained in the introduction, drawing on definitions and associations with 'horror, mass murder and the decimation of a people', though presumably also to align with the comparatively higher public legitimacy education and memory work around the Nazi Holocaust had gained.¹¹⁹ The book's stated focus on recovering and rewriting the history of slavery included a particular focus on omissions by Liverpool's own historians who, nevertheless, 'have bolstered up the part played by local white abolitionists in the ending of the slave trade'.¹²⁰ The book placed the black experience centrally within the history of slavery, including sections on Africa 'before during and after slavery' and with an emphasis on black agency that runs through and beyond the history of enslavement, on 'black people as resilient, never accepting their lot passively, but rather rising up against slavery, colonisation and racism'.¹²¹ The book considered the impact of slavery, not just economically, socially, and culturally on Liverpool, her people and built environment, but through the ideology of anti-black racism that justified it. The book used examples within Christianity, eighteenth and nineteenth-century pseudo-science, and more recent racist ideological symbols and stereotype, such as the Golliwog used by Robertson's Jam, familiar to debates around race and racism through its proposed use within the International Garden Festival some ten years prior to this book's publication.

Whilst there has been some important and impactful local black history and memory activism, more nationally driven activities have comparatively

117 Key stage 3 (England and Wales) pupils are between 11 and 14 years of age. Lenford White, 'Editorial,' *Black Practitioners and Learners Network Newsletter* 10 (Spring 2007). The book was separated into two sections, one with academic articles about slavery for teachers and the second with explicit links to the National Curriculum.

118 Historian of black Liverpool Ray Costello, and Garry Morris, outreach worker for NMGM (TSG) were also part of this group.

119 Lenford White, 'Introduction,' in *Slavery: An Introduction to the African Holocaust (revised edition...with special reference to Liverpool 'Capital of the Slave Trade')*, ed. Lenford White (Black History Resource Working Group: Liverpool, 1997), 2.

120 White, 'Introduction,' 3.

121 White, 'Introduction,' 3-4.

The Persistence of Memory

fallen somewhat flat in Liverpool. Black History Month (BHM), marked since 1987 in London and elsewhere, was designed to promote knowledge and understanding of black history, culture and heritage as a way of encouraging the formation of more positive black British identities and perceptions of black British people.¹²² Whilst this does not, indeed should not, mean a forum for discussing slavery as ‘black history’, the two have historically converged. As Paul Gilroy argues, slavery is ‘somehow assigned to blacks’, becoming ‘our special property rather than part of the ethical and intellectual heritage of the West as a whole’.¹²³ As discussed in this chapter, the history of Liverpool’s involvement in slavery and the history of the Liverpool black presence are told entwined; transatlantic slavery perhaps acting as a useful ‘starting point’ for talking about the Liverpool black presence, as well as, crucially, a starting point for addressing historic and contemporary racism in the city. With this in mind, it might be expected that, given Liverpool’s historic black community, BHM would be marked on a large scale or, at least, in a significant way. However, BHM was not marked by local authorities until the early 2000s and has not played a particularly significant role in Liverpool’s civic calendar until relatively recently. Given the long history of a black presence in the city, the aims and objectives set out by BHM had perhaps already been met, if not by the local authority then internally within the black community, by educational initiatives, by city elders, and by colleges such as the Charles Wootton College. Whilst this may well be the case, part of the objectives of BHM were also to educate everyone else, to share black history as British history and facilitate a more informed dialogue between different groups of people. BHM can be, if nothing else, a calendric prompt for the promotion of black history, a reason, as if it were needed, to bridge gaps, open dialogue, and raise issues relevant to Liverpool’s black community. Given the long-standing political tensions, racism, and conflicts between the black community and local authorities in Liverpool, this recurring, nationally endorsed opportunity to foreground black history, heritage, and culture might seem a natural one for Liverpool council to seize. However, this has historically not been the case. Further, where events have been held, they have rarely focused on black *history* or issues directly related to the Liverpool black experience, and have been criticized for their tokenism and triviality. Where slavery emerges, rightly or wrongly during BHM, the subject is enveloped within lists of more positive, celebratory entertainment-focused scheduling, creating a distinct commemorative dissonance. The history of slavery emerges in BHM in Liverpool,

¹²² See <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/> for further information.

¹²³ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993), 49.

Black Liverpool

not through specialist programming but through pre-existing memory work, through trails and literature, or as part of a milieu of generalized 'black' culture that sits somewhat uncomfortably with other events.

Merseyside Black History Month Group took on the organization of BHM in 2003 following new funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund specifically directed to community groups organizing BHM events, through the Awards for All Scheme.¹²⁴ From 2003, an Education Resource Pack was produced by representatives of local race relations groups to aid planning of BHM events in line with the 2000 Race Relations Act. These booklets included activity ideas and useful contacts within the Liverpool black community to facilitate communications. Links to slavery were made predominantly through the museums and included activities run through the TSG, such as handling of the slavery collection, slavery archives in the Maritime Museum library, and a slavery history trail. Further resources also included a key stage 2 resource with a CD-Rom, *The History of Liverpool Slavery*, an initiative funded by the city council and produced with NML as 'part of the City's public apology for its association with the slave trade'.¹²⁵ Activities for BHM after this date included a food festival, Black Achiever's Award ceremony (Ray Costello was one of the founders of this initiative), dance, music and drama performances, and screenings of films.

Criticisms of BHM in Liverpool have largely focused on its perceived tokenism, and the trivialization of culture and history. Answering a question on BHM in Liverpool, Scott criticized the content of BHM events, which he considered did not cover enough black history, and did not incorporate enough of *Liverpool's* black history.

And so, to a certain extent, it has been song and dance. It has been, as regards the Maritime Museum, inviting black Americans to come over and speak. Or, people from the Caribbean, to speak. It's never been about black Liverpoolians. And, from my point of view, because the black Liverpoolians are the bottom of the ladder, and because we live the legacy of slavery more... black Americans can come over here, do a lecture on America and then disappear.¹²⁶

Ultimately, BHM events in no way 'spoke' to Scott, or, as he suggested, to the experiences of Liverpool-born black people specifically. Scott's point about the events comprising largely of 'song and dance' is part of a wider critical discourse of multicultural engagement in Britain, the 'saris, samosas,

¹²⁴ 'Celebration of Black History,' *Liverpool Echo*, 8 April 2002.

¹²⁵ Sandi Hughes et al., *Black History Month: History Belongs to Everyone, Education Resource Pack* (Liverpool: Black History Month Group, 2003), 9.

¹²⁶ Scott, Interview.

The Persistence of Memory

and steel bands' syndrome, which acts to divert attention away from more meaningful engagements with non-white European culture through superficial celebration of consumable and largely uncontroversial cultural phenomena.¹²⁷ During BHM, where slavery has been raised, it has emerged in the midst of a discursive collage of more light-hearted cultural products. Events in 2004 were reported as being double in number to those held the year before, and ranged from 'Senegal star Yousou N'Dour performing at the Philharmonic Hall to a slavery trail, Black Expos, fashion and hair shows, a black film festival and numerous community projects.'¹²⁸ Despite BHM's aims 'to celebrate the history of people in Liverpool with an African background, and develop an understanding between all the city's different cultural and racial communities', the celebration of history does not appear to have included much discussion of a historical past, and 'history' is perhaps more generally interpreted as contemporary culture. 'History', the word, when it does appear within press discourse, has done so within the title of the month alone, or within food-related puns.¹²⁹

Conclusion

The long Liverpool black presence has shaped the city's memory of slavery in intimate, unique, and important ways. That Britain's oldest continuous and settled black presence should develop in the former 'slaving capital of the world' is a testament both to the extent, timing, and dominance of Liverpool in the trade, and the resultant ongoing trading relationships that developed with West Africa across the nineteenth century. This historic black presence has in itself formed a living memory of slavery, the familial and gendered narratives kept, told and inherited through the city's mixed black communities, and through the racialized lenses through which white society viewed cultural others, people of African descent who nonetheless initiated intimate connections to histories not long past about the trade and abuse of black bodies. However, it has ultimately been the *legacy* of this past that has created the most impact. The Liverpool black experience has sat against a context of historic (and contemporary) imperial, racialized, and racist discourses of slavery and empire, which have unfolded (and

¹²⁷ Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987). This point is also made in Mark Christian, 'The Lawrence Inquiry and the Role of Education in Resisting Institutional Racism,' *Charles Wootton News*, June 1999.

¹²⁸ Catherine Jones, 'City Prepares for an Historic Month,' *Liverpool Echo*, 2 October 2004.

¹²⁹ For example, 'History Cooks up a Treat,' *Liverpool Echo*, 20 October 2004.

Black Liverpool

refolded) over time. This experience has been punctuated both by specific moments of overt racism, oppression, prejudice, and violence, and by the more everyday structural racism of authoritative institutions, including at points the city council, educational and cultural establishments, as well as broader racist discourse adopted by Liverpool's historians. Liverpool's black communities have resisted and challenged this experience through riot and protest, and efforts to re-educate. Whilst much of Liverpool's most prominent public slavery memory work was itself a product of black resistance, especially in response to the riots and protest of the 1980s, the black experience (and its legacy) has underscored tense and contested relationships with the city's authorities that, whilst looking for ways to 'face' this past, had also historically supported racist structures and discourses in the city.

The efforts of black memory activists in Liverpool can broadly be understood as 'guerrilla public history'. The focus for many, particularly Liverpool-born black people, has been less on creating tangible memorials, as it has been on education *as* activism. Further and school education, learning, informal and formal, as well as the significance of knowing, uncovering, researching, and teaching *history*, has been a cornerstone of the approach of Liverpool black people, many of whom had careers and connections to educational organizations and roles. This kind of public history, situated firmly within an educational context, also adopted an anti-racist activist framework, seeking ways to counter and 'argue against' white racism, and give black people ownership and power through historical knowledge. This chapter has sought to contextualize this approach against the long history of the Liverpool black presence and the specific dissonant experience of those communities. However, this is not the whole story. The Liverpool black presence underscores *all* dimensions to the evolving public memory of slavery in the city and across the rest of this book, especially in relation to the marking of anniversaries (Chapter 3), the museums (Chapter 5), and other prominent slavery memory work in the 1990s (Chapter 6), as well as in relation to Liverpool's built environment (Chapter 7). The long Liverpool black presence, Britain's oldest continuous black presence, *is* a legacy of the city's slave trading past, as is the black *experience*. The legacy of both of these phenomena have created a dissonant heritage of political public memory work through acts of 'guerrilla public history' from Liverpool's black memory activists, and conflict over public efforts to 'face' this past by city authorities and authoritative institutions.

3

Coinciding Anniversaries

Birthdays and the Abolition Act in 1907, 1957, and 2007

Introduction

The city of Liverpool takes as its 'birthday' the year 1207, the date when letters patent were granted by King John, designating Liverpool a free borough. In 1807, the Act for the Abolition of the British Slave Trade was passed by Parliament, marking the end of an activity in which Liverpool had been heavily involved. From 1907 onwards, when Edwardian Liverpool first started celebrating its 'birthday' in grand public ways, the two themes met in awkward and contradictory juxtaposition. The commemorative activity surrounding 1907 as Liverpool's '700th Birthday' and 1957 as Liverpool's '750th Birthday' illustrate the complicated process of negotiating the history and memory of Liverpool and slavery alongside fostering a sense of civic pride and collective identity performed through commemorative rituals. Though downplayed and partially obscured, Liverpool's role in the transatlantic slave trade could not be completely silenced from the various enactments of the city's historic story, which formed the backbone of the performance of a coherent identity narrative. However, the silences that did stand out represent a distinct 'organized forgetting', a process that relied on actively rearranging, contesting, and resignifying Liverpool's memory of slavery in line with broader discourses of philanthropy and civic patriotism in 1907 and of wider argumentative and racialized discourses of imperialistic paternalism in 1957.¹ Fifty years later, Liverpool's 800th birthday in 2007 became dramatically overshadowed by the much larger, government-backed national commemorative activities surrounding the bicentenary of the Abolition of

¹ Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 14.

The Persistence of Memory

the British Slave Trade Act. At this point, this commemorative coincidence of round-number anniversaries was dominated by the national conversation around *Britain's* history and memory of transatlantic slavery, during which year the opening of the International Slavery Museum (ISM) (August 2007) marked a major milestone in Liverpool's slavery-memory chronology. Crucially, the 'birthday' events of 2007 were largely overshadowed by the city's forthcoming year as European Capital of Culture in 2008, which had occupied solid public promotional standing since its announcement in 2003, and was presented as an emblem of the city's economic rebirth. Out of all these shared anniversaries – 1907, 1957, and 2007 – Liverpool's historic involvement in the transatlantic slave trade featured least within the city's 800th birthday in 2007.

The public marking of anniversaries through commemorative ritual provides a useful lens through which to consider the use of the past within performances of civic identity. Peter Novick has argued that such 'memory spasms' seen within the short-lived, frenzied activities of round-number anniversaries, '[do not] signify that we're in the presence of important collective memory', and William Johnston has equally drawn focus to the artificial nature of commemorating round-number anniversaries, a cultural phenomenon he aligns with the rise of postmodernism in the 1980s.² However, it is precisely the *artificial* nature of commemorating such anniversaries that renders them useful moments through which to view contemporary attitudes about the past (and by extension, of course, hopes, fears, and anxieties about the present and future). Moreover, it is important to view such commemorations in long historical context, across the *longue durée* of their recurrence, here at 50-year intervals of their public marking. Jeffrey Olick, in his work on the repeated commemoration of 8 May 1945 in German public memory, stresses the importance of analysing the *dialogic* relationship between such commemorations; of considering the successive marking of anniversaries and their influence upon each other. He suggests that 'images of the past depend not only on the relationship between past and present but also on the accumulation of previous such relationships and their ongoing constitution and reconstitution'.³ There has, however, been little work that has analysed overlapping or coinciding anniversaries at multiple points across time. This chapter considers a unique commemorative coincidence of round-number anniversaries in Liverpool through the public marking of histories seen as foundational and 'milestone' in the city's historic narrative. The awkward juxtaposition of Liverpool's birthday years and the anniversary of the Abolition Act have formed a constitutive

2 Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, 4; Johnston, *Celebrations*.

3 Olick, 'Genre Memories and Memory Genres,' 382.

Coinciding Anniversaries

part of the dissonant poetry of the city's slavery memory. This chapter uses these moments of organized and ritualistic activity as prisms through which to view Liverpool's public memory of slavery at moments of heightened promotion of collective civic pride, and, increasingly, towards the latter of these celebrations, a nationally endorsed spotlight on slavery and abolition.

1907: Performing Civic Patriotism and Celebrating the Slave Trade

On 13 February 1907, Liverpool City Council agreed that a celebration of the 700th anniversary of Liverpool's founding charter should be organized for that year.⁴ The celebrations included a historical exhibition, a five-day pageant, a thanksgiving service at St George's Hall, a visit from the Channel Fleet consisting of 14 battleships and cruisers, firework displays, and the production of a commemorative medal. The final report of the celebrations claimed that the money brought in by these events and the increase in visitors demonstrated that 'the Festival must have very greatly benefitted the trade of the City, as well as given healthy amusement and recreation to so many thousands', which, as John Belchem has argued, indicates that the celebrations were an 'early exercise in heritage leisure and tourism' that 'placed commercial success and enjoyment above authenticity'.⁵ Whilst authenticity might not have been high on the committee's agenda, promoting a sense of civic pride and patriotism, and showing off Liverpool's history and contemporary standing to her own citizens, the nation, and further afield, certainly was. The final report triumphantly claimed that the celebrations had achieved this goal, having 'shown the citizens of Liverpool that their City has a history of which they may well be proud'.⁶ These objectives were outlined in the early organizational stages of the celebrations. Town Clerk Edward Pickmere stated early on that the celebrations should aim to 'stimulate civic pride and patriotism and (especially in the young) encourage the growth of a higher citizenship' and 'bring Liverpool more prominently to the notice of other countries'.⁷ The place and use of Liverpool's history for these stated purposes was perceived as paramount, with a corresponding need to address an apparent ignorance on the part of Liverpool's own

4 LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Proceedings 1906-07, 352 COU, Meeting of the Council of the City of Liverpool 13 February 1907.

5 LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Proceedings 1906-07, John Japp and Frank John Leslie, *700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool: Report of the General Committee to the City Council*, 1907, 10; Belchem, 'Introduction: Celebrating Liverpool,' 9.

6 Japp and Leslie, *Report of the General Committee*, 10.

7 LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Proceedings 1906-07; Edward R. Pickmere, *Proposed Celebration of the 700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool: Report of the Town Clerk*, 1907, 3.

The Persistence of Memory

citizens about their city's history. As the Chairman of the Sept-centenary Festival Committee, Frank J. Leslie stated, a 'spirit of citizenship has always drawn its strength from the lessons of history, and there could hardly be a great city more careless or more ignorant of her own history than is the Liverpool of today'.⁸ Leslie likened the necessity for knowledge of the past to individual memory, warning of the dangers of amnesia:

A man who through mental affliction has lost his memory is a pathetic object, and we, whether as a nation or as a city, have in our pre-occupation been in danger of losing all memory of our own past. May we not have dimly felt that this was so, and may not these historical pageants be the outcome of that feeling?⁹

The 700th birthday celebrations, Leslie suggested, would revive such connections between past and present, 'so that it may never be said again, as the "Times" said of us in 1874, that "Liverpool is a town whose leading inhabitants are negligent of their duties as citizens"'.¹⁰ Leslie called upon ghosts of Liverpool's history in this endeavour, asking who an onlooker would see walking through Castle Street of years gone by? Among the 'figures of the historic past' he conjured up was, 'Roscoe with outspoken courage, denouncing the slave trade in which his own friends and neighbours were engaged', celebrating Liverpool's local figure of abolition, though, notably, the ghosts of slave traders and merchants, and, indeed, of the enslaved Africans who were sold in coffee shops around that very street, do not emerge from the ether.

Whilst, as John Oldfield has argued, there was a distinct silence surrounding the year 1907 as the centenary of the Abolition Act nationally, and the passing of the Act was not specifically commemorated in Liverpool either, the slave trade was remembered in relation to the defining role it played within Liverpool's historic development, which the historical exhibition and the pageant's focus on a narrative history of the city could not avoid referencing.¹¹ In this way, Liverpool stood apart from the rest

8 Frank John Leslie, 'Our 700th Anniversary and Civic Patriotism,' *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 5 April 1907.

9 Frank John Leslie, 'Liverpool's Birthday Pageant – Some Final Pictures,' *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 3 July 1907.

10 Leslie, 'Our 700th Anniversary and Civic Patriotism.' The *Post's* editorial similarly suggests that the celebrations of 1907 indicated a 'birth of interest', in Liverpool's history indicating that previously only '[o]ne or two facts and fancies of Liverpool history, chiefly derogatory, have been Liverpool household words. 'Best Wishes for the Pageant!,' *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 3 August 1907.

11 Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 91.

Coinciding Anniversaries

of Britain in 1907 by publicly commemorating the slave trade when other places largely did not, although this was done in a manner that strove to adhere to the festivities' objectives of fostering a sense of civic pride and patriotism.

The historical 'anniversary' exhibition held at the Walker Art Gallery in July 1907 contained a limited number of artefacts relating to Liverpool and the slave trade. Some aspects of the exhibition exerted celebratory tones, focused entirely on Liverpool's links to abolition, and there was some outright censoring of the subject of slavery. Artefacts displayed included a celebratory plate bearing the words 'Success to the Africa Trade', and a slave collar.¹² The collar's use by anti-slavery campaigner James Cropper was emphasized without any discussion of who else in Liverpool might have used this artefact for its original purpose or, indeed, that it would have been one of many exhibited for sale in local Liverpool's shops.¹³

Whilst connections to Liverpool and the slave trade were not made through tangible tools of the trade, further references to abolition were emphasized freely through the local citizen-hero figure of William Roscoe, who featured regularly throughout the exhibition. Artefacts included commemorative items such as medals marking the centenary of his birth, a bust from 1820, various portraits and medals, items once owned by Roscoe himself such as his walking cane, a pencil case, or objects associated with him such as a hat ribbon worn by his election supporters in 1806, to which the catalogue remarked that Roscoe 'voted with Wilberforce when they passed the Act of Parliament Abolishing Slavery'. There was also a curiously relic-like object on display in the form of a snuff box 'made from oak taken from the house in which Wm. Roscoe was born'.¹⁴ The tone surrounding the display of artefacts relating to Roscoe remained staunchly celebratory, with

¹² Liverpool Libraries Museums and Arts Committee, *Catalogue of the Historical Exhibition Held at the Walker Art Gallery 15th July – 10th August 1907, in Connection With the Celebration of the 700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool* (Liverpool: Lee & Nightingale, 1907), 9. An image of this piece also appeared within the London newspaper *The Sphere*, in a specially produced supplement also celebrating Liverpool's 700th anniversary celebrations. See 'Celebrating Liverpool's Foundation: 700 Years of Municipal History,' *The Sphere: An Illustrated Newspaper for the Home* (1907).

¹³ The catalogue entry reads: '647 Slave collar, with projecting hooks to prevent the slave's escape into the bush. This collar was procured by Mr. James Cropper, who was closely associated with Mr. Thomas Clarkson and Mr. Wilberforce in the work for the abolition of the Slave Trade, and was used at their meetings to illustrate the cruelties practised on slaves.' Liverpool Libraries Museums and Arts Committee, *Catalogue of the Historical Exhibition*, 79.

¹⁴ Liverpool Libraries Museums and Arts Committee, *Catalogue of the Historical Exhibition*, 67–68.

The Persistence of Memory

regular connections made to the national abolition campaign and national 'heroes' of abolition such as William Wilberforce.

However, whilst abolition was readily referenced and celebrated, direct links to Liverpool's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade were limited or, in one instance, actively censored. The section of the exhibition on historic documents, charters, and books was curated by Robert Gladstone (also Vice-Chairman of the Historical Exhibition). A brief collection of 11 documents relating to Liverpool's slave trade was included, comprising slave ship lists, bills of lading, and insurance policies.¹⁵ However, as John Belchem has previously uncovered, Robert Gladstone wrote a letter to the *Liverpool Courier* that illustrates the extent to which authoritative figures within the city actively obscured slavery from official narratives of Liverpool's history:

I was unable to give in my section of [*the catalogue*] a complete collection of the materials for the history of the Liverpool slave trade. The catalogue does not contain any mention of the two most important manuscript volumes known by the name of 'The Log of the Slave Ship Boom' covering the period from 1779 to 1792.

The fault is not mine. The authorities in charge of the Public Library flatly refused me permission to include these volumes in our Exhibition, on the ground (so I understand) that it was desirable to suppress and conceal the evidence of the important part taken by Liverpool in the slave trade...I would therefore suggest that those who are keeping our catalogue as a book of reference should cut out this letter and insert it at page 156.¹⁶

This letter, and the requested act of inserting it within the official commemorative catalogue, can be seen as an act of 'guerrilla memorialization', as seen in later acts set on countering omissions of slavery in later twentieth-century memorialization.¹⁷ Through a focus on abolition and abolitionists, and the instigation of tactical omissions, the exhibition maintained a skewed and sanitized depiction of Liverpool's historic involvement in the transatlantic slave trade. However, the more overtly 'organized' forgetting within the anniversary year was achieved through comforting, justifying, and distracting narratives constructed through the parody of performance in the city's historical pageant.

¹⁵ 'Old Liverpool at Walker Art Gallery – Pictures and Handicrafts,' *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 13 July 1907, 10. A bill of lading is a receipt for goods shipped.

¹⁶ Robert Gladstone, 1907. Quoted in Belchem, 'Liverpool's Story is the World's Glory,' 19. The copy of this catalogue currently in the collection of the Athenaeum Library, Liverpool, has Gladstone's letter inserted on p. 156.

¹⁷ See Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities*, 11.

Coinciding Anniversaries

It was agreed that a pageant 'like that of Warwick' should be organized as part of Liverpool's 700th birthday celebrations.¹⁸ The pageant, which formed a commemorative focal point during 1907, took place on Edge Lane Hall Grounds and Wavertree Park on 2–6 August and a further free performance took place on 10 August. There was a perceived need to show how Liverpool, against popular speculation, had a long history that was deserving of this type of celebration. According to Frank Leslie, who framed his statements in a familiar rags-to-riches narrative, the pageant was intended to demonstrate 'the continuous story of Liverpool's growth through those seven hundred years, from humble fishing hamlet to the mightiest seaport of the world'.¹⁹ The historical procession included over 1,000 historical characters and 12 cars representing specific historical themes in overarching 'periods'.²⁰ It was estimated that upwards of 200,000 people attended the pageant displays that culminated in a patriotic rendition of Elgar's *Land of Hope and Glory*.²¹

Liverpool's role in transatlantic slavery was confined within the historical pageant to a 'Slave Trade Car', embedded within more comforting histories of local philanthropy, in a section titled *Period IX: Wealth and Charity*. The period began with a picture banner celebrating Liverpool's first dock, and a performer playing the part of dock engineer Thomas Steers. The slave trade car (see Figure 1), 'one of the most picturesque and effective in the Pageant',²² was designed by Gerard Chowne (1875–1917).²³ The *Pageant Programme* described the scene and explained the roles of the actors who

18 Pickmere, *Report of the Town Clerk*, 5. Pageantry has a long history, largely based in the display of the Royal Entry and folk-customs surrounding the May Day Festivities (Liverpool had actors performing the roles of Robin Hood, Maid Marian and Friar Tuck within its procession in 1907). Robert Withington has termed Liverpool's pageant an 'occasional-pageant' and likens the event to Ripon's *Millenary Celebration* of 1886. Robert Withington, *English Pageantry: An Historical Outline* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 163.

19 Anon, *700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool: Programme of the Pageant in Wavertree Park & Grounds August 3rd, 5th and 6th* (Liverpool: Gilbert G. Walmsley, 190).

20 The periods were: Ancient Britons, Norsemen and Saxons; Normans and Plantagenets; Days of the Barons; Early Days of Trade; Stanleys and Molyneauxs; The Tudors; Midsummer's-Eve Pageant in Elizabeth's Time; The Stuarts and the Civil War; Wealth and Charity; The Age of War, 1756–1815; The Age of Commerce and Industry, Roadways, Waterways, Steam. Taken from *Programme of the Pageant*, 18–41.

21 *Programme of the Pageant*, 59.

22 'Liverpool's 700th Birthday Pageant,' *Liverpool Courier*, 5 August 1907.

23 Gerard Chowne (1875–1917) was a portrait, landscape and flower painter. He was born in India and studied at the Slade School, Paris and Rome. He taught painting at Liverpool University 1905–08 but soon moved to the Sandon Studios, Liverpool, which began as a society in 1905 and aimed to create an alternative art studio in Liverpool independent of London influence. See Mary Chamot, Dennis Farr, and Martin Butlin,

The Persistence of Memory

sat and walked around the car. These included a female figure epitomizing 'wealth', the personified and feminized product of the slave trade elevated above both the men playing the part of 'celebrated "slave captains"', and enslaved Africans, performed by black men of African descent in this pageant:

Seated on a throne, under a canopy of gold and brown, is a draped figure typifying 'Wealth', holding in her left hand a golden cornucopia. She is supported on either side by the celebrated 'slave captains', John Newton and Hugh Crowe. The former commanded a slave ship while studying for the Ministry, and was afterwards a highly respected Liverpool Divine. Behind her stands another famous slave trader, and at each end of the Car is a group of slaves, while at the back is shown a slave driver. On each side of the Car are six slaves and a driver.²⁴

The car was decorated with chains and manacles, which apparently gave 'an awesome reality to the idea of slavery' and further '[i]ntense reality' was 'imparted by the six Africans who walk on each side of the car'.²⁵ Tellingly, if frustratingly, the identity of those who took on the role of 'slaves' within the pageant remains a mystery as the pageant cast list, which includes the names of all other performers including the children following Molly Bushell's 'Sweets Car', does not name these men.

Pageantry in England at the beginning of the twentieth century rarely included people of African descent. Even American pageantry around this time seldom performed narratives of African-American history. When it did, this predominantly focused on representations of slavery and emancipation, racial stereotypes, and depictions of Southern black people as 'comic buffoons'.²⁶ The men who took on the roles of the 'living freight' in this car were probably the only non-white faces in Liverpool's historic pageant.²⁷

The Modern British Paintings, Drawings, and Sculpture, vol. 1 (London: Tate Gallery, 1965).

²⁴ *Programme of the Pageant*, 38–39.

²⁵ 'Processional Cars – The Slave Trade Car,' *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 5 August 1907. The sale of chains and 'tools of the trade' in Liverpool is referenced within the national press (*The Sphere*) 'Celebrating Liverpool's Foundation.'

²⁶ W.E.B. Dubois responded to what he termed the white 'efforts to use pageantry as black folk drama', by writing and directing a black history pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia* in 1913. See David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 131–32.

²⁷ 'Liverpool's 700th Birthday Pageant.' This article also states that slaves were taken 'from the West Indies or Africa to the slave mart of the Mersey', which is not commonly stated within the historical narrative of slavery in Liverpool. Whether this is the author's

Coinciding Anniversaries



1 Liverpool Pageant, Car 'The Slave Trade.' 1907 Commemorative Postcard

This was said to add an air of authenticity, of 'intense reality', to the scene through the inclusion of actual humans to represent the 'human cargo' of the slave trade. However, local press reporting clearly illustrates how the parody of performance sanitizes this traumatic past:

and at each end of the car, to give realism to the scene, was a group of negroes, while at the back was shown a slave driver with his whip, but which did not appear to be a very formidable instrument of torture. On each side of the car were six slaves and driver, but, in the true spirit of pageantry, all appeared in the happiest of moods and on the best possible terms.²⁸

The 'spirit of pageantry' here incites happy moods and good terms between performers in this display of civic pride, omitting reference to the actual torture done to human beings, or anything of the long-lasting legacies of oppression and discrimination in the Atlantic world. One article concerning the slave trade car suggested instead that the 'group of "darkies", [...] though appearing as slaves harried by cruel drivers, were typical of the modern freedom and prosperity of the coloured brother'.²⁹ However, the suggestion

error, or a reference to the slave sales that would have taken place in Liverpool, is unclear. There is no reaction recorded to this statement within the letters pages following the publication of this article.

²⁸ 'Liverpool's 700th Birthday Pageant.'

²⁹ 'Slavery and Freedom,' *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 5 August 1907.

The Persistence of Memory

that the contemporary treatment of black people was one of ‘freedom and prosperity’, was challenged within a letter written to the *Post* in March 1907 in which Edward Hinds, a black man living in Liverpool, outlined the discrimination he faced finding employment on board ships because of his skin colour. He argued that there were few black people compared to white in the city, but that they were British citizens as well and, as such, should be granted the same rights. Interestingly, he drew on the history of the slave trade and the ongoing exploitation of Africa and Africans to emphasize this point, a phenomenon, he suggests, which lay at the foundation of Britain’s wealth:

I often wonder if the shipowners and those who govern this country ever think for one moment that the ships and the great wealth of this country of which they boast are the tears and blood of my forefathers which they have taken and are still taking from their land, and they, the people of this country refuse to give us a chance of earning a little of what has been taken from us, they may speak of America and criticise the actions of the white people towards the coloured race, if a charge of crime is brought against a poor unfortunate he is taken out and lynched, but on the other hand they will not deprive one of the chance of earning his daily bread on account of colour, as is done in this country.³⁰

The comparison to American segregation and Jim Crow era violence is drawn upon to highlight Britain’s own less authoritative but nonetheless present racial divides and colour bars in relation to employment. Hinds articulated this inequality through the oppression of maritime-themed work and employment. Ships – the same spaces responsible for wealth drawn from the ‘tears and blood’ of incarcerated African people, now starve and oppress them again, this time through denying them equal passage and rejecting their labour.

The necessary inclusion of Liverpool’s ‘most lucrative’³¹ trading endeavour within a largely celebratory performance of the city’s historic narrative dramatically conflicted with the stated aims of the pageant. This dissonance

30 Edward B. Hinds, ‘Grievances of Coloured Men in Liverpool,’ *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 1 March 1907. Replies were published following the publication of this letter including one response that, whilst sympathetic to the treatment of these men who were ‘quite as good seamen as the white man, and just as hard workers’, suggested segregated ships with ‘full negro crews’ as a viable solution: George C. Thomas, ‘The Troubles of Coloured Men,’ *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 4 March 1907. Whilst another suggested that ‘As a rule, coloured men are not very sharp on board ship, especially in steamers, and in these days that counts for much’ see A. Meadows, ‘The Troubles of Coloured Men,’ *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 4 March 1907.

31 Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 185.

Coinciding Anniversaries

was exemplified within local press reporting, where it was suggested that, '[l]ocal pride received a check or a toning at sight of the succeeding group, "The Slave Trade"'.³² This section of the pageant display was 'impossible to view impartially in a twentieth-century atmosphere' and the slave trade was something 'with which the early history of the port of Liverpool is somewhat painfully associated'.³³ Attempts to negotiate the conflicts and contradictions of 'celebrating' slavery in this birthday pageant fell into awkward patterns of juxtaposing cruelty with kindness and wealth with charity:

Unhappily, the opportunity came to it of making money quickly in a traffic of which we cannot now be proud – the buying and selling of slaves. Many of the old Liverpool merchants who built up vast fortunes in this way seem to have been very wealthy and highly respected citizens, examples of all the virtues of which go to the making of God fearing, clean-living Englishmen. They were generous of their wealth, and to them some of Liverpool's noblest charities owe their beginning. It was not easy to find a distinctive title for this somewhat mixed and perplexing period of our pageant, and it was the ingenuity of Mr Legge, our new director of education, which coined for us the descriptive and comprehensive heading of 'The Beginning of Wealth, well gotten and ill-gotten, and of Charity, which covereth a multitude of sins'.³⁴

'Ill-gotten' wealth was obscured in 1907 by aligning slavery with 'well-gotten' wealth, with charity, and perhaps through this apparent balancing act a 'multitude of sins' was attempted to be covered. The activities of Liverpool merchants were justified by emphasizing how 'wealthy and respected' they would have been in their time and that this wealth went on to found charitable institutions. Such institutions were immediately celebrated in the proceeding themes of the pageant performance. Whilst, as Frank Leslie admits, '[i]t would have been impossible in any faithful presentation of the city's history to have omitted a sufficient reference to her share in the slave trade', civic pride was reignited by the theme of the following section of the procession; 'we shall welcome the appearance of the Bluecoat School banner as the advent of a brighter theme'.³⁵ The narrative constructed by

32 'Processional Cars – The Slave Trade Car.'

33 'Slavery and Freedom'; 'Liverpool's 700th Birthday Pageant.'

34 Frank John Leslie, 'Liverpool's Birthday – Some More Pageant Pictures and Their Stories,' *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*, 21 June 1907, 11.

35 Leslie, 'Liverpool's Birthday'. The Bluecoat School, founded in 1708 as a charitable school for the poor, was founded by Bryan Blundell, a sea captain and slave trader involved in the transportation of 'refuse slaves' from sugar plantations in the Caribbean into the tobacco plantations of the Chesapeake. Laurence Westgaph, 'Built on Slavery,' *Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation* 108 (2009): 27.

The Persistence of Memory

car arrangement and themed juxtaposition in the pageant placed the slave trade between a celebration of the engineering feat that made the docking of slave ships possible and the distinctly positive consequence of charity and charitable institutions. A major source of Liverpool's wealth and historic development was thus briefly acknowledged – celebrated even – and simultaneously morally distanced from and mitigated.

1957: Racism, Decolonization, and Abolition

Fifty years later, Liverpool's social and physical landscape had changed dramatically. The charter celebrations in 1957 sought to present post-war Liverpool as a 'modern industrial city' by drawing on narratives of progress and events that celebrated industry.³⁶ In a city still physically fragmented by the devastation of the Second World War, the need to talk progress and illustrate recovery to potential investors and to the psyche of the local population was powerfully apparent. The official marking of Liverpool's 750th 'birthday' consisted of a charter fortnight of events in June, forecast the year before to be 'the biggest display of civic high-jinks Liverpool has ever seen'.³⁷ Such 'high-jinks' included exhibitions, events in schools, lectures, sporting activities, concerts, guard mount display, street decorating competitions, and a special religious service held at the Anglican Cathedral to mark the beginning of these events. Originally, celebrations were planned on a larger scale – intended to surpass those of the Festival of Britain in 1951, but budgetary cuts downscaled these plans dramatically.³⁸

A precedent to mark the anniversary year had been set up by the events of 1907, and a commemorative expectation for some forms of memory work was repeated as standard, such as the creation of exhibitions demonstrating a narrative history of Liverpool, and the production of commemorative texts.³⁹ However, there was an obvious absence of the historical pageantry

36 Belchem, 'Introduction,' 48. As exemplified by the booklet that told Liverpool's story through '750 years of progress'. Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, *Liverpool and Merseyside 1207–1957: 750 Years of Progress* (Derby: Bemrose Advertising Limited, 1957). The *Industry Advances Exhibition* held in Cleveland Square, near Paradise Street celebrated Liverpool industry. *City of Liverpool 1207–1957: Charter Celebrations 16th to 30th June 1957* (Liverpool: Liverpool Corporation, 1957), 6.

37 Stephen Wright, 'What a Fortnight It Will Be,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 5 September 1956.

38 Derek Whale, 'Liverpool will celebrate its Charter, and – THE SQUEEZE WILL NOT STOP OUR CITY GOING GAY,' *Liverpool Evening Express*, 22 May 1956.

39 Which in 1907 included Walter Dixon Scott, *Liverpool* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1907); Lacey, *History of Liverpool From 1207 to 1907*; Muir, *History of Liverpool; Liverpool Ancient and Modern: Published by the Liverpool Post, Mercury, and Echo Ltd.*

Coinciding Anniversaries

seen in 1907, omitted, it was stated, because of cost restrictions. There was some public reflection on the commemorative rituals seen in 1907, and the *Echo* published the programme of the 1907 pageant 'being of interest to our older readers' and for the history 'it tells so well'.⁴⁰ There was also a lack of commemorative merchandise such as mugs and medals, with emphasis falling instead on the role of specially produced books or 'inscribed texts' as a better alternative since, it was suggested, 'all would learn something about the city'.⁴¹ *The Story of Liverpool*, published by the Corporation of the City of Liverpool as a commemorative text, had less than a page on the slave trade (sandwiched in between sections on charity and privateering), which raised familiar tropes of Liverpool's slavery discourse; that Liverpool left her rival ports 'far behind', that '[o]nly a very few negroes were actually brought to Liverpool' and that Liverpool ultimately 'overcame abolition'.⁴²

The position and significance of the transatlantic slave trade in the narrative of Liverpool's history in 1957 was significantly downplayed, alongside much more moral justification and distancing than had been the case in 1907. William Roscoe received a far greater focus of attention and a more central role within the celebrations alongside a more pronounced elevation of abolition than had been the case 50 years before. Intermediate anniversaries and their accumulative commemorative effect shaped the tone and content of 1957. The large-scale national commemoration of the centenary of the Emancipation Act in 1933 and 1934 pushed the celebration of abolitionists further into the public sphere. It is also worth noting that Liverpool had publicly marked the centenary of William Roscoe's death in 1931, and birth in 1953, and the country had celebrated the life of William Wilberforce during the centenary of his death in 1933 (which merged into celebrations of the Emancipation centenary).

The mediating role of historians was also of great influence. City librarian and historian George Chandler had his council-sponsored history *Liverpool* published in 1957, which was described as a 'permanent commemoration of the anniversary' by the local press, which also produced glowing reviews.⁴³

in Commemoration of the 700th Celebration of City Charter, (Liverpool: Liverpool Post, Mercury, and Echo Ltd, 1907).

40 '1207-1907: The Pageant of Liverpool,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 17 June 1957.

41 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*; 'It's Say it With Music for the Charter Celebrations,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 17 May 1957.

42 F.A. Bailey and R. Millington, *The Story of Liverpool* (Corporation of the City of Liverpool, 1957), 34. A whole page article about the publication of this book was published in the *Echo*. 'How "A Creek of the Port of Chester" Became a Great City,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 1 May 1957.

43 Listener, 'Street Parties'. The review and interview with Chandler in the *Echo* also claimed that '[i]t is only fair to recall that the men who ran Liverpool's slave trade were

The Persistence of Memory

The book itself contained a mere four paragraphs on the slave trade within its 500 pages, two of which wholly concerned William Roscoe. Within this text, Chandler stated that:

In the long run, the triangular operation based on Liverpool was to bring benefits to all, not least to the transplanted slaves, whose descendants have subsequently achieved in the New World standards of education and civilisation far ahead of their compatriots whom they left behind.⁴⁴

The 'New World' was for Chandler a key part of Liverpool's story (or, perhaps, vice versa), a relationship united through another round-number anniversary that year. 'The discoverer of America was indeed the maker of Liverpool' Chandler states, quoting the inscription on the statue of Christopher Columbus (1898) that stood outside the Sefton Park palm house; 'it is appropriate that the New World will be celebrating the 350th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in the United States in the same year that Liverpool celebrates its 750th anniversary'.⁴⁵ Both George Chandler and Francis E. Hyde (an economic historian at Liverpool University) also authored pieces in press special supplements. Much of this echoed other work, particularly Chandler's focus on Roscoe (his biography of Roscoe was published in 1953, the bicentenary of Roscoe's birth: see Chapter 4) and Hyde's downplaying of the economic impact of the slave trade repeated arguments within an academic essay also published in 1953.⁴⁶

The William Brown Library held a number of exhibitions concerning Liverpool's history and place in the world. All dignitaries who opened exhibitions received either a copy of George Chandler's *William Roscoe of Liverpool* or his council-sponsored, *Liverpool*. The exhibitions individually addressed Liverpool's relationship with Africa, America, Asia, Europe, the Commonwealth, and the UK. The International Library was itself opened by special guest dignitary Mr Jacob Blukoo-Allotey of newly independent Ghana, who was presented with a copy of George Chandler's *Liverpool* by Councillor W.R. Maylor.

acting according to accepted standards of their time; and Liverpool produced a notable opponent of the trade, the still famous William Roscoe [...]. Arnold Edmondson, 'The Liverpool Story – From 'Suche Poore Towne to 'The Great Port,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 20 February 1957.

44 Chandler, *Liverpool*, 306.

45 Chandler, *Liverpool*, 9.

46 George Chandler, *William Roscoe of Liverpool* (London: Barsford, 1953); Chandler, *Liverpool*; Hyde, Bradbury, and Marriner, 'The Nature and Profitability of the Liverpool Slave Trade.'

Coinciding Anniversaries

The exhibition addressing Liverpool's relationship with Africa was opened by the Reverend Father Trevor Huddleston of the Anglican Community of the Resurrection, a former missionary in Johannesburg, South Africa. Among those in attendance (tickets for the opening sold out) were 'members of the city's African community'.⁴⁷ Within his opening speech, Father Huddleston discussed racial discrimination in South Africa. He addressed criticisms levelled against him that he had only focused on South Africa, stating that racism did exist elsewhere, like in the US South, but suggested that 'racial discrimination is dying out in America, but that it is sustained and bolstered up by the government in South Africa'. In amongst reporting of his discussion of contemporary racism, a *Post* article interjected a line in bold that the 'City aided the abolition drive', seemingly unrelated to the points adjacent, relating instead to the words of Liverpool Exchange Labour MP Mrs Bessie Braddock (1899–1970) from the opening. Braddock drew the focus back to a celebration of abolition by suggesting that 'it needed as much courage in 1807 when William Roscoe voted for the abolition of slavery as it took Father Huddleston to put his point of view in countries where it has been very unpopular'. Councillor W.R. Maylor similarly added that although the city was once central in the slave trade, 'Liverpool people were among the first who campaigned for the abolition of slavery'.⁴⁸ Similarly, according to the guide, and in a familiar but this time larger narrative of 'beating the competition' combined – quite contradictorily – with 'celebrating abolition', the exhibition demonstrated how 'Liverpool, because of its geographical position, wrenched the monopoly of the slave trade from Spain and took a prominent part in the movement for its abolition.' Whilst largely taking a distinct focus on abolition, the introductory paragraph of the guide ended with a justifying reminder that '[t]he slave trade had been organized for centuries by the tribal chiefs of Africa'.⁴⁹

As was the case in 1907, the exhibition content did not pass without press reaction, and criticism. This time criticism came from a neighbouring city, the *Manchester Guardian* highlighting silences surrounding slavery within the exhibition. However, the article also acknowledged bias within the historical record, for those who 'won their fortunes from slaving [...] had doubtless many reasons for silence, even in their private correspondence'. The

47 Postman, 'House Full,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 16 January 1957. Although another article described them as 'Africans in Liverpool under the Elder Dempster training scheme', 'Father Huddleston Opens City Show, Asks: Why No Protests on South African Treason Trial?', *Liverpool Daily Post*, 17 January 1957.

48 'Father Huddleston Opens City Show.'

49 *Order of Proceedings for the Opening of the Exhibition 'Liverpool and Africa'* (Liverpool: Liverpool Libraries, Museums and Archives Council, 1957).

The Persistence of Memory

focus on abolitionists at the expense of the supportive role Liverpool City Council played in opposing abolition was also criticized.⁵⁰ By comparison, an article within the *Liverpool Echo* was supportive of the exhibition, but critical of perceived public perceptions of Liverpool and slavery. The *Echo* piece stressed the need for a sense of 'perspective' on the city's slave trading past, which this exhibition had displayed.⁵¹ The author, Ian Stevens, drew on familiar discursive devices such as the celebration of abolitionists, disputing the 'myths' of this history (largely concerning its profitability) and the comparative realignment of African trauma against that experienced at 'home'. Stevens adopted a system of rhetorical questions, each referring to an area he disputed. 'A city built on the slave trade?' the opening line of the article asked, to which 'No' was presented as the only logical answer. Directly after noting 1957 as the charter year, Stevens highlighted the coincidence with 'the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slave trading in Britain'.⁵² Liverpool abolitionist names surround William Wilberforce, equalling his significance; 'slave trade reformers like Roscoe, Rathbone, Wilberforce, Dr Currie, Lord Holland'. However, there was a distinct conflict presented within the article, which at points acknowledged the impact of the slave trade, that 'the port's phenomenal expansion at the end of the eighteenth century was undoubtedly based upon it', yet threw doubt at the specific significance of slavery as a form of trade by inducing what-if histories, suggesting that 'the slave trade enhanced a prosperity that was inevitable' because geographic position and the salt trade 'would have made Liverpool a port to reckon with whatever else her merchants did'.⁵³ The rest

50 'the case for abolition is well represented, but not very much is to be seen or heard of its opponents,' 'News of the North-west – Liverpool and the Slave Trade. Father Huddleston Points a Contemporary Moral,' *The Manchester Guardian*, 17 January 1957.

51 Ian Stevens, 'An exhibition opening to-night puts into perspective Liverpool's part in the transport of negro slaves: The Skeleton in Our Cupboard Gets A Creak In The Joints,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 16 January 1957.

52 He reiterated the overcoming abolition narrative whereby abolition was predicted to bring 'financial disaster' and 'instead it channelled trade into healthier lanes, increased it, and cemented the cornerstone of Liverpool's place in the world.' Stevens, 'The Skeleton In Our Cupboard.'

53 'This is reminiscent of James Touzeau's comments in 1910 that Liverpool merchants would have been as successful in any other line of trade. 'It cannot be gainsaid that this nefarious traffic had done much to establish the wealth and foster the prosperity of Liverpool, but, while admitting this, who can say that the indomitable perseverance and energy of its people, so amply demonstrated through a long course of years would not have ensured an equal prosperity in other directions, perhaps not quite so quickly, yet as efficaciously, if this trade had never existed.' Touzeau, *Rise and Progress of Liverpool*, 589.

Coinciding Anniversaries

of the article sought to morally justify the brutality and inhumanity of the slave trade by listing other horrific experiences of the eighteenth century:

And what was morally wrong in the 18th century? To send white children into bondage overseas? We did that; we called it apprenticeship. Was it sinful to send mites scrambling up chimneys to choke in soot? Was it wrong to use women as pit-ponies? Was it a moral crime to permit Pressganging? All this happened.

Set against such a background of moral progression, with human conscience tied by different values, the sale of black men from a land known only to be fierce and primitive stirred little passion in the breast of England.⁵⁴

The case is one of moral contextualization that nonetheless invites the reader to answer 'yes' to the first questions, to express revulsion at the idea of the actively expressed exploitation of children and abuse of women that is attached to a sense of collective ownership: 'We did that.' When contrasted to the, quite passively expressed, 'sale of black men', or perhaps simply moving of them out of a 'fierce and primitive' land, acts to accentuate eighteenth-century white traumatic experience. Stevens invites a comparison between slavery and equally horrific issues contemporary to 1950s Britain: '[s]lavery in the eighteenth century, loneliness and state-inspired poverty in an age of plenty. Neither better nor worse than each other, historically speaking.' The suggestion implicit here is that these traumas have not received equal condemnation. 'Slavery indeed!' exclaimed Stevens, 'The public conscience had different opinions about freedom then.' Moreover, slavery, echoing Chandler's claims, is presented as having had positive consequences, whereby:

The Africans were taken from their backwardness and forced to create new worlds. They escaped into slavery from the ju-ju rites and mass killings. They have built a culture that is now a Western institution. Out of it has risen the only true Negro middle-class in the world. It still fights prejudice, but will win while most of us are still alive.⁵⁵

This justifying tone of imperialistic paternalism was continued by Stevens through the suggestion that Liverpool was continuing to 'help' Africans, through the African Steamship Company, Lever Brothers, and the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. Through these developments, apparently, 'Liverpool's pride became restored.' Stevens ended his article with the generalizing platitude that 'it takes all kinds to make history'.

54 Stevens, 'The Skeleton in our Cupboard.'

55 Stevens, 'The Skeleton in our Cupboard.'

The Persistence of Memory

The awkward attempts to celebrate the slave trade as part of a performance of civic pride and patriotism in 1907, and the corresponding efforts to mitigate the history of the slave trade by juxtaposing slavery with charity, had been overshadowed in 1957 by greater racialized discourses that downplayed and distanced this history. Abolition had come to be more easily celebrated following both local and national commemorative anniversaries shifting the dialogue in this direction and solidifying the 'culture of abolitionism'. The dominant discourses of 1957 echoed broader national racial and racist discourses in the context of post-Windrush Britain and a decolonizing empire, moulded by the demographic, social, and cultural changes of the mid twentieth century.

2007: Birthdays and Bicentenaries

In the 100 years since Liverpool's civic authorities first sought to publicly and officially celebrate the city's founding charter, the reach of such activities had broadened tremendously. Globalization, and its effects on cultural tourism, in particular, had propelled the local into the global (see Chapter 6), and the significance of Liverpool's birthday celebrations had been disrupted by other national and transnational commemorations and symbolic titles. Firstly, Liverpool's 800th birthday in 2007 was largely over-shadowed by the city's forthcoming year as European Capital of Culture, set to take place in 2008, a distinctly transnational celebration against the more parochial birthday commemorations.⁵⁶ The promotion of 2008 was, moreover, presented as a milestone moment in the narrative of the city's economic rebirth.⁵⁷ Secondly, 2007 was marked nationally as the bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade Act of 1807, and a whole swathe of activities took place across the country in archives, museums, and beyond. Whilst the national focus on the bicentenary meant that the history of the slave trade and abolition took a more prominent position than Liverpool's 800th birthday, it also meant that the slave trade was decoupled from Liverpool's civic identity narratives. Paradoxically, and through the compartmentalization of memory,

⁵⁶ The official 800th birthday guide lists developments and projects taking place as part of the Capital of Culture title and mentions the title 'European Capital of Culture 2008' four times in its one-page Introduction. Debbie Johnson, 'Happy Birthday Liverpool 1207–2007 – The Official Guide to the City of Liverpool,' ed. Margo Storey (Gloucester: British Publishing Company, 2006), 1.

⁵⁷ 'Now basking in the glory of its successful bids to become the European Capital of Culture 2008 and a World Heritage Site, it is throwing off the outdated images of yesteryear, and instead is emerging into a new era: one of prosperity and aspiration,' Johnson, 'Happy Birthday Liverpool 1207–2007,' 35.

Coinciding Anniversaries

slavery featured the least in the birthday celebrations in 2007 compared to 1957 and 1907.

The charter celebrations of 2007 included some examples of the memory work displayed in 1907 and 1957. Interestingly, 'pageantry' made a reappearance, having been absent during the celebrations 50 years previously. The parade route circled roads around St. George's Hall, but stayed around the city centre. Whilst images of the 'pageant' featured regularly in the press, it was clear that the impressive scale of 1907's performance had not been replicated. The performance was perhaps particularly dwarfed when compared to later twentieth-century developments in Caribbean-style carnivals and street processions. The 'pageant' of Liverpool's 800th birthday was largely dwarfed in style and scale by the 'Liverpool International Carnival' organized by Brouhaha International, and the lavish gala birthday dinner in St George's Hall was matched by another lavish dinner on 22 August, also in St. George's Hall, to celebrate the opening of the ISM that year.⁵⁸

Out of all three anniversary years, the slave trade and slavery featured least within 2007 in public discourse around 'Liverpool's 800th birthday'. The subject was mentioned particularly briefly in the official guide, which included one sentence in its historical overview. The only other mention was within the 'Tourist City' section of the guide, within a discussion of the 'Transatlantic Slavery Museum' (*sic*) set to open that year.⁵⁹ The Charter Exhibition held in Liverpool Central Library, similar to those in 1957 and 1907, displayed the original King John Charter, alongside a number of other charters, town books, and grants of arms.⁶⁰ In contrast to the Historical Exhibition hosted in the same library in 1907, there were no items relating to transatlantic slavery noted in publications.

The tension between the overtly celebratory tone of 'Liverpool's 800th birthday' (which tended to merge into discourse around Liverpool's European Capital of Culture year in 2008) and the coinciding 1807 bicentenary, played out within public debates that focused much more centrally on questions of public memory, heritage, and tourism than had been the case previously. The newsletter of the Liverpool Heritage Forum (an informal group established in 2005 representing a selection of cultural organizations covering history, archaeology, performing arts, architecture, and the fine arts, run by Rob

⁵⁸ Johnson, 'Happy Birthday Liverpool 1207–2007.'

⁵⁹ Steve Binns, *History of Liverpool* (2007) has simply: 'In the 18th century, Liverpool became the predominant English Town concerned with the slave trade'. Johnson, 'Happy Birthday Liverpool 1207–2007,' 43, 112.

⁶⁰ Liverpool Central Library, *Free Borough of the Sea: 800th Anniversary Exhibition of Liverpool's Charters* (Liverpool: Liverpool City Council, 2007). This exhibition ran from 7 February to 20 June 2007.

The Persistence of Memory

Ainsworth, also treasurer of Liverpool History Society and Andrew Pearce, former Conservative MEP and schools governor), ran a number of articles and editorials expressing concern about the place of the slave trade in these civic celebrations.⁶¹ ‘Lovers of heritage naturally want 2007 to be a reminder of the remarkable achievements of our forebears in this city’, the first newsletter of 2007 claimed; a reminder needed, it was suggested (and in tones familiar to those of 1907), given the London-centric media and apathy of Liverpool’s own citizens.⁶² This opening editorial queried ‘the place of the slave trade in all this’ and ran through a series of familiar lines of argument acknowledging how disgraceful this history was, but proposing that people today should not ‘feel guilty for actions in which they themselves had no part’; that enslaved Africans were sold to the British ‘by other Africans’; that the slave trade had little lasting impact on the city and Liverpool would have been successful without its investments in the trade (because of the manufacturing centres of Birmingham and Manchester, with no links here acknowledged to the place of the slave trade in the development of these industries). The piece continued:

2007 is supposed to be a year of celebration. Let celebration of the ending of that vile trade and the role that Liverpudlians like William Roscoe played in its abolition be part of the wider celebration. There are other occasions to point an accusing finger at those who profited from this trade in those times – and who do so in several parts of the world to this day.⁶³

Such sentiments were subsequently repeated in an article by *Echo* correspondent Joe Riley. In addition, Riley suggested that the Liverpool Cathedral commemorative service was ‘[j]ust one of a disproportionate number of events connected with slavery which officially pepper Liverpool’s 800th birthday calendar’.⁶⁴ This drew criticism from another *Echo* columnist, Liverpool-born black local historian Laurence Westgaph, who stressed the significance of slavery to Liverpool’s development, quoting from Ramsay Muir’s *History*

61 ‘Liverpool Heritage Forum,’ *Art in Liverpool*, 1 October 2006, www.artinliverpool.com/liverpool-heritage-forum/ (accessed 23 November 2018).

62 Andrew Pearce, *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter* 20 (1 January 2007). Hereafter *LHF Newsletter*.

63 Pearce, *LHF Newsletter*, 20. These points were reiterated in a later newsletter reflecting on 2007 under a section titled ‘Celebrating the End of the Slave Trade, Not Just Complaining About Its Evils’. The piece criticized the lack of attention on contemporary slavery in Africa, that 2007 was ‘supposed to be a year of celebration, not complaining – in this case celebrating the ending of the slave trade, in which Liverpool also played a significant part.’ Andrew Pearce, *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter* 35 (20 October 2007).

64 Joe Riley, ‘No Logic in Slavery Guilt Trip,’ *Liverpool Echo*, 26 February 2007.

Coinciding Anniversaries

of *Liverpool* published during Liverpool's 700th birthday celebrations in support of this, and connecting past and present through foregrounding racism as slavery's most prevailing contemporary legacy.⁶⁵ A debate ensued within the letters pages for several days after this exchange on the subject of Liverpool and slavery (much of which was personally directed at Westgaph, some supportive, some more critical), its public commemoration, and the negotiation of contemporary blame and guilt.⁶⁶

Beyond the letters pages, the most prolonged discussion of slavery in direct connection to the city's 800th birthday was made in press articles outlining Liverpool's history. Still, these were by comparison to the previous anniversary years, few and far between and largely subsumed by a celebratory tone. Slavery appeared as point number 73 in the 'Top 100 things that made Liverpool great'; 'It is not always good things that have made Liverpool great', the section begins, 'and we must acknowledge that much of our wealth and influence came from the profits of slavery, and from the human suffering and sale of commodities that were part of the Triangular Trade.'⁶⁷ Interestingly, one of the most sustained pieces of writing on the history of Liverpool and slavery in the local press was written by 11- and 12-year-olds from De La Salle Humanities College, Croxteth, who wrote a history of Liverpool for the *Echo* and foregrounded the history of slavery within their piece.⁶⁸ This reflects the De La Salle students' involvement in the *Make the*

65 Laurence Westgaph, 'Whether We Like It or Not City Was Built on Slavery,' *Liverpool Echo*, 5 March 2007. The quote from Muir was, 'Beyond a doubt it was the slave trade that raised Liverpool from a struggling port to be one of the richest and most prosperous trading centres in the world.'

66 Tayo Aluko, 'Letter: Abscess of Ignorance,' *Liverpool Echo*, 9 March 2007; Emma Reilly, 'Letter: Christian Slaves' Plight,' *Liverpool Echo*, 23 March 2007; Tony Larkin, 'Letter: Tirade on Slavery,' *Liverpool Echo*, 24 March 2007; Laurence Westgaph, 'Letter: Fact, Not Opinion,' *Liverpool Echo*, 30 March 2007; Natalie Inge, 'Letter: Correct Knowledge,' *Liverpool Echo*, 30 March 2007; Gary O'Neill, 'Letter: Education is Key,' *Liverpool Echo*, 3 April 2007; Alan Wilson, 'Letter: Short Points,' *Liverpool Echo*, 4 April 2007; L. Westgaph, 'Letter: Inhumanity to Man,' *Liverpool Echo*, 12 April 2007; Alan Wilson, 'Letter: Slavery Knowledge,' *Liverpool Echo*, 18 April 2007.

67 Ken Pye, '100 Reasons,' *Liverpool Echo*, 22 August 2007.

68 'The greatest accelerator of the city's development was the slave trade, a practice that caused controversy even at the time with many prominent voices in the city raised against the injustice and cruelty of what was taking place. The slave trade triangle was a profitable route for Liverpool's ships. Metal goods and weapons would be taken to Africa and exchanged for a grim human cargo, who would be taken in dreadful conditions to the plantations of the West Indies and mainland America. The ships then brought back sugar, tobacco and cotton to England. As the trade increased, docks were built and Liverpool prospered. When the abolitionists finally won their argument, the slave trade left behind broken families and uprooted people, but Liverpool continued

The Persistence of Memory

Link, Break the Chain international educational programme organized by NML and the charity Plan UK (a child-centred community development organization).⁶⁹ This £110,000 project, funded by the Department for International Development and Liverpool City Council, involved eight schools in Liverpool, Brazil, Haiti, Senegal, and Sierre Leone, and formed part of the ISM's initial educational programming in its opening year. Students all undertook a study project using shared online materials and communicated with partner schools through an online forum and video links. They produced different creative responses to the project and Liverpool pupils also produced four films about the transatlantic slave trade with a company called Clapperboard UK, which are now held by the ISM.⁷⁰ The success of this project led to further international schools work.

Hints at the history of slavery within Liverpool's historic identity narrative were also given within one example of material culture produced for the charter anniversary; the commemorative 2007 'birthday coin' designed by Liverpool-based sculptor Stephen Broadbent (see Figure 2). The design linked visual symbols of Liverpool's story in a continuous line spanning out from the centre of the coin. The symbols included the obligatory Liver Bird, a guitar representing Liverpool's musical heritage, and – in between a depiction of the waterfront and a ship of sail – a chained hand reaching outwards, drawing on imagery that has become a memorial cliché of the slave trade.⁷¹ Given Broadbent's involvement in slavery memorial projects between Liverpool, Benin, and Richmond, and his part in creating the Newton Memorial, perhaps this inclusion is not surprising.⁷² However, it

to prosper as the cotton trade continued to grow.' Ellis Brice, Jamie Fitzsimmons, and Karl Rowlandson, 'Hamlet That Grew to a World Class City,' *Liverpool Echo*, 20 August 2007. Children in Liverpool 8 also staged a play about slavery at the John Archer Hall in Toxteth. Note from photo caption in David Bartlett, 'Street Revellers Mark Milestone,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 28 August 2007.

69 Alan Weston, 'African link for pupils learning about slavery,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 15 June 2007.

70 NML won the UK Museums and Heritage Award for this project in 2008. Richard Benjamin, 'Museums and Sensitive Histories: The International Slavery Museum,' in *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (New York: Routledge, 2012), 186; Paul Khan, 'Make the Link, Break the Chain – National Museums Liverpool,' *ICOM UK*, <https://uk.icom.museum/resources/case-studies/make-the-link-break-the-chain-national-museums-liverpool/> (accessed 9 December 2019).

71 'Liverpool's 800th Birthday Coin Given to Schoolchildren,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 May 2007.

72 The 'Reconciliation Triangle' (1990) was originally one of three in Liverpool, Glasgow, and Belfast and spoke to more sectarian tensions in each city. Two further copies of this structure were created and installed in Richmond and Benin in 2005 and 2007, connecting three points in the 'triangular trade'. Terry Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture*



2 Liverpool's 800th Birthday Coin (Artist: Stephen Broadbent)

remained one of the few tangible artefacts that linked Liverpool's 'birthday year' directly to the city's slave-trading past.

By comparison, a larger number of different activities and events took place connected with the nationally marked bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act during 2007 in Liverpool. Not only was this the year that the ISM opened but, through a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £50,000, Liverpool (like other towns and cities across the country) also played host to a year-long programme of events to mark the bicentenary. These events were organized by different types of organizations and individuals – theatres and cultural organizations, museums, and religious bodies – with a good proportion also being organized by more grassroots groups around the city

of Liverpool (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), 29; Lew Baxter, 'City's Gift of Statue to Atoner for Slave Trade,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 August 2005.

The Persistence of Memory

and on smaller scales. There was a vast breadth of activities including book readings and launches, lectures, public debates, film screenings, dance, music, theatre productions and plays, festivals, commemorative walks, and other events alongside the annual but in this year slavery-themed Writing on the Wall arts festival, and the regular Slavery Remembrance Day ceremony, which also coincided with the opening of the new museum.⁷³

Crucially, the opening of the ISM and other slavery-related activities in Liverpool in 2007 occurred during a year in which much of the country, in museums, galleries, and a variety of other public spaces, were also marking the bicentenary of the Abolition Act. Nationally framed performative events came through Liverpool, but were also enacted in other towns and cities. The 'March of the Abolitionists', for example, a church-led walk from Hull to London in memory of slavery and abolition (walkers adorning chains and t-shirts reading 'so sorry') had a second stage (the Sankofa Walk) linking London, Liverpool, and Bristol in June and July 2007 (the Liverpool stage was led by Liverpool-born black elder and local historian Eric Lynch).⁷⁴ Similarly, Liverpool was just one of the ports at which the replica of nineteenth-century slave ship *Amistad* (made famous in the Stephen Spielberg film of the same name) called during this year.⁷⁵

In 2007, Britain was talking about slavery and abolition nationally, in stark contrast to the silent treatment this had received in 1907. Events marking the opening of the museum and related events that formed part of a national discourse around slavery in 2007 were largely separated from performances of 'civic high-jinks' related to Liverpool's narrative history. Whereas in 1907 and 1957 the incorporation of slavery in the city's historic story was awkwardly negotiated, footnotes in a discourse promoting civic pride, but nonetheless begrudgingly included, discussions of Liverpool and slavery were virtually absent from engagements with the city's 800th birthday, at least in any great depth. However, in comparison to the number, breadth, and scale of events

73 Liverpool 08 Company, *Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade – Liverpool Event Programme 07* (Liverpool: Liverpool City Council, 2007). For a useful database of many of the activities undertaken to mark the bicentenary year, see 'Remembering 1807,' *Antislavery Usable Past*, antislavery.ac.uk.

74 Alan Weston, 'March Through City Offers an Apology for Slavery,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 25 June 2007.

75 The ship set sail from New Haven, Connecticut, and stopped at more than a dozen ports around the Atlantic in Canada, Europe, Africa, and the Americas across 2007–08. The community-based mass reading of *Small Island* by Andrea Levy also took place in Bristol, Hull, and Glasgow and the play of *Rough Crossings*, based on the book by Simon Schama and adapted by novelist Caryl Phillips, was also performed in Leeds, London, and Birmingham. 'Remembering 1807,' *Antislavery Usable Past*, antislavery.ac.uk (accessed 22 November 2018).

Coinciding Anniversaries

taking place that marked the Bicentenary of 1807 and the coinciding opening of the ISM, Liverpool's 'birthday' itself became the 'footnote' in the more dominant public discourse surrounding local and national commemorations of the slave trade and its abolition. This is symbolically captured by the scale and 'footer' positioning of the Liverpool 1202–2007 trademark on the cover of the 2007 Bicentenary events programme (see Figure 3).

Conclusion

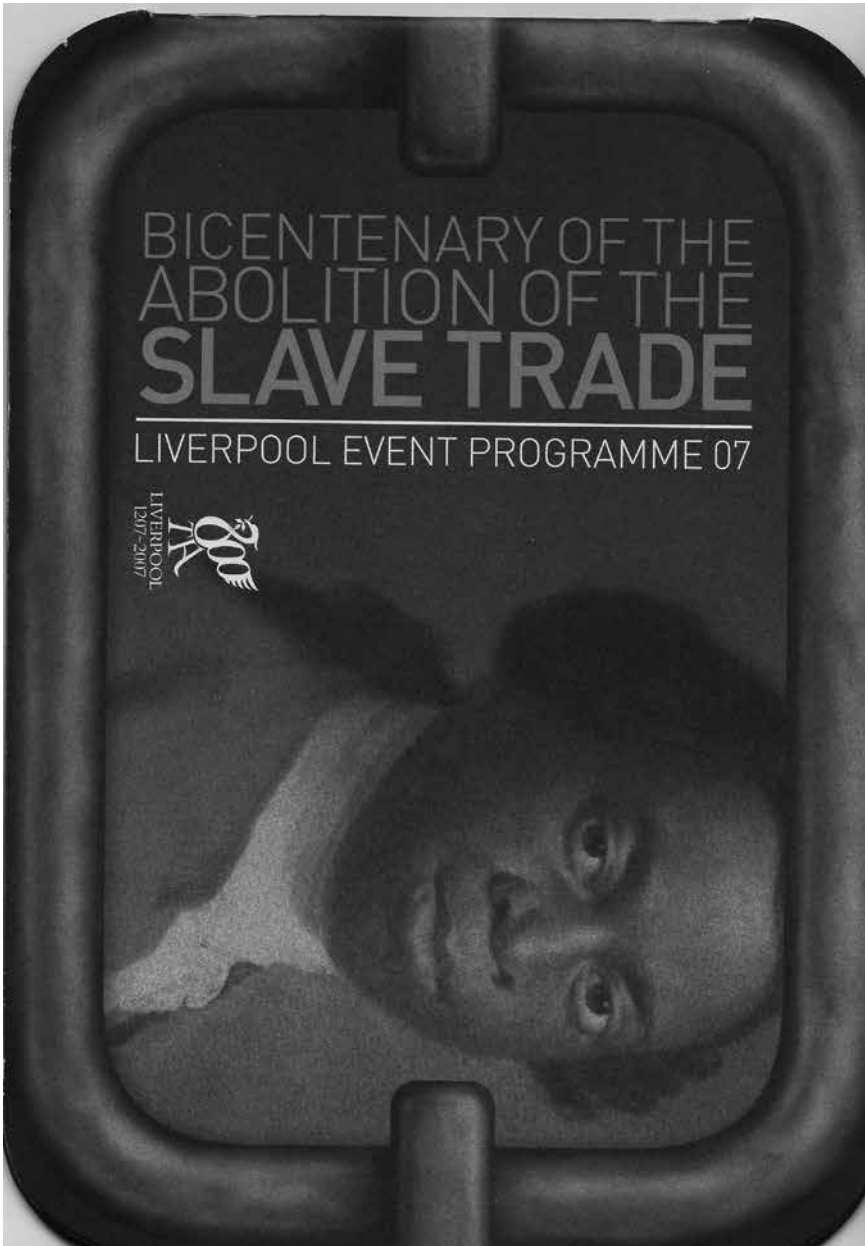
The memory work undertaken as part of Liverpool's 700th birthday in 1907 had been a demonstration, and indeed defining construction of, civic patriotism, largely directed at the city's own citizens and, secondly, to onlookers, centring on the perceived need to correct misconceptions about the length of Liverpool's history and educate her population in order to encourage ideals of citizenship. The city's 750th birthday in 1957, by contrast, was largely an advert, a promotion of the post-war recovery of the city, its industrial progress and openness to new business and investment. The cultivation of civic pride through history also had its place in this process, though this was closely connected to the psychological recovery of Liverpool's citizens, set to be achieved through 'revivifying Liverpool's great past'.⁷⁶

Throughout the commemorative events of 1907, the use of history as a tool for fostering civic pride led to a celebration of the human forces behind the city's role in the slave trade and the rhetorical defence of this involvement through the juxtaposition of themes oppositional to brutality and cruelty in the name of wealth – namely the celebration of Liverpool's charitable institutions and figures. This could be understood as an 'organized forgetting' of the slave trade through structuring that obscures dissonance.⁷⁷ More overt and racialized argumentative lines of defence emerged in 1957; a time when 'race' was prominently on the post-Windrush political and public agenda. Here, the vociferous downplaying (indeed, denial) of the significance of the slave trade to Liverpool was a bid to obscure particular aspects of history that did not correspond with the identity construction being played out. What discourse around the 1957 celebrations lacked in the imperial 'pomp' of 1907, it compensated for in justifications of slavery that embodied distinctly racialized and paternalistic overtones. This supports the idea that the repetition of commemorative events enables people to engage with revisions of meaning to suit contemporary identity concerns and contextual circumstances.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ 'Charter Reflections,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 1 July 1957.

⁷⁷ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 14.

⁷⁸ Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 221.



3 Liverpool's Bicentenary Programme (Liverpool 08)

Coinciding Anniversaries

Analysing these ‘coinciding anniversaries’, of different histories deemed significant to Liverpool’s history, one more overtly dissonant and one more clearly ‘celebratory’, reveals the shifting emphasis placed on narratives of the past that juxtapose awkwardly with one another. The orchestrated and artificial ritualistic endeavour of marking round-number anniversaries highlights the shifting priorities of the present, changing attitudes to the past, and power structures within the telling of history at specific moments in time. By 2007, the early twenty-first century had taken a distinctly global turn. The run up to the larger European Capital of Culture year, announced in 2003, had somewhat dampened the organized celebration of Liverpool’s ‘800th birthday’ in 2007, the most significant outcome from which was perhaps the publication of a new written history of the city.⁷⁹ The tone and events of 2007 were no doubt also influenced by the impact of intervening memory work of the 1990s: the development of the TSG (1994, see Chapter 6), the instigation of SRD, and Liverpool City Council’s official apology (both 1999, see Chapter 5). 2007 was, moreover, also the bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade, a commemorative year marked nationally and during which the ISM opened in Liverpool.⁸⁰ The events of 2007, perhaps, more than any year, marked the shifts in memory away from the civic localism seen in 1907 and 1957, in place of transnational titles and commemorative years performed on a global stage. Whilst the subject of the slave trade and its abolition took on a more prominent position, this had become decoupled from the celebrations of the city’s identity performed through charter anniversary, less about *Liverpool* and slavery, and more about Britain’s history and memory of slavery and abolition more broadly. Whilst this meant a larger public discussion about the history of transatlantic slavery and the slave trade, the memory of this in relation to Liverpool’s civic identity narrative had become compartmentalized, kept within the boundaries of the bicentenary events programme and the walls of the ISM.

79 John Belchem (ed.), *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006).

80 There has been much written about 2007 generally and on a national scale. See, for example, Cubitt, ‘Museums and Slavery in Britain: The Bicentenary of 1807’; Laurajane Smith and Kalliopi Fouseki, ‘The Role of Museums as “Places of Social Justice” Community Consultation and the 1807 Bicentenary,’ in *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*, ed. Laurajane Smith, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2011); Ross Wilson, ‘Rethinking 1807: Museums, Knowledge and Expertise,’ *Museum and Society* 8:3 (2010); Diane Paton, ‘Interpreting the Bicentenary in Britain,’ *Slavery & Abolition* 30:2 (2009); Anthony Tibbles, ‘Facing Slavery’s Past: The Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade,’ *Slavery & Abolition* 29:2 (2008).

4

The Memorial Cult of William Roscoe

Remembering Abolition

Introduction

For much of the last 200 years the public memory of the slave trade and slavery in Britain has been dominated by the public memory of – indeed the celebration of – abolition, abolitionists, and emancipation. The presentation of abolition and, moreover, emancipation as a ‘moral triumph’ in public discourse substituted, as John Oldfield has argued, ‘the horrors of slavery and the slave trade’ for a ‘culture of abolitionism’ in British public memory.¹ This ‘culture of abolition’ has constituted a ‘white mythology’, which Marcus Wood suggests, has been promoted and maintained through a carefully curated archive of abolitionist iconography, particularly within the visual record.² This pattern has actively re-encoded public memories of slavery through the comforting prism of abolition, whilst simultaneously keeping imagery of the enslaved ‘iconically imprisoned within the visual rhetorics of disempowerment, stereotypification, and passivity’.³ Whilst this has been the dominant memorial paradigm within British commemorative work around the history of slavery and the slave trade, it is a pattern that is not so easily replicated within Liverpool. Not only was abolition presented as something Liverpool ‘overcame’ (see Chapter 1), but there was, historically, only a very small showing of abolition culture present in Europe’s foremost slave-trading port, especially in the form of overt, public, and vociferous campaigning abolitionists who had been active in other towns and cities. The ‘culture of abolitionism’ that has dominated British, European, and American

¹ Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 2.

² Wood, *Blind Memory*, 7–8.

³ Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom*, 17.

The Persistence of Memory

public memory throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was most forcefully propagated through the valorizing of '[g]lorious white patriarchal philanthropists', such as William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson in Britain, William Lloyd Garrison and Abraham Lincoln in America, and Victor Schloelcher in France.⁴ In Britain, it was Wilberforce, in particular, and his position as a Christian martyr hero, that was solidified in public memory, through memorials, inscribed texts, and museums.⁵

Liverpool cannot claim to have had any great number of open and active abolitionists who campaigned for the abolition of the slave trade in the years approaching 1807. However, William Roscoe, and his vote in favour of abolition as MP for Liverpool, whilst initially a point of conflict in local civic identity narratives in the early nineteenth century, has through memorialization and commemorative 'reframing' come to fulfil an abolitionist citizen-hero role. Roscoe's memory was actively, if awkwardly, reshaped and reframed across the nineteenth century to suit emerging national anti-slavery agendas, and alongside local shifts in identity and cultural contexts in the years after the abolition of the slave trade within which Liverpool's comparatively more active anti-slavery societies in the nineteenth century partook. This active memory-work over the last 200 years has forged a kind of 'memorial cult' around Roscoe as a civic figure. The cult of Roscoe has shaped this historic figure into an emblem of Liverpool's liberal cultural renaissance through ritual and round-number anniversaries, as an abolitionist hero to be drawn upon in twentieth and twenty-first-century public spotlights on the slave trade and slavery.

Liverpool and Abolition

In view of the large proportion of Liverpool's political and commercial elite who had vested interests in the transatlantic slave trade, one of the greatest perceived contradictions of Liverpool's story of slavery is the involvement of some of the town's most celebrated citizens in campaigns for its abolition. William Roscoe (1753–1851) was a historian, poet, and banker in the town.⁶ He wrote poetry in the eighteenth century that was critical of the slave trade, such as *The Wrongs of Africa* (1787) and *Mount Pleasant* (1777). Roscoe also wrote pamphlets in response to the Reverend Raymond Harris, a Spanish Jesuit priest who was awarded £100 by Liverpool Corporation as a positive endorsement for his pro-slavery literature. This exchange has been noted

4 Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom*, 16.

5 Kowaleski Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 40.

6 He is most well-known for *The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici* (1796) and the poem *The Butterfly's Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast* (1807).

The Memorial Cult of William Roscoe

and repeated throughout the written histories of post-abolition Liverpool.⁷ In 1806 Roscoe was elected MP for Liverpool and in 1807 he voted in favour of the Abolition Act, though this had not featured prominently in his election campaign, and he arrived back in Liverpool to threats of violence (articulated with varying levels of emphasis in Liverpool's written histories).⁸

The exact extent of abolitionist activity in the town prior to abolition is an area of debate. The anonymous author of *Liverpool and Slavery* (1884), writing under the pseudonym 'Dicky Sam', emphasized that there were only two Liverpool names on the membership list of the 1787 Society for the Suppression of the Slave Trade, compared to the 10,000 in Manchester. The author entered into a back and forth conversation with himself in which he performs his own disbelief, building up to the final dismal figure:

Among the original names, how many belonged to Liverpool? Were there fifty? no; thirty? no; well, surely there were twenty? no; well, ten? no, then there could have not been less than five? Yes, there were less than five; then there must have been none? yes, there were some; well how many then? two!⁹

A year later, in 1788, however, a few more names, all members of the 'Roscoe Circle', were added to the society's list, which now stood at eight. The Roscoe Circle was a predominantly Unitarian network that emerged in the 1780s and 1790s and comprised a number of William Roscoe's contemporaries who were involved closely in local and national politics, the arts, sciences, and education, and, crucially, in the anti-slave trade movement.¹⁰ Further, there were a number of other Liverpool notables

7 A complex engagement with this debate is reflected by James Picton who states in relation to this exchange that 'It would be useless to attempt to disinter arguments which are now utterly dead, repudiated and forgotten, and are only referred to as singular specimens of sophistry and perversity.' Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, vol. 1, 225.

8 Brian Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' in *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 292.

9 Anon, *Liverpool and Slavery*, 76–77. The two names were Quaker merchant and ship-owner William Rathbone (1726–89) and medical doctor, Dr Jonathan Binns (1747–1818).

10 Ian Sutton, 'Roscoe Circle (act. 1760s–1830s)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), www.oxforddnb.com/view/theme/101301 (accessed 25 February 2014). The names on the 1788 list were Daniel Daulby, William Rathbone (jnr), William Roscoe, William Wallace, Reverend John Yates and an anonymous subscriber generally thought to have been Scottish physician and Wallace's son-in-law, Dr James Currie. See Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' 279.

who were involved in anti-slavery activities who did not sign the lists, such as the Reverend William Shepherd (Unitarian Minister at Gateacre) and Edward Rushton, the 'radical blind poet', formerly involved in the slave trade before contracting ophthalmia on board a slave ship, later founding the Liverpool School for the Blind.¹¹ As ever, this was a complicated social picture. As part of Liverpool's social elite, members of the Roscoe Circle lived and worked alongside slave traders and West India merchants.¹² It was this potential conflict, Brian Howman suggests, that led abolition advocates such as the physician Dr James Currie, to conduct so much of their anti-slavery activity anonymously.¹³

The legal abolition of the British transatlantic slave trade in 1807 did not end debates over Liverpool and slavery any more than it ended enslavement itself. A far greater level of organized abolitionist activity gained pace in the 1820s with the formation of the Liverpool Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery in 1822 and the Liverpool Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association in 1827, which distributed pamphlets nationally.¹⁴ James Cropper was a vocal figure at the centre of these later campaigns and engaged in a public debate in the *Liverpool Mercury* and *Courier* with John Gladstone in 1823–24, though Gladstone wrote under the pseudonym *Mercator*.¹⁵ To complicate the picture further, just as enslavement continued in British colonies into the 1830s and in the Americas into the 1860s, so did Liverpool's profits from the importation of goods produced by enslaved people. The Rathbone family, for example, though staunchly anti-slavery, profited greatly from the trade in American slave-grown cotton.¹⁶

Nonetheless, public debate and publishing of the 1820s reflected a marked increase in anti-slavery campaigning in Liverpool from members of the Roscoe Circle and beyond. In 1824, the Reverend William Shepherd, under

11 Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' 283.

12 William Roscoe, for example, was business partners with slave trader Thomas Leyland, was associated with the Earle family and shared membership on committees for charitable institutions with the likes of John Gladstone, pro-slavery advocate and Chairman of the Liverpool West Indian Association. Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' 281.

13 Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' 281.

14 Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' 278, 89.

15 This correspondence was subsequently published separately by the West India Association for the interest of their members and in a form more permanent than 'the perishable columns of a newspaper.' The West India Association, *The Correspondence Between John Gladstone, Esq., M.P., and James Cropper Esq., on the Present State of Slavery in the British West Indies and in the United States of America; and on the Importation of Sugar from The British Settlements in India...* (Liverpool: Thomas Kaye, 1824).

16 Howman, 'Abolitionism in Liverpool,' 281.

the pseudonym Timothy Touchstone, published *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver*. A satirical history of the city, the text followed the life of 'Dick Liver' a personification of Liverpool. Shepherd, in a critical tract concerning the town's history of slave trading, outlined how 'I am sorry to be obliged to state, that for a season Dick turned kidnapper, having been accustomed to catch black men on the coast of Africa, and sell them by auction to the best bidder.'¹⁷ Shepherd was equally critical of the response of the political elite, those with whom members of the Roscoe circle had been at odds for the past few decades:

When anybody intimated to him his opinion that this was not a fair kind of dealing, Dick was very peevish and cross – he looked as sour as vinegar, and made no answer to any remarks made on this branch of his traffic, but 'you be d—d!' or 'go look', or some such coarse phraseology. In short, it was observed, that while Dick was engaged in this business of kidnapping he grew more and more vulgar every day; and from a civil inoffensive gentleman, was fast degenerating into a blackguard.¹⁸

Shepherd presents the slave trade as warping Liver's character. By comparison, the abolition of the slave trade, which had caused Liver to 'curse the whole parliament', is shown to return Liverpool citizens to their natural good character; 'by its enforcement his manners have been very much mended'.¹⁹

By the following decade and the passing of the Emancipation Act (1833), more vocal support for abolition, or, more accurately, abolitionists can be seen within public discourse. In the 1834 edition of *The Picture of Liverpool*, a popular guide to the city, the treatment of slavery had lost the defensive tones expressed in the 1805 edition, and a language condemning slavery was adopted, with much descriptive flourish, although remnants of the complicated defensive tones remained within concerns for the 'profitability' of slavery, of:

that most nefarious, though profitable traffic in human thews and sinews; at the thought of which the heart sickens and the just indignation of every good man is excited. The merest outline of the portraiture of the practices of this inhuman, bloody, and iniquitous trade, must bring forth tears even from the most flinty hearted, and ought to suffuse the cheek of the most insatiably avaricious dealer with a blush of the deepest crimson.²⁰

¹⁷ Touchstone, *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver*, 4.

¹⁸ Touchstone, *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver*, 4.

¹⁹ Touchstone, *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver*, 4.

²⁰ Anon, *The Picture of Liverpool* (1834), 27–28.

The Persistence of Memory

Following this hearty condemnation, the author turns to the celebration of abolition and abolitionists. Whilst only Wilberforce is mentioned by name, this may have been due to the proximity of his death (1833) to the publication of this guide.²¹ William Roscoe, who died in 1831, though discussed positively in a later section of this guide, is not publicly celebrated in relation to his anti-slavery activity. He is praised here, as elsewhere, largely for his literary and cultural credentials. The contestation over how to memorialize William Roscoe in the years and decades following his death illustrates some of the complexities of being anti-slavery in the ‘slaving capital of the world’.

The Memorial Cult of William Roscoe

William Roscoe has, over the last 200 years, become Liverpool’s local counterpart to the national martyr-hero, William Wilberforce, frequently deployed within public discourse as a counter-argument to Liverpool’s intense involvement in the slave trade and slavery. Held up as an abolitionist hero for voting for the Abolition Act of 1807, Roscoe has received martyr status through stories outlining the varying levels of violence he suffered at the hands of angry Liverpoolians upon returning from Parliament, and through the more ‘economic’ suffering of his bankruptcy. He too made great sacrifices, risked friendships and harm through his opposition to slavery, dying in 1831, only two years before Wilberforce and the passing of the Emancipation Act.

Roscoe’s memory has, however, been fragmented and reorganized through processes of commemoration. The memory debate surrounding Roscoe has diverged over how he should be remembered: for his literary and cultural credentials, which were largely seen as uncontroversial, or for his politics, which divided commentators in the first half of the nineteenth century. Subsequent revisions of memory in the twentieth century brought Roscoe’s anti-slavery sentiments to the fore within the context of a more comfortable and familiar national ‘culture of abolitionism’. Discourse around Roscoe’s round-number anniversaries of life and death inform the memory debate

21 ‘But thanks to the truly virtuous and benevolent exertions of Wilberforce, and other benefactors of the human race, whose persevering and pacific triumphs over demoniac brutality and cupidity, have earned for them laurels that shall never fade, and a name that shall never perish, and whose memories shall be cherished by the good of all nations and of all ages, when the fame and remembrance of the warrior, who has raised himself into notoriety by his achievements in arms, shall sleep in oblivion.’ Anon, *The Picture* (1834), 28. This whole section remains word for word within the next edition of the guide three years later Anon, *The Picture of Liverpool* (1837).

surrounding his representation, constituting a distinct ‘cult of anniversary’.²² Varying aspects of Roscoe’s life are stressed or downplayed at different points in time meaning that different ‘versions’ of William Roscoe have been drawn out of a schizophrenic catalogue of his character. Significantly, this is an interactive process in which commemorative actions from one anniversary influence further memory work in subsequent anniversaries in relation not only to Roscoe’s round numbers but others in Liverpool’s history, especially those connected with slavery and the slave trade.

The contested memorial cult around Roscoe began with the public announcement of his death. William Roscoe died 30 June 1831 and, on the day his death was announced in the local press, 1 July, *The Liverpool Mercury* was celebrating its own round-number anniversary of 20 years since its first publication. The announcement of Roscoe’s death ran directly after a piece concerning the *Mercury*’s history of humanitarian and liberal ideals, and its promotion of ‘the moral, social, and political improvement of our fellow men, of every country and every complexion’ were foregrounded.²³ The paper stated that some of these objectives have been achieved, and in an asterisked footnote the first Liverpool name given in relation to such achievements was Roscoe’s.²⁴ The piece immediately below this paragraph was the announcement of the death of 79-year-old William Roscoe, made whilst ink from ‘the foregoing paragraph was scarcely dry’.²⁵ Roscoe was described as ‘a philanthropist, a patriot, and a literary man’, who had far-reaching fame ‘not only in his own country, but throughout civilised Europe’. This point was repeated in another article, which framed Roscoe’s fame, literacy, and culture against criticisms of his hometown that ‘the learned of all countries have heard with surprise that Liverpool, once only known for its enormous commercial wealth, and its local and political importance, has given birth to the most distinguished of the historians of Europe’.²⁶ Two lines of poetry were quoted, adapted from their original use as John Dryden’s epitaph, ‘substituting the name of one poet for that of another’, replacing the name of a former Poet Laureate with Roscoe’s: ‘[r]eader, attend,-the sacred dust below / Was Roscoe once,-the rest who

22 See Johnston, *Celebrations: The Cult of Anniversaries*.

23 ‘Completion of the Twentieth Year of the Mercury,’ *The Liverpool Mercury*, 1 July 1831.

24 In the very first few editions of the paper in 1811 Roscoe wrote letters to Henry Brougham (1778–1868), Whig candidate for Liverpool at this time, advocating for parliamentary reform, and the article outlines how this would later become a cause for which Brougham showed support (as Lord Chancellor) and that Roscoe may hopefully ‘live to see the great experiment fairly tried.’ ‘Completion of the Twentieth Year of the Mercury’.

25 ‘The Late William Roscoe, Esq,’ *The Liverpool Mercury*, 1 July 1831.

26 ‘Monument to the Memory of Roscoe,’ *The Liverpool Mercury*, 15 July 1831.

The Persistence of Memory

does not know.²⁷ The adapted lines came from Dryden's burial monument in Westminster Abbey and, in relation to this context, the piece claimed that by contrast 'Roscoe needs no monument, except in the hearts of his numerous friends.' However, the need to find some way of memorializing Roscoe was expressed in relation to the 'debt of gratitude' Liverpool people owed to 'the memory of this excellent man'.²⁸

In subsequent eulogies, Roscoe was described as an 'elegant and enlightened historian and scholar' publicly and privately (among 'more immediate friends') who expressed true Christian spirit, charity and firmness of opinion.²⁹ His support for 'civil and religious liberty' and, in particular, his work advocating for parliamentary reform, was stressed, as was his concern for prison discipline.³⁰ Perhaps his support for the abolition of slavery was being hinted at in the lines '[t]he moral courage and integrity of mind which it required to maintain his opinions in earlier life, can only be fully estimated by those who know the circumstances in which he commenced his career in the world.'³¹ As this veiled reference demonstrates, public discourse surrounding Roscoe's life at this point touched problematically on his opposition to slavery, appearing in opaque hints or embedded within general assessments of his support for 'the unhappy outcasts of society'.³² However, a very personal account sent to the local press by a 'fair townswoman', who had known Roscoe for 13 years, did reference his anti-slavery sentiments. In a long letter, taking up close to an entire column in the *Mercury*, the author stressed Roscoe's support for abolition in the face of opposition from his own townsmen, claiming this to be more important than his advocacy of literature and the arts:

27 'The Late William Roscoe, Esq.' Original lines by Alexander Pope in relation to John Dryden, intended as his epitaph on his monument in Westminster Abbey, erected by Sheffield Duke of Buckingham 'This Sheffield raised. — The sacred dust below / Was Dryden once; the rest who does not know.' From Theophilus Cibber and Robert Shiels, *The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. II (London: R. Griffiths, 1753).

28 'The Late William Roscoe, Esq.'

29 'Death of William Roscoe, Esq,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 1 July 1831.

30 'Death of William Roscoe, Esq.' Roscoe is also described as a 'friend of civil and religious liberty' in a eulogy within the London-based *Morning Chronicle*, quoted within 'The Late William Roscoe, extract from Morning Chronicle,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 8 July 1831.

31 'Death of William Roscoe, Esq.'

32 T.S.T., 'Letter: Proposal for Erecting a Monument to the Memory of Roscoe,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 22 July 1831. The author is most likely Dr Thomas Stewart Traill (1781–1862), originally from Orkney but moved to Liverpool in 1804 where he established a medical practice and became a part of Liverpool's cultural elite and of Roscoe's social circle. 'Traill, Thomas Stewart (1781–1862),' Brenda M. White in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27662 (accessed 26 June 2013).

The slave trade flourished, and was a prolific source of wealth and aggrandisement to many of his contemporaries and associates. He condemned it with an uncompromising steadfastness; he kept the interests of human nature in view, and disregarded the clamour and hostility that assailed him. As 'the lion shakes the dew-drops from his mane', he made light of impediments that would have suspended the usefulness of an inferior nature, opposing, as he did, the prejudices and pecuniary interests of a numerous class of his townsmen, yet so deep was their conviction, as a body, of his superior merits, that they sent him as their representative to Parliament, where he had the proud satisfaction of being amongst those who decided that our country should no more be disgraced by a traffic in mankind. On this question he had long fought the good fight, and he shared in the glorious reward of a triumph so dear to humanity.³³

Framed in religious language and imagery familiar to the sentimental rhetoric of anti-slavery discourse, Roscoe is here represented as the good Christian martyr-hero, who fought in opposition to many the 'good fight', and received the 'glorious reward' of abolition.³⁴ He shook criticism and prejudice off, as 'the lion shakes the dew-drops from his mane', a familiar line in anti-slavery discourse, used that year during the general meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society on 23 April as a metaphor for rousing moral awareness and action in response to plantation slavery.³⁵

In the national press, by comparison, Roscoe's opposition to the slave trade was more readily referenced. In the *Morning Chronicle* a eulogy foregrounded his anti-slavery views against the general mercantile attitudes of his hometown, that,

[n]ot, however, all his zeal for the local interests of that great mart of commerce could prevail over that more enlarged passion of philanthropy which he cherished throughout life. He was among the first to denounce the slave trade (in one of his early poems) and he had the happiness to assist in the deliberations of the Legislature which ratified its abolition.³⁶

33 F.M.S., 'The Late Mr. Roscoe,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 22 July 1831.

34 See Brycchan Carey, *British Abolitionism and the Rhetoric of Sensibility* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

35 'Man-stealing was permitted, and slaves were brought in thousands to our colonies, until at length the clanking of their chains aroused the lion from his slumbers: but now he shakes the dew-drops from his mane, and raises his terrific voice, and the West India hydra trembles before him.' Reverend J. Burnett, 'General Meeting', *The Anti-Slavery Reporter* 4:8 (1831): 275.

36 'The Late William Roscoe, extract from Morning Chronicle.'

The Persistence of Memory

Here, the 'local' interests of Liverpool's commercial activities are presented in opposition to the presumably more 'national', and thereby more significant, abolition campaign and subsequent Act. The slave trade is localized to Liverpool in this memorial piece, in a way that detaches the trade from Britain, in favour of the national abolition campaign, though here promoted through the reification of an 'abolitionist' figure.

Despite the *Mercury's* previous assertion that Roscoe's memory did not require a monument, the paper supported a proposal for one on 15 July 1831, calling for contributions to the project.³⁷ One letter of support for the scheme considered it unthinkable that Liverpool people could 'permit the tomb to close over the remains of Roscoe, without some durable memorial of their admiration of his talents'.³⁸ The author suggests that to not give Roscoe a memorial on the grounds that great men do not require them is a cheap solution, 'a base and selfish apology, set up by avarice', and framed the need to memorialize Roscoe by foregrounding the construction of civic identity through competitive place comparisons:

[I]f the comparatively small town of Penzance, eager to record that it gave birth to Davy, has already decreed a pyramid of granite to the memory of its great philosopher, -shall opulent Liverpool be forgetful of what it owes to the memory of its Roscoe? Certainly not.³⁹

If small and, perhaps, thereby insignificant Penzance can undertake such civic duties to its heroes of place, so should Liverpool, a town continually aware of the accusations of cultural ignorance as a centre of commerce, not of arts. The author, in turn, called for funds to be raised for a suitable '*public memorial*', its 'public' quality here stressed as significant through italics.

In a public (though sparsely attended) meeting held to discuss the proposed memorial, William Wallace Currie (1784–1840), son of the physician and biographer of Robert Burns James Currie (1756–1805), suggested that, in light of Roscoe's international fame, it was the duty of the citizens of Liverpool 'to let foreigners see that they had not been less conscious of the great and admirable qualities of their illustrious townsman than foreigners were'.⁴⁰ A physical memorial, it was supposed, would be one way of demonstrating this. The form the monument should take caused considerable debate, and suggestions included a public fountain,

³⁷ John Gibson (1790–1866) was suggested as sculptor for this memorial. Gibson had been acquainted with Roscoe, who let the sculptor use his library for studying Italian design. 'Monument to the Memory of Roscoe.'

³⁸ T.S.T., 'Letter: Proposal for Erecting a Monument to the Memory of Roscoe.'

³⁹ T.S.T., 'Letter: Proposal for Erecting a Monument to the Memory of Roscoe.'

⁴⁰ 'Monument to the Late Wm. Roscoe, Esq.,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 5 August 1831.

bronze statue, and observatory. Roscoe's opposition to slavery was raised in a letter by a W.J. Roberts and read aloud by William Rathbone within this meeting, in which it was suggested that Roscoe could rest easy having seen so many causes close to his heart realized, such as 'the abolition of slavery'.⁴¹ To this, Roberts asked whether Liverpool will appear 'ungrateful and indifferent', as it did when it permitted the sale of his library during bankruptcy. His birthplace, Mount Pleasant, also the title of one of his better known poems, was designated within this letter as an appropriate site of memory for Roscoe – '[t]his spot is become sacred to his memory' – and it is here, Roberts suggests, that a Greco-Roman style monument would be most appropriate in the middle of an area the size of Abercromby Square. Interestingly, Roberts suggested that the design should incorporate allusions to Roscoe's work, one panel of which should show, "'The Wrongs of Africa,' the manacles falling from the arms of the slaves &c.'⁴² However, Dr Traill responded to this suggestion with the accusation that such 'political sentiments of Mr. Roscoe might give rise to differences of opinion, and might produce discord'.⁴³

Efforts to memorialize William Roscoe would continue to be haunted by Roscoe's opposition to slavery, and it would be some ten years before any kind of dedicated tangible public memorial to Roscoe was created. Whilst a statue had been commissioned in 1835, in 1840 a brief press debate highlighted this as a contentious process. An anonymous letter, written by 'A Native of Liverpool', asked why there was at this stage no memorial to Roscoe in Liverpool, and questioned why Roscoe's 'memory should be apparently obliterated from our recollection', especially disgraceful for Liverpool, 'the wealth of whose Corporation is so generally known?'⁴⁴ The editor responded by publishing a note from J. Mayer on the progress of a statue of Roscoe, undertaken by sculptor Francis Chantrey, which he stated was nearing

41 I suspect this is William Roberts (1767–1849), a barrister and writer based at this time in Clapham and who was close friends with William Wilberforce and Hannah More. More was also close to Roberts's sisters, and Roberts published a biography of More in 1834. He had also been made a commissioner in bankruptcy between 1812 and 1832, which would explain his comments on Roscoe's bankruptcy. G. Le G. Norgate, 'Roberts, William (1767–1849),' rev. Rebecca Mills, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23778> (accessed 26 June 2013).

42 W.J. Roberts, quoted in 'Monument to the Late Wm. Roscoe, Esq.'

43 This point was supported in the meeting by Ashton Yates. 'Monument to the Late Wm. Roscoe, Esq.'

44 A Native of Liverpool, 'Letter: Roscoe,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 27 March 1840.

The Persistence of Memory

completion.⁴⁵ Mayer also suggested that the location of the completed statue should be in front of the Lyceum Newsroom, facing Church Street, a point that the editor supported.⁴⁶ However, just over a month later, a critical letter was published in the *Standard* about this exchange. The author of this letter, 'G', suggested that there was controversy over memorialising Roscoe because of his political views:

From the manner in which this matter of a statue of Roscoe was first brought before the people of Liverpool, by an anonymous correspondent of the *Mercury*, it appears that it is not to be erected in honour of his literary, but of his political character; if so, then Delta is right in objecting to this being considered the work of the town.⁴⁷

The *Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser* (1832–56), published twice weekly by Samuel Franceys, was set up as a conservative, Protestant voice. It took a stance against 'the groundswell of liberal sentiment that surrounded the Reform Bill' of which Roscoe was an advocate. Significantly, one of the leaders in the first issue of 1832 (November) advised voters to ignore 'the propaganda of the Anti-Slavery Society' and the paper openly supported colonial slavery on the grounds that 'Negroes' actual progress towards civilization was doubtful.⁴⁸ The *Mercury* and *Standard* were rival papers, and the editor of the *Mercury* suggested that the letter from 'G' was a misrepresentation, or even a falsehood, which did not merit surprise given 'that truth is rarely deemed a necessary auxiliary to Tory logic'.⁴⁹ Further, the editor of the *Mercury* suggested that G's statements were meant to 'prejudice the Tories, who are very numerous in the Lyceum Newsroom, against the motion, if it should ever be made, for placing Mr. Roscoe's statue in the area of the building'.⁵⁰ The editor also drew attention to a letter from 1834 calling for a memorial to Roscoe in which his politics were not mentioned, suggesting that the original public subscription for a memorial would have been made on the merits of 'private worth and the literary reputation of a distinguished and lamented townsman', which gained support even from those who disagreed on his politics. 'G' also took issue with the statue being erected 'by the town' if it was to honour his politics, to which the editor

45 Terry Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 284–85.

46 J. Mayer, 'Letter: Roscoe,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 27 March 1840.

47 'G' quoted in 'Statue of Roscoe,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 1 May 1840.

48 Laurel Brake, Marysa Demoor, and Margaret Beetham, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism: In Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), 369–70.

49 'Statue of Roscoe.'

50 'Statue of Roscoe.'

of the *Mercury* responded that the statue was in fact raised by ‘voluntary contributions’.

The fate of this much-debated statue of Roscoe in the later nineteenth century reflects the developing memorial cult around Roscoe as ‘citizen-hero’. The statue was the first of many new portrait sculptures marking a new phase in Liverpool’s history of public sculpture, which sought to celebrate ‘local worthies’ through public commemoration.⁵¹ Designed by sculptor Sir Francis Legatt Chantry (1781–1841), the statue was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1840, then moved to the Liverpool Royal Institution in 1841 where it stayed for over half a century. A large marble work, the sculpture shows Roscoe sitting and clothed in classical attire, holding a book, right arm crossing his chest. A collection of pictures and sculpture, including this statue, was due to be transferred from the Institution to the Walker Art Gallery in 1893. However it was decided through an agreement with the council in January that year that because Roscoe was not solely ‘an art patron’ but ‘also a man of letters, and of a citizen conspicuous in his public service to Liverpool’ it would be more appropriate if the statue were moved to St George’s Hall.⁵² St George’s Hall, the grand jewel in the architectural crown of nineteenth-century Liverpool, the ultimate symbol of civic pride in a ‘thriving’ imperial city, and new space for potential public commemoration of Liverpool men, was seen as the rightful resting place of this memorial statue to one of her greatest citizens.⁵³ It was transferred to St George’s Hall in June 1893, although it was dropped and badly damaged during transit to the north vestibule, also damaging the hall floor.⁵⁴ Expertise was drawn in from the British Museum and the city corporation paid for the restoration of the statue.⁵⁵ The statue of Roscoe now sits in one of 12 ‘niches’ in the great concert hall, alongside other nineteenth-century ‘worthies’ including railway engineer George Stephenson and slave-owner and MP John Gladstone.⁵⁶

Beyond this statue and the debates surrounding it, further memorial activity seeking to reframe Roscoe’s memory came to the public fore particularly during round number anniversaries of his birth and death.⁵⁷

51 Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture in Liverpool*, xi.

52 Letter from Charles W. Stubbs, President of the Liverpool Royal Institution to Liverpool City Council. Quoted in ‘The Roscoe Statue,’ *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 January 1893.

53 Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, xi.

54 ‘The Roscoe Statue: An Unfortunate Accident,’ *Liverpool Mercury*, 13 June 1893.

55 ‘Liverpool Library Committee: The Roscoe Statue: The Derby Bequest,’ *Liverpool Mercury*, 28 July 1893.

56 Joseph Sharples and Richard Pollard, *Liverpool (Pevsner Architectural Guides)* (New Haven, CT, London: Yale University Press, 2004), 56.

57 However, alternative ‘memory artefacts’ were produced following Roscoe’s death,

The Persistence of Memory

The opening of Liverpool Museum (now World Museum Liverpool) was timed to coincide with the celebrations around Roscoe's centenary of birth, though the latter were of a larger scale in the city. The memory of William Roscoe, a celebrated figure of the arts, was used alongside the opening of a new civic institution crucial to mid nineteenth-century ideals of citizenship and culture.⁵⁸ During the centenary of Roscoe's birth (1853), a collection of what Liverpool historian and librarian George Chandler described as 'Roscoeana', material relating to William Roscoe and the commemorations that year, was compiled by Roscoe's son-in-law, Thomas Brooks, and the collection subsequently added to by Liverpool Libraries.⁵⁹ The collection included programmes of events for the 'Roscoe Festival' that year, paintings and illustrations of Roscoe and his life, the commemorative collection of his poems published in 1853, ribbons from his parliamentary campaign, and a lock of his hair in an envelope. Literature commemorating the centenary highlighted Roscoe's anti-slavery sentiments in more depth than much of the press coverage around his death, particularly in a leaflet outlining events, which presented Roscoe's anti-slavery stance against Liverpool's own large investment in the trade:

In the town of Liverpool, which then received a profit of three or four hundred thousand a-year from the slave trade, and which did not at that time possess any other trade which produced the fourth-part of that profit, he began his war against that detestable traffic in the year 1771, before he was twenty years of age, and never ceased it until he appeared as member for Liverpool, in the House of Commons, to vote for its abolition.⁶⁰

The piece drew attention to the lack of leader articles and newspapers that could promote the cause, especially since many of those that were in circulation at the time were funded by 'the patronage of the slave-dealers'. William Roscoe was presented as the sole reason people in Liverpool were alerted to the wrongs of slavery. Without Roscoe, the article argued, 'the

with adverts appearing for a commemorative medal engraved by Scipio Clint, the king's medallist and *The Life of William Roscoe* by son, Henry Roscoe (1800–33) coming out in 1833. 'Advert: Medal of the Late William Roscoe, Esq,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 5 August 1831; 'News in Brief – Roscoe,' *The Liverpool Mercury*, 5 August 1831.

⁵⁸ John Millard, *Liverpool's Museum: The First 150 Years* (Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2010).

⁵⁹ Chandler, *William Roscoe of Liverpool*, 135; Thomas Brooks, *Centenary of William Roscoe: The Philanthropist, Poet & Historian. Album Containing a Collection of Pamphlets, News Cuttings, Portraits, Illustrations, Election Ribbons, etc.* (1853) LRO 920 ROS. 'Roscoeana' was a phrase in use in nineteenth-century Liverpool for Roscoe-related subjects.

⁶⁰ Brooks, *Centenary of William Roscoe*.

The Memorial Cult of William Roscoe

people of Liverpool would scarcely have had anyone to warn them that man-stealing was a crime'. Interestingly, the article aligned Roscoe's position in Liverpool to abolitionists in the contemporary US South, suggesting that '[f]or nearly thirty years the position of Roscoe in Liverpool was nearly as painful (though not so dangerous) as that of an Abolitionist would be at the present time at Charleston or New Orleans.'⁶¹ The birth centenary of 1853 inspired new calls for another public memorial (in addition to the statue erected previously) as well as commemorative street names such as Roscoe Street and Roscoe Lane, with one commentator suggesting that Lime Street be renamed Roscoe Street as it was in a more prominent position, and the first street to greet visitors by train.⁶² Perhaps spurred on by this increase in public discourse around Roscoe through commemorative activity, a further monument was erected in 1856 in the Unitarian Church which stood on Renshaw Street (Roscoe was buried in the churchyard behind this). The inscription chosen, 'Historian, poet, patriot, and Christian philanthropist', did not explicitly foreground Roscoe as an 'abolitionist'.⁶³

After this point and across the last half of the nineteenth century, however, Roscoe's connections to abolition start to become more readily referenced in public discourse. This shift in emphasis occurred alongside a general reframing of the British Empire as distinctly 'anti-slavery', and rising Victorian ideals of citizenship centred on morality, Christianity, and philanthropy.⁶⁴ Such efforts were of course taking place around the country, and towns and cities were choosing figures from their pasts to forge new memorial cults. For Liverpool, aware of external criticisms of its status as a centre of commerce more than a centre of arts, and in some ways still reeling from heightened levels of criticism of being the centre of the slave trade against anti-slavery national identity ideals, Roscoe became 'reframed' in ways that emphasized and drew on the contradictions of being anti-slavery in the slaving capital of the world. In 1884, the 50-year anniversary of the passing of the Emancipation Act, the liberal *Liverpool Review* bemoaned this absence of public commemoration of Roscoe as being particularly abhorrent when considering Liverpool's large role in the slave trade and comparatively small number of open abolitionists:

Liverpool in the course of its career of prosperous traffic has not produced so many eminent men that it can afford to let the memory of one of the earliest and most distinguished of them sink into comparative oblivion.

61 Brooks, *Centenary of William Roscoe*.

62 Civic 'Roscoe Memorials' clipping in Brooks, *Centenary of William Roscoe*.

63 This monument was erected by worshippers of the church. Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, vol. 1, 433. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the congregation (and the Roscoe memorial bust) moved to a new location in Ullet Road, near Sefton Park.

64 See Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*.

The Persistence of Memory

Roscoe lives in his works no doubt, but how is it that Liverpool has been so apathetic in claiming the parentage of a son so well calculated to add a much-needed lustre to her merely commercial eminence. As a literary man, as a man of widely extended taste and culture, as a man of the most liberal sympathies, and, above all as the champion and one of the emancipators of the slaves there is no name in all our local history we should more honour ourselves by honouring than that of Roscoe.⁶⁵

The extent to which Roscoe had been 'speaking out' against the attitudes of his own townsmen became foregrounded as a key component of his Christian values and strength of moral character, comparable in one instance to other religious philanthropic ventures of the later nineteenth century. As the, presumably anonymous author, 'Robin Hood' suggested in one of a series of articles published in *The Commercial World* in 1893:

The old Dicky Sams looked upon them [William Rathbone and William Roscoe] as visionaries, with considerably less favour than some of us regard General Booth and his schemes for raising our white slaves from a lower depth than even the hold of a slave ship.⁶⁶

Here, 'one of Liverpool's greatest men, the noble and scholarly William Roscoe' is compared to William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army (1878), who also faced opposition for the work of the mission which strove to help such 'white slaves' from fates apparently worse than the middle passage in Victorian Britain.⁶⁷ By 1897, in Gomer Williams's history of Liverpool privateers and the slave trade, Roscoe appears fully acknowledged in a chapter on abolition, as 'the man who had the courage to deliver this straight blow from the shoulder at the favourite sin of his native town'.⁶⁸

During the centenary of Roscoe's death in 1931, his identity as an 'abolitionist' was more openly framed and celebrated. His individual story, moreover, reflected Liverpool's own collective historic identity narratives. Lengthy press articles celebrated Roscoe in ways that emphasized his 'rags to riches story', mirroring the narratives presented of Liverpool's own meteoric rise from small fishing village to mighty seaport. Roscoe was said to have 'educated himself and rose to eminence', and was a 'botanist who started by

65 'Slave-Owning Liverpool,' *Liverpool Review of Politics, Society, Literature and Art*, 23 August 1884. This was part of a series of articles across a number of editions of this publication concerning Liverpool and slavery.

66 Robin Hood, 'The Liverpool Slave Trade,' *Liverpool Commercial World*, 4 March 1893.

67 Robin Hood, 'The Liverpool Slave Trade,' *Liverpool Commercial World*, 11 March 1893.

68 Williams, *History of the Liverpool Privateers*, 569.

labouring in potato-fields'.⁶⁹ This was presented against his contradictory standing as a public figure, 'execrated by the mob, yet given the freedom of his city', he was 'a banker who crashed from wealth to poverty', perhaps mirroring Liverpool's own tumultuous economic life, from second city of empire to the lows of Depression era 1930s. Roscoe's opposition to slavery was emphasized through his poetry and his parliamentary vote.⁷⁰

The public celebration of Roscoe's opposition to slavery, had become not only more acceptable by 1931, but was given greater elevation. Perhaps this was, as one article suggested, because '[t]ime clarifies our estimates of our fellows', meaning that 'in Roscoe's case, we can now perceive his towering moral stature as distinguished from the concrete manifestations of his career'.⁷¹ The passing of time may have alleviated some of the sensitivities around celebrating Roscoe's moral stance on issues close to the hearts of Liverpool's mercantile elite. The promotion of Roscoe's stance against slavery, moreover, his rebranding as an 'abolitionist-hero', also aligned more acceptably with preparations for the centenary of emancipation and centenary of the death of William Wilberforce. This version of Roscoe also more readily reflected national discourses of Britain's anti-slavery empire in the later nineteenth century, presenting a nationally coherent 'hero' during a time of much economic uncertainty for Liverpool. His greatest strengths were presented as his 'energies' for change and action, which included being 'a channel for the emancipatory fervour of the period. His active opposition to the slave trade, in Parliament and in the Press, obviously required no little courage in those days'.⁷² Courage, energy and an active stance on political issues were qualities distinctly relevant to 1930s Liverpool, and indeed Britain, and a 'tradition' of campaigning around moral issues was presented as ongoing: 'it is pleasant to think that in the century which has passed since 1831, Liverpool, despite the growing urgency of material preoccupations, has never ceased to forward the ideals he set forth'.⁷³

Two years later, more direct and excessively exaggerated estimations of Roscoe's abolitionist credentials were presented alongside both the centenary of the Emancipation Act and the centenary of the death of Britain's leading

69 'A Maker of Liverpool – Life and Work of William Roscoe,' *Liverpool Post and Mercury*, 24 June 1931.

70 'Roscoe's hatred of the slave trade on which Liverpool thrived was first recorded in verse when he was nineteen. Nor did his concern for slaves welfare end with the triumphant abolition of the trade, a triumph for which, as a Member of Parliament, he shared the credit.' 'A Maker of Liverpool – Life and Work of William Roscoe.'

71 'William Roscoe,' *Liverpool Post and Mercury*, 30 June 1931.

72 'William Roscoe'.

73 'William Roscoe'.

abolitionist, William Wilberforce.⁷⁴ In an article concerning ‘Wilberforce and Liverpool: His Friends and Supporters’, published to mark the centenary of Wilberforce’s death, it is noted that ‘Roscoe began to fight the slave trade at Liverpool a few years earlier than did Wilberforce [...] Roscoe and Wilberforce corresponded and met regularly over a long period, and were on terms of friendship.’⁷⁵

Following the centenary celebrations of 1931, the Roscoe family donated his private papers to the Picton Library.⁷⁶ The donation of these papers, ‘together with the shabby old chest, in which they have always lived’, were given to the library as ‘a mark of appreciation of the Roscoe Centenary Exhibition’ that year, a move which in turn led to the production of a new biography researched and written by City Librarian George Chandler.⁷⁷ Chandler’s biography of Roscoe, which included a fuller collection of his poetry than had previously been published, was sponsored by the city council, and published to coincide with Roscoe’s bicentenary of birth in 1953. In Sir Alfred Shennan’s lengthy and detailed introduction to this book (at points more detailed than Chandler’s main text), Roscoe was presented as the ‘founder of Liverpool culture’.⁷⁸ Shennan suggested that the book was important for re-evaluating William Roscoe and his impact on Liverpool, to see his achievements and his influence in the context of ‘a town which throughout his life was chiefly hostile to his ideals’, and the conflicts of having to do business, especially banking, in a town that dealt in slave trading, was again emphasized.⁷⁹ Chandler presented Roscoe as central to Liverpool’s cultural development, almost as the embodiment of Liverpool’s renaissance, since ‘there is hardly any movement or institution in modern Liverpool that does not owe some part of its existence or tradition to his

⁷⁴ See Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom* for a discussion of the national marking of Emancipation. I have discussed the way this was commemorated in Liverpool (in comparison to her rival former slave trade port city, Bristol) elsewhere. See Moody, ‘Remembering the Imperial Context of Emancipation Commemoration in the Former British Slave-Port Cities of Bristol and Liverpool.’

⁷⁵ ‘Wilberforce and Liverpool: His Friends and Supporters,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 29 July 1933.

⁷⁶ A further donation was also made by a great-granddaughter of Roscoe’s, Lady Margaret Mallet. ‘Liverpool Corporation has reaped a rich reward...,’ *Liverpool Post and Mercury*, 23 November 1931.

⁷⁷ LRO, Liverpool, Roscoe Papers: Correspondence, Newscuttings, Lists, etc. Concerning the Books, Manuscripts, Drawings, etc. Relating to William Roscoe, Donated by Members of the Roscoe family. 820.1 PAP Letter from William Roscoe, jnr, to the City Librarian; J.J. Bagley, ‘The Bicentenary of William Roscoe,’ *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 105 (1954).

⁷⁸ Alfred Shennan, ‘Introduction,’ in Chandler, *William Roscoe of Liverpool*, xv.

⁷⁹ Shennan, ‘Introduction,’ xv.

The Memorial Cult of William Roscoe

work.⁸⁰ Copies of Chandler's biography of Roscoe would later that decade be given as gifts to visiting signatories as part of the city's 750th charter anniversary celebrations in 1957 (see Chapter 3).

Chandler stressed Roscoe's anti-slavery activities through hyperbole and generalization, and against a discursive mitigation of the extent of Liverpool's involvement and financial benefit from the slave trade, since he was 'leader of the movement against the slave trade (although this was believed to be the foundation of Liverpool's prosperity)'. Here, Chandler casts doubt over the impact and significance of the slave trade to Liverpool which was only 'believed' to be foundational. However, within the chapter titled, amusingly perhaps, 'Marriage and the Slave Trade', covering the years 1781-90, Chandler did acknowledge the significance of the slave trade to Liverpool, though this was done in a manner that avoided exploration of its impacts and workings in the town in favour of a discussion of privateering and the French Revolution, apparently for contextual reasons.⁸¹ Familiar discursive lines were drawn upon within the (brief) discussion of slavery, that Liverpool 'secured large portions of the traffic in negro slaves, leaving their chief rivals, London and Bristol, far behind', but that, reassuringly, '[s]laves were not, of course, brought to Liverpool in large numbers'.⁸²

In 1953, to mark the bicentenary of Roscoe's birth, a church ceremony was held in Ullet Road and a commemorative event also took place at the Bluecoat Hall, which was attended by 400 people including Roscoe's descendants. Mr J. Chuter Ede, MP for South Shields and former Home Secretary, spoke at the event, describing Roscoe as 'a man who fought for causes which now had triumphed and were part of the English heritage', suggesting that a lack of informal education may have led him to his moral beliefs. Reverend Lawrence Redfern, a Unitarian minister, claimed that it was Roscoe's religious faith that had enabled him to see through his public-spirited notions, even when it might have appeared that he had made a mistake supporting such causes:

I often think that the worst that can befall a reformer is to find that the emancipated have themselves turned into tyrants like the slaves of St.

80 Chandler, *William Roscoe of Liverpool*, 2.

81 The connection made in this title apparently due to biographical chronology, against expressed through a martyr framework, that '[i]t is typical of Roscoe that he should have devoted the first year of his married life to the preparation of material for this idealistic poem', referring to *The Wrongs of Africa*. Chandler, *William Roscoe of Liverpool*, 60.

82 Chandler, *William Roscoe of Liverpool*, 60.

The Persistence of Memory

Domingo or the French revolutionaries. That happened to Roscoe; but he was right and his panic-stricken contemporaries were wrong.⁸³

In longer press articles about Roscoe at this time, Roscoe was again presented as a versatile renaissance man, as '[p]oet, artist, philosopher, historian, agriculturalist, botanist, politician, and philanthropist – he was all these things and a capable lawyer and business man as well'.⁸⁴ A point was also made about Roscoe having been 'one of the first to denounce' the slave trade, but 'could hope for little support in the city which was one of the chief centres of the traffic'.⁸⁵

A wreath-laying ceremony also took place in 1953 at Roscoe's grave in Roscoe Gardens, Mount Pleasant, led by the lord mayor (Alderman A. Morrow), with red roses (symbolic of Roscoe's Lancashire roots) and Cyprus leaves (for his associations with Italy).⁸⁶ The Roscoe Gardens remain on the site of the original graveyard of Renshaw Street Chapel today, where an octagonal domed memorial sits centrally, commemorating the church.⁸⁷ The monument included a memorial plaque that commemorated some of the people who were buried in the grounds, including William Roscoe, without an assessment of his character, 'In memory of / the worshippers / within its walls / and of / William Roscoe / Joseph Blanco White / and all who were laid to rest / in this ground'.⁸⁸

The charter celebrations of 1957, celebrating Liverpool's 750th birthday, placed increased focus on Roscoe as an abolitionist compared to those in 1907. This was particularly the case in local press articles. George Chandler foregrounded William Roscoe's 'success' in voting for the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and titled one article, 'William Roscoe and the Abolition of the Slave Trade', forging a definitive connection between the man and the moment, though only the last three paragraphs of this long article actually discussed abolition – the rest focused entirely on Roscoe's life and work more generally.⁸⁹ Great significance was given to Roscoe's brief political career,

83 '400 honour Liverpool historian,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 9 March 1953.

84 I.W.P. Roberts, 'After 200 Years Liverpool Still Honours His Name – The Life and Fame of William Roscoe,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 March 1953.

85 I.W.P. Roberts, 'After 200 Years Liverpool Still Honours His Name.'

86 'Roscoe Bi-Centenary Wreath,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 7 March 1953; 'Civic tribute on City Poet's Bi-Centenary,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 March 1953.

87 Erected in 1905 it was built by the architect Thomas Shelmerdine and designed by Ronald P. Jones. Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 116; Sharples and Pollard, *Liverpool*, 210.

88 Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 116.

89 'William Roscoe led the movement for the abolition of the slave trade and was successful in 1807 in voting for its abolition during his brief period as Member

which was 'of great historical importance' since '[h]e spoke up for Reform, and against the slave trade, casting his vote successfully for its abolition in 1807'. From this, Chandler held Roscoe up 'as the symbol for Liverpool's moral progress at the time of its sixth centenary', his vote having been 'one of the delightful paradoxes of history'.⁹⁰ This retrospectively, and artificially, connected 1957 with 1807 through the imagined commemorative tradition of the charter anniversary; further building the foundation myth of the 1207 charter through false memory, as the 'sixth centenary' was in fact never marked, the public charter celebrations only beginning in 1907.⁹¹ Similarly, and despite the rather misleading title, 'In Liverpool Ships Went the African Slaves', less than a quarter of this article discussed the slave trade, with focus again falling on Roscoe. 'In 1807', the author proclaimed, 'no more fitting representative of Liverpool in its sixth centenary year could be found than William Roscoe.'⁹² The article also discussed Roscoe's poem *Mount Pleasant*, which 'attacked the slave trade in no uncertain terms, although this was considered essential for Liverpool's prosperity', and repeated this idea later through emphasis of the dependence of the city on the slave trade.⁹³ Sydney Jeffery similarly described William Roscoe as 'the great anti-slaver,

of Parliament for Liverpool', George Chandler, 'Towards the new industrial city,' *City Charter Supplement, Liverpool Daily Post*, 17 June 1957, 5. 'William Roscoe voted successfully, during his brief period as Member of Parliament for the abolition of the slave trade' George Chandler, 'Dates that made Liverpool,' *Charter Programme (supplement), Liverpool Daily Echo*, 17 June 1957, 11. George Chandler, 'William Roscoe and the Abolition of the Slave Trade,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 3 July 1957.

90 Chandler, 'William Roscoe and the Abolition of the Slave Trade.' This is presumably a 'paradox' because an MP from Liverpool, a town heavily involved in the slave trade, voted for its abolition.

91 See R. Eyerman, 'The Past in the Present,' 162.

92 'In Liverpool ships went the African slaves and apprenticed white children who were to play an unhappy but significant part in – Opening up the New World,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 2 July 1957. Although no author is acknowledged on this article, it seems highly probable that this piece was either written by Chandler or heavily influenced by his writings. The section morally justifying the slave trade states: 'This was not due to any particular moral failing in her merchants, but to worldwide economic forces which Liverpool was well fitted to serve', a line that appears in a similar form within Chandler's *Liverpool*: 'Liverpool's supremacy in the slave trade was not, therefore, due to any distinctive moral failing in her merchants, but to worldwide economic needs, which she did not create' (305–06). It is interesting that an additional note is made of Liverpool's suitability for fulfilling these global needs.

93 'In spite of Liverpool's economic dependence on the slave trade, Roscoe was firmly convinced that it was wrong to deny others the liberty which Englishmen had acquired for themselves. He also knew at first hand the demoralising effect of the trade on some of those who were forced to take part in it.' 'In Liverpool ships...'

the Morning-Star of Liverpool's reformation'.⁹⁴ Within a similar celebration of 'Men Who Made Liverpool Famous' in the *Liverpool Evening Express's* charter supplement, William Roscoe was described as '[o]ne of the greatest Liverpoolians' who 'achieved fame as a poet, historian, political pamphleteer, opponent of the slave trade and fighter for freedom and equality'.⁹⁵ William Roscoe had, by 1957, become a clear emblem of citizen-heroic pride for Liverpool, wheeled out at moments of public commemorative and celebratory activity as the abolition counter-argument for the city's intense history of transatlantic slave trading.⁹⁶

Abolitionism had become a solid reference point within Roscoe's abbreviated memories on plaques and guides addressing places of memory in Liverpool in the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Within close vicinity to Roscoe Gardens are the Roscoe Head pub on Roscoe Street and Roscoe Arms on Renshaw Street, both of which, according to a 2004 guide (published just after the 250th anniversary of Roscoe's birth), 'are named after William Roscoe, writer, anti-slavery campaigner, and cultural giant'.⁹⁷ A black plaque was later erected on the memorial in Roscoe Gardens as part of a scheme to replace the 'blue-plaque style' colour coded system previously run by the Liverpool Heritage Bureau (city council) after 2005.⁹⁸ The plaque, placed after the 250th anniversary of Roscoe's birth in 2003, and in the year plans for the new ISM were announced, centralized Roscoe's 'abolitionist' identity neatly and succinctly, memorializing him simply as 'William Roscoe MP / Solicitor & Slavery Abolitionist / "Greatest of Liverpool's Citizens"' (see Figure 4).

Roscoe's memory has been deployed frequently as a counter-argument to the city's historic role in the transatlantic slave trade, phrased in ways which seemingly seek to mitigate this involvement; yes, Liverpool was involved in slavery, *but* Liverpool also produced Roscoe, who helped abolish the trade. In 2008, the year of Liverpool's European Capital of Culture title, a year after its 800th birthday and the bicentenary of 1807, Andrew Pearce of the Liverpool

94 Sydney Jeffery, 'The Making of the City,' *City Charter Supplement*, 6.

95 'The Men Who Made Liverpool Famous,' *City of Liverpool Charter Celebrations 1207-1957: Evening Express Charter Supplement*, 17 June 1957.

96 In an article marking the publication of a book concerning Liverpool's mansions (and the activities of their owners), journalist Arnold Edmondson queries the 'stigma Liverpool incurred by its part in the [slave] trade,' whilst suggesting that her citizens 'have the consolation that notable Liverpool men were active in opposition to it.' Arnold Edmondson, 'The Great Houses of Liverpool,' *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 17 June 1957.

97 David Lewis, *Walks Through History: Liverpool* (Liverpool: Breedon Books Publishing, 2004), 168.

98 Frankie Roberto and Carl Winstanley (Liverpool City Council), Freedom of Information Act Requested by Frankie Roberto, 26 February 2009, www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/blue_plaque_scheme_2 (accessed 24 March 2014).



4 Roscoe Gardens Memorial Plaque, 2003 (Photograph: Author)

Heritage Forum criticized a booklet published by English Heritage (written by local historian and *Echo* columnist Laurence Westgaph) about streets named in connection to slavery, in the Forum's newsletter.⁹⁹ The piece questioned whether 'this wish to make the city's history better known will extend to streets named after former citizens who made positive achievements such as William Roscoe, who played a leading part in abolishing the slave trade'.¹⁰⁰ In

⁹⁹ Laurence Westgaph, *Read the Signs: Street Names With a Connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Abolition* (Liverpool: English Heritage and Liverpool City Council, 2007); Laurence Westgaph, 'On Friday at the Big History Show I launched my new pamphlet entitled "Read the Signs";' *Liverpool Echo*, 17 September 2007.

¹⁰⁰ Andrew Pearce (ed.), *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter*, 45, 21 May 2008. The newsletter of the previous month had also included a long section on Roscoe's life and work alongside reporting on the Roscoe Lecture series. The lecture in 2007 was given

The Persistence of Memory

fact, Roscoe did appear in this booklet, with an entire page discussing street names, memorials, and buildings connected to or named after him.¹⁰¹ Roscoe's name is here readily drawn upon to 'counter' associations between Liverpool and slavery, to act as a 'positive' and thereby morally balancing historical figure, better referenced perhaps than other 'negative' aspects of Liverpool's past; '[w]hat other city' asks Pearce, 'focuses mainly on the downside of its history?'¹⁰² William Roscoe was also used by Pearce as a figure of contention within criticisms of the ISM. Pearce, who was at this time the Chair of the Friends of National Museums Liverpool, stated that the Friends were withholding funds from the ISM for its 'unbalanced' history, and in particular criticized the museum for not celebrating abolition enough, particularly the work of William Roscoe.¹⁰³ In broader discourse around the disbanding of the Friends group the following year (see Chapter 5), the apparent lack of acknowledgement of Roscoe and abolition within the museum was presented alongside a perceived lack of acknowledgement of African complicity, that only 'very small space' was dedicated to abolitionists 'including William Roscoe' and that '[t]he Liverpool abolitionists tried their best.'¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

Processes of reframing Roscoe's character and credentials have followed the ebb and flow of time and sensibilities. Across centenaries and bicentenaries of life, death, and emancipation, his anti-slavery sentiments, once a dissonant piece of Roscoe's memory puzzle in the early nineteenth century, are foregrounded to elevate his position as Liverpool's great abolitionist-martyr-hero in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The role of anniversaries and round-number commemorative events have been paramount to this

by Lord Alton, who presented a biography of William Roscoe. '200 years earlier' the newsletter states, 'an Act of Parliament which abolished the slave trade throughout the British Empire was passed. Roscoe, one of Liverpool's MPs, played a major part in this.' Later in the article, the author questions whether 'the authorities in Liverpool concentrate too much on the evils of the slave trade and not enough on the role that some of the city's citizens, Roscoe in particular, took to stamp it out?' Andrew Pearce (ed.), *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter*, 42, 14 April 2008.

101 A point made by Westgaph in response to the *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter* piece. Laurence Westgaph, 'Why We Can't Ignore Our City's Shameful Past,' *Liverpool Echo*, 27 May 2008.

102 Pearce, *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter*, 45.

103 David Bartlett, 'Museum Friends group disbanded in city row,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 28 April 2008.

104 Peter and Caro Urquart, 'Letter: No explanation,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 28 January 2009.

process. They have forged moments of succeeding chronological markers following his death, acting to focus public attention around the perception and construction of a particular version of 'Roscoe' at different points in time, awkwardly contesting the place, significance, and even mention of his euphemistically referenced 'politics' – the anti-slavery strand of his identity. Initially a point of intense public debate, the feature of divisions over his ill-fated memorialization in the 1830s and 1840s, 'Roscoe the abolitionist' is nonetheless resurrected across the later nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century reflecting a context of a progressively 'anti-slavery' British Empire. Such commemorative reframing owes more to contemporary anxiety than it does to happenstance. Whilst Liverpool's rival regional port city of empire, Bristol, was busy fashioning a memorial cult out of seventeenth-century merchant businessman, philanthropist, and, notably, slave-trader, Edward Colston (1636–1721), Victorian Liverpool chose one of her few abolitionists.¹⁰⁵ Whilst Roscoe's favourable selection owed a great debt to his cultural credentials, the greater public and civic awareness of the city as the former 'slaving capital of the world', no doubt also influenced this choice.

Roscoe's memorial reframing as 'abolitionist', and in particular his presentation as local counterpart to national figure William Wilberforce, was further shaped by commemorative anniversary memory-work during the 1930s. John Oldfield has argued that the coincidence of the centenary of the Emancipation Act with the centenary of the death of William Wilberforce came to commemoratively combine the two – Wilberforce the hero of emancipation, the ultimate Christian martyr-hero, who saw the Bill pass before his dying eyes, became synonymous with emancipation itself. The prolonged public exposure to emancipation during the run up to 1933 and 1934 and its after-effects foregrounded individual 'civic' abolitionists as 'local' patriots and heroes, which acted upon a 'national' stage. This was the national endorsement that enabled Roscoe's memory to be shaped more solidly into an abolitionist mould, used and drawn upon more fervently in the birthday celebrations of 1957 than those of 1907. Memorialized across various genres in Liverpool, in road names, pub names, statues, memorials, plaques, commemorative lectures, and of course within inscribed texts, Roscoe's associations with abolition have become accepted, without need for qualification, and in equal measure to one of his professional occupations: 'solicitor and slavery abolitionist' is now his epitaph.

105 Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, 23. Christine Chivallon, 'Bristol and the Eruption of Memory: Making the Slave-Trading Past Visible,' *Social & Cultural Geography* 2:3 (2001).

5

The Rise of the Museums

Introduction

From the late 1980s onwards, Liverpool's leading cultural institutions – National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside (NMGM – established in 1986), becoming National Museums Liverpool (NML) in 2003 – came to play a far larger role in 'memory work' relating to Liverpool and slavery, whilst ultimately remaining linked, psychologically if not always literally, to processes of regeneration in the city. Museological developments around this time sought to go 'beyond the mausoleum', placing increasing focus on communities, stories, and 'experiences' in place of the traditional focus on glass cabinets and artefacts.¹ Housed within the much-lauded Albert Dock complex, itself 'a self-conscious symbol of rebirth and redirection', the Merseyside Maritime Museum became an important site of slavery memory after a decade of silence on the matter.² Early examples included temporary exhibitions such as *Staying Power: Black Presence in Liverpool*, developed in partnership with the Liverpool Anti-Racist Community Arts Association (LARCAA) and the city council (1991) which discussed slavery in relation to the city's black community.³ In 1994, the city's first permanent

¹ Andrea Witcomb, *Re-Imagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum* (London: Routledge, 2003); Kevin Walsh, *The Representation of the Past: Museums and Heritage in the Post-modern World* (London: Routledge, 1992). See also Peter Vergo (ed.), *The New Museology* (London: Reaktion, 1989).

² Sharples and Pollard, *Liverpool (Pevsner Architectural Guides)*, 103. I discuss the Merseyside Maritime Museum in more detail in, Moody, 'Liverpool's Local Tints: Drowning Memory and 'Maritimizing' Slavery in a Seaport City'.

³ van Helmond and Palmer, *Staying Power: Black Presence in Liverpool*.

The Persistence of Memory

museum exhibition on slavery, *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity* was opened in the basement of the Maritime Museum. The Transatlantic Slavery Gallery (TSG) holds a particular ‘milestone’ status in the history of Liverpool’s memory of slavery, though its initial development was met with some challenge and conflict. In 2007, the International Slavery Museum (ISM) opened on the third floor of the Maritime Museum, building on but ultimately replacing the older display. As a museum in its own right and opening during a year of heightened public discussion around transatlantic slavery, the ISM represented a notable step change in public memory work around transatlantic slavery. The development of major museum representations of slavery in Liverpool at the end of the twentieth century occurred against a global expansion in the memorialization of slavery (see Chapter 6) and within a context of theoretical and curatorial shifts in museology.

The tensions and debates surrounding the development of both displays reflected pre-existing historical facets of Liverpool’s slavery memory discourse, and were shaped by legacies of local, political, and, particularly, racial history, especially as this related to the city’s authoritative institutions. These debates focused in particular on *whose* museum this was; reflecting broader concerns about ownership, identity, and power. Sharon MacDonald has argued that it was because museums had ‘become global symbols through which status and community’ were expressed that they so frequently became stages for history and culture wars.⁴ The development of the TSG more immediately reflected legacies of Liverpool’s recent racial history, and the ‘whose museum’ question centred closely on issues of black (and white) Liverpool. The development of the more substantial ISM reflected the historical legacy of the development of the TSG a decade earlier, and issues of ownership centred much more on local/global framings. In both cases, the ‘whose museum’ question brought into stark relief the kind of narratives foregrounded within the museum space, and broader connections that should (or should not) be made between the history of transatlantic slavery and other historic and contemporary phenomena. This chapter considers these major museological interventions with a focus on the tensions and debates around their development,

4 Mark W. Rectanus, ‘Globalization: Incorporating the Museum,’ in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 383; Sharon Macdonald, ‘Theorizing Museums: An Introduction,’ in *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World*, ed. Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe (Oxford: Blackwell/The Sociological Review, 1996), 2. For a discussion on ‘History Wars’ around this time, see Macintyre and Clark, *The History Wars*; Steven Dubin, *Displays of Power: Memory and Amnesia in the American Museum* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); Linenthal and Engelhardt, *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*.

contestations over their content and purpose, and questions around ownership, identity, and power into the early 2010s.

The Transatlantic Slavery Gallery

The TSG, which opened to coincide with Black History Month (BHM) in October 1994, arose in a context of shifting racial politics in 1990s Britain, and at a time when many museums were seeking ways of incorporating new languages of diversity and more inclusive ideas of national identity.⁵ A new wave of global black politics was also emerging, linked with the African Reparations Movement, major conferences for which were held in Nigeria and Birmingham (UK) in 1993.⁶ However, tensions around the exhibition also reflected Liverpool's particular political context and the fraught relationships between authoritative bodies (especially the city council) and black organizations in the 1980s. This demonstrated the extent to which museums were (and still are) embroiled in the dynamics of their cities; spaces of struggle over identity and ownership.⁷

Despite growing academic scholarship concerning transatlantic slavery from the 1960s onwards, museums were slow to develop displays reflecting this, and many maintained narratives that celebrated colonial endeavour and acts of white liberation.⁸ Previous museums addressing transatlantic slavery, such as Wilberforce House, Hull, the Wisbech Museum, Cambridgeshire, and the Cowper and Newton Museum in Olney, Buckinghamshire, largely told the biographical stories white men – William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, William Cowper, and John Newton respectively – presenting predominantly celebratory narratives of abolition and emancipation.⁹ The

5 Oldfield, 'Chords of Freedom', 120.

6 Stephen Small, 'Contextualizing the Black Presence in British Museums: Representations, Resources and Response,' in *Cultural Diversity: Developing Museum Audiences in Britain*, ed. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), 58; Stephen Small, 'Slavery, Colonialism and Museums Representations in Great Britain: Old and New Circuits of Migration,' *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 9:4 (2011): 121.

7 Nick Prior, 'Postmodern Restructurings,' in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 510.

8 Anthony Tibbles, 'Interpreting Transatlantic Slavery: The Role of Museums,' in *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, ed. Anthony Tibbles (London: HMSO/National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 2005) 131; Stephen Small, 'Slavery, Colonialism and Museums Representations in Great Britain,' 118.

9 For an interesting analysis of the changing narratives surrounding Newton and Cowper in historical perspective see Leanne Munroe, 'Making Museum Narratives of Slavery and Anti-Slavery in Olney,' in *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic*

The Persistence of Memory

development of the TSG, therefore, represented the beginning of a shift towards a national public memory of slavery rather than abolition.¹⁰

The TSG was developed following a substantial single grant of close to £550,000 from the Peter Moores Foundation and additional supporting funds from the Tourist Development Project.¹¹ Lancashire-born businessman and philanthropist Peter Moores set up the Peter Moores Foundation in 1964 with revenue from his family's (Liverpool-based) football pools business, Littlewoods.¹² The initial impetus for the gallery has been largely ascribed to Moores himself, who approached the museums in Liverpool about a project concerning transatlantic slavery.¹³ Museum staff suggested that the approach from Peter Moores coincided with discussions in the late 1980s and early 1990s over how to improve representations of transatlantic slavery within current displays, particularly in the wake of criticisms of panel text in the Maritime Museum within the Gifford Inquiry.¹⁴ In December 1991 the project was publicly announced and 400 square metres was dedicated to a gallery addressing transatlantic slavery, which was to open as *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*.¹⁵

Despite the clear Liverpool connections Moores and his family business had, and much being made in the local press over the significance of the project being in Liverpool, the actual reasons for Liverpool being the home for Moores's vision were apparently more circumstantial. Moores reportedly became interested in the history of slavery after researching his own Barbados estate. Surprised by omissions in the historic record and public silence surrounding the topic, Moores subsequently spent six years searching for a museum willing to take on the subject. After numerous unsuccessful

Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin' ed. Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley, and Jessica Moody (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 216–37.

¹⁰ Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 119.

¹¹ Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 33.

¹² Peter Moores Foundation, 'Sir Peter Moores – Biography,' www.pmf.org.uk/pag_pm_biog.php (accessed 26 November 2013).

¹³ Peter Moores, 'Foreword,' in *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, ed. Anthony Tibbles (London: HMSO/National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994).

¹⁴ Anthony Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity: The Development of the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery at Merseyside Maritime Museum,' Proceedings, IXth International Congress of Maritime Museums, ed. Adrian Jarvis, Roger Knight, and Michael Stammers (1996), www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/against_human_dignity.aspx (accessed 21 November 2013); Tibbles, 'Interpreting Transatlantic Slavery: The Role of Museums,' 132. See Gifford, Brown, and Bunday, *Loosen the Shackles*, 26. This is further discussed in Chapter 2.

¹⁵ Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity: The Development of the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery at Merseyside Maritime Museum.'

The Rise of the Museums

approaches, Sir Richard Foster, director of NMGM took him up on his offer.¹⁶ This is an important point for Liverpool-born black interviewee, Scott, who downplayed Liverpool's particular selection and suggested that Moores had approached Liverpool museums only 'as a last resort'.¹⁷

The project was described by NMGM director Richard Foster as 'one of the most challenging projects' the museums had ever undertaken.¹⁸ Part of this challenge lay in not only negotiating the range of ways in which the subject matter could be addressed given the dearth of other British examples from which to draw lessons, but in determining *who* should be part of the process, and *whose* perspectives should be incorporated. This covered both whose perspective this past was told *from*, but also issues of audience – whose perspective the gallery was in effect speaking *to*. Though the project had supporters from the outset, including Lord Gifford, there were also criticisms from the beginning.¹⁹ Black groups within the city raised concerns at the public launch meeting in 1991, stating that they had not been adequately consulted, and that they should have been involved prior to the public launch when numerous decisions had already been taken.²⁰ The number and diversity of people involved in the planning and development of the gallery greatly expanded after this, with NMGM bringing on board 11 guest curators, seven of whom were of African descent. Alongside current NMGM employees (maritime history curator Anthony Tibbles and project curator Alison Taubam), Garry Morris was appointed as a black outreach worker in November 1993.²¹ The curatorial team worked with an advisory committee of 17 members chaired by Lord Pitt, which

16 Simon Tait, 'Chains of Shame,' *The Times*, 20 October 1994.

17 Scott, Interview with author, Liverpool, 5 February 2012.

18 Richard Foster, 'Foreword,' in *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, ed. Anthony Tibbles (London: HMSO/National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994).

19 Lord Gifford sent a letter to the committee which was read out at the public launch in December 1991 in which he stated: 'Black people in Liverpool continue to suffer grievously from the attitudes of race inferiority by which the inhumanity of the slave trade was justified.' Quoted in Steve Brauner, 'Slavery Haunts the Old Docks,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 13 December 1991.

20 The Merseyside African Council questioned why the first gallery about Africans in the city was about slavery and not about the history of African civilizations prior to European contact. Small, 'Contextualizing the Black Presence in British Museums,' 51. See also Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity.'

21 The guest curators were Femi Biko, Alissandra Cummins, Preston King, Mary Modupe Kolawole, Paul Lovejoy, Pat Manning, Jennifer Lyle Morgan, Ed Reynolds, David Richardson, Stephen Small and James Walvin. Black Cultural Archives, London, Enslavement, Collections Management BCA/5/1/85, Press Release: How the gallery was developed.

The Persistence of Memory

included Angus Chukwemeka (Chair of Merseyside African Council), Dorothy Kuya (Senior Community Relations Officer at Merseyside Community Relations Council) and Wally Brown (Principal of Liverpool Community College and a member of the Gifford Inquiry).²² The advisory committee's role was largely to act as a means of communication to the curatorial team and to give advice on consultation, education, use of materials and overall approach.²³ Anthony Tibbles stressed the importance of incorporating a black perspective through the consultation and advisory processes, suggesting that '[b]ecause it is a story about Africans and black people it is sensible to speak to these communities in the same way you would speak to Jews about the Holocaust', and that this would enable a 'different perspective on slavery'.²⁴ In public discourse around the gallery, Liverpool's historic black presence was mentioned frequently, though often as an introductory remark framing the (implicitly apposite) location of the gallery in Liverpool, and alongside comments emphasizing the extent of Liverpool's involvement in transatlantic slavery. Moores suggested that '[i]t is particularly appropriate that this gallery should be in Liverpool, which not only has one of the oldest black communities in Europe but was also the major European slaving port in the eighteenth century'.²⁵ Though it was not explicitly made clear why this should be appropriate, Moores's suggestion that the gallery would enable 'acceptance' of 'our history', and that specifically housing a gallery on a taboo subject might 'exorcize' it, framed the 'appropriate' co-existence of Liverpool's black community and this gallery largely from a white perspective. Only general overviews of the history of the Liverpool black presence were made in the press.²⁶

22 Lord Pitt was a former Chairman of the Greater London Council, the British Medical Association and involved in numerous anti-racist campaigns. Front matter in Tibbles (ed.), *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, 7; David Hope, 'Gallery Puts Roots of Racism on Show,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 8 June 1994. Other members of the advisory committee were Dame Jocelyn Barrow, Alissandra Cummins, Richard Foster, Len Garrison, Professor Stuart Hall, Professor Alistair Hennessey, Herbie Higgins (Merseyside Jamaica Association), Barbara Johnson, Professor Preston King, Sir Shridath Ramphal, Dr Stephen Small, Sir Kenneth Stuart, Alan Swerdlow, and Sir David Wilson.

23 Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity.'

24 Andrew Forgrave, 'Gallery Slave Trade Exhibition Launches Voyage of Discovery,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 9 February 1994.

25 Moores, 'Foreword.' The initial statement made in press reporting familiarly stated that 'Liverpool, home to one of Europe's oldest black communities, beat competition from London and Bristol to house the internationally significant gallery,' Hope, 'Anger as Slave Trade Exhibition Set for City.'

26 The most that was said was one article's statement that '[b]lack people were living

The Rise of the Museums

Despite the involvement of a number of local black individuals and organizations, including the Merseyside African Council, there were also calls for a boycott from others such as the Consortium of Black Organisations and the Federation of Liverpool Black Organisations, and some Liverpool black people refused to attend the gallery after it had opened.²⁷ Anthony Tibbles suggests there was general suspicion about NMGM undertaking this project as the organization was seen to have a poor race relations record, employing very few black people.²⁸ Similarly, some took issue with a government-funded (and predominantly white) organization charging admission to black people to view what some considered was ‘their history’, and in this way profiting from slavery twice over:

So, if you're you know, wanted to view your history, you had to pay to go view your history and that money was staying in an organisation that was predominantly white, it was you know, government controlled, erm, perceptions then, and as I say obviously I'm just going back you know, so, you pay money to go view your history so you could argue that a white institution was profiting from slavery still. ²⁹

How to represent Africa and African people, was a key issue for the gallery. This was particularly poignant given previous museological representations (both in Liverpool and elsewhere) that depicted dehumanized, stereotypical imagery of black people as ‘barbarians and savages’ from a European perspective.³⁰ One linguistic approach adopted through the development of TSG, which would set a precedent for public histories of slavery nationally, was the use of the phrase ‘enslaved Africans’ in place of ‘slaves’, a move intent on rehumanizing the story of slavery, against a previous language of numerical and trade terminology devised by white

in Liverpool in the late 1700s, bought by traders and enslaved as domestic servants. Others came as freemen, having fought for the British during the American War of Independence.’ Hope, ‘Gallery Puts Roots of Racism on Show.’

²⁷ Small, ‘Contextualizing the Black Presence in British Museums,’ 51; Wood, *Blind Memory*, 300.

²⁸ Tibbles, ‘Against Human Dignity.’

²⁹ James Hernandez, interview with author, Liverpool, 23 November 2012. This point was also made in the *Granby Toxteth Community Project Newsletter*, which suggested that the museums were ‘using’ the black community for financial gain. See Steele, ‘Confronting a Legacy: The Atlantic Slave Trade and the Black Community of Liverpool,’ 143. Free entry to English national museums was not introduced until December 2001.

³⁰ Stephen Small argues that this was particularly so of black women. Small, ‘Slavery, Colonialism and Museums Representations in Great Britain,’ 118. See also Small, ‘Contextualizing the Black Presence in British Museums,’ 50–51.

The Persistence of Memory

enslavers.³¹ As part of this humanizing drive, curatorial staff also sought out ways of challenging stereotypes of African passivity through a focus on African resistance to enslavement.³² Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace has suggested that such depictions of agency were necessarily paradoxical, requiring to both emphasize the full extent of the dehumanizing trauma of the enslavement process whilst also challenging conceptions of the passive African victim.³³ One of the changes made to the display, largely as a result of lobbying from black organizations in the city, was the inclusion of a section depicting Africa before slavery.³⁴ However, this was criticized by scholars for its ahistorical presentation of artefacts relating to African culture, from different ethnic groups, regions, and time periods, which presented Africa from a decidedly European point of view through the dominance of Western ethnographic museum practice.³⁵

The development of the gallery, and the discourse around it, reflected Liverpool's recent political and racial history in interesting displays of parallel circumstances, derogatory terminology, and particular phrases concerning Liverpool's 'peculiar' brand of 1980s local politics. The employment of Gary Morris, a black man who was (notably) not from Liverpool, who was 'brought in to get the information out of the black communities' (as Scott surmises, '[t]hey bring a black face in, right?'), mirrored the tactics of the Militant Labour Council, which in 1984 also 'brought in a black face', Sampson Bond, a black man from London employed as principal race relations advisor in an attempt to ease mounting tensions in the city.³⁶ Furthermore, in reporting over the early gallery protests, a *Sunday Times* journalist suggested that there was 'no denying that disgruntled blacks in Liverpool (once dubbed 'Self-Pity City') might, with their penchant for interminable discussions, have been regarded as potential wreckers of carefully planned

31 This point is stressed on the front page of the exhibition brochure which stated: 'To refer to the Africans who were enslaved only as "slaves" strips them of their identity. They were for instance, farmers, merchants, priests, soldiers, goldsmiths, musicians. They were husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters. They could be Yoruba, Igbo, Akan, Kongolese.' *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity (Exhibition Brochure)* (Liverpool: National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994). Point also discussed in Tibbles, 'Interpreting Transatlantic Slavery,' 139.

32 This was, in part, influenced by developments in academic scholarship, which since the 1970s had focused increasingly on studies of 'slave autonomy' and produced new studies into culture and resistance. Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 121.

33 Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 35–36.

34 Small, 'Slavery, Colonialism and Museums Representations in Great Britain,' 124.

35 Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 37–38.

36 See Chapter 2. Scott, interview; Liverpool Black Caucus, *The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool*.

schedules', deploying a language of violence against black people in the city, of 'disgruntled blacks' who might 'wreck' time itself.³⁷ In fact, Liverpool had only been 'dubbed Self-Pity City' the year before by another *Sunday Times* journalist in relation to public reaction to the murder of three-year-old James Bulger.³⁸ The use of this phrase acts to classify black reaction in 1994 as *over*-reaction, ridiculing critical voices that were nonetheless typical of 'exceptional' Liverpool, to be expected somewhere with a history of needless displays of emotion. However, this tone was in part also echoed by Peter Moores in his assessment of the protests against the gallery, foregrounding engagements with history, memory, and identity. 'Liverpool', Moores mused, 'is a city of militants.'³⁹

Much of the debate around the TSG also reflected recent developments in museology, which focused on visitor experience and corresponding emotional engagements with the past, features much critiqued in the 1980s and early 1990s.⁴⁰ One of the most 'experiential' dimensions of the gallery was the middle passage section, which took the form of a reconstructed slave ship, largely modelled on a plan of the infamous Liverpool slaver *The Brookes*, with a background soundtrack of readings from John Newton's log and Equiano's memoirs.⁴¹ Since, as it was suggested, this was the 'common experience of all Africans who were enslaved', so would it form a central 'experience' of visitors to the gallery.⁴² This also reflected the 'client participation' approach adopted within living history and heritage tourism sites such as Jorvik Viking

37 Tait, 'Chains of Shame.'

38 Jonathan Margolis, 'Self-Pity City,' *The Sunday Times*, 28 February 1993.

39 Peter Moores, quoted in Tait, 'Chains of Shame.'

40 Often referred to as the 'Heritage Debates', critics of a so-called 'heritage industry' (particularly Robert Hewison, David Lowenthal and Patrick Wright) in 1980s Britain, seen within the proliferation of new museums in old industrial sites (e.g. the Coal Mining Museum, Yorkshire) and, in particular, the development of 'living history' heritage sites such as Beamish (the 'Living Museum of the North', County Durham), viewed such experiential engagements with history with suspicion, though others, such as historian Raphael Samuel, were more open to alternative representations of the past. See Robert Lumley, 'The Debate on Heritage Reviewed,' in *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader*, ed. Gerard Corsane (London: Routledge, 2005); Jessica Moody, 'Heritage and History,' in *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research* ed. Emma Waterton and Steve Watson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain* (London: Verso, 1985); Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen, 1987); David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, vol. 1 (London: Verso, 1994).

41 Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity.'

42 Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity.'

The Persistence of Memory

Centre in York.⁴³ The focus on experiential engagement with the middle passage was reflected within promotional literature for the gallery through a string of active verbs that focused on the actions of visitors, that ‘visitors *will pass*’ through the reconstructed slave ship, after which the tense shifts to the present and imperative verb demands are laid out, ‘*Find out* about the horrors of the Middle Passage’, the leaflet insists, and ‘*listen to* the true accounts of conditions on board’.⁴⁴ Anthony Tibbles stressed the active involvement of visitors by describing the middle passage as a ‘walk-through experience’. However, he acknowledged that this could risk *unwanted* emotional responses, suggesting that ‘visitors needed to experience the dislocation, but we did not want something that frightened people (particularly children) and we did not want to sensationalise’.⁴⁵ For Marcus Wood the representation of the middle passage was a worrying application of contemporary museum theory that focused on entertainment and consumer involvement. It promised something neither the gallery, nor anything else for that matter, could deliver – absolute empathy. This was, Wood argues, part of the ‘empathetic yet complacent emotional substitutions with which the West has been misremembering and disremembering slavery for more than three centuries.’⁴⁶

Throughout the announcement and development of the TSG, it was suggested that the representation of slavery as an acknowledgement of an otherwise silenced or hidden history would go some way to healing (presumably racial) wounds, to better the social position of black people in society and aid relations between black and white alike.⁴⁷ In reference to Peter Moore’s summation of the intentions, that ‘[w]e can come to terms with our past only by accepting it, and in order to be able to accept it we need knowledge of what actually happened. We need to make sense of our history’, Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace draws important attention to the perspective of such a statement. Through the use of plural pronouns ‘we’ and ‘our’, Moore both constructs a collective and unified perspective from which to view this history, yet simultaneously creates an ambiguous ‘we’; quite *whose* history he refers to, and from *whose perspective*, is, she suggests, unclear.⁴⁸ The issue is far clearer for Marcus Wood, who argues that such statements reinforce the dominantly white European outlook of the gallery,

43 Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 123.

44 *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity (Leaflet)* (National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994).

45 Tibbles, ‘Against Human Dignity.’

46 Wood, *Blind Memory*, 300.

47 Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace suggests this was the driving force between both the TSG and Bristol’s Slave Trail (1999) Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 26.

48 Moore, ‘Foreword’; Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 33.

The Rise of the Museums

and further that slavery should never be ‘accepted’ or come to terms with.⁴⁹ Wood further emphasizes the white English focus of the gallery from its title, arguing that “Dignity” is a wonderfully English verdict on what Atlantic slavery was “against.”⁵⁰ This focus, John Oldfield suggests, was perhaps what protesting black groups took issue with, rather than lack of consultation alone. The central issue much more strongly concerned *who* had control over the content, outlook, and perspective of the gallery.⁵¹

Though the stated intentions of the gallery stressed an emotional engagement with the ‘black experience’, it would ultimately be an experience viewed from a dominantly white perspective. NMGM’s mission statement for the exhibition, ‘to increase public understanding of the experience of Black people in Britain and the modern world through an examination of the Atlantic slave trade and the African diaspora’ foregrounded black experiences in the present day.⁵² The aim was for ‘understanding’, not knowledge, information, or even awareness, but a compassionate engagement on an emotional level. The history of slavery was presented as a methodology for achieving this understanding, a tributary for an emotional journey of discovery across the Atlantic and into the contemporary African diaspora. However, the phrasing and perspective of the statement raises questions over *which* public was being asked to understand the black experience?

Despite foregrounding an emotional engagement with this history, public statements drew upon general perceptions of museums as neutral and objective spaces, that the exhibition would not ‘follow any particular line.’⁵³ Peter Moores juxtaposed the emotional nature of public engagement with slavery against the neutrality of the museum space, that, ‘[w]hile we as white and black people who have gained and lost from slavery should be emotional about the tragic and shameful past, museums should be as factual and unemotional as possible.’⁵⁴ Lord Pitt reassured black protestors at the first public meeting that the TSG would be a way to tell history ‘properly’, and that it ‘would not be a “Madame Tussauds”’, reflecting concerns over the trivialization of such an important and difficult history.⁵⁵ However, some considered that the gallery should in fact ‘take a line’ in ways that questioned again *whose* history this was. Maria O-Reilly of the Consortium

49 Wood, *Blind Memory*, 296.

50 Wood, *Blind Memory*, 296.

51 Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 127.

52 Tibbles, ‘Against Human Dignity.’ This mission statement was repeated in the local press, Forgrave, ‘Gallery Slave Trade Exhibition.’

53 Peter Moores quoted in Brauner, ‘Slavery Haunts the Old Docks.’

54 Peter Moores, quoted in Danu Kogbara, ‘The Chains of History: Liverpool’s New Museum of Slavery is Under Fire by Radical Blacks,’ *The Sunday Times*, 30 October 1994.

55 Lord Pitt, quoted in Kogbara, ‘The Chains of History.’

The Persistence of Memory

of Black Organisations suggested that the exhibition should 'be slanted our way because it happened to us. We were taken, we were murdered and made Liverpool rich.'⁵⁶

The public memory of transatlantic slavery is, Barnor Hesse has argued, experienced by black and white subjects primarily through emotion; 'the black subject remembers slavery through trauma and the white subject remembers it through guilt.'⁵⁷ Conversely, Anthony Tibbles suggested that though the gallery *was* looking to elicit an emotional engagement, 'white people should not leave feeling guilty and black people should not leave feeling angry'.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, one of the most commonly referred to emotions in public discourse, particularly in the press, was 'guilt'. 'History Tinged with Guilt' declared newspaper headlines; 'Liverpudlians of today have no reason to feel guilt for the cruelty of their ancestors' were the words of the lord mayor in one letter, and another writer suggested that 'some political groups are determined to give the people of Liverpool a guilt complex'.⁵⁹ Repeated references to 'guilt' shed light on perspectives of this history and, indeed, the dominant perspective of slavery in this context. Central to the concept of 'historical guilt' is historical ownership; people need to feel sufficiently connected to the historical past, to feel it is 'theirs', to consider debates over guilt or non-guilt applicable and relevant. Equally, it is unlikely that the press was referring to black feelings of 'guilt' in relation to the history of slavery, again reflecting the dominant white perspective such articles spoke from. Ranking equally highly was 'shame', though this was discussed as an emotion experienced (or not) by both black and white. Lord Pitt suggested that, for black people, slavery was 'not something we have to be ashamed of, we should be proud because we overcame that'.⁶⁰ The local and national press discourse drew on this word freely. *The Times* reported on the opening of the gallery under the title 'Chains of Shame', and the same article stated that slavery was 'at least as

56 Maria O'Reilly, quoted in Brauner, 'Slavery Haunts the Old Docks.'

57 Barnor Hesse, 'Forgotten Like a Bad Dream: Atlantic Slavery and the Ethics of Postcolonial Memory,' in *Relocating Postcolonialism*, ed. Theo Goldberg and Ato Quayson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 164.

58 Foster, 'Foreword'; Tibbles, 'Against Human Dignity.'

59 'History Tinged with Guilt,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 2 September 1994; Michael James, 'Letter: Slur on the Albert Dock,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 27 October 1994; John Amendale, 'Letter: Slavery Guilt is Misplaced,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 27 December 1994. The quote from the 'Mayor' in Michael James' letter is most likely actually meant to read 'Maya' (Angelou), whose words were quoted in the article the author refers to.

60 Lord Pitt, quoted in, David Hope, 'Anger as Slave Trade Exhibition Set for City,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 13 December 1991.

The Rise of the Museums

shameful to humanity as the Holocaust, and as beset by a conspiracy of silence as child abuse'.⁶¹

Specially invited guest, African-American novelist Maya Angelou, however, drew both emotions together in remarks made during the opening of the gallery in October:

Guilt is about the most dangerous of emotions, it eats up the host but does nothing for the problem. What this exhibition can do is inform. That is the most important thing. Those who have eyes, let them see and those who have ears, let them hear.

No doubt white people will be ashamed by the exhibition but that is a different emotion. One should be sorry but never guilty for one's history.⁶²

Here, Angelou draws a distinction between 'guilt' and 'shame', where shame is an expression of sorrow, an outward reach of human empathy perhaps, against guilt's inward cannibalistic processes.

One of the key intended outcomes of the TSG project as a whole, as stressed by people involved, was the opportunity to 'stimulate a debate about this history'.⁶³ However, the at times fraught, contentious, and difficult process of ongoing consultation, disagreement, and negotiation, and particularly the challenge and protest from local black groups, would go beyond a debate simply about this specific past. The debates around the development of the TSG that focused so closely on *whose* history this was, who told it, from whose perspective, and who the intended audience were, set the tone for future projects undertaken by the museums in Liverpool and beyond.

The International Slavery Museum

The ISM opened as a museum in its own right, though still physically located within the larger Maritime Museum complex (on the third floor), on 23 August 2007. Its opening coincided with the annually marked Slavery Remembrance Day, the year in which the bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade Act was marked nationally and, of course, Liverpool's

61 Tait, 'Chains of Shame.'; 'David Ward on a gallery that helps black and white people confront a shameful past', David Ward, 'Story of 133 Murders in Museum of Slavery,' *The Guardian*, 20 October 1994.

62 Maya Angelou, as quoted in Claire Stocks, 'Focus on City's Shame as Gallery Opens,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 25 October 1994.

63 Stephen Small, quoted in Tait, 'Chains of Shame.' Also stated by Peter Moores, 'to act as a catalyst which will spark off reflection, debate, understanding and further study,' Moores, 'Foreword.'

The Persistence of Memory

800th birthday (see Chapter 3). Richard Benjamin (Head of the ISM, appointed in 2007), stated that whilst the former gallery had been successful, after a decade the displays needed updating. There were important links from the old gallery including the reuse (and reinterpretation) of the same artefacts, and ongoing input from staff who had worked on the TSG, including Anthony Tibbles.⁶⁴ The new exhibition, like the TSG, also started its narrative with a section on life in West Africa before slavery, as had been advocated by black groups, then moved through into the middle passage and enslavement experience section as before. The model ship was replaced by a more abstract film installation called 'The Immersion' within a circular room in the middle of the gallery, and there was also a more developed use of technology (projections, audio, screens, and touch-screen computers). The third section of the ISM's narrative addresses, in more detail than had been the case with the TSG, resistance and abolition, experiences of racism in the twentieth century, and more recent histories of civil rights (with a focus on African-American movements). This section includes a 'Black Achiever's Wall', and more positive narratives celebrating black culture, mirroring the narrative arc of many African-American museums.⁶⁵ The final section of the museum is dedicated to temporary exhibitions, and a new 'Campaign Zone' was added to the museum in 2009, which is dedicated to exhibitions and resources concerning modern-day human rights issues. Though the museum's narrative is framed largely as a general history of transatlantic slavery, throughout the museum there are small links to Liverpool via text and sections coloured red, including examples of Liverpool ships and slave captains, links to the built environment, including an interactive street sign wall that outlines the connections to slavery that some street names have.

The impetus for the new museum this time came largely from inside the organization, from NML's new Director, Dr David Fleming, who suggested that the subject matter deserved a museum in its own right.⁶⁶ Fleming tied this into the bicentenary commemorations by suggesting that the decision to create the ISM had been taken in 2003 during discussions over how to mark 2007.⁶⁷ The museum was developed following a successful Heritage Lottery

64 Richard Benjamin, Interview with Author, Liverpool, 17 August 2015.

65 See Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, *Reclaiming the Black Past: The Use and Misuse of African American History in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Verso, 2018).

66 Benjamin, 'Museums and Sensitive Histories,' 181–82; David Fleming, 'Opening of the International Slavery Museum,' Speech Delivered at the International Slavery Museum Gala Dinner, 22 August 2007, National Museums Liverpool, www.liverpool-museums.org.uk/ism/resources/opening_speech.aspx (accessed 4 December 2013).

67 David Fleming, 'Foreword,' *International Slavery Museum (Commemorative Booklet)* (Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2007). However, elsewhere Fleming suggests plans were put in place shortly after his arrival in the organization in 2001 when the

The Rise of the Museums

Fund bid of £1.65 million in 2005 and the project was publicly announced in October that year.⁶⁸ Having already been through similar processes for the TSG, NML initiated consultation meetings with representatives from the local black community in May 2005, before the project was publicly announced. Responding to feedback representatives gave about having felt excluded by museums services, another consultation process was started in 2006. Benjamin suggests that this demonstrated a more positive relationship between the museums and the black community.⁶⁹ This, in large part, reflects the experience of developing the TSG, and the influence of the response and challenge from the black community. Public discourse around the project's announcement (2005) and opening (2007) focused debate around justification (why a new museum was or was not necessary) and place (why or why not *Liverpool*). The dialogue around justifying the museum reflected Liverpool's slavery-memory debate through an awareness of the long-standing arguments against its public acknowledgement and representation. Questions over whose museum this was this time were framed firstly around distinctions of scale; the ISM was frequently articulated not as *Liverpool's* museum of slavery, but as a museum whose reach extended further, beyond national boundaries and into broad, ambiguous 'global' spaces of ownership. Secondly, these tensions over ownership were also framed around distinctions of time and thematic connections to present-day issues. By 2007 and after, questions over whose museum this was crystallized into debates around not only whose (past) *histories* were being told, and how, but which (present) *legacies* of this past were foregrounded.

Public discourse around the project announcement in 2005, particularly information put out by the museums, drew on the TSG to support and justify the new project. The TSG was presented by NML as an example of a previously successful museum endeavour, and as a sound foundation of experience on which to build.⁷⁰ There was, however, a perceived need to justify the creation of a new museum of slavery in the city as separate,

project was raised with NML Trustees. Fleming, 'Opening of the International Slavery Museum.'

68 The ISM also received government funding of £500,000 capital grant for its displays (announced in 2007 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport), and an annual sum of £250,000 for running costs. Anthony Tibbles, 'Facing Slavery's Past: The Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade,' 301; Fleming, 'Opening of the International Slavery Museum.'

69 Benjamin, 'Museums and Sensitive Histories,' 183.

70 Most of the general press articles were based on NML's press releases. 'The Maritime Museum already has a gallery dedicated to transatlantic slavery, but the new facility will allow it to expand.' Nick Coligan, 'Waterfront Site for Slave Trade Museum,' *Liverpool Echo*, 5 October 2005; 'The current Transatlantic Slavery Gallery – despite

unique, and distinct from the current gallery. This justification focused on how 'exceptional' the new museum would be, as well as the economic benefits it would bring.⁷¹ Articles made repeated reference to how the ISM would be the 'first' and 'biggest of its kind in the country'.⁷² The museum and, in particular, the proposed research centre, was also hailed as a feature with which to 'attract black tourists keen to trace their roots'.⁷³ This reflected a broader explosion of interest in genealogical research at this time (the BBC series *Who Do You Think You Are?* first aired in 2004). The language of economic heritage tourism, whilst familiar from the 1980s onwards, was more prominent in Liverpool following the announcement of the city's Capital of Culture title, in 2003.⁷⁴

However, the TSG was also drawn upon in responses critical of the new project. One letter called the new museum 'overkill', that the topic had already been covered by the TSG, and argued that the museum would further damage the psyche of Liverpool people: '[h]aving been down-trodden itself by so many over the last 30 years, the curators of Liverpool's heritage seem determined to add to our poor self-esteem.'⁷⁵ Anthony Tibbles, now Keeper of Merseyside Maritime Museum, responded to this letter in the press suggesting that there were many issues concerning the legacy of slavery that the TSG did not address (in particular the need for more focus on racism) and that '[i]t is surely a sign of maturity that a great city can acknowledge its past in an honest and open manner and recognise its failings as well as celebrating its triumphs.'⁷⁶ Echoing a familiar line of argument, one response to Tibbles's letter turned the 'legacy' idea around by suggesting that there

being located in the basement of the Maritime Museum – already draws thousands of visitors a year,' *Confronting Our Shameful Past*, *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 October 2005.

71 'More than half a million visitors a year are expected to visit the country's biggest museum dedicated to the slave trade, at Liverpool's Albert Dock,' Homa Khaleeli, '£10m Slave Trade Museum Will be Biggest in Country,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 October 2005; 'It is hoped more than 500,000 people will visit the site each year,' Catherine Jones, 'Never Forget Our Roots: Appeal to Raise £9.5m for Slave Museum,' *Liverpool Echo*, 12 November 2005.

72 Quote from Khaleeli, '£10m Slave Trade Museum Will be Biggest in Country.' 'The country's first museum dedicated to the slave trade will be established in Liverpool.' Coligan, 'Waterfront Site for Slave Trade Museum.' '...the country's biggest museum dedicated to the slave trade,' *Confronting Our Shameful Past*.'

73 Nick Coligan, 'Tourists Will Trace Roots at New Centre; US Visitors To Use Museum,' *Liverpool Echo*, 8 October 2005.

74 Plans to apply for the Capital of Culture title emerged publicly in 1999 following an unsuccessful bid for 'City of Architecture'.

75 'Letter: Damaging,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 October 2005.

76 Anthony Tibbles, 'Letter: Mature Approach,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 13 October 2005.

The Rise of the Museums

were also 'positive' legacies of slavery not addressed, 'that the descendants of slaves live for the most part in freedom and comparative luxury compared to those remaining in their ancestral homelands'.⁷⁷ Another respondent was furious that the ISM was 'deemed necessary in our city which has provided homes for so many foreigners and produced such wonderful benefactors to the human race over the years'.⁷⁸ The museum, understood here as being for 'foreign' people (therefore irrelevant for 'Liverpool' people), is seen as unnecessary since the city already did things for cultural others, including apparently producing wonderful benefactors (presumably more than making up for the horrible slave-traders). The tone of these letters echoed a familiar racialized paternalistic benevolence, where African people were 'saved' by white intervention, wonderful (presumably white) benefactors are celebrated, and foreign (presumably not white) people are blessed with white charity. Conversely, support and justification for the new museum foregrounded contemporary racism as a legacy of slavery. The *Post* raised the recent racially motivated murder of black Liverpool teenager Anthony Walker earlier that year to highlight one of the legacies the new museum would address, which showed that 'slavery and its ramifications are not some distant historical subject, but are still of vital importance today'.⁷⁹ Most notably, and despite this overt focus on race and racism, and in contrast to the debates around the TSG in the early 1990s, public discourse around the ISM omitted any discussion of the Liverpool black presence.

Discourse around the opening of the ISM two years later, in 2007, had shifted almost entirely to the contemporary themes and issues the museum would address.⁸⁰ This focus on 'presentness' countered earlier temporal distancing (how long ago slavery was) and arguments around slavery's perceived contemporary irrelevance. The issues highlighted fell into two main themes: either as 'direct legacies' of the history of transatlantic slavery itself and ongoing social effects – namely racism and discrimination against people of African descent; or, 'comparative experiences' in the modern world, frequently described as 'modern-day', or 'contemporary', slavery. Whilst museum officials may have been keen to avoid historicizing acts of atrocity to a sanitized past, the 'modern-day slavery' theme was also used

77 B.W. Hale, 'Letter: Wrong Legacy,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 20 October 2005. Hale, a regular to the letters pages, wrote a number letters critical of Liverpool City Council's apology for the slave trade in 1999. B.W. Hale, 'Letter: History Lesson,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 19 October 1999; B.W. Hale, 'Letter: Say Sorry Again,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 9 December 1999.

78 D. Morris, 'Letter: Charity Cash,' *Liverpool Echo*, 12 November 2005.

79 'Confronting Our Shameful Past.'

80 *International Slavery Museum: Setting the Truth Free (Museum Leaflet)* (Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2007).

The Persistence of Memory

in public discourse to shift focus away from the specific history and legacies of transatlantic slavery; particularly away from discussion of racism against people of African descent. Anthony Tibbles has noted the use of this device previously, suggesting it was used within public debate to distract attention away from atrocities of ‘then’ to ‘now’, and crucially most often from ‘here’ to ‘there’, usually in other countries and, significantly, in modern-day Africa.⁸¹ For Scott, the ISM’s focus on contemporary human rights issues was a particular point of contention:

When it comes to children as regards working in factories in India working to produce carpets – that’s a separate thing completely. When it comes to sex slavery, modern days, that is completely different. It has no right whatsoever to be put alongside, because what it does is it takes something *away* – cause people- oh well that’s not that bad because look what’s going on now!⁸²

Scott’s issue was not with museums highlighting or raising awareness of these types of issues as such, but the *impact* that this might have on a viewing public and their subsequent assessments concerning historic transatlantic slavery and its (ongoing) impacts on people of African descent.

Taken up readily by the press to counter assumptions of slavery’s ‘pastness’, ‘modern-day slavery’ also diverted focus to ‘foreign’ human rights abuses elsewhere. As one article outlined:

Although most people think of slavery as a shameful period that is fortunately buried deep in the past, they are far from right. Even today, millions of human beings around the globe are sold as objects and made to work for little or no pay.

Children are trafficked between countries in West Africa, women from Eastern Europe are bonded into prostitution and men are forced to work as slaves on Brazilian agricultural estates.⁸³

Attention is drawn here, as in other instances, to injustices that occur in foreign places. Brief mention of human trafficking victims ending up in Britain, where raised, is discussed in a language of emancipation, where foreign ‘others’ were rescued.⁸⁴ Although one article made a connection to

81 Tibbles, ‘Facing Slavery’s Past.’

82 Scott, interview.

83 Scott, interview.

84 ‘Last year, during a special operation, police raided 515 properties in the UK and Ireland, rescuing 72 women and 12 children from Africa, Malaysia, Thailand and Eastern Europe.’ Laura Davis, ‘Facing up to the Past: Liverpool’s Newest Museum Will Show That Slavery is an Ongoing Problem,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 2 January 2007.

the recent deaths of Chinese cockle-pickers at Morecambe Bay in 2004, whose gang masters worked out of Liverpool, there was still an emancipatory silver lining through the suggestion that the opening of the ISM brought an opportunity to ‘look to the future and what part we can play in ending this iniquity once and for all’.⁸⁵ In an online discussion forum on the website *Skyscraper City*, set up specifically to discuss the opening of the ISM, several responses highlighted the need for the museum to address ‘modern day slavery’ as a form of counter-balance to representations of Liverpool’s history. One commenter felt reassured that the museum would include educational information ‘about an issue which remains commonplace in Africa and elsewhere including the UK’, and another felt the museum would only be ‘useful’ if it raised consciousness about how to counter the slavery that ‘continues...to this day’.⁸⁶ Emma Waterton’s analysis of official publications and parliamentary discourse produced before and during 2007 demonstrates how these two themes dominated official public commemorative dialogue in the bicentenary year. Waterton argues that the official commemorations focused on the ‘present’ in ways that reinforced particular ideas of Britishness by raising calls to combat ‘contemporary slavery’, because Britain had a ‘long tradition of “rescuing people”’.⁸⁷ Stephen Small and Kwame Nimako similarly identify this theme as a ‘new anti-slavery movement’, where slavery is viewed as having been abolished by the West, which should now seek further emancipation of modern ‘slaves’ in Africa and Asia, a process that necessarily directs attention away from the historic European slave trade.⁸⁸

The ISM, in promoting the contemporary slavery cause, inadvertently enabled and endorsed this ‘new anti-slavery movement’, even without the intention of turning focus away from transatlantic slavery. More recent

85 Jane Gallagher, ‘Slavery is Not Yet a Thing of the Past,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 24 August 2007. Gallagher’s article stated that ‘at least 21 lives’ were lost at Morecambe Bay in 2004; however, this figure was actually 23. See Hsiao-Hung Pai, ‘The Lessons of Morecambe Bay Have Not Been Learned,’ *The Guardian*, 3 February 2014.

86 Online comments, *Skyscraper City Discussion Board*, ‘International Museum of Slavery’ thread, 16–17 September 2007, www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?s=f3172977c66555ae6da093ef09ab3c20&t=524570 (accessed 28 August 2018).

87 Emma Waterton, ‘The Burden of Knowing Versus the Privilege of Unknowing,’ in *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*, ed. Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Kalliopi Fouseki and Ross Wilson (New York: Routledge, 2011) 32–33.

88 Stephen Small and Kwame Nimako, ‘The Unfinished Business of Emancipation: The Legacies of British and Dutch Abolition,’ in *Trajectories of Emancipation and Black European Thinkers Symposium* (Amsterdam: National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy, 2009).

developmental strategies only strengthened this stance, from a collections management policy focusing on building a ‘contemporary slavery’ collection, and the associated appointment of a collections development officer in 2009 focusing on contemporary slavery.⁸⁹ Given Small and Nimako’s classification of this theme as the ‘new anti-slavery movement’, it is perhaps appropriate that the first accessioned artefact within the ISM’s contemporary slavery collection strand was an exhibition of photographs by Rachel Wilberforce, great-great-great grand-daughter of William.⁹⁰ The addition of the ‘Campaign Zone’ in 2009 has acted to connect the museum to contemporary international anti-slavery projects in more direct and participatory ways. Exhibitions hosted in this section have been developed with partner non-governmental organizations such as Anti-Slavery International, the Environmental Justice Foundation, and Stop the Traffik. These exhibitions have not only represented such issues but endeavoured to give visitors ‘the tools for engagement’ with the contemporary issues they campaign against.⁹¹ For example, the first exhibition in the Campaign Zone, *Home Alone: End Domestic Slavery* (September 2010 to September 2011) concerned the exploitation of domestic workers and was developed in partnership with Anti-Slavery International. Visitors were asked to write to their local MP and sign a petition. NML have suggested that this participatory action led to the International Labour Organisation adopting a new Convention for Domestic Work, which improved worker conditions and rights.⁹² The museum also ran a competition accompanying their *White Gold: The True Cost of Cotton* exhibition asking visitors to design a t-shirt around the exhibition’s themes. The successful entry was made into a Fair Trade t-shirt through the exhibition partner, the Environmental Justice Foundation.⁹³

89 Benjamin, ‘Museums and Sensitive Histories,’ 191–93. The collections policy had worked in partnership with Anti-Slavery International to develop this collection, including testimony from individuals. See Angela Robinson, ‘A Different Perspective: Developing Collections at the International Slavery Museum,’ *National Museums Liverpool*, www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/Developing-the-International-Slavery-Museums-collections.pdf, 45 (accessed 21 November 2019).

90 The exhibition, *Missing* (2007) was accessioned in 2009. Benjamin, ‘Museums and Sensitive Histories,’ 191. Adeline Iziren, ‘My Story: Rachel Wilberforce (Interview),’ *The Guardian*, 19 May 2007.

91 J.A. Orange and J.J. Carter, “‘It’s Time to Pause and Reflect’: Museums and Human Rights,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 55 (2012): 259–66.

92 ‘The Home Alone Campaign,’ *National Museums Liverpool*, www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/exhibitions/homealone/campaign.aspx (accessed 21 November 2019).

93 ‘Social Justice and the International Slavery Museum: An Interview with Lucy Johnson, Senior Exhibition Officer,’ *SJAM: Social Justice Alliance for Museums*, <https://sjam.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/WebsiteLucyInterview.pdf> (accessed 21 November 2019); Stephen Carl-Lokko, ‘International Slavery Museum: Museums and Sensitive Histories,’

The Rise of the Museums

The impact of the contemporary slavery collecting policy and the work of the Campaign Zone has strengthened the international partnerships between the museum and global human rights organizations, including a particularly fruitful relationship with Anti-Slavery International who have transferred their historic archive and library to the museum.⁹⁴

In contrast to arguments viewing the focus on ‘modern-day slavery’ as a distraction from transatlantic slavery, in incorporating material on contemporary human rights abuses such as wage slavery and sex trafficking, it is possible and appropriate to frame transatlantic slavery as a *defining* feature of modernity, rather than an ‘aberration’ of otherwise ‘progressive’ development. As such, the memory of slavery can become part of a broader critical commentary on the development of global capitalism.⁹⁵ Alan Rice is supportive of the ISM for not limiting its remit to historical slavery, for tackling subjects of contemporary human rights in ways that link broader processes of global capitalist systems, a response he also sees within the work of contemporary black artists in Britain.⁹⁶ Forging this kind of theoretical and structural connection between past and present goes to the sordid heart of the economic exploitation that underlies all modern global economies, especially in the ‘West’, which benefits so greatly from oppressive industries, trade and (in many cases quite legal) abuse of human bodies, power, and rights around the world. That said, this is not predominantly the way this link between past and present is articulated in public discourse, including within museums. The omission within explanatory frameworks of overarching processes of economics and power, of explicit and focused discussion of capitalism and its abuses as central within this, and, crucially of Britain’s (and Europe’s) position within this at the level of state structures of power, creates the space through which more comfortable (and historically accessible) engagements with narratives of emancipation and abolition – past and present – emerge. These more comfortable narratives adopt the ‘culture

Conference Talk, 2 June 2013, *Africultures Les Mondes En Relation*, <http://africultures.com/international-slavery-museum-11536/> (accessed 21 November 2019).

94 Richard Benjamin, ‘Constructing Pasts, Contesting Futures,’ *Anti-Slavery International*, 20 September 2019, www.antislavery.org/constructing-pasts-contesting-futures/ (accessed 21 November 2019).

95 Hershini Bhana Young, *Haunting Capital: Memory, Text and the Black Diasporic Body* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2006), 11. Referenced also within Alan Rice and Johanna C. Kardux, ‘Confronting the Ghostly Legacies of Slavery: The Politics of Black Bodies, Embodied Memories and Memorial Landscapes,’ *Atlantic Studies* 9:3 (2012): 249–51. See also Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*; Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005) and, of course, Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*.

96 Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities*, 208–09.

The Persistence of Memory

of abolition' framework, which has for so long dominated Britain's memory of slavery, celebrating the efforts of white liberators, past and present (often in the same sentence), and condemning 'slavery' (never entirely defined) that is 'other', elsewhere, or unseen, in ways that focus on the actions of 'evil' and 'bad' individual actors, disconnected from social, political, and economic structures sustained by states and governments.⁹⁷

Whilst governmental discourse around 2007, focusing as it did to a far greater degree on *abolition* than slavery, foregrounded campaigning as a positive legacy of this history, public discourse in Liverpool fell to a much larger degree on 'negative' legacies, on the presence and effects of racism.⁹⁸ This was particularly poignant given the close coincidence of the announcement of the ISM project with the racially motivated murder of 18-year-old black Liverpoolian student Anthony Walker in 2005. In the week before the official opening, museum officials announced that the ISM's education centre would be named after Walker, and that the space would be somewhere for education surrounding the 'legacy of racial intolerance left behind by the transatlantic slave trade'.⁹⁹ However, this was not a connection universally favoured and some critical online public commentary rejected the relevance or connection between past and present in this way.¹⁰⁰ The theme was given greater prominence in David Fleming's opening speech in August 2007, which drew on an image of a utopian future, where racial discrimination is incomprehensible, that '[t]he day will come when it is impossible to imagine that a young man should be murdered by white thugs on the streets of Liverpool simply because he was Black. But that day has not yet come.'¹⁰¹ In this opening speech, delivered at a gala dinner in St George's Hall where many leading members of Liverpool's black community were present, Fleming did not discuss the museum's campaign against contemporary slavery, focusing instead on

97 See Laura A. Brace and Julia O'Connell-Davidson (eds), *Revisiting Slavery and Antislavery: Towards a Critical Analysis* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

98 Negative impacts on Africa, the Caribbean and South America, which had 'faced long-term underdevelopment because of slavery and colonialism', were also a focus. *International Slavery Museum (Commemorative Booklet)*.

99 O'Keefe, 'Tribute to Anthony at Slavery Museum.' The space also featured footage of news coverage of the murder. Liza Williams, 'Slavery Museum to "Have International Presence"', *Liverpool Daily Post*, 21 August 2007.

100 The following comment responded to another post making a similar argument. 'This was a gruesome murder but this is a museum of slavery not of racism and I don't believe it has a relevance here.' Online comment, *Skyscraper City Discussion Board*, 'International Museum of Slavery' thread, 17 September 2007, www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?s=f3172977c66555ae6da093ef09ab3c20&t=524570L (accessed 28 August 2018).

101 David Fleming, 'Opening of the International Slavery Museum.'

racial discrimination and the importance of remembering the resistance of enslaved Africans.¹⁰²

The two main themes of combatting contemporary racial discrimination and campaigning against contemporary slavery were more often than not articulated on a national and global stage than a local one. As David Fleming illustrated in a statement after the museum's opening: '[t]his is the world's first International Slavery Museum and it's a very important statement from the government of the dedication of people in Britain to a future against racism.'¹⁰³ Fleming also stressed the desire to speak to contemporary issues as a way of going *beyond* the transatlantic slave trade and avoiding a compartmentalized, and perhaps sanitized, assessment of a time-restricted section of history.

Uppermost in our minds were two things: first, the museum should analyse the impact and legacies of the slave trade, not just the slave trade itself; and second, the museum should open up questions about other forms of slavery and human oppression, especially in the modern world, so as to unlock the full meaning, and full horror, of the transatlantic slave trade. Hence the museum's title – International Slavery Museum.¹⁰⁴

By looking at 'other forms of slavery and human oppression' the museum was presented as somehow coming full circle, looking again at the historical subject. Here, addressing contemporary human rights abuses was presented as a way of *really* understanding the transatlantic slave trade in ways that are not explicitly made clear. The 'International' naming of the ISM, moreover, was presented as a way of encompassing global themes of past and present.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

The development of the TSG and ISM permanently disrupted Liverpool's public memory of slavery, but in ways that centred on their place *as museums*, as authoritative institutions that held, exerted, and contested power, and fed into a public debate that frequently diverged over what museums were or should be, what and *who* they were for. Dominant ideas of museums as

102 David Fleming, 'Opening of the International Slavery Museum.'

103 David Fleming, quoted in Catherine Jones, 'Civil Rights Leader Jackson Meets Anthony's Mum Gee,' *Liverpool Echo*, 27 August 2007.

104 Fleming, 'Foreword,' *International Slavery Museum (Commemorative Booklet)*.

105 However, Richard Benjamin suggests the name was chosen because of the 'international' nature of the historical subject matter and its consequences, rather than a way of embracing other 'international' themes and issues. Benjamin, 'Museums and Sensitive Histories,' 178.

The Persistence of Memory

'heritage' framed their purpose in largely positive terms and down economic lines, a legacy of 1980s heritage tourism regeneration initiatives that had been particularly important for Liverpool. Although slavery walking tours had been run privately for a number of years, it was not until NMGM organized their own (through the TSG) that they became a matter of public controversy following an article published in *The Times* in 1996. The most vocal critic of the tours was Fritz Spiegl, who suggested that '[t]he city suffers from a negative image and this will not help.'¹⁰⁶ Richard Foster, Director of NMGM, however, stated that the tours would instead have positive repercussions, and that this was something the guides were trained in, that 'the tour guides go out of their way to promote the positive aspects of Liverpool, and reflect on the benefits that flowed from the prosperity created in part by the slave trade'.¹⁰⁷ Here, conflict emerged over the dominant notion that heritage tourism is a largely positive endeavour that primarily promotes place in a public relations capacity. Similarly, a public dispute over the ISM, which centred on what museums should be for, as well as the ISM's content and approach, would prove to be the last straw in a fractured relationship between NML and its Friends group. In March 2008 NML announced the dissolution of the Friends of National Museums Liverpool (a voluntary organization that offered financial support to the museums) and its replacement with an in-house membership scheme. David Fleming attributed this dramatic move to the Friends' refusal to support the development of the ISM, though the museums were keen to stress that they saw this as the position of a minority in the Friends' leadership rather than the position of the body as a whole.¹⁰⁸ In a letter to Fleming from the Friends' Chairman (former Conservative MEP and Chairman of Liverpool Heritage Forum, Andrew Pearce), Pearce raised concerns that 'political correctness' might mean the 'African contribution to the trade' would be omitted.¹⁰⁹ Pearce also edited the Friends' Journal, which he used to vocalize

106 Fritz Spiegl, quoted in Paul Wilkinson, 'Heritage Dispute Over Liverpool's Slavery Tours,' *The Times*, 9 September 1996. Writer, broadcaster, and resident of the city since 1946, Spiegl set up the Scouse Press in 1965 and wrote an opinion column for the *Liverpool Daily Post*.

107 Richard Foster, 'Letter: Liverpool's Gains From Slave Trade,' *The Times*, 24 September 1996.

108 Patrick Steel, 'Liverpool Parts with Its Friends,' *Museums Journal*, June 2008. The Friends' refusal to offer support to the development of the ISM was described as 'inexcusable' by Executive Director of Development and Communications, Amy de Joia, in a letter outlining the disbandment. Letter: Amy de Joia to Andrew Pearce, Chairman of FNML, 12 March 2008.

109 Andrew Pearce to David Fleming. Quoted in Steel, 'Liverpool Parts with Its Friends.'

his especially antiquarian views on what museums should be; places to display 'rare, beautiful or specially interesting' artefacts, not 'instruments of education', and not places for 'displaying material created specially to exemplify particular facets of history, as Disneyland does'.¹¹⁰ Curiously, given the museum's stated focus on this issue, Pearce was also critical of what he saw as the ISM's failure 'to recognise the degree to which slavery still exists in many parts of the world today'.¹¹¹ The debate between the Friends, albeit perhaps a vocal minority at the top, and NML, over the focus of the ISM, reflected changing museological stances over what museums should be, and who they should be for. However, and more damagingly for the museums, Pearce's statements echoed historic argumentative frames that had long been used to misremember slavery, and that held distinctly racialized overtones.

The development of permanent museum displays of transatlantic slavery during the 1990s and 2000s, like other facets of Liverpool's slavery memory work, occurred against a much longer memory debate around Liverpool and slavery and the 'legacy' of other contested pasts. The development of the TSG had more immediately reflected Liverpool's recent political and racial history, and spoke more clearly to issues of ownership, identity, and representation as this related to the city's local black communities. Issues around where black communities sat within the power structures of the ISM were somewhat diluted by changes in scope of ambition, content, and connections to a broader range of contemporary phenomena as they applied 'globally'. For Jacqueline Nassy Brown, the TSG had risked exonerating national engagement with transatlantic slavery through its location in 'marginalized' Liverpool, yet she found solace in its 'hemispheric' approach that broadened rather than contracted representation.¹¹² It seemed important, moreover, in public discourse around the gallery that both the black experience being represented as well as the consultation with black people, was happening on a global stage. Here, it was stated that '[b]lack groups around the world have been consulted' on a project that addressed 'how slavery developed across the Atlantic', and 'its effects on the people of Africa, America and Europe', the end product of which would be viewed by a global audience, that '[p]eople from all over the world are coming for the opening of the gallery'.¹¹³ However, for Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace and Marcus Wood, the gallery's

¹¹⁰ Andrew Pearce, 'Consultation on the New Museum of Liverpool – the Friends' Chairman Comments,' *The Friends of National Museums Liverpool Journal* 12, (2008).

¹¹¹ David Bartlett, 'We're Not Friends Any More,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 23 January 2008.

¹¹² Nassy Brown, *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail*, 186.

¹¹³ Forgrave, 'Gallery Slave Trade Exhibition'; 'History Tinged with Guilt'; Todd, 'Slavery Exhibition Wins Tribute.'

The Persistence of Memory

strengths lay in its local connections, in the familiar and everyday objects that spoke of an 'ordinary kind of human experience'.¹¹⁴

Such connections, whilst still present within the new museum, were a much smaller part of an enlarged 'global' project. Questions, therefore, around *whose* museum the ISM was, oscillated between whether this was *Liverpool's* slavery museum (black or white), to what being an *International* slavery museum meant in practice. For some, this was a comforting shift in direction that drew focus away from Liverpool's specific involvement in transatlantic slavery. 'I can live with an *International* Slavery Museum', one online commenter explained around the time of the museum's opening, 'so long as it points out that *internationally*, over the history of mankind to the present day, slave ships sailing from Liverpool, although unsavoury, is actually a mere footnote.'¹¹⁵ More recent developments at the ISM have strengthened this transnational and international approach, especially through the appointment of the conceptual artist, photographer, and film director Jean Francois Manicom as Acting Curator of the ISM from 2016. Originally from Guadeloupe, Manicom's artistic practice considers questions around his own 'fractured' Caribbean identity and his appointment has initiated the inclusion of more contemporary art from black Atlantic artists exploring issues of enslavement, exploitation, and identity; historically and contemporarily.¹¹⁶ For the museums, the international scope adopted and amplified since 2007 signals efforts to place NML itself on a larger stage. Similarly, engagement with contemporary slavery and international human rights issues speaks to the globalization of museums in other areas of their administration; particularly in the realms of fundraising. In an era of increasingly tighter budgets for state-funded national cultural organizations in Britain, museums are looking to new potential funders worldwide, beyond traditional 'museum' funding pots, which are necessarily stretched by increasing applications from organizations trying to make up financial shortfall. To be associated with (indeed partnered with), such high-profile international organizations as Anti-Slavery International, Free the Slaves, and Stop The Traffik, promotes the global positioning of an *International* Slavery Museum and perhaps a step towards a global sustainability. The focus on contemporary slavery in the ISM seeks to align this museum with larger 'global' human rights discourses in ways that frame 'local' histories as globally significant.

¹¹⁴ Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*, 43; Wood, *Blind Memory*, 299.

¹¹⁵ Online comment, *Skyscraper City Discussion Board*, 'International Museum of Slavery' thread, 17 September 2007, www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?s=f3172977c66555ae6da093ef09ab3c20&t=524570 (accessed 28 August 2018).

¹¹⁶ Jean-françois Manicom, personal website, www.jfmanicom.com (accessed 22 November 2019).

6

Performing Memory

Local Slavery Memory in a Globalizing World

Introduction

The development of official public commemorative memory-work surrounding Liverpool and slavery during the 1990s emerged alongside a global ‘memory boom’ and related developments in international efforts to memorialize the slave trade and slavery. The so-called ‘memory boom’ of the later twentieth century included developing efforts to memorialize other ‘traumatic histories’. Alongside the development of the TSG (opened in 1994, discussed in Chapter 5) a number of more ‘performative’ initiatives clustered around this pre-millennial moment, including the official apology issued by Liverpool City Council (1999). Against a backdrop of global initiatives to memorialize the slavery, NMGM also instigated an annual Slavery Remembrance Day (SRD) (1999). This chapter considers the apology and SRD as ‘bodily’ and performative memorial acts that have been staged for different scales of audience, and embedded within commercialized cultural calendars. Their development at the end of the millennium signifies the extent to which they were bound up in broader globalized and transnational contexts, whilst at the same time reflecting the ‘local’ specifics of Liverpool’s racial and political history.

Developments in globalizing cultural tourism and ‘heritage’ towards the turn of the millennium occurred alongside a proliferation in psychoanalytic literature, and a number of commemorations of ‘politically painful anniversaries’ took place around the world.¹ Michael Rothberg has argued that, as well as such ‘traumatic’ histories, the late twentieth-century memory boom

¹ Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 14.

The Persistence of Memory

was also a ricochet of more ‘multi-directional’ connections between the more prominent global memorialization of the Holocaust (coinciding with the 50-year anniversary of the end of the Second World War), and concurrent developments in postcolonial nationhood and identity building.² The ‘memory boom’, and its rise in the public sphere as well as in academic scholarship was, according to Pierre Nora, a direct consequence of the Holocaust.³ This point was echoed by Kerwin Lee Klein in his critical overview of the academic development of ‘memory’ as an emerging field, where he argued that the ‘memory boom’ was ‘the belated response to the great trauma of modernity, *the Shoah*’.⁴ Jay Winter considers this moment a second ‘generation’ of memory, earlier generations of memory (early ‘memory booms’) having formed in the late nineteenth centuries and transformed through the First World War.⁵ In the late twentieth century, modernity’s traumas were distinctly *transnational*, as Andreas Huyssen suggests and, in comparison to nineteenth-century memory, the past had become ‘memory without borders’.⁶ Crucially, therefore, the ‘memory boom’ of the later twentieth century was prompted by broader, *globalized* processes of memorialization around traumatic histories. In relation to the history of slavery and the slave trade, a past that is necessarily *transatlantic* and diasporic, this might seem a moot point. However, it was the emergence and energies of transatlantic pre-millennial memorial activity that really propelled efforts to officially memorialize slavery and the slave trade in the Atlantic world.

The cluster of memory-work activities surrounding the largest slave-trading port in the world at the very end of the twentieth century reflected both these globalized connections and efforts, as well as other national public history initiatives in Britain that arose alongside a backdrop of racialized violence and discrimination. Ana Lucia Araujo suggests that efforts to memorialize slavery came to a head in the late 1990s, in Africa, Brazil, the US, and Europe, with the initiation of a range of activities led by the UNESCO *Slave Route* project in 1994.⁷ Crucially, the *Slave Route* project was a distinctly *transnational* affair that, by awareness and global

2 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*.

3 ‘Whoever says memory, says Shoah,’ Pierre Nora, ‘quoted in Winter, ‘The Memory Boom in Contemporary Historical Studies,’ 52.

4 Klein, ‘On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse,’ 139.

5 Jay Winter, ‘Notes on the Memory Boom: War, Remembrance and the Uses of the Past,’ in *Memory, Trauma and World Politics*, ed. Duncan Bell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 55; Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the 20th Century*. (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 2006), ch. 1.

6 Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 4.

7 Ana Lucia Araujo, ‘Introduction,’ in *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (New York: Routledge, 2012) 4–5.

Performing Memory

recognition if not through direct support, led to the initiation of a number of other projects and museums. Alongside this, and on a national level, as Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace argues, the broader national context of developing patterns of slavery memory-work in Britain occurred against a temporal context of ‘millennial reckonings’ with race and racism, as seen in the late 1990s publication of the *MacPhearson Report* into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, and the *Parekh Report* into *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*.⁸ As John Gillis has highlighted, one of the paradoxes of the globalization of memory in the 1990s was that the focus simultaneously also became more ‘local’.⁹ Stuart Hall eloquently suggested that this was in many ways not such a paradox, but that the turn ‘inwards’ – to the ‘local’ through identity-work, was itself a response garnered by reactions to a form of global capitalism that left many behind.¹⁰ Patterns of migration have been part of the founding theoretical blocks of globalization in the modern age and it was Liverpool’s own distinctly ‘local’ and long-standing Liverpool-born black community that brought the politics of global memory back to the ‘local’ during the millennial memory-boom era.

Whose Apology? Local Apology, Global Audience

As its last formal act, at its last formal meeting of this Millennium, the City Council acknowledges Liverpool’s responsibility for its involvement in three centuries of the slave trade, a trade which influenced every aspect of the city’s commerce and culture and affected the lives of all its citizens.

Whilst bequeathing the city with a rich diversity of people and cultures, learning, architecture and financial wealth it also obscured the human suffering upon which it was built. The untold misery which was caused has left a legacy which affects Black people in Liverpool today.

On behalf of the city, the City Council expresses its shame and remorse for the city’s role in this trade in human misery. The City Council makes an unreserved apology for its involvement in the slave trade and the continual effects of slavery on Liverpool’s Black community.

The first step towards reconciliation will be the basis upon which the city and all its people and institutions can grasp the challenges of the new

8 Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*.

9 Gillis, ‘Introduction,’ 14.

10 Stuart Hall, ‘The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity,’ in *Culture, Globalisation and the World-System* ed. Anthony D. King (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1991), 33–34.

The Persistence of Memory

Millennium with a fresh and sustainable commitment to equality and justice in Liverpool.

The City Council hereby commits itself to work closely with Liverpool communities and partners and with peoples of those countries which have carried the burden of the slave trade.

The Council also commits itself to programmes of action with full participation of Liverpool's Black communities which will seek to combat all forms of racism and discrimination and will recognise and respond to the city's multi-racial inheritance and celebrate the skills and talent of all its people.¹¹

A wave of collective, political apologies for historic 'wrongs' were issued globally around the turn of the millennium. These have been viewed variously as a consequence of post-decolonization consciousness of 'traumatic' history, part of a politics of recognition and as a consequence of the decline of the nation.¹² Michel-Rolph Trouillot has argued that apologies in the global era acted to create continuities of collective groups. Interested in the 'wave' of apologies from the 1980s onwards, he has suggested that the transference of attributes of the liberal self to collectives, as well as changes in historical perception and the existence of a 'global stage', have contributed to this growing trend.¹³ The idea of a 'global stage' and its corresponding 'international audience' is a significant concept for understanding how political apologies, as *performances*, are 'framed'.¹⁴ In many ways, Liverpool, a 'global' city of empire since the late eighteenth century, has perhaps always felt the world was, or should be, looking its way. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the city council announced it was going to issue an official apology for the city's role in the transatlantic slave trade in December 1999,

11 The full text of Liverpool's official apology for the city's role in the transatlantic slave trade. LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Minutes, 352 MIN/COU, Special Meeting of the City Council, 9 December 1999. Also quoted in Mark Christian, 'The Age of Slave Apologies: the Case of Liverpool, England' (Transcript of Lecture), National Museums Liverpool, <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/transcript-of-age-of-slave-apologies-case-of-liverpool-england> (accessed 26 June 2020).

12 Nancy Fraser, 'Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation,' in *Culture and Economy After the Cultural Turn*, ed. Larry Ray and Andrew Sayer (London: Sage, 1999); Jeffrey K. Olick and Brenda Coughlin, 'The Politics of Regret: Analytical Frames,' in *Politics and the Past: On Repairing Historical Injustices*, ed John Torpey (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003).

13 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 'Abortive Rituals: Historical Apologies in the Global Era,' *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 2:2 (2000): 173.

14 Trouillot, 'Abortive Rituals,' 181.

transnational links were sought with America (through ‘celebrity’ guests, invitations extended to Jesse Jackson and President Bill Clinton) and Africa (through twinning with a West African port).¹⁵ Jesse Jackson was at this time Clinton’s special envoy to Africa, where Clinton had stopped short of issuing a full apology for slavery in 1998 whilst in Uganda, instead expressing regret for the role the US had played in the slave trade.¹⁶

The pre-millennial timing of the apology was stressed as significant by both the apology’s critics and its supporters, but was also ominously timed against a number of events poignant to race and racism in Britain. 1999 marked the publication of the *MacPherson Report* into the murder of black London teenager Stephen Lawrence (and the subsequent mismanagement of the police investigation), and was the ten-year anniversary of the publication of the *Gifford Report* into race relations in Liverpool.¹⁷ This timing was drawn upon both by members of the council to support their staged choice of moment, and by some members of the black community who criticized the apology, that it was ‘more than 10 years since the Gifford Inquiry into racism but discrimination and apartheid is still practised under the noses of Liverpool City Council’.¹⁸

Motions to issue political apologies over histories of slavery have had a much longer trajectory in America, gaining particular momentum in the 1950s and 1960s, stimulated by civil rights protests including those around James Forman’s 1969 *The Black Manifesto*.¹⁹ A number of scholars have also noted and assessed the rise in collective, institutional, and political apologies across the later twentieth century.²⁰ Michael Cunningham has assigned the

¹⁵ The lord mayor suggested that Jackson and Clinton would be present ‘in spirit’ if not physically. Larry Neild, ‘Forgive Us For Our Slave Trade History, Mayor to Seek a Presidential Pardon for Port,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 13 October 1999.

¹⁶ BBC News, ‘Special Report: Clinton Close to Apology Over Slavery,’ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/special_report/1998/03/98/africa/68974.stm (accessed 30 October 2013); John Ryle, ‘A Sorry Apology from Clinton,’ *The Guardian*, 13 April 1998; James Bennet, ‘Clinton in Africa: The Overview; in Uganda, Clinton Expresses Regret on Slavery in US,’ *The New York Times*, 25 March 1998.

¹⁷ William MacPherson, *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny*, February 1999; Gifford, Brown, and Bunday, *Loosen the Shackles*.

¹⁸ Mark Brown quoted in Sol Buckner, ‘Children of Slavery Blast City’s “Quick-Fix” Apology,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 December 1999.

¹⁹ Roy L. Brooks, ‘Not Even an Apology?’ in *When Sorry Isn’t Enough: The Controversy Over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice*, ed. Roy L. Brooks (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 310; Jerry K. Frye, ‘The “Black Manifesto” and the Tactic of Objectification,’ *Journal of Black Studies* 5:1 (1974). Forman called for financial reparations from religious organizations.

²⁰ Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann and Mark Gibney, ‘Introduction: Apologies and the

increase to shifts in identity politics and a self-reflexive political ideology seen across the Blair and Clinton administrations in particular.²¹ In 2007, Prime Minister Tony Blair would express his ‘deep sorrow’ during the Bicentenary year. Significantly, this was explicitly *not* an apology, however his words nonetheless initiated some fierce public debate around the apology issue.²² By comparison, Anthony Tibbles has suggested that the apology made in Liverpool (which was explicitly framed as an all-out apology) in 1999 did not attract a great deal of criticism or reaction, though he conceded that there were protests from members of Liverpool’s black community over a perceived lack of consultation.²³ Whilst, as Tibbles suggests, perhaps the apology did not attract as much of a furore as might have been expected, or that Blair’s non-apology would attract some eight years later, the reaction within the local press unveiled telling, if familiar, threads of argument through a sustained public debate.

The place of the apology within Liverpool’s slavery memory discourse is particularly significant when apologies, individual, collective, and political, are understood as ‘speech acts’.²⁴ Nicholas Tavuchis suggests that apologies accomplish nothing ‘outside of speech’, that it is not enough to *be* sorry, subjects must *say* that they are, and Janna Thompson similarly emphasizes how integral ‘appropriate words’ are in apology performances.²⁵ Within council meetings, the wording of the official apology was itself a subject of much debate. Councillor Alan Dean suggested replacing the word ‘remorse’

West,’ in *The Age of Apology: Facing up to the Past*, ed. Mark Gibney, et al. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). See also Trouillot, ‘Abortive Rituals: Historical Apologies in the Global Era.’

21 Michael Cunningham, “It Wasn’t Us and We Didn’t Benefit”: The Discourse of Opposition to an Apology by Britain for Its Role in the Slave Trade,’ *The Political Quarterly* 79:2 (2008), 252.

22 See for example Emma Waterton and Ross Wilson, ‘Talking the Talk: Policy, Popular and Media Responses to the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Using the “Abolition Discourse”,’ *Discourse & Society* 20:3 (2009); David Scott, ‘Preface: Soul Captives are Free,’ *Small Axe* 11:2 (2007).

23 Tibbles, ‘Facing Slavery’s Past,’ 301.

24 Craig W. Blatz, Karina Schumann, and Michael Ross, ‘Government Apologies for Historical Injustices,’ *Political Psychology* 30:2 (2009): 221; Jan Lofstrom, ‘Historical Apologies as Acts of Symbolic Inclusion – and Exclusion? Reflections on Institutional Apologies as Politics of Cultural Citizenship,’ *Citizenship Studies* 15:1 (2011): 105; Janna Thompson, ‘Apology, Justice, and Respect: A Critical Defense of Political Apology,’ in *The Age of Apology: Facing up to the Past*, ed. Mark Gibney, et al. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 32.

25 Nicholas Tavuchis, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 31; Thompson, ‘Apology, Justice, and Respect: A Critical Defense of Political Apology,’ 32.

Performing Memory

with 'shame' for a more powerful effect, and both words were included in the final wording (above). These words were perhaps chosen to counter the sanitized language of other political apologies, and indeed the frequently euphemistically termed 'trade'. Interestingly, whilst one recommendation was made to include mention of 'activists who were residents from the City [who] actually assisted in bringing about the abolition of the slave trade', this was not included in the apology text.²⁶ The familiar and comforting culture of abolitionism was therefore not deemed appropriate in the context of this apology. Public reaction and debate over the apology constituted, in essence, a 'memory debate', holding at its core a 'cultural war over how we remember the past and what, if anything, we should do about it'.²⁷ This element of the debate concerned larger theoretical questions over whose apology this was, who was or was not involved, and what such an act could or could not accomplish.

The timing of the apology in 1999 was frequently remarked upon by supporters and critics. It would be, as was often stated 'Liverpool City Council's final deed of the 20th Century', which would mean going 'into the millennium with a fresh start'.²⁸ Public responses supporting the apology echoed the fresh start idea, suggesting that '[t]he Millennium is a good moment for cleaning the slate'.²⁹ However, reaction against the way the apology was enacted from one Liverpool-born black critic suggested that the timing showed the apology to be insincere, that '[i]f the millennium had not come around this apology would not have happened', suggesting that councillors wanted only a 'clear conscience' to start the new millennium but were not doing enough of substance for 'black members of the community'.³⁰ As Scott also stated:

At the same time, the new millennium was coming in. And at the same time Councillor Devaney was leaving as Lord Mayor. So, he wanted to

26 LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Minutes, 352 MIN/COU, Community, Equality and Values Select Committee Meeting, 4 November 1999.

27 Alfred L. Brophy, 'The University and the Slaves: Apology and its Meaning,' in *The Age of Apology: Facing up to the Past*, ed. Mark Gibney, et al. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 115.

28 Councillor Juarez and Mayor Joe Devaney quoted in Neild, 'Forgive us for our Slave Trade History.'

29 Gerald F. Henderson, 'Letter: Clean Slate,' *Liverpool Echo*, 19 October 1999. Henderson later reiterates his focus on timing in a letter written after the apology had passed commending the council for expressing 'regret for Liverpool's leading role in the slave trade, as we enter the new millennium'. Gerald F. Henderson, 'Letter: 2000 Pardons,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 14 December 1999.

30 Buckner, 'Children of Slavery Blast City's "Quick-Fix" Apology.'

The Persistence of Memory

be seen as a sh- as going out in a shower of glory but he knew that- he wanted to be part of history! And what better way from his point of view than to apologize.³¹

The motion for an official apology was in fact raised by Liberal Democrat Councillor Mirna Juarez, who had some links to black institutions in Liverpool, having been a former student of the Charles Wootton College.³² However, Devaney did publicly claim part-ownership of the apology idea, suggesting that it was something he had ‘considered for some time and by coincidence Coun[cillor] Juarez has come forward with her own thing.’³³ Joe Devaney further placed himself as central to this process in a later interview.

Lord David Alton, a Liberal Democrat Councillor, came to talk to me about slavery, and I said, ‘Look why don’t we apologize?’ So Myrna Juarez, a young Liberal Democrat Councillor, with my help put down a motion. I fully supported it.³⁴

Accusations of seeking personal acclaim are a common trait in debates over apologies.³⁵ Such actions are frequently presented as superficial or made for other self-centred, non-authentic reasons, often utilizing a commercial language, as one letter suggested, ‘and if the council has nothing better to do, I’m sure they can get the “apology *industry*” up to nearly one a month’.³⁶ The millennium played a large part within such conclusions about the apology’s superficiality, alongside the ‘use’ of the black community within such performances. Mark Brown of the Consortium of Black Organisations, for example, suggested that the council was ‘using the black community as a Millennium Trophy in the shop window to promote an unreal multi-racial corporate image of Liverpool’.³⁷

31 Scott, interview.

32 Juarez was born in Honduras and had lived in Liverpool for 20 years. She left the college in 1995, going onto further education at Liverpool John Moores University, studying for a Media and Screen degree. ‘Former CWC Student Elected to the City Council,’ *Charles Wootton News*, June 1999.

33 Neild, ‘Forgive Us For Our Slave Trade History.’

34 Piers Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool: Memories of Life in Disappearing Britain* (London: Headline Review, 2010), 34.

35 Howard-Hassmann and Gibney, ‘Introduction: Apologies and the West,’ 6.

36 B.W. Hale, ‘Letter: Say Sorry Again,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 9 December 1999. My emphasis.

37 Mark Brown, quoted in Buckner, ‘Children of Slavery Blast City’s “Quick-Fix” Apology.’ Interestingly, given the topic of the previous few months’ press debates (see Chapter 1), Brown suggested that one way of demonstrating a, perhaps more sincere and tangible, sense of remorse, would be through the erection of a plaque saying so: ‘We

Performing Memory

One of the most common arguments made against issuing apologies for ‘historical wrongs’ is a lack of continuity in the lineage of victims and perpetrators, and that, in particular, the historical ‘perpetrators’ are no longer alive. However, as Tony Hall argued in his defence of ‘House Concurrent Resolution 96’ (that Congress should apologize to African-Americans whose ancestors were enslaved), whilst no member of Congress today was involved in slavery, ‘Congress’ as an institution acted collectively in the past and bears political continuity across time. It is a ‘transgenerational polity’ that exists beyond the lifespans of individual people.³⁸ Within Liverpool’s official apology text, however, ‘shame and remorse’ was expressed ‘on behalf of the city’, symbolically encompassing a vague body of diverse peoples, yet the speech act of ‘apology’ itself was restricted to the city council alone, an institution that had historically supported the slave trade.³⁹ Michael Cunningham has suggested that the ‘we weren’t born then’ argument really comes down to a question of responsibility, which an apology necessarily requires.⁴⁰ This argument was worded in various ways in the local press. The *Liverpool Daily Post* questioned whether contemporary Liverpoolians had a ‘right’ to apologize for such past people:

It is surely unconscionable nowadays that we as individuals could feel anything other than disgust at the barbarity of the slave trade. But, collectively, have we the right to express remorse, or any other emotion, for the actions of shipping owners so many generations ago, when the world was an entirely different place, founded on strange and primitive principles?⁴¹

Here, the ‘wrongness’ of slavery is naturalized, the *Post’s* position on the issue made clear, an apparently sympathetic stage laid on which to criticize the idea of the apology. The issue of a ‘right’ to apologize is articulated, as Cunningham suggests, as an issue of responsibility, which the *Post*

want a prominent plaque erected in the city which shows how sorry this council is then future generations might be able to learn from its terrible past,’ Mark Brown quoted in Buckner, ‘Children of Slavery Blast City’s “Quick-Fix” Apology.’

38 Thompson, ‘Apology, Justice, and Respect: A Critical Defense of Political Apology,’ 37–38.

39 Liverpool Corporation organized petitions against the Abolition Bill and paid £100 to Reverend Raymond Harris who wrote tracts claiming that slavery was sanctioned by the bible.

40 Tony P. Hall, ‘Defense of Congressional Resolution Apologizing for Slavery,’ in *When Sorry Isn’t Enough: The Controversy Over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice*, ed. Roy L. Brooks (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 351; Brophy, ‘The University and the Slaves: Apology and its Meaning,’ 114; Cunningham, “‘It Wasn’t Us and We Didn’t Benefit,’” 253.

41 ‘Daily Post: Our View,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 13 October 1999.

The Persistence of Memory

discursively limits to 'shipping owners so many generations ago'. Slavery is morally distanced from, having been 'founded on strange and primitive principles', implying that Liverpool today is too morally and culturally different to relate to 'Liverpool then'. The suggestion here is that there is no lineage, no continuity. However, there is an internal conflict within this argument since the editors also draw identifying connections within acknowledgments of 'our' history and its representation, that '[t]he displays at the Maritime Museum provide a permanent reminder of our deplorable record at the end of the 18th century.'⁴²

The apology moment sat within a much longer history of Liverpool's slavery memory debate, and those who sought to tell the story of Liverpool and slavery publicly expressed an awareness of this background. Mike Boyle (University of Liverpool) wrote a piece for the *Echo* that stressed the magnitude of the city's involvement with the transatlantic slave trade, within which he suggested that he did not 'think the slave trade is something people in Liverpool should be ashamed of today or feel guilty about...but we do need to acknowledge the significant role the city played'.⁴³ Whilst this reflects both broader awareness of the long-running debate over this history in Liverpool, and the emotionally charged reactions apologies incite, Boyle's attempt to pacify some emotional reactions from white Liverpoolians did not sit well with everyone. Whilst supportive of the apology generally, Mark Christian found Boyle's comments 'very off', asking, '[c]an you imagine the outcry if someone stated that the people of Germany today should not feel ashamed about the Jewish Holocaust?'⁴⁴ Christian drew on a common and temporally poignant connection to the open acknowledgement and broad, global memorialization of the Holocaust in his criticism, through a traumatic history where the acknowledgement of historical victim and perpetrator has been more widely accepted.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot has suggested that what sets apologies apart from other 'speech acts' is the recognition of identity that implicates the speaker as historical perpetrator and addressee as historical victim, linking the two along temporal planes.⁴⁵ In critical public reaction to Liverpool City Council's apology from white respondents, some sought to sidestep this temporal plane and align themselves with a historic collective group

42 'Daily Post: Our View.'

43 Mike Boyle, 'Slaves to History,' *Liverpool Echo*, 16 October 1999.

44 Mark Christian, 'Letter: History Lesson,' *Liverpool Echo*, 19 October 1999. Mark Christian was named as a consultant within the apology process within council minutes. LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Minutes, 352 MIN/COU, Community, Equality and Values Select Committee Meeting, 4 November 1999.

45 Trouillot, 'Abortive Rituals: Historical Apologies in the Global Era,' 175.

that apparently did not benefit from transatlantic slavery, often through class.⁴⁶ One respondent stated that '[t]he majority of modern day Liverpool people – with largely working class origins – would have had no direct connections with slavery and it is unlikely that their antecedents had any connections either.'⁴⁷ The phrasing here produces an interesting ambiguity of tense and time, since the author has layered the class composition of modern-day Liverpool over its eighteenth-century history, and extended this to their own 'antecedents'. A similar intersection of temporal planes between collective identity groups was demonstrated in a response to Mark Christian's letter, above, where '[t]he working classes did not share in this wealth, so why should they – or their descendants – share in the guilt?'⁴⁸ The author drew focus to another large, and apparently unconnected, collective identity group in Liverpool, by asking 'how can the Liverpool Irish have any responsibility for Liverpool's role in slavery?' when most would not arrive in the city until the 1840s.⁴⁹ Similarly, competitive trauma, another common device in Liverpool's slavery memory debate, was used to break links between the temporal planes of 'perpetrator' and 'victim', where '[p]erhaps there should be an apology for the inhuman treatment of Liverpool seafarers whose death rate in percentage terms for that era was reported as being higher than the hapless slaves.'⁵⁰ This comparison was even more explicitly made by one author, who suggested that '[i]t can be argued that Liverpool's seafarers fared just as badly; press-ganged into the Royal Navy (a form of slavery) and treated equally badly in the Merchant Navy.'⁵¹

Alfred Brophy has outlined how, in reactions to calls for an apology over Alabama University's slavery links, the identity of those asking for an apology became part of the critical arguments made against the apology. One respondent suggested that they were 'sorry that your owner in Africa sold you to an American rather than to another African. There's your apology.'⁵² In Liverpool, the call for apology came from its highest political body and, whilst the motion for an apology was issued by someone who had been involved in at least one institution within Liverpool's black community for some time, the speaker's identity as a cultural outsider, from outside not

46 'Liverpool's working classes were victims of the same system which produced slavery.' R.W. Hale, "Letter: Not Guilty," *Liverpool Daily Post*, 28 December 1999.

47 Laurence Keen, 'Letter: Who's Sorry Now,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 14 December 1999.

48 Delia O'Hennessey, 'Letter: Not Guilty,' *Liverpool Echo*, 3 November 1999.

49 O'Hennessey, 'Letter: Not Guilty.'

50 Hale, 'Letter: Say Sorry Again.'

51 Hale, 'Letter: Not Guilty.'

52 Brophy, 'The University and the Slaves: Apology and its Meaning,' 117.

The Persistence of Memory

only Liverpool's black community, but outside Liverpool and indeed the UK, was significant:

And, there was er- there was also, a Latin American woman there erm... I'm pretty certain, if she didn't come from Nicaragua, she came from that area. Her parents were from there. She may have been born here but to all intents and purposes, the way in which she spoke, she was from that area – had more in common with Latin America. She was a councillor as well. [...] And he [Joe Devaney] had this woman- this young woman who'd never been in the black community, knew nothing about it whatsoever, to propose or to second it.⁵³

For Scott, who assigns the identity of Juarez to Latin America through cultural attributes, Juarez's position 'outside' the Liverpool black community in belonging and awareness was significant, and the suggestion underlying his statement above is that the junior councillor was used by her senior counterpart, Joe Devaney, Lord Mayor of Liverpool, without a full awareness of Liverpool's unique context of racial politics. Press reports did make a point of stating that Juarez's 'own family were affected by the slave trade', however, no further detail on this transatlantic connection was given.⁵⁴

These points, of who was issuing the apology, the connections and fractures between these figures and Liverpool's own black communities, were most relevant precisely because the apology text identified a specific contemporary 'victim' identity group. Notably, it is not African-Americans as descendants of the enslaved, Africans in Africa as descendants of those involved or affected by the mass transportation of generations of people, or even people of African descent in general, that the language of the apology identifies as 'historical victims'. Despite the broader impact the largest slave-trading port in Europe undoubtedly had on huge populations of African descent around the Atlantic, the text identifies *only* Liverpool's own current black community, who are directly mentioned three times across the text. Sitting against a context of national reckoning with incidents of racial violence and institutional racism, the city still reeling from its own intense recent history of racism and black resistance and challenge to this, particularly through the riots of the 1980s, the specific identification of Liverpool's own black communities framed this apology as a local act of race relations. Supporters presented the apology as a form of verbal acknowledgement which would in turn perform a restorative function, often through the metaphor of physical wounds, that 'such acts of acknowledgement and regret can play a part in healing the festering wounds inflicted in years long gone by', that the apology

53 Scott, interview.

54 Buckner, 'Children of Slavery Blast City's "Quick-Fix" Apology.'

‘could help heal the wounds of the past’.⁵⁵ It was frequently recognized as a symbolic act, and articulated as such.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the apology was understood as a process of recognizing and taking steps against inequality experienced by Liverpool’s black communities as a legacy of this history, that ‘slavery left white people with a stereotypical view they [black people] were only fit for servitude’ and that this was a ‘legacy affecting black people in Liverpool today’.⁵⁷ Mark Christian suggested that whilst this apology ‘would not solve the contemporary discrimination faced by black Liverpudlians’,⁵⁸ it was a step in the right direction, and apology-supporter Gerald Henderson suggested that the apology would be an opportunity to ‘hold the city council and each other to account’ on issues of racism and discrimination.⁵⁹ During the apology ceremony, Councillor Juarez called ‘upon the black community never to forget its history of struggle against inequality, but to forgive the past and claim the future’.⁶⁰ Forgiveness is, however, a big thing to ask of a varied and diverse group of people, many of whom were not happy about the process of the apology and had not felt involved.

Criticisms of the apology were largely framed negatively around what the apology could *not* do, as opposed to what it *could* do. Apologies could not ‘change history – what is done is done, and is irrevocable, immutable, unalterable’ as the *Liverpool Daily Post* editorial put it – also suggesting that apologies were (implicitly futile) attempts to ‘transform people’s perceptions of events long ago’, which, as many supporters would argue, is precisely the point of the apology process.⁶¹ The editorial ended by again outlining the nature of apologies as a ‘token gesture’, words that might ‘salve our collective conscience,

55 Henderson, ‘Letter: Clean Slate’; Christian, ‘Letter: History Lesson.’

56 ‘These acts are of course symbolic but they have play [*sic*] a helpful role in building trust between the descendants of the victims and the perpetrators of such injustices.’ Henderson, ‘Letter: Clean Slate.’

57 Juarez, quoted in Buckner, ‘Children of Slavery Blast City’s “Quick-Fix” Apology.’ Whilst attempts at social inclusion through such acknowledgment of both historical injustice and contemporary effects is a common justification of political apologies, Jan Lofstrom has argued that institutional apologies can have the opposite effect, excluding those who do not fit into national historic stories (such as recent immigrants), and therefore not being part of contemporary ‘apologizing community’. Lofstrom suggests that the rise in political apologies across Europe in recent years also aligns with a rise in citizenship tests for immigrants and that rather than the two things being opposed, one the liberal ideal and the other a conservative policy, apologies can exclude by reinforcing alien status. Lofstrom, ‘Historical Apologies as Acts of Symbolic Inclusion – and Exclusion?’

58 Christian, ‘Letter: History Lesson.’

59 Henderson, ‘Letter: 2000 Pardons.’

60 Juarez, quoted in Buckner, ‘Children of Slavery Blast City’s “Quick-Fix” Apology.’

61 ‘Daily Post: Our View.’

but capable of little else'. Here, an acknowledgement of the 'wrongness' of this historic injustice was made whilst simultaneously outlining what could not be achieved, that '[w]e know slavery was wrong, inhumane, and detestable, and will do well to remember the lessons that history can teach us. But we should never pretend that we can ever turn back the clock.'⁶² The focus on what apologies could not achieve drew on fictional claims that the apology advocates never in fact made. It was never suggested that history could be changed or clocks be turned back. The focus here fell on producing ridicule, points that fly in the face of 'common sense', rendering the opposition's support itself nonsensical. This was also demonstrated within the description of the apology as 'yet another example of the ludicrous affliction of political correctness'.⁶³ Other criticisms of the apology suggested that it would, at best, be a distraction away from more practical steps the council could take towards racial discrimination and disadvantage or, at worst, do representational damage to Liverpool's black community. B.W. Hale argued against the apology on the grounds that it would do more harm than good, that it was 'yet another example of the desires of many people, black and white, to depict black people as perpetual victims'. Hale suggested that energies should instead be focused on more pressing concerns, drawing again on the apology's ominous timing, that 'at the dawn of the 21st century', the council should instead 'tackle today's problems' such as 'the catastrophically high dropout rate for black school children'.⁶⁴

Opposition and protest from some sections of Liverpool's black community focused not so much on the idea of issuing an apology, but on the way in which it was being carried out, with protesters critical of the speed of the process and lack of consultation. Mark Brown criticized the fact that groups had been given two days' notice for comments, suggesting that '[y]ou can't even get a tap fixed by Liverpool City Council in two days.'⁶⁵ James Hernandez of the Liverpool Anti-Racist Community Arts Association (LARCAA) was prominently quoted in the local and national press as one of the apology's biggest critics when he suggested that the apology was 'little more than lipservice' and was essentially 'too little too late'.⁶⁶ The move was also referred to as a 'publicity stunt' and as 'window dressing and

62 'Daily Post: Our View.'

63 Keen, 'Letter: Who's Sorry Now.'

64 Hale, 'Letter: Say Sorry Again.'

65 Mark Brown, quoted in Buckner, 'Children of Slavery Blast City's 'Quick-Fix' Apology.' This point of lack of consultation was also made separately by Liverpool-born black elder Eric Lynch, quoted within the same article.

66 "'Sorry' Slave Row,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 8 December 1999; Kate Hurry, 'City Haunted by Slavery Tries to Say Sorry,' *Daily Mail*, 8 December 1999.

Performing Memory

a public relations exercise' by Maria O'Reilly of the Consortium of Black Organisations.⁶⁷ Particularly critical of the lack of consultation, James Hernandez drew focus to the place in which the apology was being carried out, suggesting that the use of the town hall was itself insulting:

If they had taken into account our feelings I am sure they would not have staged an apology in that building. There is artwork in there that black people find racist and insulting. It is somewhat ironic to apologize in a building built on slavery and glorifying slavery without doing something to change it.⁶⁸

This was a point also raised by other spokespeople.⁶⁹ In a recent interview, Hernandez reflected that much of the reaction, at least from LARCAA's point of view, stemmed from the lack of clarification, and possibly thought, over what the apology might 'mean', and indeed, what might happen afterwards:

we were a bit like there's been no consultation about this – what does this mean, what does an apology for the city's role in slavery actually *mean*? ... a number of organisations and a number of key people from the black community got together and discussed it and thought well, there's been no consultation, what does this mean, there's been a few select people invited to the Town Hall when the apology was taking place and erm you know we had a lot of different – on why we were doing it but I think collectively, you know, one – no consultation, you know, what does an apology mean, what was the apology as well, erm, and then also, what next? You know, you don't just apologize for something and then you know, business as usual.⁷⁰

The council's defence implied firstly that there had been sufficient consultation, going as far as to suggest the 'ceremony was planned with full consultation of the black communities in Liverpool', and Mirna Juarez stated that letters were sent out to 45 black organizations on 26 November

67 'City's Apology on Slave Trade Called "A Stunt";' *Liverpool Echo*, 19 December 1999.

68 James Hernandez quoted in "Sorry" Slave Row.'

69 'You just have to look around the town hall building to see the outdated images of slavery which are an outright insult to our community which undermines everything the council is trying to achieve,' Mark Brown quoted in Buckner, 'Children of Slavery Blast City's "Quick-Fix" Apology.' Brown also criticized the statue of Major William Earle (1833–85) outside St George's Hall, which depicts Earle standing with his foot on an aesthetically 'African' shield.

70 James Hernandez, Interview by author, 23 November 2012.

The Persistence of Memory

that focused on the wording of the apology text to be read out less than two weeks later, on 8 December.⁷¹ In reaction to the criticisms over the use of the town hall, a spokesperson suggested that, whilst they ‘can’t hide the foundations of many institutions and buildings’, they could issue this apology.⁷² Critics were not, however, suggesting the council was hiding such foundations, but were rather drawing attention to the inappropriate use of the town hall as the stage for this performance. This point was used by critics as symbolic of the lack of consultation undertaken, showing that without full and lengthy discussions with black organizations in Liverpool (people towards whom the apology was explicitly framed), these were the kinds of issues to which an unaware city council were blind.

Blatz, Scumann, and Ross have argued that the relationship between the addressees and issuers of the apology are integral factors within the ‘success’ of apology processes, where trust and respect between the two groups should facilitate a more credible apology.⁷³ In Liverpool, this historically and contemporarily fraught relationship between the highest political institution in the city and the city’s black communities was not a sound foundation upon which to enact a trouble-free performance of something as contentious as a collective apology for the slave trade.⁷⁴ Defending the council’s position and in reaction to criticisms of the apology being ‘lip-service’, Juarez also suggested that the apology was only the first step and that ‘[f]urther consultation will take place in the near future regarding the next steps in this process of apology.’⁷⁵ In regards to any ‘next steps’, James Hernandez recalled one meeting and some slightly disorganized attempts to fulfil the very ambitious promise made in the apology text ‘to combat all forms of racism and recognize and respond to the city’s multiracial inheritance and celebrate the skills and talents of all its people’:

JM: And what did happen next?

JH: Oh, [*laughs*] erm. Not much actually. I do remember being involved in a very large meeting and there was representatives from various black community organisations and erm, the City was there, I can’t remember exactly who from the city was there but the city was there. And erm, the city was almost saying you know, well what do you want us to do?

71 ‘Council Spokeswoman’ quoted in “Sorry” Slave Row.; Mirna Juarez, ‘Letter: Slavery Apology is First Step,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 14 December 1999.

72 “Sorry” Slave Row.’

73 Blatz, Schumann, and Ross, ‘Government Apologies for Historical Injustices,’ 234.

74 ‘City Council continues to exclude many people in its workforce. Individuals and communities do not receive a fair equal service.’ Christian, ‘An African-Centered Approach to the Black British Experience,’ 185.

75 Juarez, ‘Letter: Slavery Apology is First Step.’

We've made this apology, what do you want us to do? And we were only semi-prepared for that answer. For that question. And you know we had a list, when I say prepared, we had ideas in our heads of things the City could do in order to erm, for want of a better phrase, slightly level the playing field [...] they were sort of shrugging their shoulders going 'And? You know, what do you want us to do? We've apologized' [...] – there was loads of different measures that could have been put in place and we actually I think came up with a 20 point list of things they could explore. [...] But nothing happened. Nothing.⁷⁶

One post-apology measure raised and fully supported by senior figures within the city council was that Liverpool should be twinned with an African port city. The support for this idea largely centred on comparative positive touristic and financial repercussions following Liverpool's previous twinning's with Dublin, Cologne, and Shanghai, though it was suggested that this twinning would have benefits of a more 'cultural' than 'financial' nature. The twinning would 'form part of the council's public apology for Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade' according to Lord Mayor Joe Devaney, who proposed the Ghanaian port of Takoradi where he had previously worked in the 1970s with the Voluntary Service Overseas. Devaney suggested the move would lead to 'better racial harmony in Liverpool' through cultural exchange.⁷⁷ Quite how this would happen was never made explicitly clear. The move also sat uneasily against the very specific framing of the apology towards Liverpool's own black communities.

The apology text itself is fairly long, and, as Mark Christian has noted, certainly sounds powerful.⁷⁸ However, the apology promised more than it could deliver, and the specifics on how exactly the council would tackle the legacies of the slave trade and slavery were not spelled out. Whilst discussing the apology, Scott suggested that without such action, the apology had no meaning, that it was 'words, without deeds'.⁷⁹ However, Blatz, Schumann, and Ross suggest that government apologies are aimed as much at people who might not have previously known about the injustice in question as they are at the identifying victim group.⁸⁰ In this sense, apologies can act to raise awareness about episodes in history. One impact such 'speech acts' can have, therefore, is the facilitation of an active discursive exchange. As Alfred Brophy concludes, a consequence of the heated debates both on and off the Alabama campus has been discussion, which 'has increased the

⁷⁶ Hernandez, interview.

⁷⁷ Rob Brady, 'Africa Twinning Call,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 January 2000.

⁷⁸ Christian, 'The Age of Slave Apologies.'

⁷⁹ Scott, interview.

⁸⁰ Blatz, Schumann, and Ross, 'Government Apologies for Historical Injustices,' 221.

knowledge of history on the campus.⁸¹ Apologies can in this sense act to stir debate and raise awareness, and Liverpool City Council's official apology certainly stirred debate locally, awareness nationally, and connections and links globally.

Slavery Remembrance Day

In 1997, UNESCO established the International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition. The date chosen was 23 August, because this was the day in 1791 that marked the start of the 'Haitian Revolution', an uprising of enslaved people that saw the successful overthrow of the French colonial regime.⁸² As former Curator of Merseyside Maritime Museum Anthony Tibbles has said, whilst the day was marked by only a few countries, Liverpool has been one of the places which has had a continual and repeated series of events.⁸³ SRD in Liverpool was initiated and led by NMGM from August 1999 onwards, with support from some representatives and organizations from within the local black community, and, later with support from the city council. SRD's initiation in 1999 reflected globalized efforts to memorialize the transatlantic slave trade in new performative ways, whilst also merging commemoration with leisure and consumption through its position within a 'cultural calendar'. As Mark Rectanus has suggested, museums around this time sought to participate in an 'event culture' embedded within 'global networks of media communication'.⁸⁴ SRD encapsulated globalized processes of embodied memorialization within localized calendars and identity performances. Further, its commemorative significance has been manifested within its calendrical recurrence. This is an event that calls upon people to 'remember slavery' not once, not when visiting a museum or reading a book, but on a particular moment in organized time, on a particular day every year. In this sense, not only has there been a conscious decision to create this particular commemorative

81 Brophy, 'The University and the Slaves: Apology and its Meaning,' 118.

82 Christopher R. Hughes, 'ICTs and Remembering the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in Britain: An Occasion for Celebration or Remorse?' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 25:2 (2012).

83 Anthony Tibbles, 'Facing Slavery's Past'. The Greater London Authority have also undertaken activities, and France has marked its own Slavery Remembrance Day on 10 May since 2006, the date chosen to commemorate the passing of a law in France recognizing slavery as a crime against humanity, taken in 2001. 'France Remembers Slavery Victims,' *BBC News Online*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4756635.stm> (accessed 23 July 2013); 'Remembrance of the Slave Trade,' *France.fr*, www.france.fr/en/institutions-and-values/remembrance-slave-trade (accessed 23 July 2013).

84 Rectanus, 'Globalization: Incorporating the Museum,' 384.

day, but a deliberate decision to keep marking it every year, a decision that demonstrates support by particular groups of people, though for potentially different reasons.⁸⁵ Whilst it could be argued that SRD ‘segregates’ the memory of slavery in Liverpool into a commemorative day, much like its broader segregation into ‘black history’ or ‘maritime history’ or, even, just to port cities like Liverpool, and that this is a way of forgetting through marginalization, through being part of a ‘calendar’ of events, SRD reaches audiences that might not otherwise have come into contact with the subject matter at all.⁸⁶

The main SRD event consists of a libation ceremony on 23 August, a traditional African ritual that has historically been led by black city elder Chief Angus Chukuemeka (though there has been discussion of others taking on this role). Born in Nigeria in 1938, Chief Angus Chukuemeka came to Liverpool in 1968 and has been involved in Liverpool’s local politics since the 1970s.⁸⁷ His roles have included Chair of the Merseyside African Council (1975), Chair of Merseyside Racial Equality Council, President of the Ibo Community Association, and member of the Board of Directors of the Granby Toxteth Poverty Three Project.⁸⁸ The libation ceremony is accompanied by a changing programme of events, which has included poetry readings, musical performances, and arts and crafts workshops. A commemorative lecture was added to the programme in 2003, usually taking place the day before. This was renamed the ‘Dorothy Kuya Slavery Remembrance Lecture’ in 2014, following the local black activist’s passing in 2013. In 2011, a walk of remembrance was added, which leads participants from the city centre to the site of the Old Dock. 2012 was a particularly notable year for SRD, when the distinguished guest of honour was Martin Luther King III, son of the late African-American civil rights leader (discussed in more detail later in this chapter). All ritual elements during this year were amplified, and the commemorations saw record numbers of people attend at all stages, though much of the performance relied on previous ritualized actions developed over the preceding 13 years. This has set something of a precedent

85 Eviatar Zerubavel, ‘Calendars and History: A Comparative Study of the Social Organization of National Memory,’ in *States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations in National Representation*, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 318.

86 See Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*, 217.

87 National Museums Liverpool, ‘Music map of L8 by Chief Angus Chukuemeka, 2008,’ <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/music-map-of-l8-chief-angus-chukuemeka-2008> (accessed 26 June 2020).

88 Taken from author details in Ackah and Christian, *Black Organisation and Identity in Liverpool*.

The Persistence of Memory

for inviting the descendants of civil rights activists to speak and, in 2015, the guest of honour was Ndaba Mandela, Nelson Mandela's grandson.⁸⁹

The ceremony and activities organized as part of SRD have been articulated in ways that place platitudes of 'not forgetting' alongside celebrations of contemporary culture and, in some instances, the advertisement of events as entertainment. Councillor Mike Storey encapsulated these positive expectations of celebration in 2004, stating that SRD 'provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the harmony between the city's ethnic groups'.⁹⁰ However, links within the performative dimensions of SRD were made to a less harmonious present and specifically to contemporary racism, through the choice of speakers, guests, and lecture topics such as the inclusion of Doreen Lawrence, mother of Stephen Lawrence, as the event's main speaker in 2002. In the, albeit very limited, press reports that do include Liverpool-born black voices, the significance of the commemorative event is seen largely as an acknowledgement by one respondent, but also as a source of psychological healing and pride through education:

Slavery Remembrance Day is important for this city. We have young people who feel ashamed that their ancestors were slaves. People think African slaves were savages who lived in mud huts and ate missionaries. We need to stop, think and educate ourselves.⁹¹

Similarly, SRD is presented by another Liverpool-born black respondent as a way of legitimizing identity, because 'it gives someone like myself and other black people in the city a firm place in the city's history'.⁹² The expectation that SRD should fulfil both a commemorative and psychologically healing function and yet also act as a form of 'celebration', perhaps of African resistance to enslavement, though more commonly as another 'celebratory' event in Liverpool's cultural calendar, was repeatedly set out, particularly within articulations of SRD as a 'festival'.⁹³ The 'festival of commemoration

89 Catherine Jones, 'Nelson Mandela's Grandson to Give Slavery Remembrance Day Lecture,' *Liverpool Echo* 17 August 2015.

90 Joe Riley, 'Civic Remembrance of Slavery Victims,' *Liverpool Echo*, 23 January 2004.

91 Mary Murtagh, 'Slaves to City's Fortunes,' *Liverpool Echo*, 18 August 2004.

92 Catherine Jones, 'City's Triangle of Shame: As Liverpool Commemorates Slavery Remembrance Day,' *Liverpool Echo*, 23 August 2004.

93 Celebrating African resistance appears to be more easily expressed within the local press after 2007, when national discourses repeated such ideas and, crucially, this was a major theme around the marketing of the ISM which opened in 2007. 'Liverpool's 2009 Slavery Remembrance Day festival is part of an annual international event that commemorates the lives of millions of enslaved Africans and their descendants and celebrates the spirit of resistance that ended slavery,' 'Victims of Slave Trade Not Forgotten,' *Liverpool Echo*, 21 August 2009.

Performing Memory

and celebration' in 2002, for example, was a programme of events that mixed performance and entertainment into the libation ceremony, where 'the River Niger Orchestra and singing group Sense of Sound will be woven in with speeches about the occasion'.⁹⁴ It was later assured that 'tomorrow is not just about speeches. It will also be a celebration and a chance to reflect and look forward.' The contradicting call to look both forwards and backwards is echoed in symbolic imagery adopted by NML through the use as its image for the event of the Sankofa bird, a mythical creature which looks behind whilst flying forwards, representing acknowledging the past in order to move forwards (see Figure 5).

Within public representation of SRD as a 'festival of commemoration and celebration', a language of entertainment has been drawn upon. Chief Angus Chukuemeka 'will kick off proceedings at 4pm' states one article, and SRD is an event that 'showcased some of the best acts in Merseyside'.⁹⁵ In a review of events from 2008, Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture, SRD was assimilated into Liverpool's cultural calendar, sandwiched between the annual Liverpool Children's Festival and the World Fire-fighter Games, in a month that saw much 'carnival fun'.⁹⁶ The assimilation of SRD into civic entertainment events, as 'something to do', was clearly expressed in 2012, as one events article outlines:

Cheap thing to do!

Slavery Remembrance Day: August 23.

This will be the 13th year the museum has commemorated Slavery

Remembrance Day outside the museum.⁹⁷

This process of assimilation took hold particularly clearly from 2004 onwards, when there was far greater prominence and public discussion given to SRD. It was a year after the announcement of Liverpool's successful bid for European Capital of Culture, and as the year that Liverpool City Council began to officially (and financially) support the event. Crucially, however, the events held in Liverpool in this year could, more than ever, be seen and articulated as part of a wider global memorialization of slavery, which subsequently reinforced Liverpool's international position during the UNESCO Year for Commemoration of the Struggle Against Slavery and its Abolition (2004). After 2004's year-long promotion of remembering slavery, SRD was presented

⁹⁴ Ian Fannon, 'City Atones For Slavery; Top Actress Cathy Tyson At Festival,' *Liverpool Echo*, 22 August 2002.

⁹⁵ Fannon, 'City Atones For Slavery.'

⁹⁶ 'Summer's Here And The Time Is Right For...Carnival,' *Liverpool Echo*, 11 December 2008.

⁹⁷ 'Summer Family Fun For Free,' *Liverpool Echo*, 23 July 2012.

The Persistence of Memory



5 Sankofa Bird on Slavery Remembrance Day Postcard
(National Museums Liverpool)

by a member of NML staff as being ‘firmly established as part of the city’s rich cultural life.’⁹⁸ More and more focus was given over to accompanying entertainment – performances, song, dance, and food – which for the next few years took place at Otterspool Promenade, out of the city centre, and a bus ride away due to waterfront building work taking place by the docks. SRD was positioned as a point in Liverpool’s civic calendar by press and authoritative institutions, as Councillor Marilyn Fleming outlined: ‘August 23 is now an annual civic event, recognising its growing importance as a day of remembrance, commemoration and celebration.’⁹⁹ SRD became discursively decoupled from slavery in public discourse through its position within a cultural calendar, it is ‘August 23’, a ‘civic event’, something important for memory and celebration, though remembering what and celebrating what exactly is rarely stated. However, it is through its ritualized performance and *embodied* memorialization that SRD breaks free from oppressive languages of entertainment and consumer culture.

James Young has argued that the speeches made as part of Yom Hashoah, the Jewish Holocaust Memorial Day, ‘constitute part of the remembrance day’s text’, but calls within this speech to unite listeners with memory do

⁹⁸ ‘Pier Head Libation Marks Slavery Day,’ *Liverpool Echo*, 22 August 2005.

⁹⁹ Jones, ‘City’s Triangle of Shame.’

Performing Memory

not necessarily signify that the meaning of this memory itself is united; text does not necessarily mean concurrence.¹⁰⁰ Paul Connerton has similarly suggested that rituals can usefully be understood along the same interpretive lines as myths, that both can be viewed as 'collective symbolic texts' that embody cultural values, often through 'elaborate statements'.¹⁰¹ However, he has stressed that the medium of expression is here fundamental, that through the performance of ritual, the relationship between performer and performed subject is specified and, to an extent, solidified, through the ritual process. Rites are less malleable than myths, which can take on different forms (be sung, told in different ways), and are thereby somewhat less open to change.¹⁰² Through their physical performance, rituals are 'stylised, stereotyped and repetitive' carrying meaning through textual and bodily engagement.¹⁰³

Ritual text is part of the hyperbole of the commemorative performance. Particular linguistic forms are used and formal language drawn upon.¹⁰⁴ Ritual language forms a crucial component of the performance, is more restricted in vocabulary than every day speech, takes on a fixed sequence and pattern, and often carries rigidity in tone and volume.¹⁰⁵ The structure and form of SRD as a performance has become familiar through its repetition. The ritual text forms a significant part of this familiarity and, significantly, as a point of contest and debate. Whilst the language of the SRD ceremony has evolved subtly since 1999, many elements have remained relatively stable. However for the purposes of this chapter, the following close analysis of the 'text' of the SRD libation ceremony has been taken from two ceremonies in 2010 and 2012.¹⁰⁶ This close reading brings to the fore the politics of language and the impact of the comparatively 'amplified' scale of the 2012 ceremony.

100 James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 276.

101 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 53.

102 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 54.

103 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 44.

104 This formal language is 'already coded in a canon and therefore exactly repeatable,' Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 58.

105 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 60.

106 The 2010 ceremony has been transcribed from an online video produced by Square One Pictures, funded by NML and narrated by Chase Johnston-Lynch. The 2012 ceremony text has been transcribed from an audio recording of the event taken by the author that year. Chase Johnston-Lynch (Square One Pictures), 'Slavery Remembrance Day; *YouTube*, 17 December 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=jawK-oNbKV8 (accessed 30 July 2013); Slavery Remembrance Day Libation Ceremony, 2012, Audio Recording Made by Author (Albert Dock, Liverpool, 2012).

The Persistence of Memory

The ritual text performed by actors within the libation ceremony forms a crucial part of SRD's cognitive reception, with words and phrases forming a structural web of recognition and association through the performance of largely formalized language by one senior participant to an audience; much like the preaching of a sermon, carried out in the tone of a prayer. The ceremony is, however, highly self-conscious in its post-modern commemorative performance, reflecting Charles Maier's interpretation of memory as a 'self-referential activity'.¹⁰⁷ Rather than history, the ceremony starts with a discussion of memory, highlighting former silences around the subject of slavery, that 'nothing was mentioned' for a long time, and that it is important to remember for the usual platitudes concerning children, futures and 'never again'.¹⁰⁸ During the libation itself, the groups of people being honoured and remembered are named, as the 'kinsmen and women who were forcefully uprooted from the African soil against their will', their experiences of suffering are noted and remorse is expressed. Honour is paid to abolitionists, though emphasis is given to Africans who 'were their own liberators'. The ritual text of the ceremony is, however, also a point of conflict as Scott demonstrates: 'when the ceremony was first done, they speak in English, they don't speak in African. And if they do speak in African, they don't have an English interpreter to talk about what they're saying.'¹⁰⁹ The question of whose voice, or 'in' whose voice, the ceremony is conducted, is important here, and raises questions over who the ceremony is for. By suggesting that this is important, Scott focuses on the larger significance of the objectives behind the ceremony, intended audience and position through language, perhaps turning Eurocentric positions of power around through the adoption of a language that is not English.

The ritual text enacted for SRD constitutes not only a symbolic and integral part of the commemorative ceremony, but also part of its commentary. The participants (which include viewers and listeners) are told explicitly what the ceremony is doing; there is no part of the process which is not annotated with its corresponding symbolic caption. The ceremony honours ancestors who were enslaved, 'and that is what libation is all about, which we are now about to perform', helpful oral subtitles, translating symbolic African gestures into English language.¹¹⁰ Libation is described within the ceremony as 'a traditional African way of making connections with God, with ancestors, through atonement during which we point out our own deeds, acknowledge

¹⁰⁷ Charles Maier, 'A Surfeit of Memory? Reflections on History, Melancholy and Denial,' *History & Memory* 5:2 (1993).

¹⁰⁸ Chief Angus Chukuemeka in Square One Pictures, 'Slavery Remembrance Day.'

¹⁰⁹ Scott, interview.

¹¹⁰ Square One Pictures, 'Slavery Remembrance Day.'

Performing Memory

them and promise to make amends, and finally ask for forgiveness'.¹¹¹ Here the form is set out, the stages of the ceremony listed as if in a programme, reasons made clear, even the emotional processes of 'atonement' and 'forgiveness' are outlined. In 2012, this self-conscious commentary on the commemorative process was made more explicit, libation explained as 'a solemn African traditional ceremony for remembering and honouring our ancestors and leaders'.¹¹² The significantly larger, broader audience at the event this year prompted a far longer libation ceremony, with an extended and elaborated 'ritual text', though much of the content was repeated. Perhaps it was the broader audience which merited further explanation of terminology within the ceremony during this year, with explanation of beliefs for those who might be confused, or even scared or offended, that:

During the libation we will be referring to the spirits of our ancestors, African ancestors, because we Africans believe there is life after death so the spirit of our ancestors are still there, looking at us [but that] there is nothing devilish about it.¹¹³

The props in the performance were also explained: the kola nut that is offered in African tradition 'to our guests as a gesture of peace and goodwill it is shared by all present, and sharing brings us all together'.¹¹⁴ In case any of the *symbolism* of the last section of the ceremony was missed, it was emphasized repeatedly that:

we are going to end the libation today by symbolically pouring the drinks into the sea and the sea behind you is symbolic. It is the port where the ships were repaired in those days, so pouring the libation along the shores is quite symbolic.¹¹⁵

The language used within the ritual text acts to create a sense of unity, as Connerton outlines in relation to the liturgical language of commemorative rites, that '[t]he community is initiated when pronouns of solidarity are repeatedly pronounced'.¹¹⁶ In the libation speeches, it was continually 'we' who remember, for 'our children' and their future, 'we' who honour ancestors and ask for forgiveness, 'we' who were performing the ceremony. However, in the ritual commemoration of a history of enslavement and racial violence,

111 Square One Pictures, 'Slavery Remembrance Day.'

112 SRD Libation Ceremony, 2012.

113 SRD Libation Ceremony, 2012.

114 SRD Libation Ceremony, 2012.

115 'SRD Libation Ceremony, 2012.

116 Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 58–59.

The Persistence of Memory

which necessarily has victims and perpetrators, exactly who this 'we' refers to is left ambiguous. The speaker is an African-born man, but through the collective pronouns he speaks for a great many, for 'we the citizens of Liverpool, Great Britain and all people of African descent'.¹¹⁷ Simultaneously it is 'our kinsmen and women who were forcefully uprooted from their African soil', for whom the ceremony is dedicated, during which 'we point out our own deeds, acknowledge them and promise to make amends, and finally ask for forgiveness'. The 'we' in this last instance becomes broader, more widely applicable than those who had been rooted in African soil. 'We' in this instance can encompass the ancestors who were involved in enslavement from the African soil themselves (chiefs and elites who traded with Europeans), but it could also include the ancestors of European, British and, indeed, Liverpoolian citizens, previously embraced in the 'we' before this statement. The collective perpetrators, coming from a variety of soils though they may, are outlined in relation to their position of power within the next statement which again self-consciously explains why particular people are present at the ceremony:

During the slave trade, again the leaders of this country and in fact royalty supported and gave blessing, so it is important that when we are doing libation the leaders know the significance of it and take part in it, because every day they are the people who make the decision so we appeal to them to cast their mind back and remember.¹¹⁸

This acts to shift the focus of who should be asking for most forgiveness to those with the most power. The 'leaders' present as audience-participants within the ceremony are drawn in personally by being asked to 'cast their mind back'; it is their minds specifically that, through a metaphorical personal act of 'remembering', should connect most with this ceremony and what it stands for. However, the presence and interaction with these 'leaders' can also be a point of contest. For Scott, it was an insult to carry out performative actions that were seen to be 'honouring' people in such positions:

The other thing which really upsets me, and I've said so at the time, was, the audience is made up of Lord Mayors from around the country. Chief Angus Chukuemeka always honours the kings and queens of this country, he honours the Lord and Lady Mayors who are present. That is a disgrace. Because, the people who hold them offices, are representatives and in some cases, royalty are the true descendants of the Duke of Clarence and others

117 Square One Pictures, 'Slavery Remembrance Day.'

118 Square One Pictures, 'Slavery Remembrance Day.'

Performing Memory

who were heavily involved in the slave trade – so why honour the people whose office is responsible for the slave trade?¹¹⁹

Compared to his regular, if ambiguous, use of the collective pronoun in earlier libations, Chief Angus Chukuemeka made far more use of the personal pronoun, 'I' in 2012. At the beginning of the ceremony, Chukuemeka positioned himself and his own narrative within Liverpool's history of its memory of slavery, in a sequence of events that led to this exceptional and historic moment – the visit of the son of Dr Martin Luther King. Chukuemeka used plural pronouns when explaining the ceremony's objectives and outlining what would be done, that 'we will remember the enslavement of our African brothers and sisters' and, within the ceremony itself, that 'we are pouring this libation to remember our kinsmen and kinswomen', but then personalized the performance when naming people who had been involved in the organization of the event; 'I must have to thank the members of staff which have made this possible.' Chukuemeka positioned himself within the narrative of the development of SRD, which began with the development of the museums, that 'I was part of the museum, I was part of the team' (akin to 'I was there', at these milestones), along with noted friends, 'with Dorothy Kuya – Dorothy are you there? Where are you? Dorothy, can you stand up please, let people see you.' Involvement in the advisory team for the TSG was historically situated – 'how many years now? Twenty, twenty years? And we're still going strong' – reflected in the 'strength' of the events of 2012.¹²⁰

In the ceremonies in both years, Liverpool's 'exceptional' memory of slavery was acknowledged by Chukuemeka. In 2010, this exceptionalism was expressed through the museums more than the ceremony; that very little was done to commemorate slavery until 'Liverpool took the first stride through one of these projects to do this museum which now is the first of its kind in the world.'¹²¹ This reaffirmed the position of the libation ceremony as part of the memory work done by NML. In 2012, however, more focus was given to SRD, that 'Liverpool first hosted Remembrance Day thirteen years ago following UNESCO's declaration' and that '[o]ur city is the first city in Europe that recognized the remembrance event and has supported it ever since', statements of pride for a proud day, marking out the particular commemorative event as something of further uniqueness to the city.

The end of the ceremony, like the end of sermons and other memorial rites, turned to the present with an eye on the future, asking in 2010 'for the

119 Scott, interview.

120 SRD Libation Ceremony, 2012.

121 Square One Pictures, 'Slavery Remembrance Day.'

The Persistence of Memory

end of all modern day slavery, conflicts, operation and acts of terror in the world today'. This request for an end to 'modern-day slavery' aligned closely with the ISM's mission statement and internal discourse, though fell short of Scott's hope that SRD should act to connect specifically to Liverpool, to 'be political about what is happening today as regards the legacies of slavery in this city'.¹²² However, in 2012, broader contemporary themes were raised within the extended ritual text, in which the ceremony was called on to 'promote equality, fairness, and justice for all mankind. Let us use it to promote and preserve human rights, and human dignity for all mankind irrespective of colour and creed', communicated through a language very similar to that used by King and US civil rights discourse, particularly within the 'I have a dream' speech played moments before during the renaming of the Dock Traffic Office as the 'Martin Luther King Junior Building'. The ancestors and 'almighty God' were asked once again to aid in the end of 'all civil wars' though this year the 'poverty and suffering in Africa' was also highlighted (a point raised by Martin Luther King III in his SRD lecture the previous evening), as well as 'the end of all modern-day slavery, conflicts and acts of terror in the world today' as before. However, a prayer was also made to the ancestors concerning conflict in contemporary Liverpool during the 2012 ceremony, that '[w]e humbly beg you to bless our city of Liverpool and bring unity and prosperity to her diverse community', a point most poignant just over a year after riots in major UK cities in 2011 following the shooting of black Londoner, Mark Duggan by the Metropolitan Police.

Within the performance of the libation, the body itself becomes a mnemonic device through which memory is 'sedimented' through an associative engagement with place. Paul Connerton has criticized historical approaches to the study of commemorative ceremonies for placing undue focus on their interpretation as invented traditions, as 'intentional responses to particular and variable social and political contexts', and for not allowing the performance itself to be addressed as a significant aspect of such rites. In this sense, he suggests, the 'reading' of ceremonies has been taken to literal extremes by historians, who analyse rites like documents in an archive.¹²³ Further, Connerton argues that although 'incorporating practices' such as rituals, as opposed to 'inscribed' ones such as written texts, are 'traceless', leaving little behind, they are constitutive of a collective memory primarily through their bodily performance, where memory becomes 'sedimented in the body'.¹²⁴ During the SRD ceremony, memory is 'sedimented' not only through ritual performances involving the movement of the body, but

¹²² Scott, interview.

¹²³ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 103.

¹²⁴ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 102.

Performing Memory

correspondingly also through symbolic connections made to liquid. The pouring of drink, the conscious reference to water, the spiritual connections to seas and rivers, is performed within maritime spaces, at the site of the docks and the River Mersey:

We present this drink to you today and humbly ask you to bless it and all that are here today. Motherland [...] the great sea gods, the great sea of Atlantic, the great river Mersey through whose course the seafarers of Liverpool and Europe continued the trade in slavery, the spirit of ancestors, the gods of ancestors, the lands and rivers of Africa we present this drink to you today and always.¹²⁵

The liquid is poured after such statements of honour, onto the ground of the Liverpool waterfront, an act in which the front row of the audience (the 'leaders', mayors, councillors, and NML director) also partakes. The last of the liquid is then cast into the Mersey, formally ending the libation ceremony.

The body is used in its most collective sense to 'sediment' memory through performative action within the 'Walk of Remembrance', introduced to the SRD ceremony in 2011.¹²⁶ In the cultural histories of walking, it is both the universality and ordinariness of walking as everyday action in conjunction with its potential for individual and collective performance that is seen to imbue walking with cultural significance, agency and, in some instances, power. Rebecca Solnitt's beautiful exploration of the cultural history of walking focuses on the importance of walking as universal action, as accessible and open to being inscribed with a wide range of different cultural meanings. As 'one of the most universally available form[s] of public expression', the meaning(s) of walking are nonetheless also historically situated, and it was in the eighteenth century, Solnitt argues, that walking came to be seen (and written about) as a 'conscious cultural act' rather than simple necessity.¹²⁷ Walking as cultural act is therefore attuned to the broader processes of modernity, of personal and collective choice, and crucially to collective resistance. Chad Bryant, Arthur Burns, and Paul Readman similarly argue that walking became increasingly political as the nineteenth century progressed, an important avenue for 'expressing political

¹²⁵ SRD Libation Ceremony, 2012.

¹²⁶ Whilst I have taken part in this aspect of SRD across a number of years since its initiation in 2011, the following analysis is derived predominantly from participant observation carried out in 2011 and 2012.

¹²⁷ Rebecca Solnitt, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Penguin, 2000), 14. See also Joseph Amato, *On Foot: A History of Walking* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

The Persistence of Memory

dissent, with parades and protests serving as agents of mass mobilization'.¹²⁸ In this sense walking is itself a form of representative language or, as Joseph Amato puts it, 'walking is talking'.¹²⁹ We construct and express meaning when we walk, especially when walking as a collective. We make statements, express solidarity, carry meaning through the conscious and deliberate movement of the body through the landscape.

The Walk of Remembrance, initially held the day before the ceremony but later incorporated into the ritual before the libation, begins at Church Street, in the heart of Liverpool's shopping district and, deliberately or not given the museums' interest in contemporary human rights and labour abuses, outside Primark.¹³⁰ The official text within the 2011 SRD leaflet described the walk as follows:

Remember ancestors who, deprived of their liberty, enabled the port of Liverpool to thrive. Making its way from the bandstand on Church Street in Liverpool city centre, via Paradise Street to Thomas Steers Way, the walk ends at the site of the Old Dock. The point where hundreds of years ago, the fruits of enslaved labour – cotton – would have landed.¹³¹

Although it is suggested that participants on this walk will 'remember ancestors' of the enslaved, these 'ancestors' are not owned or explicitly associated with any particular contemporary identity group, though this is perhaps inferred. The audience at which this commemorative act is aimed, however, is much broader than those who identify themselves as the descendants of enslaved African people. In taking this form of performative commemorative action into the city centre, away from the docks and the maritime and slavery museums where the memory of slavery has in the past been segregated through its 'maritimization', the walk seeks to engage people who are not the usual faces, or bodies, at SRD, or may

¹²⁸ Chad Bryant, Arthur Burns, and Paul Readman, 'Introduction: Modern Walks,' in *Walking Histories, 1800–1914*, eds. Chad Bryant, Arthur Burns, and Paul Readman (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 10.

¹²⁹ Amato, *On Foot*, 4.

¹³⁰ Primark was at the centre of a BBC *Panorama* documentary and *Observer* investigation in 2008 into the use of child labour in Indian refugee camps to produce its clothing. The low-cost fashion retailer has consistently been at the centre of labour investigations into high street retailers and general criticisms of the industry. Though other stores are implicated, it is often Primark, perhaps as one of the cheapest yet highly successful of these, which is singled out as a metaphor for the unethical price of contemporary fashion. See Dan McDougall, 'The Hidden Face of Primark Fashion,' *The Guardian*, 22 June 2008.

¹³¹ National Museums Liverpool, *Slavery Remembrance Day Leaflet 2011* (National Museums Liverpool, 2011).

not otherwise engage with events organized in relation to the memory of slavery. It is a point of interest also that, although aimed at remembering the enslaved, a prominent point of dissonance – the theme of ‘slaves in Liverpool’ – is avoided (see Chapter 7). The walk ends at the site of the Old Dock, where any number of statements could have been made about the activities of slaving vessels at this site in the eighteenth century. However, emphasis is placed on cotton, which shifts focus to enslaved African labour in America. Perhaps this also ties up loose threads, as it were, starting at Primark and ending in cotton produced by unfree labour. In 2011 this aligned particularly closely with the special exhibition due to open the month after this walk in the ISM about labour abuses in the cotton industry in Uzbekistan.¹³²

The use of walking emerges elsewhere in commemorative rituals of history, memory, and collective identity. This is particularly common when associated with ‘marching’, through the military connections made in parades on Armistice Day, and further political and religious forms of walking such as the marches of Northern Irish groups such as the Orange Order (who also march through areas of present-day Liverpool). As Solnitt argues, we can consider most processions as commemorative, especially as they relate to place, that ‘moving through the space of the city to commemorate other times knits together time and place, memory and possibility, city and citizen, into a vital whole, a ceremonial space in which history can be made’.¹³³ Walking is also a practice with specific relevance to the history of enslavement, the long arduous walks of the enslaved in chains often conjured in representations of this history in art, museums, and textbooks. The Walk of Remembrance also mirrors global slavery memory work, particularly in the US, such as the Richmond Slave Trail where a night-time walk acts to recreate the route taken by enslaved people through the city. Organized by the Richmond Slave Trail Commission, this trail has more recently been given tangible expression through the creation of ‘markers’ along the route, which include interpretation and information for people wanting to make their own journeys.¹³⁴ The Richmond Slave Trail also bears similarities to the Walk of Remembrance since both are associated with annual commemorative days. The Richmond walk takes place during the celebrations of

¹³² National Museums Liverpool, ‘White Gold: The True Cost of Cotton,’ www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/exhibitions/whitegold/ (accessed 29 July 2013). This exhibition was organized with the environmental justice foundation and ran from 1 September 2011 to 1 December 2013.

¹³³ Solnitt, *Wanderlust*, 216.

¹³⁴ Katherine Walker, ‘Buried in the Unremissive Ground: Reading Richmond’s Subterranean Signs,’ *Social Semiotics* 19:4 (2009).

The Persistence of Memory

Juneteenth, or Emancipation Day (marking 19 June 1865, taken as the day the last enslaved people were freed following the Emancipation Proclamation). As of yet, and unlike its American counterpart, there are no tangible memory markers along the route in Liverpool. Although the Old Dock is commemorated and has its own permanent interpretation, slavery is only memorialized along this walk through banners, badges, drums, and walking. The walk does not, in fact, come into contact with any of the 'sites of memory' discussed in Chapter 7, or meet any of the places tour guides have taken their groups. Furthermore, and despite seeking to 'remember ancestors', there is no obvious association between the routes that might have been taken by enslaved African people or to sites that have had associations with enslaved people in Liverpool, such as Goree. Here, a distinction is made between memorial action and history. This is not a history walking tour, this is a memory walk – this is part of the performance of SRD. The eighteenth-century sites of memory associated with Liverpool and slavery are, additionally, perhaps on the wrong side of town, in the business district which, though busy at lunchtimes, might not be the place where shoppers, families, and strollers will stop and take notice.

The Walk of Remembrance is a multisensory experience that encompasses sound and interactions with the modern city through movement. A drumming group leads the procession, which in the first year was a band from Amsterdam and, in 2012, was the more local group Batala, from Merseyside. The beat of these drums speaks to the movement of the body in the act of walking. Walking is here, as Solnitt suggests, aligned with 'the unwilling rhythms of the body, to breathing and the beating of the heart', and the drums leading the procession speak this language of bodily rhythm, of the universal blood and breath of us all. The use of sound alongside movement means that the procession reaches those who might not even be in the same street as the walk's route, in much the same way that the sound of the siren made on the morning of Yom Hashoah reaches those who do not attend the official ceremony.¹³⁵ The walk was introduced by a member of NML staff at the beginning, though as the procession worked its way through the streets of the city centre, past banks and shops and MacDonald's, it was unclear whether passers-by, particularly those who could not see the banner at the front, knew what the event was for. For many, dancing with children on the sidelines and waving to the procession, this could have been any of a number of lively carnival-style processions. However, people were handed badges along the route and some joined the procession to see where it led. The procession caught at least the eyes or ears of many ordinary people going about their business, watching from the

¹³⁵ Young, *The Texture of Memory*, 276.

windows of shops or overhead walkways, and, taking place as it did at the busiest time of day, the procession also came into contact with those out and about on their lunch breaks.

There is a sense of spectacle about the walk as a collective performance. As a collective ‘body’, walking through the streets, there is an awareness of being gazed at by those not engaged in the movement, of being a point of intrigue. Whilst this can lead to a sense of self-consciousness, even of embarrassment, it also initiates a sense of distinction. Walking is here akin to the language of pilgrimage, a physical demonstration of belief, and being *seen* to participate is part of this expression. Through the spectacle of collective performance, the act of walking becomes an active and conscious act of solidarity or, as Solnitt succinctly captures it, ‘[w]alking becomes testifying.’¹³⁶ Encouraging bodies to ‘perform’ through something as simple as walking, or moving, creates a sense of collective participation and unity in action where participants are ‘no longer an audience but a force’.¹³⁷

The performance of the walk is nonetheless shaped through its interaction with place. Shaped by physical geographical circumstance and active involvement of human bodies, it is sometimes slowed by the routine of the drummers or by turning corners, the beat of the drums echoing around the architecture of Liverpool’s busy retail district. Bodies move through the shopping centre, Liverpool One, and end at the site of the Old Dock (visible through a glass panel constructed following an excavation), and outside the towering Hilton Hotel. The engagement with space through movement in this way is sometimes poignant, where references and connections are inferred to the contrasts of wealth and poverty of the modern city – the buildings and capitalist dynamics of working life set against homeless people passed en route. This engagement with the city via the movement of bodies through space, no matter how carefully orchestrated and mapped, remains unpredictable. This is true of all forms of cultural walking. As Solnitt suggests, ‘you never step in the same trail twice’.¹³⁸ This gives each walk a uniqueness, not only in the experiences of individuals but through the changing set of environmental circumstances, temperature, and weather, and through sound. In 2011 when the procession ended at the Old Dock site, much of the crowd dispersed, though some remained to listen to that year’s invited speaker, Dr Maulana Karenga. When Dr Karenga spoke of the ‘African Holocaust’, of resistance and struggle, of the horrors of slavery and the trauma the enslaved endured, he spoke against

¹³⁶ Solnitt, *Wanderlust*, 216.

¹³⁷ Solnitt, *Wanderlust*, 227.

¹³⁸ Solnitt, *Wanderlust*, 12.

The Persistence of Memory

a background of audible screaming. Screams from the fairground rides above in Chavasse Park echoed the speaker's story, linking to the screams of torture in cognitively dissonant ways, representative of the complications and contradictions that arise through remembering slavery during this annual 'festival of commemoration'.

Conclusion

SRD emerged linked with Liverpool City Council's official apology, both in terms of timing and subsequent ritual performance in 2000 and 2001. The debate initiated by events of the first SRD, which included the dedication of a commemorative plaque by the waterfront, merged into that aroused by the announcement of the city council's apology from October, becoming part of a wider debate over the city's memory of slavery in the run up to the new millennium. The framing of these commemorative events, particularly SRD, align with an 'events culture' that is itself part of a global culture of consumption, where the events marking the memory of slavery became points among many in a busy cultural calendar.¹³⁹ 'The paradox' argues Andreas Huyssen, 'is that memory discourses themselves partake in the detemporalizing processes that characterize a culture of consumption and obsolescence.'¹⁴⁰ The key temporal dimension and commemorative significance of SRD is its calendrical recurrence; however this has paradoxically rendered SRD one moment in a broader cultural entertainment and leisure calendar.

The events surrounding SRD in 2012 were larger than they had been previously and, as such, overtly articulated exaggerated processes of memory. SRD was this year inflated, expanded, and shaped through the cult of celebrity, and capitalized on by civic authorities. This was particularly apparent in the SRD lecture, given by Martin Luther King III. The lecture was given to a full house in St George's Hall, and a programme of events surrounding the speech broke from the tradition of previous lectures. There was no introductory speech from the lord mayor, only from Anna Rothery, Labour councillor for Princes Park ward, Liverpool 8, and of African heritage. King was introduced by Dr David Fleming, Director of NML. 'Warm up' acts included local black poet Levi Tafari, who recited a poem about Liverpool and slavery, stating within his introduction that he did not want

¹³⁹ Brian Conway sees this 'neoliberalism triumphalism' in the selling of 'Bloody Sunday t-shirts' in Derry. Brian Conway, 'Local Conditions, Global Environment and Transnational Discourses in Memory Work: The Case of Bloody Sunday (1972),' *History & Memory* 1:2 (2008), 192.

¹⁴⁰ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 10.

Performing Memory

to remember slavery, but neither should it be forgotten. Tafari highlighted issues of the 'segregation of memory', stressing that slavery is often only discussed as black history, not European history that affected Africa. There were also musical performances from local musician Esco Williams and Ogo Nze Ocore as well as the Positive Impact Dancers who performed to songs by Beyoncé and Michael Jackson. All artists and performers were from Liverpool. King's lecture, 'Fulfilling the Dream: Idols vs. Ideals' discussed leadership and social change. More performances followed the speech and the night ended with songs performed by a musical duo starting with 'Let There Be Love' sung by Billy Wenton followed by 'At Last' sung by Joanna Wenton (a professional singer and actress who has also made appearances in British soap operas set in the northwest of England, such as *Brookside* and *Hollyoaks*). The pair ended the night with a duet of 'My Girl'. The singers performed in a tradition that could best be described as 'Scouse Cabaret', the white-suited Billy beginning the set exhibiting some cheeky humour by trying to get King to sing along with him, and both singers pulling Councillor Anna Rothery up on stage for a dance. A comment from an audience member, who had not visited Liverpool before, likened the act to karaoke, adding that it was 'like if Butlins did Slavery Remembrance Day'. Perhaps for someone not familiar with Scouse culture, the evening might seem crass, out of place and, perhaps, offensive. However, the majority of the diverse audience were singing along, clapping, and dancing in the aisles of St George's Hall, cheering their local acts. This, the whole evening and the events of the following day at the Walk of Remembrance and libation ceremony, were an expression of a very local Liverpool identity performed for a global audience, much like the opening ceremony of the Olympics that same year had been an orchestrated showcase of British identity on a global stage. The 'Liverpool Slavery Remembrance Cabaret' brought together the drive to celebrate identity and forge unification, rounding off an evening in which the audience were asked to give a 'very big Liverpool welcome' to their distinguished American guest, this celebrity, in an attempt to unite white and black Liverpool, echoing statements of the intention at the very first SRD in 1999.

As successful as this year was, football alone does not tell the whole story and the overt celebratory tones of SRD can form part of avoidance strategies. As Mark Levene suggests in relation to the memory of the Holocaust, 'avoidance and celebration have been carefully calibrated through the medium of events such as Holocaust Memorial Day to serve specific functions'.¹⁴¹ Through the segregation of slavery to a commemo-

¹⁴¹ Mark Levene, 'Britain's Holocaust Memorial Day: A Case of Post-Cold War Wish-Fulfilment, or Brazen Hypocrisy?' *Human Rights Review* 7:3 (2006): 26–59.

The Persistence of Memory

rative day, and one that is used to fulfil a number of increasingly demanding and jarring social roles, most prominently entertainment, celebration, and as a 'festival', much of the *history* of transatlantic slavery, and in particular Liverpool's involvement in it (speakers tended not to speak on this issue since those invited usually came from America, Africa, and the Caribbean), has remained largely absent. There has also been a sense that the performative aspects of SRD have enabled politicians and those in positions of power to 'play a part' in remembering in somewhat superficial ways. After the libation is over, connections can be broken, and they return to their positions of power that directly influence social issues relating to racism, discrimination, and unequal treatment of different people. As Dan Stone argued in relation to the instigation of Holocaust Memorial Day, '[a] day will be ignored by most people and act as smokescreen for political performances of concern.'¹⁴²

The cluster of commemorative activity surrounding Liverpool and slavery around the end of the twentieth century was bound up in forging local meaning in a global world. Though emerging from a global context of transnational and Atlantic memory work around the slave trade and slavery, meaning was forged in Liverpool through local specifics of race and racialized connections through Liverpool's black community. Whilst there may have been a broader memorial imperative underlying drives towards memory work at this time, Liverpool's own local, specific, and longer memory debates over this history continued to contest its public representation. The conflict between local meaning and global connections, emerged particularly strongly when black Liverpool continued to pull meaning back to the local from the museums' explicit outward global framings. Whilst overwhelmingly positive in tone, this particular debate was not far from the surface during the 2012 SRD events. In the question and answer session following Martin Luther King III's lecture, one Liverpool-born black woman turned attention of the event back to the local, asking why the ISM did not include more information about *Liverpool* and slavery. In response, the Director of NML, David Fleming responded, 'The International Slavery Museum is bigger than Liverpool.'

¹⁴² Dan Stone, 'Day of Remembrance or Day of Forgetting? Or, Why Britain Does Not Need a Holocaust Memorial Day,' *Patterns of Prejudice* 34:4 (2000): 53–59.

7

Sites of Memory

Bodies and the Cityscape

Introduction

Liverpool currently has no public memorial to transatlantic slavery. The preceding chapters of this book have explored the otherwise quite varied range of memory work undertaken across the past 200 years, which have included written texts, anniversaries, museums, walking tours, rituals, and apologies. However, the absence of something so traditional to commemorative practice as a tangible memorial in Liverpool, the largest European slave-trading port city, and somewhere that has nonetheless undergone periodic processes of introspection over ways to face this difficult past, is a notable omission. Given the creation or designation of a number of other public memorials in former slave ports in Britain in recent years (*Pero's Bridge* in Bristol, 1999; *Captured Africans* memorial in Lancaster, 2005; *Gilt of Cain* monument in London, 2008), as well as Liverpool being home to the oldest settled and continuous black community in the country, this anomaly becomes all the more striking. The ISM does have a small space known as the *Shrine to the Ancestors*, which was designed for quiet reflection; however this is not explicitly a public memorial and is housed inside the museum itself. In line with national commemorative patterns, there are numerous public memorials commemorating abolitionists such as William Roscoe (see Chapter 4) and John Newton (a memorial, designed by sculptor and artist Stephen Broadbent, unveiled in the Pier Head Ferry Terminal in 2009). However, there are no tangible, official public memorials that commemorate Liverpool's role in transatlantic slavery, or the African and African-descended people who suffered through it.¹

1 Whilst this is true at the time of writing, following the Black Lives Matter

The Persistence of Memory

Despite this absence, (indeed, *because* of it), numerous ‘unofficial’ public *lieux de mémoire* have come to perform a commemorative function in relation to Liverpool and slavery.² In this sense, there are places in Liverpool’s cityscape that merge both Pierre Nora and Toni Morrison’s uses of the term ‘sites of memory’, but also push this further. French historian Pierre Nora’s term, *lieux de mémoire*, referred to the ‘sites’ where ‘memory crystallizes and secretes itself [...] like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded’.³ In a sense, the *lieux de mémoire* concerning Liverpool and slavery that have appeared across this book are also symptomatic of the dissonance between loss and absence (the receding of living memory) and the ‘will to remember’ as Nora puts it.⁴ The continual and persistent presence of mythologies of the presence of the enslaved, of places in Liverpool’s cityscape where stories about this past accumulate over time, are *lieux de mémoire* because of their persistence and ‘capacity for metamorphosis’ through debate, discourse, and dissent.⁵ However, the ‘sites of memory’ considered in this chapter are not Nora’s idea of the ‘true memory’ of past cultures as it lives through gestures and the body and unspoken traditions, but neither are they the authoritative and ‘artificial’ sites Nora envisages in ‘history’.⁶ They are not archives or museums (Chapter 5), nor are they orchestrated commemorations (Chapter 3). There is still something half-living about the mythologies passed down unofficially and orally about places in Liverpool that are seen to embody or speak to this past. With no official memorial in the public cityscape, these are places that perform sites of memory in part in the way Toni Morrison intended. In her essay, ‘The Site of Memory’, Morrison meditates on the place of fiction in recovering the stories of the enslaved, a kind of ‘literary archaeology’ as she terms it, where ‘imagination is bound up with memory’.⁷ Writing fiction is a form of ‘remembering’ and literature is a site of memory. The sites of memory in this chapter are the unofficial ‘rememberings’, where the memory of Liverpool and slavery crystallizes and secretes itself to sites around Liverpool’s urban

protests in summer 2020, renewed calls for a memorial to the enslaved in Liverpool were made and a fundraising campaign was launched by local Liverpool-born black historian Laurence Westgaph. <https://theguideliverpool.com/campaign-for-permanent-memorial-in-liverpool-for-those-killed-in-the-slave-trade/> (accessed 9 July 2020).

2 Nora, ‘Between Memory and History,’ 7.

3 Nora, ‘Between Memory and History,’ 12.

4 Nora, ‘Between Memory and History,’ 19.

5 Nora, ‘Between Memory and History,’ 19.

6 Nora, ‘Between Memory and History,’ 12–13.

7 Toni Morrison, ‘The Site of Memory,’ in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Culture*, ed. Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-Ha, Félix González-Torres, Cornel West (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 302.

terrain. The 'sites' in this chapter are, like Toni Morrison's 'sites', forms of counter-memory that emerge not through political, tangential or euphemistic languages of commerce and trade – but through the trauma of the enslaved themselves. Moreover, these sites of memory are persistently present because of absence, rising through gaps and silences and ambiguities, between history and memory.

In the urban landscape of the modern city, place becomes the stage for memorial performance. As Brian Ladd suggests, '[m]emories often cleave to the physical settings of events' through the activities that are enacted at them.⁸ Such 'activities' include the discourse and debate *around* dissonant pasts as they relate to 'place'. Rudy Koshar views such 'sites' of memory as being produced precisely through negotiation and conflict' over the past.⁹ Sites of slavery memory in Liverpool have 'crystallized' against the built environment and urban landscape through a persistent memory debate that has secreted, built up as a textured patina through a layering of 'myth', narrative and counter-narrative over time. For a dissonant heritage like slavery, such sites become present *because of* absence. It is precisely in the face of the official silences, downplaying and omission by authoritative institutions and figures, that associations and connections between Liverpool and slavery persist in public discourse and debate. Moreover, and against the tangible 'stage' of the built environment, it is the human connections, the bodies of the enslaved themselves, which most commonly and evocatively fill such gaps, and 'cleave' to Liverpool's physical urban terrain. These bodies exist as figurative emblems; in their 'presence' as physical sculptured artistic adornment on statues and buildings (Nora's 'monumental memory-sites'), which embrace ambiguous connections by performing symbolic functions as mnemonic provocations.¹⁰ However, they also exist and *persist* in their 'absence', as intangible stories of a Liverpool slave presence seen not to be told, the publicly unacknowledged lives of enslaved people, bought and sold, who lived and died in the cityscape.

Buying and Selling: Myth, Place, and Layering

The prospect of enslaved people living in, or, more contentiously, being *sold* in Liverpool is a central and recurring point of debate within the city's slavery discourse that has continued to knit the history of transatlantic slavery to the cityscape in complex, ambiguous, and contested ways. The

8 Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 1.

9 Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*, 10.

10 Nora, 'Between Memory and History,' 22.

The Persistence of Memory

contentiousness of a slave presence is curious given how little it would affect overall assessments of the city's involvement in, or profit from, the slave trade. For, even if no enslaved African person had ever touched Liverpool soil, her merchants still masterminded the shipping and sale of over 1.4 million Africans, and the city still financially benefitted from transatlantic slavery in real tangible ways. However, the idea that the 'product' of this involvement, the consequence of the planning and administrative organization of Liverpool's 'African trade', being physically present in the city, of Liverpool people having *seen* and *lived with* the human realities of the trade, is a key point of contention for those who so passionately argue against the possibility of a slave presence in the city.

Despite such denials, the idea of a slave presence nonetheless perpetually rises from the gaps created by official silences; from below ground, from graveyards, caves, and cellars, or from concealment, from behind locked doors, gates, and under the cover of darkness. Stories of a Liverpool slave presence are articulated through an ethereal language of 'myth' and 'legend', a language that nurtures their presence through ambiguity, blurring lines between truth and untruth, in ways that provide spaces for them to rise. The contested remains, discursive and physical, of enslaved people in the city can be understood as a memorial 'haunting'. Avery Gordon describes such sociological 'ghosts' as occupying an uneven visible/barely visible state that represents something trying to be known, that, '[t]he ghost or apparition is one form by which something lost, or barely visible, or seemingly not there to our supposedly well-trained eyes, makes itself known or apparent to us.'¹¹ One of the ways in which enslaved people have made themselves known has been through the recurring persistence of 'myths' of slave sales. Here, 'myths' are understood, not as contradictions of historical 'fact', but as the layering and 'crystallization' of narrative around place in ways that forge unofficial *lieux de memoire*. These risen stories of the enslaved in Liverpool have been 'hooked' onto place, through semiotic associations – places that bear symbolic yet contested imagery of enslavement, or to sites previously connected to slave ships and sales themselves, at sites that provide a foundation for a layering of debate over time and place.

Mythologies of enslaved people in Liverpool arise through the symbolic associations forged between histories and their contexts, often in the face of, and in reaction to, silences surrounding this subject. Slave sales have been discussed in Liverpool's long history of slavery memory in an illusory language of 'myths and legends', 'folklore' or 'local tradition' that is often

¹¹ Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 9.

Sites of Memory



6 Goree Warehouses Engraving, 1826 copy

‘hooked’ onto specific places.¹² Most of these specific places lie at the memory of the River Mersey’s edge. In her essay ‘The Site of Memory’, Toni Morrison presents the flooding of the Mississippi river as a metaphor for water’s ‘perfect memory’, that the Mississippi is ‘remembering’ its original course when it floods, where it was before it was artificially straightened out.¹³ If the river Mersey ever flooded enough to remember its own eighteenth-century course, before it was pushed back by later dock constructions on

¹² ‘Local folklore has it that slaves used to be tied to iron rings at the Pier Head. However, truth tells a different story and there is no evidence to suggest that any ship ever berthed at Liverpool with a cargo of slaves.’ Jones, *The American Connection*, 77. ‘Folklore has it that slaves were once chained to the iron rings on the arches of the Goree and in the cellars of the Town Hall’s pub on the corner, though this is not generally considered to be true.’ Peter Aughton, *Liverpool: A People’s History*, 3rd ed. (Lancaster: Carnegie, 2008), 216. ‘A comprehensive mercantile history of the city has yet to be written, but meanwhile it is essential to dispel, by means of such forthright letters as Mr. Lascelles’s, the *popular legend* that slaves were shipped from Liverpool, and to refute the assertion that the town owed its remarkable commercial development to prosecution of the African trade’ (emphasis added). Arthur C. Wardle, ‘Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade – Early Records,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 19 August 1939. See Chapter 1 for discussion of this specific press debate.

¹³ Morrison, ‘The Site of Memory,’ 305.

The Persistence of Memory

reclaimed land, it would reach sites of memory that place enslaved people on Liverpool's landscape. Like flooding, and like Morrison's writing, the persistent stories of the enslaved at the eighteenth-century river's edge are acts of 'remembering'.

One of the most prominent of these sites of memory is 'Goree' (see Figure 6).¹⁴ In Ramsay Muir's *History* published in 1907, Liverpool's 700th birthday year, Muir recounted how 'the legend which pictures rows of negroes chained to staples in the Goree Piazzas, exposed for sale, is a curious instance of popular superstition', or, more elusively, the Goree Piazza 'suggests old slaving days', as Louis Lacey claimed, writing in the same year as Muir.¹⁵ Here the name of Goree alone conjures up associations with slavery. The Goree Piazzas used to stand on the east side of Georges Dock (opened in 1771). James Picton suggested that the structures were a part of the original design, though were not constructed until 1793 when they were named 'in commemoration of the African trade, then so prosperous in Liverpool', bearing the name of an island off the west coast of Africa.¹⁶ The island of Gorée, whilst connected to the history of the transatlantic slave trade through public memory and the heritage site of Maison des Esclaves (House of Slaves), is itself a contested site of memory. Historians have debated the significance of the island to the trade, and the authenticity of the House of Slaves as a site of exit for enslaved African people, especially through its infamous 'Door of No Return', which, some have claimed, leads onto rocks too dangerous for ships. The downplaying of the numbers by historians such as Philip Curtin have largely been rejected by Senegalese historians such as Mbaye Gueye who used archives from France's largest slave port, Nantes to argue that between 1763 and 1775 more than 103,000 enslaved Africans were traded from Gorée.¹⁷ Such contestations and ambiguities mirror those at Liverpool's Goree site of memory, where debate has focused on whether or not enslaved Africans were sold here and, as discussed below, even replicate those infamous

¹⁴ I discuss Goree as a 'site of memory' in more detail in Moody, "Liverpool's Local Tints".

¹⁵ Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 202; Lacey, *The History of Liverpool From 1207 to 1907*, 75. After this mysteriously unexplained association by name, Lacey included further reference to slave sales in the immediate vicinity of the Goree warehouses, where 'a public house, where slaves were regularly bought and sold, stood, not more than half a century ago, adjacent to the Churchyard.'

¹⁶ Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, vol. 1, 557. I have used Gorée with its French accent to denote the West African island, and without to signify the site in Liverpool, which never has an accent in public discourse.

¹⁷ See Ana Lucia Araujo, 'Welcome the Diaspora: Slave Trade Heritage Tourism and the Public Memory of Slavery,' *Ethnologies* 32:2 (2010): 150.

symbols of slave heritage sites along the west coast of Africa – the cellars and dungeons, and the Door of No Return.

The original structure of the Goree Piazzas was largely destroyed by fire shortly after construction in 1802. After their reconstruction, they stood for over 100 years, surviving another fire in 1840 in Back Goree (behind the warehouses, now The Strand), until being partly destroyed during the blitz in the Second World War, and finally being completely demolished 1948–50.¹⁸ Their association with slavery, the enslaved and specifically slave sales, however, continued long after their demolition, and Goree has become the intangible place where ‘legend asserts that slaves were sold’.¹⁹ Here, memory has emerged through absence, settling into a more ‘mythical’ status, where ‘the story that African slaves were once chained to the metal rings in the now-vanished Goree Piazza near the Pier Head is one of the classic images of Liverpool’s brutal past’.²⁰ However, ‘[i]t is also a myth, according to some historians’ who point the triangle of slave trading away from the city, leaving enslaved people in the Americas as part of a financial transaction which saw only inanimate products (nonetheless slave-produced) returning to Liverpool. Who tells these stories seems important in this debate. According to Ron Jones’s 1986 guidebook concerning Liverpool’s connections with America, ‘[t]axi drivers and other locals may tell you that this [*Goree*] is where slaves were housed awaiting shipment to America or the West Indies’, but that historians will tell you otherwise. Local people, ordinary people, those prone to flights of fancy and hyperbole (such as ‘taxi drivers’), might even propose primary evidence of their own, ‘that they have actually seen the iron rings to which the slaves were chained’, but they are recounting *tales* not factual history and ‘the fact of the matter is that these tales are simply untrue!’²¹ Similarly, these ‘myths’ are also articulated as a ‘commonly held belief’ in relation to Goree that ‘[i]t used to be a commonly held belief that African slaves were brought to Liverpool and put up for sale near the docks on a large square known as the Goree Piazza’ and that, furthermore, ‘[s]chool children of the pre-war years were told that the iron rings fixed into the walls surrounding the piazza were originally where the slaves were manacled and chained.’²²

18 Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, vol. 2, 84. Date of demolition given on a commemorative plaque at the original site.

19 Quentin Hughes, *Seaport* (London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co, 1964), 11. See also Andrew Lees, *The Hurricane Port: A Social History of Liverpool* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2011), 23.

20 Brauner, ‘Slavery Haunts the Old Docks.’

21 Jones, *The American Connection*, 24.

22 Tulloch, *The Story of Liverpool*, 65.

The Persistence of Memory

The links between the site of Goree and slavery have been forged through architectural connections, history and imagery. In 1923, some 30 years before their demolition, Charles Reilly, Professor of Architecture at the University of Liverpool, raised this association made between the warehouses and the slave trade within the context of discussing the 'older' (predominantly eighteenth-century) architectural structures within the city. He suggested that very few eighteenth-century buildings remained, though linked those that did remain to Liverpool and slavery, tantalisingly mentioned as asides without details, perhaps illustrating the prominence of stories surrounding these places in public discourse. He stated that 'there are only a few fine old merchants' residences in Duke Street and the neighbourhood, now used as warehouses, and the walls of a slave prison'.²³ He queried the age of the Goree Piazzas, though proposed that they were in an eighteenth-century style, articulating the language of 'myth' through 'tradition', that 'local tradition says that slaves were exposed for sale in their arcades'. Not dismissing such 'traditions', Reilly drew further detailed connections to architectural symbols: '[c]uriously enough, there is still a very finely carved wooden tiger with a negress upon its back (which ought to be in the local museum) to be seen above their arches'.²⁴

The 'myths' of enslaved people being present in Liverpool have repeatedly emerged from below ground, from stories about tunnels, dens, chambers, and prison cells under buildings, under the feet of contemporary Liverpoolians, in movements that fuse history and memory. Debates concerning connections between other specific warehouses in the vicinity of Goree, and the presence of the enslaved, emerged within a public debate in the early 1930s when an 'invoice' was discovered in the cellar of a Liverpool warehouse. This document was discussed by Mr Harry Gaunt on 24 April 1931 in an address to the Liverpool Transport Institute. Within local press coverage it was recounted that Mr Gaunt raised a 'controversial point' by claiming that the previously discovered document, 'found a few years ago in a cellar shows that Goree warehouses, as well as those of Sparling, Gilbert, and Henry Streets were frequently used for the housing of African negroes'.²⁵ The invoice was quoted as accounting for 'a cargo of 209 men, women, and children shipped in 1773 in the Julia from Old Calabar' and Mr Gaunt was reported as

23 Charles H. Reilly, 'A Note on the Architecture of Liverpool,' in *Merseyside: A Handbook to Liverpool and District Prepared on the Occasion of the Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Liverpool, September 1923*, ed. Alfred Holt (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1923), 49.

24 Reilly, 'A Note on the Architecture of Liverpool.'

25 Y.J. Woodcock, 'Letter: Old Slave Traffic,' *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 27 April 1931.

stating that enslaved people were ‘accommodated in the Sparling warehouses pending transshipment to America’. Two days later, a letter defending Mr Gaunt was published, stressing that he had been ‘careful to say that the warehouses mentioned’ within the article ‘were “said” to be used for the storage of slaves’, drawing attention to the fact that he knew ‘full well that this was a controversial point’.²⁶ The author of the letter gave further detail about the recovery of the document, that it was found ‘with other documents relating to the slave traffic, in a cellar of one of the very old warehouses in Henry-street’.²⁷ The following day a *Post & Mercury* editorial argued that this document was probably an ‘A/c sales’, for people actually exchanged in Jamaica, adding that ‘[t]here need be no uncertainty about Liverpool and the slave trade. Liverpool merchants always sent barter goods to the West Coast, where they were exchanged for slaves collected by African Kings’, drawing attention to the ‘triangular’ structure of the slave trade system, that these enslaved people were then taken to the West Indies, ‘on the terrible Middle Passage’, and the returning ships would carry home ‘rum, sugar and other native produce’.²⁸ Drawing on the *Somerset* case of 1772, the author claimed that, after this date, ‘no slave came to Liverpool’.²⁹ The piece ends defiantly, stating that ‘[w]hat has been written from time to time about slave cellars and slave dens is all rubbish.’³⁰

The marking of round-number anniversaries and their associated organized civic commemoration have tended to reignite such debates. Two years later this same document was subject to public debate again, in the midst of the celebrations surrounding the centenary of emancipation in 1933. One article threw doubt on the document, whilst acknowledging the ‘controversial’ nature of the topic by using a separate occurrence to distance the action of slave sales elsewhere, to the West Indies, leaving an imagined Liverpool ship to return home without enslaved people:

Invoices found a few years ago in a very old cellar at Henry-street suggest that warehouses may conceivably have been used to accommodate slaves at the Goree and in Sparling, Gilbert, and Henry streets. This is still a controversial point. In 1766 a report in Williamson’s Advertiser made it appear that the ship *Vine* had brought 400 slaves from Bonny to

26 Woodcock, ‘Letter: Old Slave Traffic.’

27 Woodcock, ‘Letter: Old Slave Traffic.’

28 ‘Letter: In reference to your note...’, *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 28 April 1931.

29 The *Somerset* case is often drawn upon in debates discounting the possibility of slave sales in Goree since the warehouses were constructed in 1793, after Lord Mansfield’s ruling, that ‘slavery did not exist in England and that every slave became free so soon as his foot touched English soil.’ Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 202.

30 ‘Letter: In reference to your note....’

The Persistence of Memory

Liverpool. It has since been shown, however, that she sold these slaves in the West Indies before returning here.³¹

In 1935, a similar argument was presented. The only evidence for slave sales in Goree warehouses, the author suggested, was this 'one solitary invoice' with its corresponding and elusive 'suggestions'. The author familiarly drew a triangle across the Atlantic turning the points of slave sales away from Liverpool, where 'actually' only 'rum, sugar and so-on' were returned.³² The persistent rise of this historic document, which was found in a place associated with Liverpool's eighteenth-century trading history and within an area of the cityscape already linked to the slave trade through corresponding 'mythologies' of slave sales, is illustrative both of the ways in which Liverpool's slavery memory discourse has forged sites of memory through contested debate, and the ways this has 'layered' over time. The contestation over the nature of this 'evidence' against public and popular narratives of the enslaved in Liverpool creates a space for the bodies of enslaved people to take hold in places connected to the slavery business.

The relationship between the enslaved in Liverpool is both revealed, and obscured, by a language of 'romantic' mythology, which repeatedly connects to hidden places: chambers, caves, and cellars. When Edmund Vale undertook research for the British local information sheets in 1946 he was reported as describing Liverpool as 'a most romantic town', and described in his accounts 'the subterranean sandstone chambers in which the pitiful "stock" of the slave trade used to be kept while awaiting shipments to America'.³³ It was this line, in particular, reported within the local press, that elicited a predictable and perhaps desired response from letter pages regulars Arthur C. Wardle and George Lascelles.³⁴ Wardle responded with apparent disappointment in Mr Vale, whose 'good work is likely to prove valueless if he relies on legend rather than factual history and the research of the historian', complaining that he was tired of 'continually trying to dispel

31 'Not Brought Here?,' *Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury*, 28 August 1933.

32 'One solitary invoice was found in a Goree cellar, some years ago, referring to a cargo of 209 men, women, and children, shipped in 1773 in the Julia from Old Calabar, which suggested that they might have been accommodated in Sparling's warehouse there. Actually, Liverpool ships sailed to West Africa with beads, cloth, gin, guns and knives, and have these to the head men in exchange for slaves. Then they sailed by the cruel middle passage to the West Indies, where they sold the slaves for anything up to £50 apiece. Newly born children brought £5. This was then spent on rum, sugar and so on, which was brought to England.' 'Chained and Auctioned,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 February 1935.

33 "All Round" in The London Letter,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 8 April 1946.

34 See Chapter 1.

the legend of the Liverpool “slave cellars”.³⁵ The proposed ‘romanticism’ of these myths has been used by critics as a way of trivializing the idea of enslaved people being present in Liverpool, and to discount the possibility of slave sales having taken place; ‘[i]t’s all rather amusing’ suggested Arthur Wardle, whilst recounting how people would take him to see these ‘slave cellars’. Arthur Wardle urged Edmund Vale to ‘stick to factual history, for he will find more romance in the authentic history of the local press gangs, privateers and the general trade than by following the sordid story of slaving or the silly legend of the slave-cellars’, crucially diverting attention towards aspects of Liverpool’s non-slaving past.³⁶ Edmund Vale responded to his critics by citing his source as the ‘memory’ of an elderly Liverpool man who remembered seeing ‘slave cellars’ in his youth, during the nineteenth century:

I knew a man fairly well who was a big Liverpool contractor and had been connected with the building and joinery trades all his life. He must have been about seventy years of age in 1920. He told me that under many houses in Liverpool there were formerly large cellars excavated in the sandstone rock. At some time (I think when he was a young man) they had been filled in, a work in which he took part. He said that at one time some of these underground rooms had been used to confine negroes who had been brought from Africa (the Middle Passage being then closely watched by our gunboats) and were destined for the American plantations. The men were brought up from the waterside by night and returned at a similar hour after transshipment matters had been arranged. I suppose my friend had this information from others. But he said it was a fact that there were ring-bolts with rings in them let into the rock walls and he was quite satisfied in his own mind about the use they had been put to, and that the authorities had been sympathetically aware of it.³⁷

The cellars in this instance are numerous and general rather than isolated and solitary, ordinary and domestic rather than exceptional and commercial, appearing under ‘many houses’. These domestic ‘caves’ carved out of Liverpool’s physical geographic substance exist in the same discursive space as the cellars of Goree. They are hidden, walked over, lived over, unknown. The mystery and secrecy of these stories extends to time itself and the cloak of darkness, that enslaved people were moved by night, from water

³⁵ Arthur C. Wardle, ‘Letter: “Slave Cellars” Legend,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 9 April 1946.

³⁶ Wardle, ‘Letter: “Slave Cellars” Legend.’

³⁷ Edmund Vale, ‘Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade,’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 16 April 1946.

The Persistence of Memory

to underground cell, like myths moving through time. Connections are made here, however, to American antebellum plantation slavery, not the eighteenth-century transatlantic slave trade, and to an illegal ongoing trade post-abolition. There is also a suggestion of a 'public secret', that authorities were aware of such places and activities even if it was not explicitly stated – both known, and unknown. Vale ends his rebuke with a comment on myth and history, suggesting that his critics' idea of 'history' will always remain incomplete if it relies blindly on documents, highlighting their inadequacy for subjects such as this.

Mr. Wardle demands documentary evidence for his facts. But in the past there have always been 'open secrets' whose mention in any form of writing has been studiously avoided. That is why history based entirely on documentary evidence must always remain very incomplete.³⁸

These 'myths' persist through a contested debate because they occupy a place *between* history and memory. This is a place of uncanny translucent beauty, of elusiveness and ambiguity, where stories of the enslaved in Liverpool exist in the hazy space between truth and untruth, fact and fiction. During Liverpool's 750th birthday year, one author stated that '[i]t is unlikely that any slaves were chained to the ringbolts in the pillars of old Goree, or in underground city passages, however romantic the stories may sound.'³⁹ The mythical, romanticized stories of enslaved people in Liverpool arise in the face of 'things unknown', and in reaction to the otherwise 'hidden' status of the history of Liverpool and slavery. This hidden history emerges from under visible surfaces, and at points public reaction to secrecy and concealment becomes more literally expressed. J.F. Doyle, writing in 1951, suggested that not only was evidence of 'slaves' in Liverpool hidden within cellars in Goree, but behind purposefully sealed doors wherein tangible evidence lies:

Regarding the slave cellars in Goree, a friend of mine in the cotton business told me that, years ago, he, with several others, discovered a nailed-up door in the cellar of one of their warehouses, and upon opening it, leg irons were found hanging from staples on the walls, which seemed to indicate that slaves had been kept there.⁴⁰

Evidence here, like the 'invoice' discussed previously, merges with memory in the recanting of stories surrounding Goree. The relationship between

³⁸ Vale, 'Letter: Liverpool and the Slave Trade.'

³⁹ 'The Men Who Made Liverpool Famous,' *Evening Express Charter Supplement* (1957).

⁴⁰ J.F. Doyle, 'Letter: Slave Market,' *The Liverpool Echo*, 6 November 1951.

history, myth, and memory collide in the debates surrounding enslaved people in Liverpool. Myth is pitted against history in Arthur Wardle's response to Edmund Vale's piece above, suggesting that sound scholarship was 'undone' by its association with such stories, stories that are fanciful nonsense and that 'calm reflection' would show that 'the "slave-cellar" legend is a myth'.⁴¹ However, George Lascelles suggested that simply denying 'myths' does not kill them, that it 'does not seem to prevent the circulation of another variant', that the fluidity and ambiguity of myth allowed for longevity in variation and persistence in adaptability, here over time, but also over place, which become regular 'haunts' for stories of the enslaved in Liverpool, experiencing a 'layering' of myth, counter-myth, and association.

This is a fluid process, and myths of the enslaved in Liverpool and their attachment to place create connections across Liverpool's urban landscape: from old houses on the outskirts of the city, back to the above riverside sites of memory. Gateacre Hall in Gateacre, a suburb of Liverpool officially incorporated into the city in 1913, used to be known as 'The Nook', and is one such fluid site of slavery memory forged through mythology, symbolic associations, and historical connections. It was once the parsonage of Gateacre Unitarian Chapel, and residence of the minister Dr William Shepherd, anti-slavery advocate, author of *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver*, and member of the 'Roscoe Circle', whose other members, including the Rathbones, would visit regularly.⁴² Architect Huan Matear wrote to the *Liverpool Post* in July 1937 to discuss this building in which he had lived some years previously, praising the beauty and antiquity of the place, but dismissing any supernatural connections in relation to 'the so-called "ghost," I may say I never saw or even heard of one, and I think it is very unfortunate that rumour should attribute such a thing to this fine old place'.⁴³ However, Matear had no such issue in drawing architectural connections between this 'fine old place' and slavery, where:

As a matter of historic interest, may I add that the old stone entrance gateway and wrought iron gates were many years ago removed from a site now occupied by Tower Buildings, at the bottom of Chapel-street, where they formed the original gateway through which the slaves were reputed

41 Wardle, 'Letter: The Slave Cellars.'

42 Albert Nicholson, 'Shepherd, William (1768–1847),' rev. R.K. Webb, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25340 (accessed 3 November 2011); 'Liverpool Worthies: Dorothy Nicholson (Obituary),' *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 April 1893.

43 Huan A. Matear, 'Letter: Gateacre Hall,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 5 July 1937.

The Persistence of Memory

to have passed into the old building where they were confined pending transshipment.⁴⁴

Here the author creates a 'door of no return' akin to those made infamous in the slave castles on the coast of West Africa, and indeed on the African island of Gorée, though here placed at the foot of Liverpool's waterfront. The site of Tower Buildings runs parallel with where the Goree warehouses once stood, a mere few metres away. Perhaps it was this architectural connection to Goree that fuelled persistent mythologies of a slave presence in Gateacre itself, where enslaved people were rumoured to have been sold outside Gateacre Hall.⁴⁵ Interestingly, this suggestion emerged during the bicentenary year, 2007, and within the context of tunnels that apparently run under the city (a recurring theme), presenting the Liverpool slave presence as persisting underground, unseen, unknown.

The connections drawn between Goree and Liverpool's waterfront and slave sales, however, blur distinctions of scale, and highlight a conflict over points of the trading 'triangle'. In response to the 1930s debate over gates located at 'the Nook', one letter also noted the recurring location, that such stories persist 'always in the vicinity of the Goree Piazzas', which prompted the author to research further and yet found that, 'there is no evidence whatever of slaves being transhipped from Liverpool, and only a few isolated instances of odd slaves being sold here'.⁴⁶ This response highlights a key and recurring point of contention in the Liverpool slave presence debate. Public discussion of 'slave sales' in the city has meant either the buying and selling of individual people, or transactions of greater scale, akin to those on the coast of West Africa or plantations in the Americas, and these points are sometimes discussed simultaneously. This confusion allows for contradictory phrasing within these debates, that in a sense enslaved people both were and were not sold in the city, that there both were and were not enslaved people living in Liverpool.⁴⁷ During Liverpool's 750th birthday year and, in a review of African-American singer and actress Eartha Kitt's recently published autobiography, *Thursday's Child*, the *Echo* was clear to 'correct' Kitt's description of Liverpool as a 'town of old slave markets of flesh for gold', stating that such connections between Liverpool and slavery were 'considerably more remote [...] The slaves were picked up abroad and

44 Matear, 'Letter: Gateacre Hall.'

45 See debate in 'Liverpool Tunnels,' *Yo! Liverpool Forum* (2007), www.yoliverpool.com/forum/showthread.php?3309-Tunnels-Under-Liverpool (accessed 11 January 2019).

46 'Letter: No Evidence,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 July 1937.

47 'There is no proof that negro slaves were actually brought to Liverpool, though doubtless odd ones arrived,' *Liverpool Post & Mercury*, 28 August 1933.

discharged abroad.⁴⁸ The focus placed on there not having been a mass ‘slave trade’ within the city’s urban terrain itself is a mechanism that enables the stories of those individual slave sales, for which evidence does exist, and that represent the real-life experience of enslaved African people who were bought and sold and lived within the city, to be obscured and *dis*-placed.

In the case of Goree, architectural change has mirrored broader structures of discourse, where narratives celebrating abolition have also been used to try and displace narratives of slavery around this site of memory. Urban landscapes change and develop, buildings go up or are brought down, but Liverpool’s slavery memory debate has persisted. After the warehouses were demolished in the 1950s, a large office block was constructed directly opposite the site where Goree Piazzas would have stood, on the road known as Back Goree. This 1960s concrete tower was commemoratively named ‘Wilberforce House’ after William Wilberforce, the nationally celebrated abolitionist, whose bicentenary of birth had been recently marked in 1959.⁴⁹ The office block, designed and built by Gotch and Partners in 1965–67, was given the name Wilberforce House to celebrate a national hero, one whose commemoration in name few would take issue with, and whose celebration has long obscured the full acknowledgment of Britain and slavery.⁵⁰ Goree and its immediate vicinity as a site of memory became a place for stories of slavery to gather like a memorial haunting, persisting within the absences, ambiguities and contradictions of a contested past, layering over time and place.

Graves and Ghosts

If the prospect of enslaved people in Liverpool can be understood as a recurring or ‘haunting’ debate, nowhere is this more literally apparent than in an actual graveyard, where the ghosts of Liverpool and slavery rise from below, fusing with history, memory, and phantom memorials. Some of Liverpool’s sites of slavery memory concern places that are significant to Liverpool’s black history and merge the ghostly presence of the enslaved,

48 In a section of the review of her book which the *Echo* journalist described as ‘not entirely flattering to Merseyside’, Kitt describes her discomfort about being in Liverpool, especially around its maritime landscape: ‘I only remember the uncomfortable feeling I had when I walked the streets. The loathing of the waterfront where the slave boats had docked. This was where it all began, with Africa across the sea I used to stand on the pier for hours staring out over the water. Was I feeling sorry for them that are no more, or was it me, a descendent of them?’ Quotation from *Thursday’s Child*. ‘Eartha Kitt – The Lonely Piccanninny,’ *Liverpool Echo*, 5 February 1957.

49 Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, 104–05.

50 Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 46.

The Persistence of Memory

free black people, life and death. One such site is the Grade II* listed Church of St James.

Built between 1774 and 1775 and located on the corner of Upper Parliament Street and St James's Place in Toxteth, St James's Church was listed in June 1985 for architectural significance as the earliest surviving recorded example of a cast-iron structure in Britain.⁵¹ In a book produced as part of *Religion and Place* (a project run by English Heritage documenting historic places of worship in Leeds, Liverpool, and Tower Hamlets, London), St James's was celebrated for its embodiment of 'speculative enterprise', which transformed the development of industrial architecture.⁵² However, one important dimension of the building's social history was not outlined within this project but discussed by English Heritage in a section of their website designed to mark the 2007 bicentenary:

Many people from West Africa, the Caribbean and America settled in Liverpool. St James's Church, Toxteth, Liverpool was built between 1774–5 and many of these settlers were baptised here. The records and monuments of St James's are evidence of the many reasons for this transatlantic migration, including Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade.⁵³

Local historian Ray Costello also used these records of baptism from St James's when discussing early Liverpool-born black people to prove that '[b]lack people were being born in Liverpool by at least the latter part of the eighteenth century'.⁵⁴ Although this aspect of the church's history is not discussed within many of the architectural histories and guides to Liverpool,⁵⁵ a history of the church written in 1925 by the contemporary vicar cited five such records, presenting one as a 'reminder' of slavery:

There are many entries referring to the baptism of negroes and mulattos, such as these:—
'Jemmy Africa, negro, native of Gold Coast.

51 Historic England, 'Church of St James, List Summary, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1208257> (accessed 17 April 2019).

52 Sarah Brown and Peter De Figueiredo, *Religion and Place: Liverpool's Historic Places of Worship* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2008), 13–14.

53 English Heritage, 'Black lives in England,' www.english-heritage.org.uk/discover/people-and-places/the-slave-trade-and-abolition/sites-of-memory/black-lives-in-england/ (accessed 14 August 2012).

54 Ray Costello, *Black Liverpool*, 36.

55 Not discussed within Hughes, *Seaport*; Quentin Hughes, *Liverpool: City of Architecture* (Liverpool: Bluecoat Press, 1999); Sharples and Pollard, *Liverpool (Pevsner Architectural Guides)*; Nikolaus Pevsner, *Lancashire: The Industrial and Commercial South* (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1969).

Thomas Neptune, negro, native of Tortola.

Thomas, son of Jack Brown, native of Savannah.'

The Following entry is a reminder of the slave-holding of that period:–

'1792. James Thomas, a negro, was baptized, March 9th, with the consent and approbation of his master, Thomas Aspinall, Esquire.'

This record of the baptism of a black prince is interesting:–

'1796. Samuel Baron, son of the African King, Oaramby, alias Johnson, was baptized January 21st.'⁵⁶

The church is therefore an important site within the history of the Liverpool black presence, and indeed for black British history more generally. However, it is rarely talked about in these terms in broader historic discourse, only emerging from moments and actions focusing particular attention on issues, research, and projects into black history or transatlantic slavery. St James's, as a site of black memory remains outside authoritative narratives that focus attention and conceptualize significance around its exceptional architectural features and material history, and yet from debates surrounding the conservation and maintenance of the church's physical fabric, the ghosts of the enslaved re-emerge.

Whilst Liverpool currently has no tangible memorial to transatlantic slavery, the site of St James's Church recurs as a potential place for such a memorial, disturbing debates and raising engagements with this history when plans are publicly revealed. St James's Church had been derelict since the 1970s following plans (ultimately not seen through) to extend the M62 motorway into the city centre, and was in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust until responsibility was returned to the diocese in 2010.⁵⁷ Writing a decade earlier, in 1999, architect Quentin Hughes lamented the church's fall into disrepair, suggesting that it would be wonderful 'if it could be converted into a museum of iron architecture in whose development Liverpool has played such a significant part'.⁵⁸ In 2012, a memorial acknowledging a different significant part of Liverpool's history was proposed for the site as part of a planned £47 million regeneration project managed by Liverpool City Council and LivServ, an Anglican diocese charity. The proposed memorial was described within the local press as an 'African Garden of Remembrance', and was also billed as 'the UK's first monument to victims of the slave trade', without acknowledging

⁵⁶ Colin T. Dawson, *The Church of St. James, Toxteth Park 1775–1925. One Hundred-and-Fiftieth Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church* (Liverpool: A. Litchfield, 1925), 10.

⁵⁷ Emily Gosden, 'Historic church's £400k grant joy: Archbishop of York visits to celebrate work,' *Liverpool Echo*, 12 March 2011.

⁵⁸ Hughes, *Liverpool: City of Architecture*, 26.

any other memorials.⁵⁹ It was suggested that the memorial would attract tourism from America, the Caribbean and West Africa, presumably in an attempt to tap into 'roots tourism'. Roots, or diaspora tourism, which emerged during the 1960s and 1970s, saw many people of African descent, and African-Americans in particular, visiting sites along the west coast of Africa.⁶⁰ This tourism drive extended to sites of slavery memory in Africa, particularly to 'slave castles' along the West African coast, in a bid to 'promote the tangible and intangible heritage handed down by the slave trade for the purposes of cultural tourism' (one of the objectives of the 1995 *Slave Route* project).⁶¹ The St James's 'Garden of Remembrance' was, perhaps rather optimistically, proposed to offer the same experience to wealthy African-descended tourists. The tension created by this particular presentation of the past, through economically motivated heritage tourism, was expressed within an online comment in response to this piece, which sarcastically responded: 'Toxteth the museum ... I don't see it catching on. You'd have difficulty getting anyone to come from as far as Norris Green to see this.'⁶²

However, closer to the heart of tensions and contestations within public discourse surrounding this announcement was the alleged presence of slave burials in the church's graveyard. Councillor Joe Anderson was quoted in the local press as stating that St James's was an appropriate site for a slavery memorial because 'of the people buried there who are victims of the slave trade' and journalist Marc Waddington also stated that the garden will recognize the 'many slaves who were buried there'.⁶³ The suggested presence of enslaved people provoked much criticism within online responses to the scheme, 'Watch my lips...' demanded one author, 'SLAVES ARE NOT BURIED THERE ... but but [*sic*] people believe what they want to

59 Including the nearby *Captured Africans* memorial designed by Kevin Dalton-Johnson in neighbouring former slave port Lancaster as part of STAMP (Slave Trade Arts and Memorial Project) in 2005. See Rice, 'Naming the Money and Unveiling the Crime,' 323.

60 See Bayo Holsey, 'Transatlantic Dreaming: Slavery, Tourism, and Diasporic Encounters,' in *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, ed. Fran Markowitz and Anders H. Stefansson (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 168.

61 UNESCO, quoted in Anthony Tibbles, 'Facing Slavery's Past,' 298.

62 Norris Green is a suburb of Liverpool. Lord_Rafa, Comment on article: Marc Waddington, '£45m Toxteth Regeneration to Include UK's First Slave Trade Victims Memorial,' *Liverpool Echo*, 13 March 2012, www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/liverpool-news/local-news/2012/03/13/45m-toxteth-regeneration-to-include-uk-s-first-slave-trade-victims-memorial-100252-30517431/#ixzz1rogxQtKQ (accessed 12 April 2012).

63 Waddington, '£45m Toxteth Regeneration to Include UK's First Slave Trade Victims Memorial.'

believe!!!'⁶⁴ One respondent stated that since there were 'no slaves' within the cemetery, the whole scheme must be a public relations stunt and 'land grab on a historic monument'.⁶⁵ Similarly, 'Moriarty' questioned in expressive capitals 'WHAT MANY SLAVES??' whilst stating that 'very few slaves were brought to Liverpool'.⁶⁶

The issue of whether enslaved people were buried in St James's cemetery is divisive, and has been for some time. Most local historians have been careful to cite only the baptism records available in discussions of enslaved people and the church, whilst much popular debate has implied, or outrightly stated, that enslaved people must have been buried within the grounds. The issue had been raised earlier, in 2008, when the diocese laid out regeneration plans that included redevelopment of the grounds and the construction of office and apartment blocks to finance renovations. This would, the diocese declared, require the exhumation of up to 2,500 bodies from the graveyard, 'including many former slaves'.⁶⁷ These plans were criticized as 'ludicrous vandalism' in a subsequent letter to the *Post*, the author condemning the exhumation of 'graves containing the remains of slaves who settled in Liverpool', and a plea in a later letter asked the church to '[j]ust let the slaves rest in peace'.⁶⁸ Joyce Exley suggested that the area around St James's should be used instead to reflect upon the lives of the enslaved through religious prayer, that the ISM, opened the year before, was a 'constant reminder [...] of the shameful past of Liverpool's heritage and its slaves, and those who wish to pray for their souls may do so in any of the churches near St James's'.⁶⁹ The plans to develop the land and exhume skeletons did not go ahead and, whilst it is perhaps more likely that the suggestion was a hypothetical one, made to highlight the financial dire straits of the church and raise the profile of the regeneration scheme, the public response it elicited once again raised the dissonant issue of enslaved people being present in Liverpool.

The repeated assertion that enslaved African people were buried at St James's, without specific historic evidence so far to confirm this, is both a reflection of the dominant significance given to 'slave burial grounds' in global slavery

64 georgechristophermciver, Comment on online article: Waddington, '£45m Toxteth Regeneration to Include UK's First Slave Trade Victims Memorial.'

65 Vespers9, Comment on online article: Waddington, '£45m Toxteth Regeneration to Include UK's First Slave Trade Victims Memorial.'

66 Moriarty, Comment on online article: Waddington, '£45m Toxteth Regeneration to Include UK's First Slave Trade Victims Memorial.'

67 Ben Schofield, 'Church May Dig up 2,500 Bodies: Buried Slaves Among Remains Facing Removal in City Plan,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 8 October 2008.

68 Ian Poole, 'Letter: Ludicrous vandalism,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 October 2008; Monice Lawrence, 'Letter: Church plan,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 14 October 2008.

69 Joyce Exley, 'Letter: Refurbishment plan,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 20 October 2008.

memory, and to the symbolic associations of what a slave burial ground in Liverpool would mean.⁷⁰ The idea of the internment of ‘slaves’ reflects an imaginative association of community and place; the church served a small but growing local black population in Liverpool, in life certainly – for baptisms – and, as churches do, also in death – for burials, seeing through the lifecycles of Liverpool black people. The ghostly presence of the enslaved in this Liverpool graveyard also reflects the itinerant nature of the enslavement process itself, the mass forced movement of bodies across oceans and the loss, indeed severing, of roots, a displacement rendered all the more evocative in death. In this sense, the graves in St James’s are imagined, as the diocese suggests, as the ‘final resting places’ of enslaved Africans, the transient bodies of enslaved people, many remaining untraceable, or whose bones line the Atlantic Ocean.⁷¹ ‘Slaves were buried at sea’ replied one author, to the vociferous denials of slave burials in St James’s, ‘[t]hrown over the side!! on their way to the “New World”.’⁷² This mirrors Dr Barbara J. Molette’s poignant image that ‘[i]f the Atlantic Ocean were to dry up, a trail of bones would lead from the shores of Africa to the Americas.’⁷³ What the internment of the bodies of enslaved people in Liverpool soil *would* do is root people to place and create concrete connections between the city and the victims of its ‘lucrative trade’. St James’s persists as a potential location for a slavery memorial precisely because of its connections to African people who, for so long in Britain’s ‘culture of abolitionism’, were presented as mere footnotes in their own tragedy.

The persistent debate around ‘slaves in Liverpool’, in life or death, is a symbolic struggle over a largely invisible history, one frequently discussed in a ‘neutral’ language of trading and economics. Alan Rice and Johanna Kardux, in discussing the ownership of the mummified hand of an enslaved person, passed down as an ‘heirloom’ by a former slaving family, suggest that this ‘literal phantom limb’ counters otherwise sanitized narratives of Lancaster’s slaving history:

70 For example, the archaeological excavation and subsequent memorial and museum site of the African Burial Ground in New York in the early 1990s gained much coverage. See Michael L. Blakey, ‘The New York African Burial Ground Project: An Examination of Enslaved Lives, a Construction of Ancestral Ties,’ *Transforming Anthropology* 7:1 (1998); Joyce Hansen and Siri Hustvedt, *Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence: The Story of New York’s African Burial Ground* (New York: Henry Holt and Company Ltd, 1998); Cheryl J. LaRoche and Michael L. Blakey, ‘Seizing Intellectual Power: The Dialogues at the New York African Burial Ground,’ *Historical Archaeology* 31 (1997).

71 Schofield, ‘Church May Dig Up 2,500 Bodies.’

72 tiktokmano, Comment on online article, Waddington, ‘£45m Toxteth Regeneration to Include UK’s First Slave Trade Victims Memorial.’

73 Quote taken from Imna Arroyo. ‘Trail of Bones’, <https://www.imnaarroyo.com/trails-of-bones> (accessed 26 June 2020).

It is a business whose profits returned, but whose bodies, broken and mutilated, remained elsewhere. What the returned public appearance of the hand does is to interrupt such convenient elision and introduce the black flesh on which such profits were made and of course the traumatic histories it carries with it.⁷⁴

The hand was eventually laid to rest in a special ceremony, 'as a material spectre to remember other such black lives that made little or no mark'.⁷⁵

Fittingly, perhaps, Liverpool's involvement in transatlantic slavery also emerges in theatrical 'ghost walks' of the city.⁷⁶ At the start of one tour, a ghoulishly made-up drama student, standing at the foot of the towering Roman Catholic Cathedral, lists items traded by Liverpool ships, 'tobacco, cotton, sugar, and most famously...?' leaving this lingering, leading question, following on from the subliminally suggestive inanimate products to, 'slaves!', the audience shouts back in awkward pantomime. This, now 'famous', trade in enslaved people, raised at the start of the walk, continues to 'haunt' the audience through the suggestion that the subject 'will be returned to later', persisting at the edges of expectations until the tour ends at Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral at the other end of Hope Street. Standing in the atmospherically dark tunnel leading down to the cathedral's St James's Cemetery (discursively linked by name to St James's Church, but located just across the road), the last ghost story of the evening concerns an African refugee with a crippled left leg, who (played by another drama student) jumps out at the group from behind a gravestone to screams of terror. Connections between Liverpool and slavery are both revealed and obscured, and the hints of connections levitate. The 'African refugee' was not explicitly named a slave in this tour, but the mention of slavery at the tour's start, alongside the promise that the subject would return later, presents unanswered questions and ambiguous associations. His disfigured body, moreover, like the mythical and discursive 'bodies' of enslaved people in the city, bought and sold or laid to rest, raises the haunting and persisting memory of Liverpool and slavery via the brutal and bodily truth of the 'trade in human flesh'.

⁷⁴ Alan Rice and Johanna C. Kardux, 'Confronting the Ghostly Legacies of Slavery: The Politics of Black Bodies, Embodied Memories and Memorial Landscapes,' *Atlantic Studies* 9:3 (2012): 249–51.

⁷⁵ Rice and Kardux, 'Confronting the Ghostly Legacies of Slavery,' 251.

⁷⁶ 'The Hope Street Shivers' ghost walk by *Shiverpool*. Taken October 2010. See www.shiverpool.co.uk/.

Bodies in Stone

Whilst the intangible stories of a slave presence have over time occupied gaps and silences in Liverpool's public memory of slavery, the more tangible bodies of enslaved people that adorn buildings or monuments in the city have formed unofficial sites of memory within Liverpool's urban landscape by embodying, prompting, and reinvigorating debate. The imagery of enslaved African people that adorn the city's buildings represents distinctly gendered celebrations of identity at sites also often intimately connected with the history of transatlantic slavery. These representations perform public celebrations of Liverpool's prowess in transatlantic slavery by aligning with schematic civic identity narratives of mercantile enterprise (see Chapter 1) and national mnemonic frameworks of Britain and slavery (and abolition) more generally. The face of an African woman, the feminized symbol of the 'product' of Liverpool's slave-trading commercial success, sits within the high-relief frieze of the eighteenth-century Grade I listed town hall (the city centre's only surviving eighteenth-century building).⁷⁷ This is the third town hall of Liverpool and was designed by renowned architect John Wood of Bath (1704–54), who had recently designed commercial rival Bristol's Exchange building (1741–43).⁷⁸ The town hall, one of the most prominent public buildings of eighteenth-century Liverpool, is historically, as well as visually, linked to slavery. The construction of the town hall was undertaken by a firm owned by Joseph Brooks (1706–88), whose son (also Joseph Brooks, 1746–1823), was a prominent Liverpool slave trader and owner of the ship (often misspelled) *Brookes*, plans of which were much used within abolitionist campaign literature and imagery.⁷⁹ A later construction in this area also 'celebrates' the financial wealth brought to Liverpool by the slave trade. Around the Water Street entrance of the Grade II* listed Martins Bank (designed in 1927 by architect Herbert J. Rowse, completed in 1932), 'an unsettling reminder of the slave trade' greets visitors through the carvings of African children that stand at the sides of the building's entrance, holding bags of gold, their heads bowed under the palms of a sea god.⁸⁰ The decorative theme of the building was 'money and the sea', and the designer, George Herbert Tyson Smith, worked closely

⁷⁷ Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 72.

⁷⁸ Sharples and Pollard, *Liverpool*, 42.

⁷⁹ 'Plan and Sections of a Slave Ship [the 'Brooks' sometimes "Brookes"]', *Royal Museums Greenwich* <http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/254967.html> (accessed 7 January 2019).

⁸⁰ David Lewis, *Walks through Liverpool History* (Liverpool: Breedon Books Publishing, 2004), 33.



7 Nelson Memorial, Exchange Flags, Liverpool (Photograph: Author)

with Rowse on these maritime designs.⁸¹ These included the carpets in the banqueting hall, which include images of ships, a place to which Liverpool-born black elder Scott frequently took his tour participants.

Whilst these tangible and prominent visual 'reminders' of Liverpool and slavery have proven useful within public memory work (especially within walking tours), more complex symbolic depictions of chained bodies in the

81 Sharples and Pollard, *Liverpool (Pevsner Architectural Guides)*, 170.

city's built environment bring to the fore fuller dimensions of Liverpool's slavery memory discourse. The Nelson Memorial in Exchange Flags (see Figure 7), Liverpool's first publicly funded monument, and the debate surrounding the chained figures at its base, represents a layering of symbolism and subsequent ambiguities in meaning that memorials can embody.⁸² The Grade II* listed Monument to Lord Nelson was designed by Matthew Cotes Wyatt (1775–1856), and its completion was overseen by Richard Westmacott (1799–1872), who had also produced memorials to Nelson in Birmingham and Barbados.⁸³ Created to commemorate Admiral Horatio Nelson (1758–1805) as a 'supreme English naval hero', Terry Cavanagh suggests the memorial was intended to align closely with Liverpool's own maritime identity.⁸⁴ Liverpool's coinciding rise in maritime confidence and sea-bound civic identity narratives were well-placed and well-timed to celebrate this heroic naval figure. The project committee consisted of 21 people including the mayor, John Bolton, John Foster Senior, John Gladstone, and William Roscoe.⁸⁵

Around the pedestal sit four semi-nude male figures in chains. Officially, these represent Nelson's four victorious battles. However, they also introduce striking yet contradicting ambiguous visual allusions to Liverpool and slavery.⁸⁶ The use of chained figures aligns to a broader sculptural tradition of the time, there being particular similarity between this piece and Giovanni Bandini's *Monument to Ferdinand I* (1624, Piazza della Darsena, Livorno), with its deployment of bronze 'slaves' around its base.⁸⁷ Such prominent

82 Alison Yarrington, 'Nelson the Citizen Hero: State and Public Patronage of Monumental Sculpture,' *Art History* 6:3 (1983): 322; Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 55.

83 Alison Yarrington, 'Public Sculpture and Civic Pride 1800–1830,' in *Patronage and Practice: Sculpture on Merseyside*, ed. P. Curtis (Liverpool: Tate Gallery Publications and National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1989), 22. Campbell Dodgson, 'Westmacott, Richard (1799–1872),' rev. Marie Busco, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29115 (accessed 27 February 2013).

84 Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 51.

85 Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 55.

86 'At the base of the pedestal are four emblematic figures, of heroic size, in the character of captives, or vanquished enemies; in allusion to the four signal victories obtained by Lord Nelson, viz. those of St. Vincent, the Nile, Copenhagen, and of Trafalgar.' Sydney Jones Library, Liverpool, Liverpool Pamphlets 1806–14: Miscellaneous, SPEC G34.30 (12), *Report of the Committee for Superintending the Erection of the Monument to the Memory of the Late Right Honourable Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, in the Area of the Liverpool Exchange*, 21 October 1813, 17.

87 Further, Westmacott perhaps took direct inspiration from the shape of the chains

inclusion of chained figures within Liverpool's first public memorial, and at a time when the city was at the height of its involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, is unlikely to be a coincidence. As Alison Yarrington has suggested, William Roscoe's central involvement in the project also implies at least a dual symbolic function, that the figures could represent both French prisoners of war and the suffering of African slavery.⁸⁸ This is a stance also taken by architectural historian Quentin Hughes, who suggests the four chained prisoners 'may also be a subtle allusion to Roscoe's hatred of the slave trade'.⁸⁹ Within most written histories, official accounts and broader public discourse, however, connections between the chained figures and transatlantic slavery are more often than not vociferously argued against. Where concessions are made through murmurings of the possible allusions to slavery, these appear, as argued above, behind the comforting guise of Liverpool's much-celebrated anti-slavery campaigner. Further, whilst a number of other memorials to Lord Nelson were constructed in towns and cities nationally at this time, no other designs included chained figures, and yet *two* of the designs proposed for Liverpool by different artists, both with local connections, did so.⁹⁰ Additionally, the Liverpool designers were submitting their compositions up to February 1807, in the midst of abolition debates and a mere month before the Act of Parliament outlawing slave trading by Britain was passed.⁹¹

Roscoe's anti-slavery stance was at odds with the views of the other men on the committee, many of whom formed an active part of the pro-slavery lobby. Whilst more visually obvious renditions of enslaved Africans may have come up against fierce opposition from the majority of the committee, it is possible that a more 'veiled' reference to slavery was being made that

used, with oblong links connected the figures with the monument. Yarrington, 'Public Sculpture and Civic Pride 1800–1830'; Yarrington, 'Nelson the Citizen Hero,' 325.

88 Yarrington, 'Public Sculpture and Civic Pride 1800–1830,' 27.

89 Hughes, *Liverpool: City of Architecture*, 2nd ed., 33.

90 Both Matthew Wyatt and George Bullock's proposed designs included similar figures in chains. Matthew Cotes Wyatt was a fairly unknown sculptor in Liverpool, yet he had connections to the town through his father, James Wyatt (1746–1813) who was an external advisor to the competition for the design of the sculpture, and had also been involved in the rebuilding of Liverpool Town Hall. George Bullock (d. 1818) came to Liverpool from Birmingham in 1798 with a mind to establishing himself as a sculptor in the town, becoming President of the Academy of Art and earning the patronage of William Roscoe. Cavanagh, *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*, 55. Alison Yarrington, 'The Commemoration of the Hero, 1800–1864: Monuments to the British Victors of the Napoleonic Wars,' PhD diss, Cambridge University, 1980.

91 *Report of the Committee for Superintending the Erection of the Monument to the Memory of the Late Right Honourable Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson*.

The Persistence of Memory

drew instead upon the experience of prisoners of war, of which there were around 4,000 within Liverpool at this time.⁹² One letter published in the *Mercury* after the monument was unveiled revealed the beginnings of what would become a long public debate over what these four figures meant. The author stated that ‘a prodigious outcry has been raised against the four figures in chains’, that many have claimed it a shock to see such a ‘galling exhibition of slavery in Britain! For, as the poet says, “Slaves cannot breathe in England”’, drawing familiarly on words from William Cowper’s poem.⁹³ The author dismissed such assumptions, stating instead that the statues represented prisoners of war, shifting the focus of the debate around these figures away from slavery, and indeed Liverpool’s part in it, to a more acceptable and concurrently prominent area of national discourse by issuing anti-French rhetoric in a derisory tone:

In answer to all this, I would beg leave to ask, are not these figures intended to represent prisoners of war? And have we any assurance that they have been put on their *parole*? For my part, I never trust a Frenchman, and I have not the least doubt, that if the chains were taken away, these *mounseers* would quickly scale the palisades, and take French leave, without waiting for the ceremony of being regularly exchanged.

As to the misery which is so visibly depicted in their countenances and postures, I have no hesitation in saying that it is all feigned, in order to excite sympathy in the by-standers, and to induce them to ease them of their chains. I, however, warn the Committee to be on their guard, and even to employ some loyal blacksmith to examine their fetters once a week; for, should they get loose, as far as I can judge from their size and muscular appearance, they would be more than a match for a whole posse of constables.⁹⁴

The author here turns attention away from something the town had been criticized for, to a subject it could take pride in. This letter illustrates how, from the moment of the unveiling, there was a reactionary debate prompted by the chained figures, certainly to a high enough degree to merit the author of this letter writing into the local press to assert his position and deny symbolic connections to slavery, instead turning to national identity narratives that celebrated naval heroism via stereotypes of the French.

92 Yarrington, ‘Public Sculpture and Civic Pride 1800–1830,’ 25.

93 N.Y., ‘Letter: Nelson’s Monument,’ *Liverpool Mercury*, 5 November 1813. ‘Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs / Receive our air, that moment they are free / They touch our coun’ry, and their shackles fall.’ William Cowper, ‘The Task’ (1785) Book II in William Cowper, *The Poems of William Cowper* (New York: C. Wells, 1835).

94 N.Y., ‘Letter: Nelson’s Monument.’



8 Figure in Chains, Nelson Memorial (Photograph: Author)

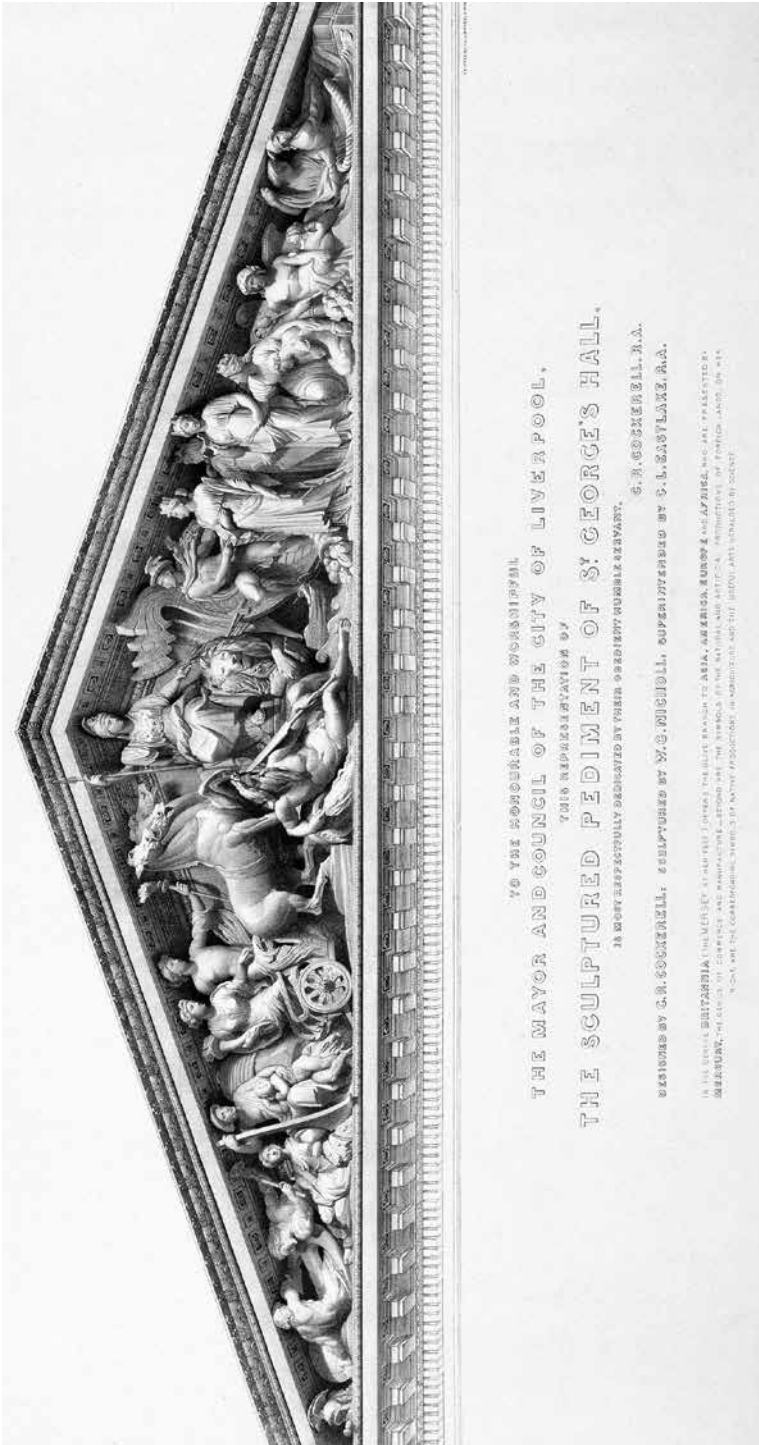
The Persistence of Memory

The chained figures, whilst perhaps not explicitly or singularly representing enslaved Africans, do imply a symbolic connection to them, through coincidental suggestion maybe, or through an intentional allusion that can take as its alibi the 'official' allegory of a national heroic victory. There is an additional level of irony to such symbolic memorial connections given Lord Nelson's own opposition to abolition and the 'damnable and cursed doctrine of Wilberforce and his hypocritical allies'.⁹⁵ This attitude of course echoed much of the official response and pro-slavery sentiment from Liverpool's eighteenth-century political and mercantile elite, who toasted their slave trade and sent petitions against abolition from the town hall just metres from this statue.

The multiplicities of meaning and ambiguity of interpretation permit contestation and contradiction and, through this dissonance, have created a porous terrain onto which a memory debate can take root and unfold. In nineteenth-century novelist Herman Melville's largely autobiographical work *Redburn*, where the central character recounts a visit to Liverpool in the 1840s, Melville more overtly aligned the figures he saw surrounding Nelson on the base of the structure with enslaved Africans: 'These woe-begone figures of captives are emblematic of Nelson's principal victories; but I never could look at their swarthy limbs and manacles, without being involuntarily reminded of four African slaves in the market-place.'⁹⁶ Whilst *Redburn's* 'involuntary' reminiscence implies a subconscious link with symbolism, the connections he makes to slavery are rationalized through the more obvious aesthetic qualities of the sculpture's physical fabric; that it is impossible to look at *black* bodies in chains, the 'swarthy limbs and manacles', of figures rendered in bronze and treated with a black patina, without thinking of African slavery. The Nelson Memorial itself 'reflects' connections between Liverpool and slavery like a black 'swarthy' mirror, hinting at potential connections without explicitly making them. The bodies in chains have come to fulfil a form of figurative shorthand for the city's involvement in the slave trade and, perhaps, its memory. The emasculated male figures, semi-nude and bearing heavy chains, look passively to their feet in the shadow of the eighteenth-century town hall, with its decorative emblems of the city's trade with Africa. Yet these figures, who surround a national maritime hero, both reveal and obscure Liverpool and slavery, their obvious

⁹⁵ Letter written by Lord Nelson to Simon Taylor 11 June 1805. See Christer Petley, 'The Royal Navy, the British Atlantic Empire and the Abolition of the Slave Trade,' in *The Royal Navy and the British Atlantic World, c.1750–1820* ed. John McAleer and Christer Petley (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

⁹⁶ Herman Melville, *Redburn: His First Voyage* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1849), 148–49.



9 After C.R. Cockerell, R.A. *The Sculptured Pediment of St George's Hall, Liverpool* c. 1850. Lithograph, 330 × 892 mm (image), 560 × 930 mm (sheet). Lithographed by Alfred Stevens. Printed by Hullmandel and Walton.

Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Prudence Cuming Associates Limited

connections to enslavement through chains jar against their categorical description as allegories of war victories.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, one particular chained African body adorning one of Liverpool's most celebrated public buildings, made connections to African enslavement, whilst nonetheless aligning to increasingly prominent national and distinctly imperial anti-slavery discourses. The original pediment sculpture of St George's Hall (built between 1841 and 1854) incorporated a neo-classical collection of 18 allegorical figures including Britannia in the centre presiding over a lion (see Figure 9). In one section, four figures represent the four corners of the globe this port of empire traded with. At one end of these 'global' figures, an African man is shown kneeling, designed with tight curled hair and aesthetically 'African' facial features, unclothed, and sitting with head bowed, in broken chains (see Figure 10). His appearance is in stark contrast to the other global allegories that stand in full-length classical attire exhibiting more 'European' bodily aesthetics.⁹⁷ This figure echoed familiar anti-slavery imagery of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the kneeling African with broken chains reminiscent of the widely circulated 'Am I Not a Man and a Brother?' figure adopted by the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in October 1787, and mass-produced by Josiah Wedgwood as a medallion.⁹⁸ The kneeling African figure was a familiar motif within art and sculpture of the period more broadly, including within another of Westmacott's designs, the funerary monument to Charles Fox (1822), and within artwork such as Robert Smirke's illustrations of James Montgomery's poetry collection *The West Indies, a Poem in Four Parts* (1809), and large fresco by Daniel Maclise, which appears in the House of Lords, Westminster Palace called *The Spirit of Justice* (commissioned 1847).⁹⁹ However, this image is more accurately understood as an allegory of British imperial ambition, oppressive colonial rule and domination, articulated through a distinctly gendered embodiment of mid nineteenth-century identity and anxiety narratives of empire. That the figure echoes visual prompts of abolition is indicative of the many ways in which the memory of slavery and, here, its abolition has

97 Michael Harris has suggested that the repeated depiction of the naked black body in Western art signifies primitivism, used to justify imperial dominance. Michael D. Harris, *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 35–36.

98 J.R. Oldfield, *Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: the Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade, 1787–1807* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 156; Mary Guyatt, 'The Wedgwood Slave Medallion: Values in Eighteenth-Century Design,' *Journal of Design History* 13:2 (2000): 96.

99 See Hugh Honour, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. IV (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 97–99, 169.

been *perverted* for contemporary motives across time. The widespread reach of the abolition imagery from which the figure takes its cue has fuelled its reinvention, its use and abuse, reflecting what Marcus Wood has described as ‘the violent instability of the slavery archive’.¹⁰⁰

Tracking the evolution of this image through design and application demonstrates this keen instability, the abuse of the black body both through art and symbolism, and the tensions inherent within local framings of a national anti-slavery imperial discourse in this former slave port city. In 1843 architect Charles Cockerell (1788–1863) produced a sketch titled *Idea for the Frontispiece of a Public Building in England*, which the building’s designer, Harvey Lonsdale Elmes (1814–47), had asked to be executed on St George’s Hall.¹⁰¹ Following Elmes’ death, Cockerell sought sculptor Alfred Stevens’s (1817–75) artistic input on the redesign and completion of his own design for the pediment on St. George’s Hall.¹⁰² A lithograph survives of Stevens’s redesign of the piece (see Figure 9), which was executed by sculptor William Grinsell Nicholl (c. 1796–1871) between the end of 1849 and the beginning of 1850.¹⁰³ The building opened in 1854, and the sculpture remained on the south pediment for the next 100 years.

The description accompanying Steven’s lithograph reads as follows:

In the centre Britannia (the Mersey at her feet) offers the olive branch to Asia, America, Europe and Africa, who are presented by Mercury, the genius of commerce and manufacture – beyond are the symbols of the natural and artificial productions of foreign lands, at her right are the corresponding symbols of native productions in agriculture and the useful arts heralded by science.¹⁰⁴

However, within a handwritten note accompanying the original design by Charles Cockerell, the figures are described as follows:

100 Wood, *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography*, 4.

101 Ronald P. Jones, ‘The Life and Works of Harvey Lonsdale Elmes,’ *The Architectural Review* XV (1904): 238.

102 Kenneth Romney Towndrow, *Alfred Stevens* (Liverpool: University Press of Liverpool, 1951), 5. There is some debate over the extent of Stevens’s input. See Robert Pepys Cockerell, ‘The Life and Works of Charles Robert Cockerell, R.A.,’ *The Architectural Review* (1902): 139.

103 Frank Salmon and Peter De Figueiredo, ‘The South Front of St George’s Hall,’ *Architectural History* 43 (2000): 203. Robert Chambers, ‘St. George’s Hall, Liverpool: A Review of the Recent Work,’ *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 13:1 (2007): 39.

104 After C.R. Cockerell, R.A. *The Sculptured Pediment of St George’s Hall, Liverpool* c. 1850. Lithograph, 330 x 892 mm (image), 560 x 930 mm (sheet). William Grinsell Nicholl. Lithographed by Alfred Stevens. Printed by Hullmandel and Walton. Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Prudence Cuming Associates Limited.

The Persistence of Memory

The subject represents Britannia in the centre, and Neptune at her feet; in her left hand she holds out the olive branch to Mercury and the four quarters of the Globe; of whom the last, Africa, does homage for the liberty she *and her children* owe to her protection; beyond are figures representing the vine and other foreign commercial productions. In her right she extends her protecting spear over her own productions, agriculture, sciences – domestic affairs, the plough, the loom, and the anvil.¹⁰⁵

When compared to the same allegorical group in Cockerell's original drawing, and read alongside his description of the piece, it becomes apparent that the kneeling figure in Stevens's lithograph, represents 'Africa's children', which had been depicted within Cockerell's earlier design in a more obvious childlike aesthetic (as an actual child). In the later image, 'Africa', the mother figure, has one arm around 'her children' and one wrist in the grasp of Europe, to whom she is turned, and looks to presumably for guidance and protection.

The changes made to the design reflect the reprojection of national identity narratives and broader discourses of empire and colonialism through a more locally specific prism. Cockerell's initial earlier sketch of 1843 had originally been designed for the Royal Exchange in London, a competition that Liverpool's Nelson Monument sculptor Richard Westmacott ultimately won.¹⁰⁶ Stevens's development of the design for St George's Hall rendered it more apposite to a Liverpool context. The addition of a bale of cotton in the corner of the pediment sculpture represented the significance of the cotton trade to mid nineteenth-century Liverpool, and the allegorical male reclining figure in the centre came to represent the River Mersey specifically, rather than Neptune, as it had in Cockerell's drawing and description. More significantly, Stevens's substitution of a standing aesthetically European child for a kneeling African figure in chains only appears once it is known that the sculptural group is intended for a *Liverpool* building.

Whilst the pediment sculpture fits into a tradition of European architectural visual representation, it represents, reinforces, and symbolically

105 LRO, Liverpool, St George's Hall: Collection of Illustrations, Photographs, News cuttings etc., Prepared in the Library, Hf 942.7213 GEO, duplicate of label attached to watercolour drawing by Cockerell, 1843. My emphasis.

106 Gavin Stamp, 'Architectural Sculpture in Liverpool,' in *Patronage and Practice: Sculpture on Merseyside*, ed. Penelope Curtis (Liverpool: Tate Gallery Publications and National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1989), 9. Campbell Dodgson, 'Westmacott, Richard (1799–1872),' rev. Marie Busco, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: OUP), www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29115 (accessed 27 February 2013).



10 Close up of the figure of 'Africa' from After C.R. Cockerell, R.A. *The Sculptured Pediment of St George's Hall, Liverpool* c. 1850. Lithograph, 330 × 892 mm (image), 560 × 930 mm (sheet). William Grinsell Nicholl. Lithographed by Alfred Stevens. Printed by Hullmandel and Walton. Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Prudence Cuming Associates Limited

creates much more.¹⁰⁷ Jan Nederveen Pieterse has suggested that the emphasis in such classical representations shifted from a focus on commerce in the eighteenth century to an emphasis more on power and rule in the nineteenth century, following an imperial framework which worked within neo-classical visual cues. Drawing on a 'pictorial architecture of power', such imagery created a subtext of domination that drew on visual contrasts,

¹⁰⁷ Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 18–19.

The Persistence of Memory

placement, and body language.¹⁰⁸ The weak, beaten posture of ‘Africa’s Children’ on St George’s Hall celebrates white philanthropic action and contemporary colonial rule, the rightful power and domination of Europe, or, more specifically, Britain, over Africa. Joanna de Groot has argued that discriminatory discourses of ‘race’ and ‘sex’ during this period emerge entwined, that the construction of a system of language that emphasizes physical difference to justify power and control over both women in British society and non-European people in the colonies mutually corresponds. These discourses drew on similar arguments within ‘pseudoscience’ to emphasize the inherent weakness of both groups and, therefore, their necessary control by Western men. This was correspondingly expressed through the symbolic imposition of a ‘parent–child’ relationship which related to both women and non-European peoples, men valuing in both subordinated groups ‘obedience, devotion and ability to serve and nurture’.¹⁰⁹ The expression of subordination achieved through a coupling of protection and power within ‘parental’ roles, as outlined by de Groot, becomes particularly ‘gendered’ in the pediment sculpture on St George’s Hall. Here, expressions of a Western male identity, the anxiety and confusion over contradictions inherent in processes of colonization, and discriminatory power, find artistic expression in romanticized, idealized notions of ‘sex’ and ‘race’. It is specifically Africa ‘and *her* children’ who show gratitude to Britannia for their freedom. Africa holding her ‘children’ in a nurturing posture, head resting against breast, turning to Britannia, hand held out and in the grip of ‘Europe’, seeking the guidance and protection the imperial power can afford her. Next to her naked ‘children’, Africa is gendered as *more* female than the allegories of other continents through her ‘mother’ role, a position that requires, and thereby justifies, protection from a father figure, an imperial power who exerts ‘protection’ via the colonial rule of Africa (and her children), defended by ongoing public displays of cultural propaganda and artistic expressions of imperialistic paternalism. This was the symbolism echoed within broader discourse across the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. Descriptions of the sculpture in a guidebook from 1883, the 50th anniversary of the Emancipation Act, produced just after the commencement of the ‘Scramble for Africa’ (1881–1912), described the sculpture as depicting ‘Africa, who is represented in a posture of gratitude and humility, with her sons in her arms, the breaking of whose chains is the work of Britannia, to whom

¹⁰⁸ Pieterse, *White on Black*, 22–23.

¹⁰⁹ Joanna de Groot, ‘“Sex” and “Race”: The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century,’ in *Cultures of Empire: A Reader*, ed. Catherine Hall (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 43.

she points'.¹¹⁰ This description was repeated within versions of this guide in 1912 and 1927, and it is this description that Quentin Hughes, in his 1964 architectural history of Liverpool, quotes whilst suggesting the sculpture's subject matter 'may now seem pompous – and somewhat ironical in view of the port's large participation in the slave trade'.¹¹¹ Rather, it was *precisely* Liverpool's large role within the slave trade that determined the inclusion of this figure initially, and the abuse of the slavery archive the image represents was common to broader imperialistic anti-slavery discourses of Victorian Britain.

Debates surrounding the meaning of this figure, celebrations of abolition, and representations of 'race' were reignited at the end of the twentieth century in moves towards its material restoration. By 1950, the pediment sculpture had weathered beyond recognition, and the remaining segments were removed after some sections fell off the building.¹¹² In 1995, St George's Hall was transferred from council ownership to a charitable trust in the hope, according to Deputy Council Leader Frank Pendergast, that, through external fundraising, it would be 'restored to its former glory', including the reinstatement of the original south pediment sculpture.¹¹³ The hall was opened to the public the month before, where a model of the proposed pediment sculpture was on display.¹¹⁴ The proposal to include the original chained African figure 'Africa' drew criticism from local black and anti-racist organizations. Within the local and national press, the figure, which originally represented 'Africa's children', was referred to varyingly as a freed black slave, a black man bowing before Britannia, giving thanks 'with broken manacles at his feet' for his release from slavery.¹¹⁵ The Liverpool Anti-Racist Community Arts Association (LARCAA) and the Merseyside Racial Equality Council criticized the inclusion of the figure. Ibrahim Thompson, from LARCAA expressed

110 Anon, *Illustrated Guide to, and Popular History of Liverpool and its Environs*, 10th ed. (London: Ward, Lock & Co. Ltd, 1883), 19.

111 Hughes, *Seaport*, 103.

112 'Statuary Falls From St. George's Hall,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 22 August 1950.

113 Deborah Mulhearn, 'Liverpool Council Places St George's Hall in Charity Trust,' *The Architects' Journal* 202:10 (1995): 14; Caroline Gidman, 'Trust Takeover of City Treasure,' *Liverpool Echo*, 5 September 1995.

114 Roger Bryson, 'Back Home and Backing Battle for Britannia,' *Liverpool Echo*, 6 September 1995.

115 Mulhearn, 'Liverpool Council Places St George's Hall in Charity Trust'; Gidman, 'Trust Takeover of City Treasure'; Roger Bryson, 'Race Row Frieze in £3m Storm – Sculpture Faces Axe in Slavery Rumpus,' *Liverpool Echo*, 6 September 1995; Stephen Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze,' *The Daily Mail*, 7 September 1995; 'News in Brief: Row Over "Racist Sculpture",' *The Guardian*, 7 September 1995.

concern over the glorification and representation of history in this way: 'Recreating art from this era without thought or consideration of its content – especially on such a large scale – is very alarming. I think the portrayal of Britannia as some sort of saviour is rewriting the history books.'¹¹⁶ In a familiar discursive tactic that drew on the recognition given to the trauma of the Holocaust, Thompson also asked, '[h]ow would the Jewish community feel in Germany if they started recreating some of the artwork from Hitler's time?'¹¹⁷ LARCAA member Lenford White also spoke out about the pediment sculpture, suggesting that a more positive image of a black person could be found and used, and Maria O'Reilly, Chair of the Merseyside Racial Equality Council, suggested that the money for the project should instead go on 'black youth projects.'¹¹⁸

Opposition to the sculpture voiced by Liverpool black people was framed in the local and national press through a discourse of violence and vandalism that echoed reporting on 1980s protests and political unrest. The debate was frequently described as a 'row', or, more specifically, a 'race row' and, more risibly, as 'a slavery rumpus', suggesting that this was a petty dispute launched by black people that would 'jeopardise the scheme' over 'one small detail', presenting the sculpture as an innocent bystander in a personal spat that might not go ahead through 'fears it will upset the black community'.¹¹⁹ The sculpture was itself personified as a victim, being 'in danger of falling prey to that most modern of curses, political correctness'.¹²⁰ Violent and threatening imagery was drawn upon, whereby the black opposition were 'outraged'¹²¹ and 'threatened to wreck the scheme'.¹²² Liverpool-based journalist and regular to such debates, Fritz Spiegl, wrote in *The Times* a year later that it was the same 'Black rage', generated by slavery heritage trails, that had stopped the restoration project from going ahead the year before.¹²³ References were also made to destruction; that the sculpture, though not yet physically created, would have to 'be scrapped'.¹²⁴ Council leaders were also keen to stress that they were not 'bowing to the black

116 Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

117 Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

118 Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

119 Gidman, 'Trust Takeover of City Treasure'; 'News in Brief: Row Over "Racist Sculpture"; Bryson, 'Race Row Frieze in £3m Storm'; Brian Baker, 'I Can Think of a Better Way to Spend Our £3m,' *Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 September 1995.

120 Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

121 Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

122 Bryson, 'Back Home and Backing Battle for Britannia.'

123 Fritz Spiegl, 'Letter: Liverpool at Odds on Slave Heritage,' *The Times*, 3 October 1996.

124 Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

lobby', echoing conflicts between Militant Labour leaders and the Black Caucus in the 1980s.¹²⁵

Defence of the image centred on the suggestion that the sculpture's critics were upset because they had 'misunderstood' the intended visual symbolism. Sculptor on the project, John Hogg, stated that,

[i]t seems to be generally thought that it represents slavery but it represents the abolition of slavery. The figure is on his knees giving thanks to Britannia for his liberty because of the decision by Britain to abolish the horror of the slave trade.¹²⁶

Such comments attest to the 'comforting' nature of Britain's culture of abolition, without awareness of the ways in which images of abolition have been used and abused in British imperial history. The chained figure is a *perversion* of abolitionist imagery, used as propaganda for nineteenth-century colonial ambitions through a racist and distinctly gendered expression of quite literal imperialistic paternalism, drawing on the guise of a symbolic 'child'. In relation to the opposition to reinstating this figure in 1995, however, this more theoretical interpretative exploration of meaning might seem a moot point. There is enough wrong with the idea of recreating a sculpture of a black African person in chains (broken or not), kneeling before a white European figure on a prominent (public) city centre building without going back to the sculptural intentions or cultural contexts of the mid nineteenth century. However, re-examining sculptural symbolism reveals the ways major cultural symbols are used and abused in different contexts, and, perhaps more significantly, directs attention to the way this has been done to the black body since slavery.

Conclusion

Whilst no official memorial to slavery yet exists in Liverpool, numerous 'unofficial' sites of memory have been created through visual aesthetics, symbolic associations, mythologies, and the recurring persistent public debate around them. For those seeking to engage with this past in public ways, the tangibility of the built environment, and the links this provides to otherwise less 'visible' histories of slavery, have provided useful points for connections to be made. Liverpool-born black local historians have made particularly prominent use of markers in the urban terrain for public history work connecting Liverpool and slavery. Scott (who has conducted

¹²⁵ Oldfield, 'Freeze on the Frieze.'

¹²⁶ Bryson, 'Race Row Frieze in £3m Storm.'

The Persistence of Memory

slavery walking tours of the city since the 1970s: see Chapter 2) outlined the intimate connection between discoveries of slavery, the built environment and a quite literal ‘history from below’, where discoveries emerged, like the invoice discussed previously, from old papers in the basements of buildings. He recalled a job he had as a lift boy in a building in Old Hall Street, Liverpool’s eighteenth-century commercial centre, and his close relationship with an elderly white caretaker that led to these discoveries:

Now in that building there was shipping offices, and like most caretakers in them days, down in the basement they all had their own little room, and in the offices there was no such thing as erm...machines where you put paper and they cut them to ribbons. There was nothing like that. So there’d be lots of papers. [...] And these caretakers would go down below in their basement with their stacks of documents and go, well that’s no good bin that... oh keep that. Some of them actually knew what to invest in. Yeah. So they were a mine of information and because they’d had their jobs for years, they knew a lot of history about the building. So, this old man used to tell me all kinds of things, and anything about slavery went into the back of my head. And when he found out I was really interested, he said to me, in the weekend, go to such-and-such a building, and see-ask for Mr so-and-so, he’s the caretaker there. Have a word with him. And I’d go and they’d tell me about that building and the people in it. So – I built up this history of what was on the buildings, why they were there and er, the way in which my mind works, anything which regards Africa, slavery, black history, Liverpool, treatment of black people, it just goes to the back of my head. I had gathered all this information and did nothing with it for years.¹²⁷

The history of Liverpool and slavery emerges for Scott, not through textbooks or formal education, but from the fabric of the city itself, from the evidence held within (and by) old buildings and those who work closely with that fabric. Moreover, this ‘hidden history’ exists ephemerally underground, in basements and within documents meant to be thrown away. Less hidden connections between Liverpool and slavery persist within the names of streets. Whilst debates have persisted around whether streets named to commemorate slave traders, owners, and merchants should be renamed, they have also provided points of connection for public history work around Liverpool and slavery.¹²⁸ As part of the bicentenary commemorations in 2007, Laurence Westgaph’s

¹²⁷ Scott, interview.

¹²⁸ In 2006, Councillor Barbara Mace called for streets named after slave traders to be renamed after abolitionists to mark the 2007 bicentenary, a motion that prompted a prolonged press debate around the issue. Larry Neild, ‘Should We Change Our Streets Linked to Slavery?’ *Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 July 2006.

pamphlet *Read the Signs*, published by English Heritage with support from Liverpool City Council and the museums, set out some of the connections between slavery and Liverpool street names and prompted criticism from Liverpool Heritage Forum, some directed personally towards Westgaph.¹²⁹ Whilst these tangible markers might be useful as ways to draw attention to the history of Liverpool and slavery, this attention is not always welcomed.

The connections between Liverpool and slavery made in relation to the urban cityscape occupy a liminal space between 'presence' and 'absence'. Caryl Phillips's suggestion that history is both 'physically present, yet so glaringly absent' from public consciousness in Liverpool, is particularly stark in relation to slavery and the built environment. Here the names of slave traders are the streets people walk, the faces and bodies of the enslaved adorn public buildings and monuments, yet nothing officially 'memorializes' their trauma.¹³⁰ The place between absence and presence, moreover, is also one of ambiguity; the multiple meanings embodied by symbolism in public art and sculpture, the translucent 'myths' of a slave presence and its metaphorical ghosts, haunt Liverpool's cityscape. The ambiguous connections to Liverpool and slavery are, however, ones that are 'locally' derived. Both the Nelson Memorial and St George's Hall designs only incorporated slave figures in chains when it was known they were intended for Liverpool monuments. Neither are 'about' slavery, or memorialized Liverpool and slavery in any official sense, but they do offer symbolic connections in their tangible designs and in their persisting debates over meaning.

Crucially, and in the face of official silence, it is the human experience; the brutalized, commodified, objectified bodies of the enslaved, that are discursively stitched (or 'secreted') onto Liverpool's urban terrain. The ghostly presence of enslaved people in Liverpool, metaphorically and in earnest, has served to draw focus back to the 'real' human embodiment of an otherwise distant and often euphemistically discussed 'African trade', placed in a maritime, mobile context of seafaring and 'trading' that occurs between foreign people in foreign lands. The presence of enslaved people in Liverpool itself has acted to 'bring home' the reality of Liverpool and slavery, by highlighting the more tangible effects of an industry otherwise largely only administratively controlled from within

129 Westgaph publicised this pamphlet through his regular *Echo* column and criticisms were made by Andrew Pearce of the Liverpool Heritage Forum and then Chair of the Friends of National Museums Liverpool for presenting 'negative' history and for not focusing enough on abolition. *Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter*, 45, 21 May 2007; Westgaph, *Read the Signs*, <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/the-slave-trade-and-abolition/read-the-signs/>.

130 Caryl Phillips, *The Atlantic Sound*, 93.

The Persistence of Memory

the city space. Although historians and commentators have recounted the evidence for slave sales and auctions taking place within coffee houses and on the steps of the Custom House in the pages of the *Liverpool Williamson Advertiser*, the issue of enslaved people being sold in Liverpool itself has remained a contentious issue. Like the mummified hand in Lancaster, the 'ghosts' of the enslaved in Liverpool, as myths and as 'bodies' in graveyards, are also phantom limbs, unseen and trying to be known. Crucially, however, they are not 'free-floating'; they 'haunt' specific places across Liverpool's contested urban terrain; places along the original course of the River Mersey, places associated with the inanimate 'goods' that an amnesiac language of an 'African trade' foregrounds, and places associated with the long history of the Liverpool black presence. These 'myths' function much like ghost stories, which, as Avery Gordon suggests, 'not only repair representational mistakes, but also strive to understand the conditions under which a memory was reproduced in the first place, toward a counter-memory of the future'.¹³¹ The placement of mnemonic slave 'bodies' underground, in tunnels, graves, under the cover of darkness, behind locked doors, acknowledges the ways in which this history has otherwise been covered up, buried, in official discourse. It purposefully counters the 'forgetting' achieved through trading triangles, of neutralized sanitized histories of economics and of white philanthropy and imperial paternalism, violently wrenching the history of Liverpool and slavery out of geographical distance, and bringing it 'home'.

131 Avery Gordon, quoted in Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities*, 217.

Conclusion

Untelling Difficult Pasts

Over more than four centuries, the transatlantic slave trade changed the history of three continents – Africa, America and Europe – and it also changed the history of Liverpool. The trade brought great wealth and prosperity to Liverpool but at a terrible cost in human lives. While the city has begun to acknowledge that uncomfortable past in recent years, it has yet to find a satisfactory way of living with that legacy.¹

Anthony Tibbles

Our entrance to the past is through memory – either oral or written. And water. In this case salt water. Sea water. And, as the ocean appears to be the same yet is constantly in motion, affected by tidal movements, so too this memory appears stationary yet is shifting always. Repetition drives the event and the memory simultaneously, becoming a haunting, becoming spectral in its nature.²

M. NourbeSe Philip

Forget. Memory is pain trying to resurrect itself.³

Fred D'Aguiar

¹ Tibbles, *Liverpool and the Slave Trade*, 110.

² M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong! As Told to the Author by Setaey Adamu Boateng* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), 201.

³ Fred D'Aguiar, *The Longest Memory* (London: Vintage, 1994), 138.

The Persistence of Memory

Dissonant memory persists. It resurrects itself; it haunts and will not stay dead. For over 200 years, the memory of slavery in Liverpool has persisted through a contested public debate. Dissonant memory remains dissonant through its uneven persistent eruption and repetition, stubbornness and resistance, even through the discursive violence of the public debate. It is uncannily familiar yet changes, 'stationary yet shifting always', shaped by historical processes, cultural practice, narratives of place, and lived experiences. Liverpool has had more permanent forms of commemoration than any other British city when it comes to the history of transatlantic slavery. The former 'slaving capital of the world' has at points tried to face this past through ritual and performance, through apology, through museums, texts, and tours – but the twisted memory of this traumatic past cannot be so easily 'satisfied'.

Living with the legacy of this past, as Anthony Tibbles puts it, means living with the undead; living with the persistent resurrection of the memory debate of Liverpool and slavery as it has endured over time. In taking a *longue durée* view of this subject and broadening the range of areas considered, the analysis in this book challenges existing scholarly engagement, which, as stated within the introduction, has largely revolved around the museums, or other aspects of late twentieth-century memory, in isolation. The coinciding 100-year survey of anniversaries in Chapter 3 illustrates the impact of round-number commemorations on subsequent commemorations, just as narratives, expressions, and phrases (Chapter 1) have transcended 200 years of public discourse. Here, the place of the broader narrativization of Liverpool's historic story is shown to shape, yet also be shaped by, Liverpool's slavery memory discourse. It is moulded through a 'rags to riches' narrative, forms part of broader 'overcoming adversity' and 'enterprising spirit' motifs, as well as constituting and being constituted by discursive displays of competitive tones directed against rival port cities. The *longue durée* approach has, moreover, enabled a greater focus to be given not only to the immediate context memory work sits within, but an *evolving* context; how this changes over time, highlighting the significance of particular events, moments or themes within Liverpool's general history, across the 200 years considered. Memory's multidirectional qualities not only react to concurrent memory work around other dissonant pasts as Michael Rothberg has argued, but to other events and experiences deemed significant.⁴ This interdependent memory relationship has been particularly influenced by corresponding histories of empire and imperialism, war, patterns of economic prosperity and decline, immigration, race and racism. Liverpool's memory of slavery has therefore been resurrected within moments of trauma, unrest, and

4 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*.

Conclusion

activism within the Liverpool black experience and black political protest. The distinct racial tensions across the twentieth century shaped memory work approaching the millennium, particularly around the museums but also in areas less readily addressed in the literature, in relation to tours of the city and debate over the restoration of St George's Hall pediment sculpture. The long history of the Liverpool black presence (itself a legacy of the port's historic trading relationships with West Africa), black politics, protest and resistance to racism initiated, shaped, and determined slavery memory work towards the end of the twentieth century.

In tracing Liverpool's memory of slavery from *history* to *memory*, from the end of the eighteenth century, through abolition and emancipation and through to the twenty-first century, it has been possible to map the specific role that dissonant histories play in the formation of civic identity narratives. In relation to these influences, in particular, the nineteenth-century timing and cultural context of Liverpool's general historic story, when histories of the city started to be written, has been of great significance. The discursive shape of these early histories continued to influence the discourse of slavery in Europe's largest slave port city well into the twentieth century, through the awkward dissonance of celebrating Liverpool's 'success' in slave trading – being both 'the glory and the shame' of the city in history and memory. Transatlantic slavery existed in the public sphere in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries through debate, through the pro and anti-slavery lobbies and the discourse they put out into the world. As the 'slaving capital of the world', much of this was aimed at Liverpool, directed at the livelihoods and morality of her people. The persistent memory debate of Liverpool and slavery continued to regurgitate these lines of argument, of what slavery meant to Liverpool, how important it was or was not, the rights and wrongs, its effects and aftereffects, and who knew how much. Much of this merged into discourse around the exceptional and unique black presence in the city, forged through years of trading with West Africa, directed at Liverpool black people as walking 'reminders' of the city's history of slavery, as 'beneficiaries' of either slavery, maritime-themed employment, or Liverpool's imperial philanthropy, or as victims of a crime against humanity who live daily with its legacies. Both the long view over 200 years, and the mapping from history to memory, have illustrated just how repetitive these discourses are, over time and in different contexts.

There is a persistence to the memory of difficult pasts. The dissonance around memory work in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is testament to the *long* history of this memory. This is the memorial context that more recent interventions, like museums, sit within and against. They might contribute to and disrupt such debates, but they are part *of* them – not apart *from* them; they are part of the longer history of memory in the

The Persistence of Memory

city. However, part of this persistence also encompasses the ways in which this past has been *used* for various ends from history to memory. Most poignantly, the memory of slavery – or, more accurately, the memory of its abolition – has been used in the cause of other imperial or humanitarian campaigns over the last 200 years, often to justify paternalistic power over colonial ‘others’. Some of the discourse around the use of this history in the cause of ‘modern-day slavery’ in the twenty-first century bears disturbing similarities to such historic discourses. In addition, the dissonance of this history and its memory also persists through its knowing deployment as a contentious subject, used within public debates over seemingly unrelated issues, drawn on for its power to upset, to provoke, to persuade. Present-day memory work must contend with this long and persistent history of use and abuse in different contexts, be that in charity appeals and campaigns, industrial disputes, or propaganda.

Dissonant memory *persists* in the shadows more than it does in the light of authoritative memory work. It has lived in the darkness of what is not said or done, in stories shared and passed down, creating ambiguous worlds of memory myths that map themselves against the physical urban terrain of the city, through the imagined lives of enslaved people on, and in, Liverpool soil. As Chapter 7 showed, much of this memory has emerged from below, from underground, from cellars, tunnels, and under the cover of darkness. This is a common motif in slavery memory, and comparable myths exist for Bristol, where enslaved African people are said to have been kept in the caves around Redcliff Hill.⁵ This is symptomatic of a history not publicly told, of secrets kept and histories not written, or not trusted. The stories of caves, cellars, and tunnels that kept the bodies of the enslaved in the urban terrain of slave port cities are metaphors for this ‘forgetting’. However, as the persistence of memory over time has shown, forgetting is the wrong word. To say that the history of slavery has been forgotten does not acknowledge the work this takes, the active nature of rearranging for example the memory of slavery into a memory of abolition. Moreover, forgetting is also the wrong word because memory *has* nonetheless persisted in the face of official silences; in the shadows of myth and debate and most consistently through the bodies – imagined and storied, real and lived, or cut from stone – of enslaved African people themselves who have been placed so centrally in the cityscape. To approach public history and memory work assuming difficult pasts to be absent, forgotten, hidden, is to ignore both the communities of African-descended people who remember all too well because they have to, and the dissonant texture of that memory as it has persisted

⁵ ‘Bristol Slavery Trail,’ *Victoria County History*, www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/collection/bristol-slavery-trail (accessed 18 April 2018).

Conclusion

over time. Present-day interventions in the memory of difficult histories, especially those so centrally bound up with place, people and identity, must acknowledge the pre-existence of dissonant pasts through the debates about them that in this case have persisted over centuries. In tracing this memory over 200 years and revealing its persistence, its hauntingly familiar shape over time, it becomes less surprising that nationally endorsed and funded interventions like those in 2007 did not have the radical impact some may have expected. Moreover, the dissonance inherent to all heritage, the contested process of memory work, the fraught debates and disagreements over how to remember this horrific history, and, moreover, who has power over those narratives, is a product of the long history of memory, as well as the memory of other histories related to the subject – notably race and racism. Acknowledging this legacy of the past is a crucial first step in any intervention in memory.

There is a significant constituting component of the public and cultural memory of transatlantic slavery that is conspicuous by its absence from this book; its absence may seem surprising, but it is also telling. The slave ship *Zong*, a ‘Liverpool ship’, both owned and insured by Liverpool merchants, has haunted the memory of this past in its role as a usable abolitionist symbol, and as emblematic of black Atlantic trauma. In 1781, a group of Liverpool merchants, Edward Wilson, James Aspinall, William Gregson and his two sons, sent a slave ship, *William*, to the west coast of Africa. They subsequently arranged the purchase of a Dutch slave ship that had been captured by the British navy. On 6 September 1781, the slave ship *Zong*, a misnaming of the original *Zorg*, meaning ‘care’ in Dutch, set sail from Africa carrying 440 enslaved African men, women, and children, more than the average number for this voyage.⁶ Towards the end of that year, and following a difficult journey where the ship had veered off course and was allegedly running low on supplies, Captain Luke Collingwood (formally the surgeon on the outbound ship *William*), ordered 132 African people to be thrown overboard in order for the owners to make an insurance claim against the loss of their ‘property’. A further ten African people jumped into the sea following this, and another 62 died through disease and malnutrition during the journey. The ship’s owners made a claim for compensation, which the insurers rejected, and it was the ensuing court case, *Gregson v Gilbert* and its reporting that raised the profile of this horrific event. The trial in 1783 was overseen by Lord Mansfield (who had previously ruled slavery to be illegal in Britain in the *Somerset Case* of 1772), who initially ruled in

6 A typical British slave ship of comparable size would normally have carried 193 African people. James Walvin, *Zong: A Massacre, the Law and the End of Slavery* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 27.

favour of the owners. The insurers sought a retrial, which Olaudah Equiano brought to the attention of Granville Sharp. This second case found in favour of the insurers.⁷

The *Zong*, the fateful events on board, and the legal case around it, came to play a crucial role in the campaign for abolition. As a consequence, and through the ‘culture of abolition’ that has determined so much of British and European framings of this past, it has become firmly lodged within the public and cultural memory of slavery more broadly. The *Zong* became an important component in abolitionist propaganda, often cited as the key mobilizing event in the formal history of British abolitionism and its popular campaigns.⁸ A number of abolitionists wrote about the *Zong*, Granville Sharp had the case transcribed, Thomas Clarkson wrote about it in his influential *History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade* (1808), Ottobah Cugoana and John Newton both wrote about the *Zong*, and William Wilberforce raised it before Parliament in 1806.⁹ Perhaps the most famous image associated with the *Zong* is J.M.W. Turner’s *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On* (1840). Whilst not explicitly a depiction of the event, the painting has come to be culturally coupled with it, and as with the story of the *Zong* itself, the painting has also come to represent the history of numerous other, similar or related, but less well-remembered, slave-trading brutalities.¹⁰ As Anita Rupprecht has argued in her analysis of the case and its subsequent afterlife; it was, like much of the slavery archive, an unstable narrative, shaped and used to suit particular agendas.¹¹ The use of the *Zong* in the 1787–1807 abolition campaigns is also illustrative of the way the middle passage had become the main ‘battleground’ for pro and anti-slavery arguments, especially as the campaign focused on the slave trade rather than the business of enslavement more broadly towards the end of the eighteenth century.¹² It became, therefore, less about the specifics of the case, and stood

7 For more on the history of the *Zong* see F.O. Shyllon, *Black Slaves in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 184–209; James Walvin, *Black Ivory*, 14–18; James Walvin, *Zong*; Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*.

8 Anita, Rupprecht, ‘Excessive Memories: Slavery, Insurance and Resistance,’ *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007): 14.

9 Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, 31.

10 Anita Rupprecht, “A Limited Sort of Property”: History, Memory and the Slave Ship *Zong*,’ *Slavery & Abolition* 29:2 (2008), 274. For the Turner painting see Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 13–17; Wood, *Blind Memory*, ch. 2.

11 Anita Rupprecht, “A Very Uncommon Case”: Representations of the *Zong* and the British Campaign to Abolish the Slave Trade,’ *The Journal of Legal History* 28:3 (2007).

12 Wood, *Blind Memory*, 14.

Conclusion

instead as an abstract symbol for the ‘horrors of the Middle Passage’.¹³ In the campaign for abolition, the framing of African people on board the *Zong* through the sentimental prism of emotional suffering, innocence, and voiceless passive victimhood, has, like much eighteenth and nineteenth century abolition imagery (including another infamous Liverpool slave ship, *Brookes*) acted to remove African agency from this narrative.¹⁴ This was a useful usable narrative for abolitionists, a ‘kind of open space for the inscription of abolitionist fantasies’, which adhered to white sentimentality without acknowledgement of black resistance or rebellion.¹⁵ It is a testament to the power and resilience of the abolitionist myth of the *Zong* that in 2007, the bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade, a replica (a three-masted schooner from the 1940s, used in the film *Amazing Grace*) sailed up the Thames, escorted by a Royal Navy ship. The replica *Zong* had an accompanying exhibition, opened by London mayor Ken Livingstone by the ceremonial (and somewhat clichéd) cutting of a chain, and a Christian choir sang hymns.¹⁶ It was a visual and performative metaphor, as Rupprecht argues, of ‘the combined might of the military, church and state’ coming together to ‘commemorate their own historic roles in the abolition of the slave trade’.¹⁷

The *Zong* in history and memory has also come to be understood as signifying key structures in modernity that render the atrocity very much of the present. *Spectres of the Atlantic*, Ian Baucom’s retracing of the *Zong* massacre, reveals the ways in which this event, and thereby transatlantic slavery as a whole, was an integral facet of ‘the history of modern capital, ethics, and time consciousness’, especially within the pursuit of ‘speculative finance’.¹⁸ As such, Baucom argues, Liverpool should be seen as ‘the capital of the long twentieth century’, as central within the shift to replace ‘real’ property with ‘mobile property’. The prevalence of this kind of financial transaction and property in the form of stocks, bonds, and insurance, as well as the legacies this has left in modern financial systems, means that ‘the present is more than *rhetorically* haunted by the spectre of the *Zong*’s 1781 voyage’.¹⁹ Like much else in the memory of slavery and its persisting, unfolding legacies in the present, the *Zong* lives on in real, tangible ways,

13 Rupprecht, ‘Excessive Memories,’ 14.

14 Rupprecht, ‘Excessive Memories,’ 14. Marcus Wood discusses both the *Description of a Slave Ship*, the diagram of the Liverpool slave ship *Brookes*, and the Turner painting in *Blind Memory*, ch. 2.

15 Rupprecht, “A Very Uncommon Case,” 341.

16 Rupprecht, “A Limited Sort of Property,” 266–67.

17 Rupprecht, “A Limited Sort of Property,” 267.

18 Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, 31.

19 Baucom, *Spectres of the Atlantic*, 16–18.

The Persistence of Memory

within contemporary debates and policy about how to value human life. As Rupprecht has argued, the memory of the *Zong* and the legal wrangling over the insurance dispute is ‘embodied in the everyday availability of contemporary life insurance’.²⁰

However, the *Zong* also speaks to the unrepresentable nature of the trauma of this past. There is so much that is unknown and unknowable about the fate of the *Zong*, most glaringly of course the identities of the murdered enslaved African people as well as their experiences; even many of the ‘facts’ of the case cannot really be known under the murky cloak of legal arguments and case-making. But it is also an emblem of the unknowable and unrepresentable trauma of slavery, its ‘unspeakability’, which has become a such an important focal point for black Atlantic writers and artists. The *Zong* is the subject of literature such as Fred D’Aguiar’s *Feeding the Ghosts* and, more recently, Marlene NourbeSe Philip’s poem *Zong!* and of art such as Lubaina Himid’s *Memorial to Zong*. Himid’s painting, originally shown as part of the *Revenge* exhibition (Rochdale, 1992), was created as a monument to the events of 1781. Alan Rice and Celeste Marie Bernier describe it as ‘an emotionally traumatising painting’, which is at its heart about absence and inhumanity.²¹ This painting, as well as related sketches and new work about a ship with a similar traumatic history, the French slaver *La Roduer*, have been brought together on display in Lancaster Maritime Museum. This exhibition was designed to mark another sailing of the replica *Zong* ship in summer 2020 around slave port cities in Britain, organized by the Movement for Justice and Reconciliation who were behind the 2007 event. At the time of writing, however, the funding for this venture has not been secured and the ship will not make this journey, marking another absence in the history of the memory of the *Zong* and its financing.²² Caribbean-Canadian poet Marlen NourbeSe Philip’s poem cycle, *Zong!*

20 Rupprecht, “A Very Uncommon Case”, 346.

21 Alan Rice and Celest-Marie Bernier, ‘Inside the Invisible,’ in *Lubaina Himid: Memorial to Zong*. Exhibition Catalogue, Lancaster Maritime Museum, ed. Alan Rice and Andrea Sillis (Preston: UCLan Publishing, 2020), 18. Lubaina Himid won the Turner Prize in 2017. See also Celeste-Marie Bernier, Alan Rice, Lubaina Himid and Hannah Durkin, *Inside the Invisible: Memorialising Slavery and Freedom in the Life and Works of Lubaina Himid* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019).

22 This is reminiscent of another of Himid’s works, *Jelly Mould Pavillion* (exhibited in Liverpool, 2010), which proposed imagined and hypothetical monuments to the contribution of black diasporic people to Liverpool’s history around the cityscape, none of which actually existed, the lives and experiences of people of African descent again memorialized by absence. See ‘Jelly Mould Pavillion’, *Making Histories Visible*, <http://makinghistoriesvisible.com/museum-collaborations/jelly-mould-pavillion/> (accessed 7 November 2019).

Conclusion

uses the 500-word legal transcript of the trial to disturb the history of slavery, to meditate on absence, forgetting, the unknowable past, and trauma. Rupprecht argues that both *Feeding the Ghosts* and *Zong!* partake in processes of mourning, or a form of ‘working through’.²³ Philip’s *Zong!* uses techniques of whitening out and blacking out words, erasure; she mutilates and ‘murders’ the text, as she describes, castrating verbs from the trial that she describes as a tombstone itself, ‘a textual monument marking their murder and their existence, their small histories that ended so tragically.’²⁴ *Zong!* creates discomfort in its fragmentation, there is dissonance in the desire to impose order on the unordered, in ways that never settle, nor should they. In researching and developing the poem, Philips was ‘compelled’ to visit Liverpool as ‘the home of the Gregsons, Gilberts, and, not to mention, the good captain Luke Collingwood’, the murderers, as well as the other Europeans who also died on board the *Zong*. When in Liverpool, Philips staged her own small libation ceremony on the waterside, where the same ritual has happened on the edge of the Mersey since 1999.²⁵

Despite the prominence of the *Zong* in the history and memory of slavery, the elevation granted by abolitionist rhetoric, and the focus black writers and artists have given the subject, the *Zong* has *not* been present in Liverpool’s public memory of slavery in any significant way across the 200 years considered in this book. This absence is notable but not entirely surprising. Firstly, and as this book has explored, Liverpool does not have the same easy celebratory relationship with Britain’s dominant culture of abolition. Liverpool is a place that remembers (or misremembers and obscures) transatlantic slavery, more than it does abolition. The histories of slave trading, of the journeys and profits of ships like the *Zong*, were the foundational narratives of the city’s burgeoning identity formation at the end of the eighteenth century, narratives which have ‘cleaved’ to identity imaginings from history to memory. Secondly, the absence of the *Zong* from Liverpool’s public memory of slavery is a product of the ways in which slavery has in general been misremembered, maritimized and dismembered from identity narratives and ‘place’ for the past two centuries. So much of the twisted heart of the history of slavery, the human trauma, happened at a distance from the European metropolises that masterminded it. That a ship owned by Liverpool merchants, including an eighteenth-century mayor, and insured by Liverpool merchants, and an event so publicly fought over, can be ‘forgotten’ from the city’s own memory narratives of transatlantic slavery is

23 Rupprecht, “A Limited Sort of Property”, 269.

24 M. NorbeSe Philip, *Zong! As Told to the Author by Setaey Adamu Boateng* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), 194.

25 Philip, *Zong!*, 203.

The Persistence of Memory

a product of this distancing and disavowal, and of its displacement through other maritime narratives; the memory of other ships, sea-bound images of romance and exploration, mercantile endeavour, and imperial might. Even the slave ships that have appeared on the crest of public memory in Liverpool have tended to spout more positive and persistent mythologies, such as the framing of Hugh Crow as a 'kind slave owner', his ships places of 'care', humanity, and even joy.

This book has faced such persisting mythologies face on, mapping their unfolding and evolving re-emergence over 200 years, acknowledging their long histories, which stretch back decades, even centuries, before the pre-millennial moment so readily cited, mapping their very human construction and uncanny familiarity across time and place. Marlene NourbeSe Philip's poem *Zong!* is an intervention in history and memory. As Philip explains, *Zong!* is the 'Song of the untold story; it cannot be told yet must be told, but only through its un-telling.'²⁶ This book is an 'untelling'. To tell any difficult history, its memory must first be 'untold'. The historical deconstruction of memory means picking apart and illuminating memory's construction, looking behind the scenes, into the mechanics, the human-made inner workings of the ways in which difficult histories have been remembered and mis-remembered over time. Writing the history of memory is part of the untelling of difficult pasts that must happen as part of their telling. This book contributes to the public history of slavery by this untelling, by naming its mythologies and revealing its construction, by knowing and taking apart the uneven persistence of its fraught memory.

For difficult histories, the past insists upon the present; and there is no putting this past to rest. As more varied research and interrogations around the implications of this history develop, particularly through projects considering its reach beyond maritized spaces, into other areas of British imperial history, into the pervasiveness of slave-owning across the country, and the economic webs connecting the enslavement of African people to higher education institutions, cultural organizations, charities, and the built environment – more questions are being asked about how to acknowledge, engage with, and 'face' this past in the present. Other British or European places, or anywhere else around the Atlantic looking to Liverpool for guidance on how to 'face' this history, should first ask what this means. The discourse surrounding the slavery memory work in the 1990s sat within a recent context of riot and resistance of the 1980s, and was concerned with ideas of healing racial wounds. Yet this pre-millennial memory work itself threw into stark relief the tensions around race and power in the modern city, the fractures that were as large as oceans and as long running as the

26 Philips, *Zong!*, 207.

Conclusion

history that such interventions sought to redress. Healing the historic racial wounds wrought by modernity, white supremacy, and capitalism is a lot to ask of a museum, or a ceremony, or a memorial. And what does that healing look like? Equality? The end of racism? Policy change? Like the Sankofa bird, if we ‘face’ the past whilst also moving forwards, do we know where we are moving to? Does ‘facing’ the past really mean, for some people, a form of forgetting through the ultimate objective of ending this difficult conversation? Can ‘facing’ difficult histories for some people be a form of ‘planned obsolescence’, as one of Paul Connerton’s seven forms of forgetting puts it?²⁷ This is particularly conceivable for dissonant pasts whose memories are framed within time-sensitive capitalist structures. The ‘remembering of slavery’ can so easily become ‘forgetting’ through ‘planned obsolescence’ when placed within a mass consumer culture, slotted into cultural calendars, something to yet again be bought and sold, and owned, tied into consumer demand and behaviour, and marketized experiences. Connerton suggested that perhaps not all forgetting is a failure, and, although this was largely articulated to stress the active nature of different forms of state, group, and personal ‘forgetting’, others have echoed more literal incantations of forgetting as healing. The trope of ‘moving on’, as it emerged so strongly in 2007, had at its heart a wilful forgetting, a disavowal of African trauma and hierarchy of telling; of who gets to decide on issues of remembrance.²⁸ More pantomime calls for forgetting difficult pasts have suggested that remembering itself can be trauma, can do more harm than good, and that forgetting may be the only way for societies to really heal.²⁹ Whilst such arguments largely revolve around the uses and abuses of history, especially within totalitarian states and government-controlled narratives, the implication that forgetting can be a way forward for other difficult pasts is dangerous. The amnesia, obscuring and mythologizing around histories of slavery and empire throughout so much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has certainly not healed any wounds. Moreover, such claims to forget, unsurprisingly, rarely come from people of African descent about histories of enslavement, those living so viscerally and tangibly with the legacies of colonial histories.

The memorial interventions in Liverpool, which have been more wide-ranging and more permanent than any other British city thus far, make clear that there is no putting this past to rest, nor should there be.

²⁷ Paul Connerton, ‘Seven Types of Forgetting,’ *Memory Studies* 1:1 (2008): 66.

²⁸ Emma Waterton, ‘Humiliated Silence: Multiculturalism, Blame and the Trope of “Moving On”,’ *Museum and Society* 8:3 (2010).

²⁹ See David Rieff, *In Praise of Forgetting: Historical Memory and its Ironies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

The Persistence of Memory

Transatlantic slavery devastated Africa and people of African descent, tore 12 million enslaved African people from their homes, was sustained by physical and sexual violence, was supported by institutional and popular racism of European institutions, historians, government, and religious bodies, and left in its wake the unfolding legacies of discrimination and racism that people of African descent still live with today. The past will persist, because it has to. Untelling this history through the historical deconstruction of persisting memory is part of the process of its future telling. The persistence of dissonant memory must be deconstructed then met head on with persistent retellings and 'new forms of telling' using new 'tools'.³⁰ This is imperative in places that are the historical epicentres of dissonant pasts, and where their tellings have historically been wrought using the 'master's tools', as Audre Lorde puts it.³¹ Much of the authoritative memory structures around European slavery remembrance have been constructed with such tools; the books of white male European historians, the displays of museums as colonial institutions, pageantry as racial spectacle. We need new forms of telling, to revisit and critically deconstruct old forms of telling. Moreover we need *more* forms of telling. All heritage is dissonant, but efforts to engage with this past in the present in meaningful and inclusive ways, which acknowledge this dissonance with all its emotive, fraught, and fractured processes, must continue. There is too much at stake for them not to.

30 Rupperecht, "A Limited Sort of Property", 268.

31 Patricia Saunders, 'Defending the Dead, Confronting the Archive: A Conversation with M. NourbeSe Philip,' *Small Axe* 12:2 (2008).

Bibliography

Periodicals

Anti Slavery Reporter, The
Architects Journal, The
Black Linx
Black Practitioners and Learners Network Newsletter
Charles Wootton News
Commercial World, The
Daily Mail, The
Daily Telegraph and Morning Post, The
Friends of National Museums Liverpool Journal, The
Guardian, The
Independent, The
Listener, The
Liverpool Courier, The
Liverpool Daily Echo
Liverpool Daily Post
Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury
Liverpool Evening Express
Liverpool Heritage Forum Newsletter
Liverpool Mercury, The
Liverpool Review of Politics, Society, Literature and Art
Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser
Manchester Guardian, The
New York Times, The
Porcupine, The
Sphere, The

The Persistence of Memory

*Sunday Times, The
Times, The*

Archival Material

After C.R. Cockerell, R.A. *The Sculptured Pediment of St George's Hall, Liverpool* c. 1850. Lithograph, 330 x 892 mm (image), 560 x 930 mm (sheet). William Grinsell Nicholl. Lithographed by Alfred Stevens. Printed by Hullmandel and Walton. Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Prudence Cuming Associates Limited.

Black Cultural Archives, London, Enslavement, Collections Management BCA/5/1/85.

Bodleian Library, Oxford, British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society Papers (BFASS) Mss Brit Emp, S23 H1 21, African Churches Mission Pamphlet August 1933. Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, *The Papers of Baron King-Hall of Headly*, STKH 3, Dr J. Goebbels, The Reply to British Propaganda, August 1939.

House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Race Relations and Immigration Sub-Committee. *Racial Disadvantage. Minutes of Evidence (Liverpool)* 14 October 1980.

LRO, Liverpool, Council Proceedings 1906–07, 352 COU, Meeting of the Council of the City of Liverpool 13 February 1907.

LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Minutes, 352 MIN/COU, Community, Equality and Values Select Committee Meeting, 4 November 1999.

LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Minutes, 352 MIN/COU, Special Meeting of the City Council, 9 December 1999.

LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Proceedings 1906–07, Edward R. Pickmere, *Proposed Celebration of the 700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool: Report of the Town Clerk*, 1907.

LRO, Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Proceedings 1906–07, John Japp and Frank John Leslie, *700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool: Report of the General Committee to the City Council*, 1907,

LRO, Liverpool, Roscoe Papers: Correspondence, Newscuttings, Lists, etc. Concerning the Books, Manuscripts, Drawings, etc. Relating to William Roscoe, Donated by Members of the Roscoe Family. 820.1 PAP Letter from William Roscoe, jnr, to the City Librarian.

LRO, Liverpool, St George's Hall: Collection of Illustrations, Photographs, News Cuttings etc., Prepared in the Library, Hf 942.7213 GEO, duplicate of label attached to watercolour drawing by Cockerell, 1843.

Sydney Jones Library, Liverpool, Liverpool Pamphlets 1806–14: Miscellaneous, SPEC G34.30 (12), *Report of the Committee for Superintending the Erection of the Monument to the Memory of The Late Right Honourable Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, in the Area of the Liverpool Exchange*, 21 October 1813, 17.

Bibliography

Thomas Brooks, *Centenary of William Roscoe: The Philanthropist, Poet & Historian. Album Containing a Collection of Pamphlets, News Cuttings, Portraits, Illustrations, Election Ribbons, etc.* (1853) LRO 920 ROS.

Published Guidebooks

- A New Guide to Liverpool*. Liverpool: Littlebury Brothers, 1902.
- A Pictorial & Descriptive Guide to Liverpool and its Environs*. Ward, Lock & Co Ltd, 1899–1931.
- Black's Guide to Liverpool & Birkenhead*. Blacks: Edinburgh and London, 1868–1900.
- The City of Liverpool Official Handbook; Published Under the Authority of the Corporation*. Liverpool: Liverpool Corporation, 1906–2002.
- Cornish's Guide to Liverpool and Manchester*. Liverpool: Cornish & Co., 1837–40.
- Holt, Alfred. *Merseyside: A Handbook to Liverpool and District Prepared on the Occasion of the Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Liverpool, September 1923*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1923.
- Illustrated Guide to, and Popular History of Liverpool and its Environs*, 10th ed. London: Ward, Lock & Co. Ltd, 1883.
- Jones, Ron. *The American Connection: The Story of Liverpool's Links with America from Christopher Columbus to the Beatles*. Moreton: Ron Jones, 1986.
- Lewis, David. *Walks Through History: Liverpool*. Liverpool: Breedon Books Publishing, 2004.
- Liverpool As It Is or The Stranger's Complete Guide*. Liverpool: Edward Howell (possibly a continuation of *The Stranger* 1854–70).
- Pevsner, Nikolaus. *Lancashire: The Industrial and Commercial South*. Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1969.
- The Picture of Liverpool*. Liverpool: W. Jones/Thomas Taylor, 1805–37.
- The Picturesque Handbook to Liverpool for the resident and visitor*. Liverpool: Wareing & Webb/Edward Howell, 1842–54.
- Sharples, Joseph and Richard Pollard. *Liverpool (Pevsner Architectural Guides)*. New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Stonehouse, James. *Pictorial Liverpool*. Liverpool: Henry Lacey, 1844–48.
- Stonehouse, James. *The Streets of Liverpool*. Liverpool 1869, 1870, 1879.
- The Stranger in Liverpool*. Liverpool: Thomas Kaye, 1807–41.
- Thomas, Lloyd-Jones. *Know Your Liverpool; Walks in the City Centre*. 1974, 1976, 1979.

Histories of Liverpool

Anderson, Matthew. *The Book of Liverpool. Civic Week, September 22nd to 29th, 1928*. Liverpool: Liverpool Organisation Ltd, 1928.

The Persistence of Memory

- Anon, *Liverpool and Slavery: An Historical Account of the Liverpool-African Slave Trade. By a Genuine Dicky Sam*. Liverpool: A. Bowker & Son, 1884.
- Aughton, Peter. *Liverpool: A People's History*. Preston: Carnegie, 1990.
- Aughton, Peter. *Liverpool: A People's History*, 3rd ed. Lancaster: Carnegie, 2008.
- Bailey, F.A. and R. Millington. *The Story of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Liverpool Corporation, 1957.
- Baines, Edward. *History, Directory and Gazetteer, of the County Palatine of Lancaster*, vols 1 and 2. Edited by Owen Ashmore. Newton Abbot: David and Charles Publishers, 1824.
- Baines, Thomas. *History of the Commerce and Town of Liverpool and of the Rise of Manufacturing Industry in the Adjoining Counties*. London: Longman Brown Green and Longmans, 1852.
- Belchem, John, ed. *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.
- Brooke, Richard. *Liverpool as It Was During the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century, 1775-1800 (a 2003 Reprint by Liverpool Libraries and Information Services)*. Liverpool: J. Mawdsley and Son, 1853.
- Chandler, George. *Liverpool*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1957.
- Corry, John. *The History of Liverpool from the Earliest Authenticated Period Down to the Present Time*. Liverpool: William Robinson, 1810.
- Hughes, Quentin. *Seaport*. London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co, 1964.
- Hyde, Francis Edwin. *Liverpool and the Mersey: An Economic History of a Port 1700-1970*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971.
- Lacey, Louis. *The History of Liverpool from 1207 to 1907. Some Notes. 700th Anniversary Souvenir*. Liverpool: Lyceum Press, 1907.
- Lamb, Charles L. and Eric Smallpage. *The Story of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Daily Post Publishers, 1935.
- Lees, Andrew. *The Hurricane Port: A Social History of Liverpool*. Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2011.
- Muir, Ramsay. *History of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1907.
- Parkinson, Cyril Northcote. *The Rise of the Port of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1952.
- Picton, James Allanson. *Memorials of Liverpool, Historical and Topographical*, 2 vols. London: Longman, Greens & Co., 1875.
- Scott, Walter Dixon. *Liverpool*. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1907.
- Touzeau, James. *The Rise and Progress of Liverpool from 1551 to 1835*. Liverpool: Liverpool Booksellers Co, 1910.
- Tulloch, Alexander. *The Story of Liverpool*. Stroud: History Press, 2008.
- Tyndale Harries, William. *Landmarks in Liverpool History*. Liverpool: Philip Son & Nephew, 1946.
- Wallace, James. *A General and Descriptive History of the Ancient and Present State of the Town of Liverpool*. Liverpool: R. Phillips, 1795.

Bibliography

Williams, Gomer. *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque: With an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade, 1744–1812*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1897, reprinted 2004.

Other Primary Texts and Sources

- ‘The Hope Street Shivers’ ghost walk by *Shiverpool*. Taken October 2010.
- 700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool: Programme of the Pageant in Wavertree Park & Grounds August 3rd, 5th and 6th. Liverpool: Gilbert G. Walmsley, 1907.
- Ben-Tovin, Gideon and Rashid Mufti. *Merseyside Against Racism – First Annual Report of Mara – Merseyside Anti-Racialist Alliance*. Liverpool: Merseyside Anti-Racialist Alliance, 1979.
- Benjamin, Richard. Interview with Author. Liverpool, 17 August 2015.
- Brown, Sarah and Peter De Figueiredo. *Religion and Place: Liverpool’s Historic Places of Worship*. Swindon: English Heritage, 2008.
- Chandler, George. *William Roscoe of Liverpool*. London: Barsford, 1953.
- Charles Wootton College – Special 20th Anniversary Report, 1994.
- City of Liverpool 1207–1957: Charter Celebrations 16th to 30th June 1957. Liverpool: Liverpool Corporation, 1957.
- Costello, Ray. Interview with Author. Liverpool, 13 January 2013.
- Cowper, William. *The Poems of William Cowper*. New York: C. Wells, 1835.
- Dawson, Colin T. *The Church of St. James, Toxteth Park 1775–1925. One Hundred-and-Fiftieth Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church*. Liverpool: A. Litchfield, 1925.
- Dudgeon, Piers. *Our Liverpool: Memories of Life in Disappearing Britain*. London: Headline Review, 2010.
- Fletcher, Muriel. *Report on an Investigation into the Colour Problem in Liverpool and Other Ports*. Liverpool: Liverpool Association for the Welfare of Half-Caste Children, 1930.
- Gifford QC (Chair), Lord Wally Brown and Ruth Bunday. *Loosen the Shackles: First Report of the Liverpool 8 Inquiry into Race Relations in Liverpool*. London: Karia Press, 1989.
- Guided Tour of the ISM, 28 April 2012.
- Hernandez, James. Interview with Author. Liverpool, 23 November 2012.
- Hughes, Quentin. *Liverpool: City of Architecture*. Liverpool: Bluecoat Press, 1999.
- Hyde, Francis Edwin, Parkinson B. Bradbury and Sheila Marriner. ‘The Nature and Profitability of the Liverpool Slave Trade.’ *The Economic History Review* 5:3 (1953): 368–77.
- International Slavery Museum (Commemorative Booklet)*. Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2007.

The Persistence of Memory

- International Slavery Museum: Setting the Truth Free (Museum Leaflet)*. Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2007.
- ISM Tour Guide, Interview with Author. Liverpool, 24 August 2015.
- Johnson, Debbie. *Happy Birthday Liverpool 1207–2007 – the Official Guide to the City of Liverpool*. Edited by Margo Storey. Gloucester: British Publishing Company, 2006.
- Letter: Amy de Joia to Andrew Pearce, Chairman of FNML, 12 March 2008. Liverpool 08 Company. *Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade – Liverpool Event Programme 07*. Liverpool: Liverpool City Council, 2007.
- Liverpool Ancient and Modern: Published by the Liverpool Post, Mercury, and Echo Ltd. in Commemoration of the 700th Celebration of City Charter*. Liverpool: Liverpool Post, Mercury, and Echo Ltd, 1907.
- Liverpool Central Library. *Free Borough of the Sea: 800th Anniversary Exhibition of Liverpool's Charters*. Liverpool: Liverpool City Council, 2007.
- Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. *Liverpool and Merseyside 1207–1957: 750 Years of Progress*. Derby: Bemrose Advertising Limited, 1957.
- Liverpool Libraries Museums and Arts Committee. *Catalogue of the Historical Exhibition Held at the Walker Art Gallery 15th July – 10th August 1907, in Connection with the Celebration of the 700th Anniversary of the Foundation of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Lee & Nightingale, 1907.
- MacPherson, William. *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny*, February 1999.
- Melville, Herman. *Redburn: His First Voyage*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1849.
- National Museums Liverpool. *Slavery Remembrance Day Leaflet 2011*. National Museums Liverpool, 2011.
- Order of Proceedings for the Opening of the Exhibition 'Liverpool and Africa'*. Liverpool: Liverpool Libraries, Museums and Archives Council, 1957.
- Question and Answer Discussion Between Undergraduate Students and 'Stephen'. Liverpool, 28 April 2012.
- Scott. Interview with Author. Liverpool, 5 February 2012.
- Slavery Remembrance Day Libation Ceremony, 2012*. Audio Recording Made by Author. Albert Dock, Liverpool, 23 August 2012.
- Touchstone, Timothy. *The True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver: Shewing How From Small Beginnings He Became a Man of Substance; and How He Was Robbed While He Was Asleep; and Relating His Ineffectual Attempts to Get into His Own House and Recover Property*, 2nd ed. Liverpool: Rushton and Melling, 1824. University of Liverpool Special Collection. Liverpool pamphlets, 1766–1849. Miscellaneous. 14 (SPEC G35.14 (10)).
- Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity (Exhibition Brochure)*. Liverpool: National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994.
- Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity (Leaflet)*. National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994.

Bibliography

Victoria County History.

West India Association. *The Correspondence Between John Gladstone, Esq., M.P., and James Cropper Esq., on the Present State of Slavery in th British West Indies and in the United States of America; and on the Importation of Sugar from The British Settlements in India...* Liverpool: Thomas Kaye, 1824.

Westgaph, Laurence. *Read the Signs: Street Names with a Connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Abolition in Liverpool.* Swindon: English Heritage, 2007.

White, Lenford, ed. *Slavery: An Introduction to the African Holocaust (Revised Edition...with Special Reference to Liverpool 'Capital of the Slave Trade').* Liverpool: Black History Month Resource Working Group, 1997.

Secondary Works

Ackah, William and Mark Christian, eds. *Black Organisation and Identity in Liverpool: A Local, National and Global Perspective.* Liverpool: Charles Wootton College Press, 1997.

Agbetu, Toyin. 'Restoring the Pan-African Perspective: Reversing the Institutionalisation of Maafa Denial.' In *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*, edited by Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Kalliopi Fouseki, and Ross Wilson, 61–74. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Alderman, Derek H. 'Surrogation and the Politics of Remembering Slavery in Savannah, Georgia (USA).' *Journal of Historical Geography* 36:1 (2010): 90–101.

Amato, Joseph Anthony. *On Foot: A History of Walking.* New York: New York University Press, 2004.

Anderson, Benedict R. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 1983.

Anstey, Roger and P.E.H. Hair, eds. *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade and Abolition: Essays to Illustrate Current Knowledge and Research.* Widnes: Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1976.

Appadurai, Arjun. 'The Past as a Scarce Resource.' *Man* 16:2 (1981): 201–19.

Araujo, Ana Lucia, ed. *Living History: Encountering the Memory of the Heirs of Slavery.* Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009.

Araujo, Ana Lucia, ed. *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space.* New York: Routledge, 2012.

Araujo, Ana Lucia. *Public Memory of Slavery: Victims and Perpetrators in the South Atlantic* Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010.

Araujo, Ana Lucia. 'Welcome the Diaspora: Slave Trade Heritage Tourism and the Public Memory of Slavery.' *Ethnologies* 32:2 (2010): 145–78.

Assmann, Jan. *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.

The Persistence of Memory

- Bagley, J.J. 'The Bicentenary of William Roscoe.' *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 105 (1954).
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. M. *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas, 1985.
- Balkenhol, Markus. 'Emplacing Slavery: Roots, Monuments and Politics of Belonging in the Netherlands.' *African Diaspora* 4:2 (2011): 135–62.
- Baucom, Ian. *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005.
- Beech, John G. 'The Marketing of Slavery Heritage in the United Kingdom.' In *Slavery, Contested Heritage, and Thanatourism*, edited by G.M. Dann and A.V. Seaton, 85–105. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 2001.
- Behrendt, Stephen D. 'Human Capital in the Slave Trade.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles and Suzanne Schwarz, 68–97. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Belchem, John. 'An Accent Exceedingly Rare.' In *Merseypride: Essays in Liverpool Exceptionalism*, edited by John Belchem, 31–66. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000.
- Belchem, John. *Before the Windrush: Race Relations in Twentieth-Century Liverpool*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014.
- Belchem, John. *Irish, Catholic and Scouse: The History of the Liverpool-Irish 1800–1939*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Belchem, John. 'Introduction: Celebrating Liverpool.' In *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, edited by John Belchem, 9–58. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.
- Belchem, John. 'Liverpool's Story Is the World's Glory.' In *Merseypride: Essays in Liverpool Exceptionalism*, edited by John Belchem, 3–30. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000.
- Belchem, John, and Donald M. MacRaid. 'Cosmopolitan Liverpool.' In *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, edited by John Belchem, 311–91. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.
- Benjamin, Richard. 'Museums and Sensitive Histories: The International Slavery Museum.' In *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, edited by Ana Lucia Araujo, 178–96. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Bernier, Celeste-Marie. 'Exhibition Review – Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity: 'a Respectable Trade?': Bristol and Transatlantic Slavery: Pero and Pinney Exhibit.' *Journal of American History* 88:3 (2001): 1006–12.
- Billig, Michael. *Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Billig, Michael. 'Discursive, Rhetorical and Ideological Messages.' In *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, edited by Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor and Simeon J. Yates, 210–21. London: Sage, 2001.
- Blatz, Craig W., Karina Schumann, and Michael Ross. 'Government Apologies for Historical Injustices.' *Political Psychology* 30:2 (2009).

Bibliography

- Bodnar, John E. *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Brace, Laura A. and Julia O'Connell-Davidson, eds. *Revisiting Slavery and Antislavery: Towards a Critical Analysis*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.
- Brake, Laurel, Marysa Demoor, and Margaret Beetham. *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism: In Great Britain and Ireland*. Gent: Academia Press, 2009.
- Brooks, Roy L. 'Not Even an Apology?' In *When Sorry Isn't Enough: The Controversy Over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice*, edited by Roy L. Brooks, 309–14. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
- Brophy, Alfred L. 'The University and the Slaves: Apology and Its Meaning.' In *The Age of Apology: Facing up to the Past*, edited by Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud, and Niklaus Steiner, 109–19. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Brown, Jacqueline Nassy. *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Bryant, Chad Carl, Arthur Burns, and Paul Readman, eds. *Walking Histories, 1800–1914*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Burke, Peter. 'History as Social Memory.' In *Memory: History, Culture and the Mind*, edited by Thomas Butler, 97–113. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Cameron, Gail and Stan Crooke. *Liverpool – Capital of the Slave Trade*. Liverpool: Picton Press, 1992.
- Camus, Jean-Yves. 'The Commemoration of Slavery in France and the Emergence of a Black Political Consciousness.' *The European Legacy* 11:6 (2006): 647–55.
- Cavanagh, Terry. *Public Sculpture of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997.
- Chambers, Robert. 'St. George's Hall, Liverpool: A Review of the Recent Work.' *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 13:1 (2007).
- Chantiluke, Roseanne, Brian Kwoba, and Athinangamso Nkopo (eds). *Rhodes Must Fall: The Struggle to Decolonize the Racist Heart of Empire*. London: ZED Books Ltd, 2018.
- Chivallon, Christine. 'Bristol and the Eruption of Memory: Making the Slave-Trading Past Visible.' *Social & Cultural Geography* 2:3 (2001): 347–63.
- Christian, Mark. 'An African-Centered Approach to the Black British Experience: With Special Reference to Liverpool.' *Journal of Black Studies* 28:3 (1998): 291–308.
- Christian, Mark. 'The Fletcher Report 1930: A Historical Case Study of Contested Black Mixed Heritage Britishness.' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21:2/3 (2008): 213–41.
- Climo, Jacob J. and Maria G. Cattell. 'Introduction: Meaning in Social Memory and History – Anthropological Perspectives.' In *Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by Jacob J. Climo and Maria G. Cattell, 1–36. Oxford: Altamira Press, 2002.

The Persistence of Memory

- Cockerell, Robert Pepys. 'The Life and Works of Charles Robert Cockerell, R.A.' *The Architectural Review* (1902): 129–46.
- Confino, Alon. 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method.' *The American History Review* 102:5 (1997): 1386–403.
- Connerton, Paul. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Connerton, Paul. 'Seven Types of Forgetting.' *Memory Studies* 1(1): (2008): 59–71.
- Conway, Brian. 'Local Conditions, Global Environment and Transnational Discourses in Memory Work: The Case of Bloody Sunday (1972).' *History & Memory* 1:2 (2008): 187–209.
- Cooper, Laura E. and B. Lee Cooper. 'The Pendulum of Cultural Imperialism: Popular Music Interchanges Between the United States and Britain 1943–1967.' *Journal of Popular Culture* 27:3 (1993): 61–78.
- Costello, Ray. *Black Liverpool: The Early History of Britain's Oldest Black Community, 1730–1918*. Liverpool: Picton Press, 2001.
- Cubitt, Geoff. 'Museums and Slavery in Britain: The Bicentenary of 1807.' In *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, edited by Ana Lucia Araujo, 159–77. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Cubitt, Geoffrey. *History and Memory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- Cunningham, Michael. "It Wasn't Us and We Didn't Benefit": The Discourse of Opposition to an Apology by Britain for Its Role in the Slave Trade.' *The Political Quarterly* 79:2 (2008): 252–59.
- Davies, John. 'Liverpool Guides, 1795–1914.' *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 153 (2004): 63–85.
- de Groot, Joanna. "'Sex' and 'Race': The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century." In *Cultures of Empire: A Reader*, edited by Catherine Hall, 37–60. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- Donington, Katie, Ryan Hanley and Jessica Moody, eds. *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin'*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016.
- Drescher, Seymour. 'The Slaving Capital of the World: Liverpool and National Opinion in the Age of Abolition.' *Slavery & Abolition* 9:2 (1988): 128–43.
- Dresser, Madge. 'Remembering Slavery and Abolition in Bristol.' *Slavery & Abolition* 30:2 (2009): 223–46.
- Dresser, Madge. *Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in Bristol*. Bristol: Redcliffe, 2007.
- Dresser, Madge, and Andrew Hann, eds. *Slavery and the British Country House*. Swindon: English Heritage, 2013.
- Dubin, Steven. *Displays of Power: Memory and Amnesia in the American Museum*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

Bibliography

- Eichstedt, Jennifer and Stephen Small. *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2002.
- Elder, Melinda. 'The Liverpool Slave Trade, Lancaster and Its Environs.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz, 118–37. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Eyerman, Ron. *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Eyerman, Ron. 'The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory.' *Acta Sociologica* 47:2 (2004): 159–69.
- Fleming, R.M. 'Anthropological Studies in Children.' *Eugenics Review* 18 (1926–27): 294–301.
- Forsdick, Charles. 'The Panthéon's Empty Plinth: Commemorating Slavery in Contemporary France.' *Atlantic Studies* 9:3 (2012) 279–97.
- Foster, Richard. 'Foreword.' In *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, edited by Anthony Tibbles, 11. London: HMSO/National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Translated by Alan M. Sheridan Smith. London: Tavistock Publications, 1972.
- Fraser, Nancy. 'Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation.' In *Culture and Economy After the Cultural Turn*, edited by Larry Ray and Andrew Sayer, 25–52. London: Sage, 1999.
- Frith, Nicola and Kate Hodgson, eds. *At the Limits of Memory: Legacies of Slavery in the Francophone World*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015.
- Frost, Diane. 'Ambiguous Identities: Constructing and De-Constructing Black and White "Scouse" Identities in Twentieth-Century Liverpool.' In *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'the North' and 'Northernness'*, edited by Neville Kirk, 195–217. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000.
- Frost, Diane. 'Ethnic Identity, Transience and Settlement: The Kru in Liverpool Since the Late Nineteenth Century.' In *Africans in Britain*, edited by David Killingray, 88–106. Ilford: Cass, 1994.
- Frost, Diane. 'Racism, Work and Unemployment: West African Seamen in Liverpool.' In *Ethnic Labour and British Imperial Trade: A History of Ethnic Seafarers in the UK*, edited by Diane Frost, 22–33. London: F. Cass, 1995.
- Frost, Diane. 'West Africans, Black Scousers and the Colour Problem in Inter-War Liverpool.' *North West Labour History* 20 (1995/96): 50–57.
- Frost, Diane. *Work and Community Among West African Migrant Workers*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999.
- Frost, Diane and Richard Phillips. *Liverpool '81: Remembering the Riots*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011.
- Frye, Jerry K. 'The "Black Manifesto" And the Tactic of Objectification.' *Journal of Black Studies* 5:1 (1974): 65–76.

The Persistence of Memory

- Fryer, Peter. *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*. London: Pluto, 1984.
- Gaglo Dagbovie, Pero. *Reclaiming the Black Past: The Use and Misuse of African American History in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Verso, 2018.
- Gerzina, Gretchen Holbrook. 'Introduction.' In *Black Victorians, Black Victoriana*, edited by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, 1–10. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003.
- Gillis, John R. 'Introduction – Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship.' In *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, edited by John R. Gillis, 3–24. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London: Verso, 1993.
- Gilroy, Paul. *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Glassberg, David. *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.
- Goldman, Aaron. 'Stephen King-Hall and the German Newsletter Controversy of 1939.' *Canadian Journal of History* 10:2 (1975): 209–29.
- Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
- Gueye, Abdoulaye and Johann Michel, eds. *A Stain on Our Past: Slavery and Memory*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2018.
- Guyatt, Mary. 'The Wedgwood Slave Medallion: Values in Eighteenth-Century Design.' *Journal of Design History* 13:2 (2000): 93–105.
- Hagopian, Patrick. 'Exhibition Review – Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity.' *The Public Historian* 19:4 (1997): 102–05.
- Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Translated by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Hall, Stuart. 'Introduction.' In *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, edited by Stuart Hall, 1–12. London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997.
- Hall, Stuart. 'The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity.' In *Culture, Globalisation and the World-System*. Edited by Anthony D. King, 19–40. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1991.
- Hall, Stuart. 'The Spectacle of the Other.' In *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, edited by Margaret Wetherell, S. Taylor and S.J. Yates, 324–44. London: Sage, 2001.
- Hall, Stuart. 'Whose Heritage? Un-Settling "the Heritage" Re-Imagining the Post-Nation.' *Third Text* 49:13 (1999): 3–13.
- Hall, Tony P. 'Defense of Congressional Resolution Apologizing for Slavery.' In *When Sorry Isn't Enough: The Controversy over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice*, edited by Roy L. Brooks, 350–51. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

Bibliography

- Hamilton, Carolyn. *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Hammond Perry, Kennetta. 'Black Britain and the Politics of Race in the 20th Century.' *History Compass* 12:8 (2014): 651–63.
- Handler, Richard. 'Is "Identity" A Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?' In *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, edited by John R. Gillis, 27–40. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Hanley, Ryan. *Beyond Slavery and Abolition: Black British Writing c.1770–1830*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Harris, Jose. 'Introduction: Civil Society in British History.' In *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions*, edited by Jose Harris, 1–12. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Harris, Michael D. *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation*. London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Harvey, David C. 'Heritage Pasts and Heritage Presents: Temporality, Meaning and the Scope of Heritage Studies.' *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 7:4 (2001): 319–38.
- Hesse, Barnor. 'Forgotten Like a Bad Dream: Atlantic Slavery and the Ethics of Postcolonial Memory.' In *Relocating Postcolonialism*, edited by Theo Goldberg and Ato Quayson, 143–73. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- Hewison, Robert. *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*. London: Methuen, 1987.
- Holley, Bayo. 'Transatlantic Dreaming: Slavery, Tourism, and Diasporic Encounters.' In *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, edited by Fran Markowitz and Anders H. Stefansson, 166–82. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004.
- Honour, Hugh. *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. IV. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989.
- Horton, James Oliver. 'Slavery in American History: An Uncomfortable National Dialogue.' In *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*, edited by James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, 35–55. New York: New Press, 2006.
- Hourcade, Renaud. 'Commemorating a Guilty Past: The Politics of Memory in the French Former Slave Trade Cities.' In *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, edited by Ana Lucia Araujo, 124–40. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Howard, P. 'Resonance and Dissonance: When the Local and the Global Meet.' In *Heritage and Identity: Shaping the Nations of the North*, edited by J. Fladmark, 239–53. Shaftesbury: Donhead Publishing, 2002.
- Howard-Hassmann, Rhoda E. and Mark Gibney. 'Introduction: Apologies and the West.' In *The Age of Apology: Facing up to the Past*, edited by Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner, 1–9. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

The Persistence of Memory

- Howman, Brian. 'Abolitionism in Liverpool.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles and Suzanne Schwarz, 277–96. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Hughes, Christopher R. 'ICTS and Remembering the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in Britain: An Occasion for Celebration or Remorse?' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 25:2 (2012): 223–43.
- Huyssen, Andreas. *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Huzzey, Richard. *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012.
- Irwin-Zarecka, Iwona. *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994.
- Jenkinson, Jacqueline. *Black 1919: Riots, Racism and Resistance in Imperial Britain*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009.
- Johnston, William M. *Celebrations: The Cult of Anniversaries in Europe and the United States Today*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1991.
- Jones, Ronald P. 'The Life and Works of Harvey Lonsdale Elmes.' *The Architectural Review* XV (1904): 230–45.
- Kardux, Johanna C. 'Monuments of the Black Atlantic: Slavery Memorials in the United States and the Netherlands.' In *Blackening Europe: The African American Presence* edited by Heike Raphael-Hernandez, 87–106. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Killingray, David. 'Africans in the United Kingdom: An Introduction.' In *Africans in Britain* edited by David Killingray, 2–27. Ilford: Cass, 1994.
- Klein, Kerwin Lee. 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse.' *Representations* 69 (2000): 127–50.
- Koshar, Rudy. *From Monuments to Traces: Artifacts of German Memory, 1870–1990*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Kowaleski-Wallace, Elizabeth. *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Ladd, Brian. *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Law, Ian. *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool, 1660–1950*. Edited by June Henfrey. Liverpool: Merseyside Community Relations Council, 1981.
- Laxton, Paul. 'Blacks in Eighteenth Century Liverpool: Some Notes on the Evidence of Parish Registers.' Unpublished paper, University of Liverpool (1985).
- Leffler, Phyllis K. 'Maritime Museums and Transatlantic Slavery: A Study in British and American Identity.' *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 4:1 (2006): 55–80.
- Levene, Mark. 'Britain's Holocaust Memorial Day: A Case of Post-Cold War Wish-Fulfilment, or Brazen Hypocrisy?' *Human Rights Review* 7:3 (2006): 26–59.

Bibliography

- Linenthal, Edward Tabor, and Tom Engelhardt. *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 1996.
- Liverpool Black Caucus. *The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool: The Black Community's Struggle for Participation in Local Politics 1980–1986*. Liverpool: Merseyside Area Profile Group and Runnymede Trust, 1986.
- Lofstrom, Jan. 'Historical Apologies as Acts of Symbolic Inclusion – and Exclusion? Reflections on Institutional Apologies as Politics of Cultural Citizenship.' *Citizenship Studies* 15:1 (2011): 93–108.
- Longmore, Jane. "Cemented by the Blood of a Negro?" The Impact of the Slave Trade on Eighteenth-Century Liverpool.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz, 227–51. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Longmore, Jane. 'Civic Liverpool: 1680–1800.' In *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, edited by John Belchem, 113–69. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.
- Lovejoy, Paul and David Richardson. 'Letters of the Old Calabar Slave Trade, 1760–1789.' In *Genius in Bondage: Literature of the Early Black Atlantic*, edited by Vincent Carretta and P. Gould, 89–115. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001.
- Lovejoy, Paul E., and David Richardson. 'African Agency and the Liverpool Slave Trade.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz, 43–65. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Lowenthal, David. *The Past Is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Lumley, Robert. 'The Debate on Heritage Reviewed.' In *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader*, edited by Gerard Corsane, 15–25. London: Routledge, 2005.
- MacDonald, Sharon. 'Theorizing Museums: An Introduction.' In *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World*, edited by Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe, 1–18. Oxford: Blackwell/The Sociological Review, 1996.
- MacDonald, Sharon. *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2009.
- Macintyre, Stuart, and Anna Clark. *The History Wars*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2003.
- Maier, Charles. 'A Surfeit of Memory? Reflections on History, Melancholy and Denial.' *History & Memory* 5:2 (1993): 136–52.
- Megill, Alan. 'History, Memory, Identity.' *History of the Human Sciences* 11:3 (1998): 37–62.
- Miles, Tiya. *Tales from the Haunted South: Dark Tourism and Memories of Slavery from the Civil War era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.

The Persistence of Memory

- Millard, John. *Liverpool's Museum: The First 150 Years*. Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2010.
- Moody, Jessica. 'Heritage and History.' In *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research*. Edited by Emma Waterton and Steve Watson, 113–29. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Moody, Jessica. 'Liverpool's Local Tints: Drowning Memory and "Maritimizing" Slavery in a Seaport City.' In *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin'*, edited by Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley, and Jessica Moody, 150–71. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016.
- Moody, Jessica. 'Remembering the Imperial Context of Emancipation Commemoration in the Former British Slave-Port Cities of Bristol and Liverpool, 1933–1934.' *Slavery & Abolition*, 39:1 (2018): 169–89.
- Moody, Jessica and Stephen Small. 'Slavery and Public History at the Big House: Remembering and Forgetting at American Plantation Museums and British Country Houses.' *Journal of Global Slavery* 4:1 (2019): 34–68.
- Moores, Peter. 'Foreword.' In *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, edited by Anthony Tibbles, 9. London: HMSO/National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1994.
- Morgan, Kenneth. 'Liverpool's Dominance in the British Slave Trade, 1740–1807.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles and Suzanne Schwarz, 14–42. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Morgan, Kenneth. *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Morris, Michael. *Scotland and the Caribbean, c. 1740–1833*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.
- Morrison, Toni. 'The Site of Memory.' In *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*, edited by William Zinsser, 103–24. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.
- Munroe, Leanne. 'Making Museum Narratives of Slavery and Anti-Slavery in Olney.' In *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin'*, edited by Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley, and Jessica Moody, 216–37. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016.
- Murden, Jon. "'City of Change and Challenge": Liverpool since 1945.' In *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, edited by John Belchem. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.
- Murphy, Andrea. *From the Empire to the Rialto: Racism and Reaction in Liverpool, 1918–1948*. Birkenhead: Liver Press, 1995.
- Myers, Norma. *Reconstructing the Black Past: Blacks in Britain c. 1780–1830*. London: Frank Cass, 1996.
- Nelson, William E. *Black Atlantic Politics: Dilemmas of Political Empowerment in Boston and Liverpool*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Bibliography

- Nelson, William. E. and Gideon Ben-Tovin. 'Race, Class, Equal Opportunity Policies and Local Government: The Case of Liverpool.' *The National Political Science Review* 7 (1999): 53–63.
- Nora, Pierre. 'Between Memory and History, Les Lieux De Memoire.' *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–25.
- Nora, Pierre. *Les Lieux de Memoire*. Paris: Gallimard, 1984.
- Nora, Pierre and Lawrence D. Kritzman, eds. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 4 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Novick, Peter. *The Holocaust in American Life*. New York: First Mariner Books, 2000.
- Oldfield, John. *Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: The Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade, 1787–1807*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.
- Oldfield, John R. 'Chords of Freedom': *Commemoration, Ritual and British Transatlantic Slavery*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- Olick, J. 'Genre Memories and Memory Genres: A Dialogical Analysis of May 8, 1945 Commemorations in the Federal Republic of Germany.' *American Sociological Review* 64 (1999): 381–402.
- Olick, Jeffrey K. and Brenda Coughlin. 'The Politics of Regret: Analytical Frames.' In *Politics and the Past: On Repairing Historical Injustices*, edited by John Torpey, 37–62. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003.
- Oostindie, Gert, ed. *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2001.
- Otele, Olivette. 'Bristol, Slavery and the Politics of Representation: The Slave Trade Gallery in the Bristol Museum.' *Social Semiotics* 22:2 (2012): 155–72.
- Paton, Diane. 'Interpreting the Bicentenary in Britain.' *Slavery & Abolition* 30:2 (2009): 277–89.
- Petley, Christer. 'The Royal Navy, the British Atlantic Empire and the Abolition of the Slave Trade.' In *The Royal Navy and the British Atlantic World, c.1750–1820*, edited by John McAleer and Christer Petley, 97–121. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Philip, M. NorbeSe. *Zong! As Told to the Author by Setaey Adamu Boateng*. Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008.
- Phillips, Caryl. *The Atlantic Sound*. London: Faber, 2000.
- Pieterse, Jan Nederveen. *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Pooley, Colin G. 'Living in Liverpool: The Modern City.' In *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History*, edited by John Belchem, 171–255. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.
- Pope, David. 'The Wealth and Social Aspirations of Liverpool's Slave Merchants of the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century.' In *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*, edited by David Richardson, Anthony Tibbles, and Suzanne Schwarz, 164–226. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.

The Persistence of Memory

- Power, M.J. 'The Growth of Liverpool.' In *Popular Politics, Riot and Labour: Essays in Liverpool History 1790–1940*, edited by John Belchem, 21–37. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992.
- Prior, Nick. 'Postmodern Restructurings.' In *A Companion to Museum Studies*, edited by Sharon Macdonald, 509–24. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Rectanus, Mark W. 'Globalization: Incorporating the Museum.' In *A Companion to Museum Studies*, edited by Sharon Macdonald, 381–97. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Rice, Alan. *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010.
- Rice, Alan. 'Jazzing It up a Storm: The Execution and Meaning of Toni Morrison's Jazzy Prose Style.' *Journal of American Studies* 28:3 (1994): 423–32.
- Rice, Alan. 'Naming the Money and Unveiling the Crime: Contemporary British Artists and the Memorialization of Slavery and Abolition.' *Patterns of Prejudice* 41:3–4 (2007): 321–43.
- Rice, Alan and Celeste-Marie Bernier. 'Inside the Invisible.' In *Lubaina Himid: Memorial to Zong* Exhibition Catalogue, Lancaster Maritime Museum, edited by Alan Rice and Andrea Sillis. Preston: UCLan Publishing, 2020.
- Rice, Alan and Johanna C. Kardux. 'Confronting the Ghostly Legacies of Slavery: The Politics of Black Bodies, Embodied Memories and Memorial Landscapes.' *Atlantic Studies* 9:3 (2012): 245–72.
- Roth, Michael. *The Ironist's Cage: Memory, Trauma, and the Construction of History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- Rothberg, Michael. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Rowe, Michael. 'Sex, "Race" and Riot in Liverpool, 1919.' *Immigrants & Minorities* 19:2 (2000): 53–70.
- Roy, May and Robin Cohen. 'The Interaction between Race and Colonialism: A Case Study of the Liverpool Race Riots of 1919.' *Race and Class* 16:2 (1974): 111–26.
- Rupprecht, Anita. "'A Limited Sort of Property": History, Memory and the Slave Ship Zong.' *Slavery & Abolition* 29:2 (2008) 265–77.
- Rupprecht, Anita. "'A Very Uncommon Case": Representations of the Zong and the British Campaign to Abolish the Slave Trade.' *The Journal of Legal History* 28:3 (2007) 329–46.
- Rupprecht, Anita. 'Excessive Memories: Slavery, Insurance and Resistance.' *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007).
- Salmon, Frank and Peter De Figueiredo. 'The South Front of St George's Hall.' *Architectural History* 43 (2000): 195–218.
- Samuel, Raphael. *Theatres of Memory*, vol. 1. London: Verso, 1994.
- Saunders, Patricia. 'Defending the Dead, Confronting the Archive: A Conversation with M. NourbeSe Philip.' *Small Axe* 12:2 (2008): 63–79.

Bibliography

- Schudson, Michael. 'Lives, Laws, and Language: Commemorative Versus Non-Commemorative Forms of Effective Public Memory.' *The Communication Review* 2:1 (1997): 3-17.
- Scott, David. 'Preface: Soul Captives Are Free.' *Small Axe* 11:2 (2007): v-x.
- Seaton, A.V. 'Sources of Slavery-Destinations of Slavery: The Silences and Disclosures of Slavery Heritage in the UK and the US.' In *Slavery, Contested Heritage, and Thanatourism*, edited by G.M. Dann and A.V. Seaton, 107-30. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 2001.
- Sharples, Joseph and Richard Pollard. *Liverpool (Pevsner Architectural Guides)*. New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Sherwood, Marika. *Pastor Daniels Ekarte and the African Churches Mission*. London: Savannah Press, 1994.
- Small, Stephen. 'Contextualizing the Black Presence in British Museums: Representations, Resources and Response.' In *Cultural Diversity: Developing Museum Audiences in Britain*, edited by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, 50-66. London: Leicester University Press, 1997.
- Small, Stephen. 'Racialized Relations in Liverpool: A Contemporary Anomaly.' *New Community* 17:4 (1991): 511-37.
- Small, Stephen. 'Slavery, Colonialism and Museums Representations in Great Britain: Old and New Circuits of Migration.' *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 9:4 (2011): 117-28.
- Small, Stephen. 'Still Back of the Big House: Slave Cabins and Slavery in Southern Heritage Tourism.' *Tourism Geographies* 15:3 (2013): 405-23.
- Small, Stephen, and Kwame Nimako. 'The Unfinished Business of Emancipation: The Legacies of British and Dutch Abolition.' In *Trajectories of Emancipation and Black European Thinkers Symposium*. National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy, Amsterdam, 2009.
- Smith, Anthony. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Smith, Laurajane. *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Smith, Laurajane and Kalliopi Fouseki. 'The Role of Museums as "Places of Social Justice" Community Consultation and the 1807 Bicentenary.' In *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*, edited by Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Kalliopi Fouseki, and Ross Wilson, 97-115. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Smith, Laurajane, Geoffrey Cubitt, Ross Wilson, and Kalliopi Fouseki, eds. *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Solnitt, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York: Penguin, 2000.
- Stamp, Gavin. 'Architectural Sculpture in Liverpool.' In *Patronage and Practice: Sculpture on Merseyside*, edited by Penelope Curtis. Liverpool: Tate Gallery Publications and National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1989.
- Steel, Patrick. 'Liverpool Parts with Its Friends.' *Museums Journal*, June 2008.

The Persistence of Memory

- Steele, Murray. 'Confronting a Legacy: The Atlantic Slave Trade and the Black Community of Liverpool.' In *Historical Perspectives on Social Identities*, edited by Alyson Brown, 137–53. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*. London: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Stone, D. 'Day of Remembrance or Day of Forgetting? Or, Why Britain Does Not Need a Holocaust Memorial Day.' *Patterns of Prejudice* 34:4 (2000): 53–59.
- Taaffe, Peter, and Tony Mulhearn. *Liverpool: A City That Dared to Fight*. London: Fortress, 1988.
- Tabili, Laura. *'We Ask for British Justice': Workers, and Racial Difference in Late Imperial Britain*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Tavuchis, Nicholas. *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991.
- Terdiman, Richard. *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- Thomas, Hugh. *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440–1870*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997.
- Thompson, Janna. 'Apology, Justice, and Respect: A Critical Defense of Political Apology.' In *The Age of Apology: Facing up to the Past*, edited by Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud, and Niklaus Steiner, 31–44. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Tibbles, Anthony. 'Facing Slavery's Past: The Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade.' *Slavery and Abolition* 29:2 (2008): 293–303.
- Tibbles, Anthony. 'Interpreting Transatlantic Slavery: The Role of Museums.' In *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, edited by Anthony Tibbles, 131–40. London: HMSO/National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 2005.
- Tibbles, Anthony. *Liverpool and the Slave Trade*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018.
- Towndrow, Kenneth Romney. *Alfred Stevens*. Liverpool: University Press of Liverpool, 1951.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 'Abortive Rituals: Historical Apologies in the Global Era.' *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 2:2 (2000): 171–86.
- Tunbridge, J.E. and G.J. Ashworth. *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*. Chichester: Wiley, 1996.
- van Helmond, Marij, and Donna Palmer. *Staying Power: Black Presence in Liverpool*. Liverpool: National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside, 1991.
- Vergo, Peter, ed. *The New Museology*. London: Reaktion, 1989.
- Vinitzky-Seroussi, Vered. 'Commemorating a Difficult Past: Yitzhak Rabin's Memorials.' *American Sociological Review* 67:1 (2002): 30–51.

Bibliography

- Walker, Katherine. 'Buried in the Unremissive Ground: Reading Richmond's Subterranean Signs.' *Social Semiotics* 19:4 (2009): 427-38.
- Walsh, Kevin. *The Representation of the Past: Museums and Heritage in the Post-Modern World*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Walvin, James. *Black and White: The Negro in English Society, 1555-1945*. London: Allen Lane, 1973.
- Walvin, James. *Black Ivory: A History of British Slavery*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001.
- Walvin, James. *Britain's Slave Empire*, 2nd ed. Stroud: Tempus, 2007.
- Walvin, James. *Zong: A Massacre, the Law and the End of Slavery*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.
- Waterton, Emma and Ross Wilson. 'Talking the Talk: Policy, Popular and Media Responses to the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Using the "Abolition Discourse".' *Discourse & Society* 20:3 (2009): 381-99.
- Waterton, Emma. 'Humiliated Silence: Multiculturalism, Blame and the Trope of "Moving On".' *Museum and Society* 8:3 (2010).
- Waterton, Emma. 'The Burden of Knowing Versus the Privilege of Unknowing.' In *Representing Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements*, edited by Geoffrey Cubitt, Laurajane Smith, Ross Wilson, and Kalliopi Fouseki, 23-43. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Weissberg, Liliane. 'Introduction.' In *Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity*, edited by Dan Ben-Amos and Liliane Weissberg, 7-26. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1999.
- Wertsch, James V. 'Collective Memory and Narrative Templates.' *Social Research* 75:1 (2008): 133-56.
- Wertsch, James. 'Narrative Tools of History and Identity.' *Culture and Psychology* 3:1 (1997): 5-20.
- Wertsch, James. 'The Narrative Organisation of Collective Memory.' *ETHOS* 36:1 (2008): 120-35.
- Westgaph, Laurence. 'Built on Slavery.' *Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation* 108 (2009): 27-29.
- White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Williams, Eric. *Capitalism and Slavery*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944.
- Wilson, Ross. 'Rethinking 1807: Museums, Knowledge and Expertise.' *Museum and Society* 8:3 (2010): 165-79.
- Winter, Jay. 'Notes on the Memory Boom: War, Remembrance and the Uses of the Past.' In *Memory, Trauma and World Politics*, edited by Duncan Bell, 54-73. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Winter, Jay. 'The Memory Boom in Contemporary Historical Studies.' *Raritan* 21:1 (2001): 52-66.

The Persistence of Memory

- Winter, Jay. *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the 20th Century*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Witcomb, Andrea. *Re-Imagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Wood, Marcus. *Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Wood, Marcus. *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780–1865*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- Wood, Marcus. *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Wood, Marcus. *The Horrible Gift of Freedom: Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010.
- Wright, Patrick. *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain*. London: Verso, 1985.
- Yarrington, Alison. 'Nelson the Citizen Hero: State and Public Patronage of Monumental Sculpture.' *Art History* 6:3 (1983): 315–29.
- Yarrington, Alison. 'Public Sculpture and Civic Pride 1800–1830.' In *Patronage and Practice: Sculpture on Merseyside*, edited by P. Curtis, 23–31. Liverpool: Tate Gallery Publications and National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1989.
- Yarrington, Alison. 'The Commemoration of the Hero, 1800–1864: Monuments to the British Victors of the Napoleonic Wars.' PhD diss, Cambridge University, 1980.
- Young, Hershini Bhana. *Haunting Capital: Memory, Text and the Black Diasporic Body*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 2006.
- Young, James. *At Memory's Edge: After Images of the Holocaust in Art and Architecture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Young, James. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Zerubavel, Eviatar. 'Calendars and History: A Comparative Study of the Social Organisation of National Memory.' In *States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations in National Representation*, edited by Jeffrey K. Olick, 315–37. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Zerubavel, Eviatar. 'Social Memories: Steps to a Sociology of the Past.' *Qualitative Sociology* 19:3 (1996): 283–300.
- Zerubavel, Yael. *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Websites and Online Resources

- 'Liverpool and the Slave Trade.' *International Slavery Museum*. 2014. www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/srd/liverpool.aspx.
- 'Remembering 1807'. *Antislavery Usable Past*. www.antislavery.ac.uk.

Bibliography

- Art in Liverpool*. www.artinliverpool.com.
- Black History 365*. www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/.
- France.fr*. www.france.fr/en.
- Historic England Listings*. <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/>.
- National Museums Liverpool*. www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk.
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. www.oxforddnb.com.
- Peter Moores Foundation*. www.pmf.org.uk.
- Royal Museums Greenwich*. www.rmg.co.uk.
- Runaway Slaves in Britain: Bondage, Freedom and Race in the Eighteenth Century (Database)*. University of Glasgow. www.runaways.gla.ac.uk.
- Skyscraper City Discussion Board*. 'International Museum of Slavery' thread, 16–17 September 2007. www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?s=f3172977c66555ae6da093ef09ab3c20&t=524570.
- Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*. www.slavevoyages.org.
- Understanding Slavery Initiative*. www.understandingslavery.com.
- Yo! Liverpool Forum*. www.yoliverpool.com.
- YouTube*. www.youtube.com.

Index

- Page numbers in **bold** refer to figures.
- abolition 12, 129–53
 - attempts to foreground 24–25
 - culture of 10, 176–77
 - and Liverpool 130–34
 - overcoming narrative 47–51, 64, 116n52, 129, 258
 - public memory 129
 - and the *Zong* slave ship massacre 262–63
 - Abolition Bill, 1791 35
 - abolition movement, growth of 35–36
 - Abolition of the Slave Trade Act (1807) 3, 10, 24, 35, 48, 101, 131
 - bicentenary commemorative activities 101–02, 118–19, 123–25, **126**, 127, 167–68
 - centenary 104
 - abolitionism, culture of 24, 129–30, 134, 187, 253, 265
 - abolitionist activity 131–34
 - academic interest 4–5, 6, 7, 9–12
 - Ackah, William 73
 - Adkin, Ernst 78
 - African Churches Mission 78–79
 - African Garden of Remembrance
 - proposal 233–34
 - African people, numbers transported 29–30, 45
 - African refugee, the 237
 - African Reparations Movement 157
 - Africans enslaving Africans motif 57
 - Ainsworth, Rob 119–20
 - Alabama University 191, 197–98
 - Algerian War of Independence 13
 - Aliens Order and Coloured Alien Seaman Order 77
 - Amato, Joseph 209–10
 - American Civil War 42, 58
 - Anderson, Benedict 37
 - Anderson, Joe 234
 - Angelou, Maya 167
 - Anglican Cathedral 112, 237
 - anniversaries 52
 - Abolition Act bicentenary commemorative activities 101–02, 118–19, 123–25, **126**, 127
 - birthday celebrations, 2007 101
 - coinciding 24, 101–27
 - commemorative activity, 1907 101, 103–12, **109**, 124, 125
 - commemorative activity, 1957 101, 112–18, 125
 - commemorative activity, 2007 101–02, 118–25, **123**, 127

The Persistence of Memory

- historical context 102
- intermediate 113
- Liverpool's charter 24, 103–12
- public marking 102
- Roscoe 134–35, 141–42, 152–53
- round-number 23–24, 102, 225, 258
- tone 23
- anti-abolition arguments 49
- Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society 78, 79
- Anti-Slavery International 174, 175, 180
- apologies and the Liverpool City Council apology 55, 94, 127, 183–98, 214
 - arguments against 189–90
 - black communities and 192–93
 - criticisms of 193–96
 - global stage 184
 - place of 186–87
 - political 183–86
 - public reaction and debate 187, 190–91
 - timing 185, 187–88
 - United States of America 185
 - victim identity group 192–93
- apology industry 188
- Araujo, Ana Lucia 10, 182
- Ashworth, G.J. 17–18
- Association for the Welfare of Half-Caste Children 77
- atonement 205
- Australia 14, 90
- authenticity 103, 109
- authoritative memory 268
- avoidance strategies 215–16

- Baines, Edward 48
- Baines, Thomas 45
- Bakhtin, Mikhail 15–16, 18
- baptism records 232–33
- Barnett, Colin, *Slave Trade Jibe*, 1978 61–62
- Baucom, Ian 263
- Behrendt, Stephen 32

- Belchem, John 46–47, 47, 51, 103
- Benjamin, Richard 168, 169
- Bennett, Alex 88
- Bernier, Celeste Marie 264
- Billig, Michael 16
- Birmingham 120
- birthday celebrations, 2007 101
- Black Access 92
- Black Achiever's Award 97
- Black Caucus 84, 85, 253
- black communities 23, 65, 67
 - apologies and 192–93
 - demographic background 67–69
 - Liverpool-born 73–74
 - origins debate 69
 - population 68
- black employment 70–71
- black empowerment 91–92
- black experience 23, 65, 66–67, 74–88, 95, 98–99, 165, 259
- Black History Month 96–98, 157
- Black History Resource Working Group 94–95
- Black History Workshop 91
- black identity 72–74
- Black Linx* (magazine) 92–94
- Black Lives Matter movement 5
- Black Media Group 91
- black memory activists 66
- Black Panthers 82
- black presence 4, 7, 22–23, 65–99, 68, 96, 98, 256, 259
 - census records 67–68n7
 - and collective memory 71–72
 - continuity 65
 - demographic research 67–69
 - eighteenth and nineteenth centuries 67–74
 - impact 65
 - key roles 65–66
 - as legacy 65
 - longevity 72
 - origins debate 69
 - and the port 69
 - public memory and 65–66, 99

Index

- runaways 68–69
visibility 65, 72
- Black rage 252
- black seamen, racist experiences 90
- Black Sisters 91
- Blair, Tony 4, 186
- Blatz, Craig W. 196, 197
- Bluecoat Hall 147–48
- Bluecoat School 111
- Blundell, Bryan 111
- Bond, Samson 85, 162
- Book of Liverpool* (1928) 79–80
- Boyle, Mike 190
- Braddock, Bessie 115
- Bradshaw, K. 60
- Bristol 5–6, 11, 12, 27, 32, 40, 41, 42,
43, 45, 153, 217, 238, 260
- British Emancipation Act, 1833 78,
113
- Broadbent, Stephen 122–23
- Brooke, Richard 45
- Brookes* (slave ship) 238
- Brooks, Joseph 238
- Brophy, Alfred 191, 197–98
- Brown, Jacqueline Nassy 74, 77–78
- Brown, Mark 188, 194
- Brown, Wally 86, 160
- Bryant, Chad 209–10
- built environment 14, 26–27, 254, 255
public imagery 238–42, **239**, **243**,
244, **245**, 246–53, **249**
sites of memory 219–31, **221**, 259
- Bulger, James, murder of 163
- Burns, Arthur 209–10
- business acumen 31–32
- Cameron, Gail 38
- Captured Africans* memorial 234n59
- Cavanagh, Terry 240
- ensorship 106
- census records 67–68n7
- Chandler, George 113–14, 142,
146–47, 148–49
- Chantrey, Francis 139–40, 141
- Charles Wootton Centre 87
- Charles Wootton College 90–94, 96
- Charles Wootton Newsletter* (magazines)
94
- chattel slavery 78–79
- China 62
- Chinese population 71
- Chowne, Gerard 107, 107n23
- Christian, Mark 73n28, 77, 81, 94,
191, 193, 197
- Chukuemeka, Angus 160, 199, 201,
206–07
- Churches Conservation Trust 233
- Chuter Ede, J. 147
- civic identity 10, 34, 42, 127, 138, 238
- civic patriotism 103–12
- civic pride 44–46
- Clapperboard UK 122
- Clarkson, Thomas 130, 262
- clichés 42
- Clinton, Bill 185, 186
- Cockerell, Charles **245**, 247–48, **249**
- collective identity 29, 211
- collective memory 38–39
and black presence 71–72
- Collingwood, Luke 261
- colour bar 76–77, 110
- Colston, Edward 5–6, 153
- commemorative activity 52
- commemorative activity, 1907 101,
103–12, 124, 125
pageant 107–12, **109**
- commemorative activity, 1957 101,
112–18, 125, 148–50
- commemorative activity, 2007
101–02, 118–25, 127
birthday coin 122–23, **123**
pageant 119
- commemorative events 15
Germany 18–19
see also anniversaries
- commemorative rituals 14
- commemorative text 112, 113
- Commercial World, The* 144
- Commission for Racial Equality 86
- compartmentalization, of memory
118–19
- competition narratives 42–43, 45

The Persistence of Memory

- competitive trauma 191
Confederate States of America 42, 58
Confino, Alon 15
Connerton, Paul 203, 205, 208, 267
Connors, Gerry 62–63
Consortium of Black Organisations 161, 165–66, 188, 195
contemporary context 3
contested figures, commemoration of 5
continuity 66
Corry, John 41
Costello, Ray 69, 89, 232
Cotes Wyatt, Matthew 240, 241n90
cotton 50
Cotton Salesroom 59
counter memory 27, 219
Coyne, Kevin 62
Crooke, Stan 38
Cropper, John 105
Crow, Hugh 80, 266
Cugoano, Ottobah 262
culpability 53
cultural context 21, 29, 35–38
cultural tourism 118, 181
culture wars 14–15, 156, 187
Cunningham, Michael 185–86, 189
Currie, William Wallace 132, 138
Curtin, Philip 222
- D'Aguiar, Fred 264
Daily Telegraph and Morning Post (newspaper) 59–60
Dali, Salvador, *The Persistence of Memory* 2
Dalton-Johnson, Kevin 234n59
dancing of the slaves 80
Davenport, William 33n20
de Groot, Joanna 250
De La Salle Humanities College 121–22
Dean, Alan 186–87
debate triggers 52
decolonization 74
deindustrialization 47, 74
demographic research, black presence 67–69
Devaney, Joe 187–88, 192, 197
dialogism 15–16, 18–19
Dickens, Charles 70
difficult heritage 18
Discharged Sailors and Soldiers Federation 76
discourse 16
discursive legacies 30, 51–63
discursive terrain 20–21
dissonant heritage 17–18, 268
dissonant memory 64
 persistence of 7, 13–19, 258, 260–61, 268
Doyle, J.F. 228
Drescher, Seymour 36
Dresser, Madge 11
Dubois, W.E.B. 108
- economic regeneration 87–88
education 4, 87, 99
 restorative 88–94
Egan, Terry 62
Ekarte, George Daniels 78–79
Elder Dempster Company 70
Elmes, Harvey Lonsdale 247
emancipation 12
Emancipation Act, 1833 133, 143, 250
emigration 50
emotional engagements 163–66
emotional impacts 46–47
empire, teaching of 4
English Heritage 151, 232, 255
Enola Gay B-29 Superfortress 14
enterprising spirit motif 41–44, 44
Environmental Justice Foundation 174
ethnic minority immigrant groups 71
Eugenics Education Committee 77
European Capital of Culture 102, 118, 127, 170, 201
event culture 198, 214
Exley, Joyce 235

Index

- Federation of Liverpool Black Organisations 161
fiction 218–19
First World War 75, 182
Fleming, David 168–69, 176–77, 178, 214, 216
Fleming, Marilyn 202
Fleming, Rachel 77
Fletcher, Muriel E. 77–78
Fletcher Report 77–78, 79
folklore 220–21, 221n12
football 62–63
forgetting 2, 12, 19, 39, 86, 101, 256, 260, 265–66, 267
forgiveness 193, 205
Forman, James 185
Foster, Sir Richard 159, 178
Foucault, Michel 16, 66
Fox, Charles 246
framing narratives 29, 38–51, 64, 258
France 13–14, 222
Free the Slaves 180
Friends of National Museums
 Liverpool 152, 178–79
Frost, Diane 72

Garrison, William Lloyd 130
Gateacre Hall 229–30
Gaunt, Harry 224–25
gendered networks 89
Germany 13, 18–19, 102, 190
Gerzina, Gretchen 70
ghost walks 237
ghosts 231–37, 256
Gifford Inquiry 158, 185
Gillis, John 17, 23, 183
Gilroy, Paul 96
Gladstone, John 132
Gladstone, Robert 53, 54–55, 61, 106
Glasgow 11, 12
Glasgow, University of 6
globalization 26, 118, 183
Goebbels, Joseph 59–61
Gordon, Avery 220, 256
Gorée 222, 230

Goree Piazza/Warehouses 27, 221, 222–26, 230–31
Gove, Michael 4
Grant, Bernie 55–58, 56n110, 91
graves 231–37
Gregson v Gilbert 261–62
Grove Street Access to Higher Education course 92
guerrilla memorialization 27, 65–66, 88–98, 99, 106
Gueye, Mbaye 222
guidebooks 21–22, 42–43, 44–45, 49–51, 119, 133, 223
guilt 53, 166–67, 167, 190

Hale, B.W. 194
half-caste children 77
half-caste problem, the 83–84
Hall, Stuart 57, 183
Hall, Tony 189
Harris, Sir John 78
Harris, Raymond 130–31
haunting 220, 231–37, 256
Henderson, Gerald 193
Henfrew, June 93
heritage 16–17, 28
Heritage Debates 163n40
heritage leisure and tourism 103
Heritage Lottery Funding 3, 97, 123, 168–69
heritage tourism 94, 170, 178
Hernandez, James 194, 195, 196–97
Heseltine, Michael 87
Hesse, Barnor 2, 166
hidden history 254
hidden knowledge 27
Himid, Lubaina, *Memorial to Zong* 264
Hinds, Edward 110
historic baseline 20–21, 29–35
historical airbrushing 38
historical amnesia 11–12
historical culpability, strategic avoidance of 9
historical guilt 166
historical imagery 10

The Persistence of Memory

- historical ownership 166
- historical victims 192
- histories 21
- historiography 32–33
- history
 - endurance of 2
 - hidden 254
 - importance 92
 - and memory 36–38
 - myth and memory 228–29
 - official 88–89
 - professionalization 29, 36–38
 - as recursion 66–67
 - unbalanced 152
 - use of 260
- history debate, 1939 22, 52–55, 60
- history from below 254
- history wars 14–15
- Hogg, John 253
- Holocaust, the 11, 13, 95, 160, 182, 190, 215–16, 252
- Holocaust memorial competitions 13
- Holocaust Memorial Day 215–16
- Home Affairs Committee 84–85
- House of Lords 246
- Howman, Brian 132
- Huddleston, Trevor 115
- Hughes, Quentin 233, 241, 251
- human legacies 22–23
- human trafficking 172
- Huyssen, Andreas 182, 214

- identity 2, 200
 - black 72–74
 - civic 10, 34, 42, 127, 138, 238
 - collective 29, 211
 - maritime 40
 - and meaning 29
 - and memory 16–17
 - museums and 156, 157
 - national 13–14
 - symbols of 13–14
- identity construction 16–17
- identity discourse 36
- identity groups 17

- identity narrative 38–44, 122–23
- identity-building 12
- imagery, public 238–42, **239**, **243**, 244, **245**, 246–53, **249**
- imagined communities 37
- immigration 70
- Immigration Advice Unit 85
- imperial past, traces of 66
- industrial slavery 79
- International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition 198
- International Garden Festival 87–88, 95
- International Labour Organisation 174–75
- International Slavery Museum 25, 87, 102, 122, 124, 127, 152, 156, 177–80, 211, 216
 - Black Achiever's Wall 1
 - Campaign Zone 174–75
 - consultation meetings 169
 - contemporary focus 171–75, 177
 - culture of abolition framework 175–76
 - education centre 176
 - exhibition 168
 - film installation 168
 - funding 168–69
 - global positioning 180
 - justification 169–71
 - links to the TSG 168
 - location 167
 - meaning 180
 - opening 167–68, 169
 - origins 168–69
 - partner NGOs 174, 180
 - role 177
 - Shrine to the Ancestors* 217
 - White Gold: The True Cost of Cotton* exhibition 174
- intertextuality 39
- invoice, slave sales 224–26, 228–29
- Irish community 71
- Irwin-Zarecka, Iwona 18
- Israel 39

Index

- Jackson, Jesse 185
jazz 81
Jeffery, Sydney 149–50
Jim Crow era 90, 110
John, King 24
Johnston, William 102
Jones, Ron 50, 223
Juarez, Mirna 188, 192, 193, 195–96,
196–97
- Kardux, Johanna 236–37
Karenga, Maulana 213–14
King, Martin Luther III 214–15, 216
King-Hall, Stephen 59–60
Klein, Kerwin Lee 182
kneeling African motif **245**, 246–53,
249
knowledge 16
Koshar, Rudy 219
Kowaleski-Wallace, Elizabeth 162,
164, 179–80, 183
Kuya, Dorothy 1, 28, 160
- labour shortages 81
Lacey, Louis 222, 222n15
Ladd, Brian 219
Lancaster 11, 12, 217
Lancaster Maritime Museum 264
Lascelles, George 54–55, 226–28, 229
Law, Ian 69, 93
Lawrence, Doreen 200
Lawrence, Stephen, murder of 183, 185
Laxton, Peter 68
layering 226, 229
League of Coloured Peoples 79
Leeds Mercury (newspaper) 35
Leslie, Frank J. 104, 107, 111
Levene, Mark 215–16
lieu de mémoire 13–14, 26, 36
unofficial 218, 220
Lincoln, Abraham 130
Listener, The (magazine) 83–84
Liverpool 104
800th birthday 101, 118–25, **123**,
127
and abolition 130–34
abolitionist activity 131–34
business acumen 31–32
charter 24
histories 37–38, 40–41
imports 33
involvement in the transatlantic
slave trade 29–35, 35, 36, 49–50,
59–63, 63–64, 79–80, 96, 190
location 31
population 34, 34n28, 68, 70–71
rise to dominance 12, 31–32, 35,
40–41, 45, 63–64
Roscoe's impact on 146–47
slave trading profit margin 33
social aspiration 34
source of wealth 42–43
twinning's 197
Liverpool (Chandler) 113–14
Liverpool 8 Defence Committee 84,
91–92
Liverpool 8 Law Centre 85, 91
Liverpool and Slavery (1884) 131
Liverpool and Slavery (Anon) 72
Liverpool Anti-Racist Community
Arts Association 95, 155, 194,
195, 251–52
Liverpool Black Organisation 85
Liverpool Central Library 119
Liverpool City Council 50–51, 55, 86,
103, 116, 181, 233
apologies 183–98, 214
Liverpool Civic Week 79–80
Liverpool Community College 92
Liverpool Courier (newspaper) 106
Liverpool Daily Echo (newspaper) 113,
116
Liverpool Daily Post (newspaper) 189,
193–94
history debate, 1939 52–55
Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury
(newspaper) 110
Liverpool Echo (newspaper) 61,
120–21
Liverpool Evening Express (newspaper)
150
history debate, 1939 52–55

The Persistence of Memory

- Liverpool FC 62–63
Liverpool Heritage Forum 119–20,
150, 150–52, 255
Liverpool International Carnival 119
Liverpool Ladies' Anti-Slavery
Association 132
Liverpool Mercury, The (newspaper)
135–38, 138, 140, 242
Liverpool Museum 142
Liverpool Organisation 80
Liverpool Post & Mercury (newspaper)
76, 225
Liverpool Review 143–44
Liverpool Round Table Luncheon
52
Liverpool Society for Promoting the
Abolition of Slavery 132
*Liverpool Standard and General
Commercial Advertiser*
(newspaper) 140–41
Liverpool Times (newspaper) 45
Liverpool Williamson Advertiser
(newspaper) 256
Livingstone, Ken 263
LivServ 233
London 31, 32, 40, 217
Longmore, Jane 33, 69
longue durée approach 3, 18, 19, 20,
25, 26, 258
Loosen the Shackles report 86–87
Lovejoy, Paul 31–32
Lynch, Eric 73–74
- MacDonald, Sharon 18
Maclise, Daniel 246
MacPhearson Report 183
MacPherson Report 185
Maison des Esclaves (House of
Slaves) 222
Make the Link, Break the Chain
international educational
programme 121–22
Manchester 35, 71
Manchester Guardian (newspaper)
115–16, 120
Manchester Ship Canal 47
- Manicom, Jean Francois 180
Mansfield, Lord 261–62
mapping 39
maritime identity 40
maritimization 20, 210, 266
Martins Bank 238–39
masculinity 43
master narratives 39
Matear, Huan 229–30
Mayer, J. 139–40
Maylor, W.R. 115
Melville, Herman 244
memorial activity 26
memorial cults 24–25
memorial debate 28, 30, 51–63
memorial interventions 267–68
memorial paradigm, dominant 129
memorial plaque 55–56
memorialization 10–11, 27
 globalized 182
 guerrilla 27, 66, 88–98, 99
 lack of tangible 217
memorials 26–27
memory 99
 authoritative 268
 collective 38–39, 71–72
 compartmentalization of 118–19
 formations of 16–17
 globalization of 183
 and history 36–38
 history and myth 228–29
 and identity 16–17
 layered 90
 mobilization of 64
 multidirectional qualities 258
 objective 36–38
 persistence of 58, 64, 259–60
 second generation 182
 sedimented 208–09
 shaping 3
 sociobiographical nature of 44
 subjectivity of 36
 true 218
memory activism 27, 65–66, 88–98
memory boom 11, 23, 181–82
memory debate 29–30, 259

Index

- memory debate, 1999 22, 55–58
memory scholarship 3, 15
memory spasms 102
memory work 7–8, 19, 28, 88, 217,
266–67
 dissonance around 259–60
 global 26
 museums 155–57
Mersey, River 221–22
Merseypride 51
Merseyside African Council 161
Merseyside Anti Racist Alliance
82–83
Merseyside Black History Month
Group 97
Merseyside Community Relations
Council 92
Merseyside County Council 92
Merseyside Development Corporation
87
Merseyside Maritime Museum 86,
87, 97
 floor three 1, 156, 167
 *Staying Power: Black Presence in
Liverpool* exhibition 155
 *Transatlantic Slavery: Against
Human Dignity* exhibition 156,
158
 see also International Slavery
Museum; Transatlantic Slavery
Gallery
Merseyside Racial Equality Council
criticized 251–52
methodology 3, 15–16, 19–20
Militant 85, 162, 253
millennial reckonings 183
Mississippi river 221
modern-day slavery 260
Molette, Barbara J. 236
Moody, Harold 79, 81
Moore, David 84
Moore, Peter 158–59, 160, 163, 164,
165
moral contextualization 117
Morgan, Kenneth 31
Morning Chronicle (newspaper) 137–38
Morris, Garry 159, 162
Morris, Michael 11
Morrison, Toni 2, 8, 26, 219, 221
Movement for Justice and
Reconciliation 264
moving on trope 267
Muir, Ramsay 42, 46–47, 120–21,
222
multicultural engagement 97–98
multiculturalism 73
Murari, Timeri 82
museums 14, 198, 207, 259
 client participation approach
163–64
 dominant ideas of 177–78
 emotional engagements 163–66
 identity and 156, 157
 International Slavery Museum 1,
25, 87, 102, 122, 124, 127, 152,
156, 167–77, 177–80, 211, 216,
217
 Liverpool Museum 142
 memory work 155–57
 Merseyside Maritime Museum 1,
86, 87, 97, 155–56
 ownership 156, 157, 169
 previous 157
 rise of 25–26, 155–80
 tensions and debates around
156–57
 Transatlantic Slavery Gallery 25,
44, 55, 156, 157–67, 168, 169,
170, 177, 179–80
 World Museum Liverpool 142
Myers, Norma 68
mythologies 39, 253, 256, 266
 and history and memory 228–29
 layering 226, 229
 presence of 218
 romantic language 226–28
 slave presence 219–31
Nantes 222
narrative templates 38–51, 258
Nassy Brown, Jacqueline 179
National Curriculum for History 95

The Persistence of Memory

- National Front 82
national identity 13–14
National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside 25, 155, 159, 161, 165, 178, 181
National Museums Liverpool 25, 155, 168, 178–79, 207, 212
National Trust 6
Nazi Germany 59–61
Nelson, William E. 92
Nelson Memorial **239**, 240–42, **243**, 244, 246, 255
networks of trust 32
new anti-slavery movement 173–74
New Labour Government 4
Newton, John 217, 262
Nimako, Kwame 173, 174
Nora, Pierre 13–14, 26, 36, 182, 218
Novick, Peter 102
- Obama, Barack 1
objective memory 36–38
official histories 88–89
Oldfield, John 9, 24, 104, 129, 153, 165
Olick, Jeffery 18–19
Olick, Jeffrey 102
On the Mersey Beat (TV programme) 83
O-Reilly, Maria 165–66, 195
Oriel College Oxford 5
Otele, Olivette 6, 11
overcoming abolition narrative 47–51, 64, 116n52, 129, 258
ownership, of the past 17–18
- pageantry 107–12, 107n18, **109**, 112–13, 119
Pan-African Federation 81
Parekh Report 183
paternalism 117, 125, 260
 racialized 80, 171
Peacock, D.C.W. 52–55
Peacock Debate, 1939 22, 52–55, 60
Pearce, Andrew 119–20, 150–52, 178–79
- Pendergast, Frank 251
performative initiatives 181
Peter Moores Foundation 158
philanthropy 12
Philip, Marlene NourbeSe, *Zong!* 264, 264–65, 266
Phillips, Caryl 63, 73, 255
Pickmere, Edward 103
Picton, James 46, 131n7, 222
Picton Library 146
Picture of Liverpool, The (1834) 133–34
Pier Head 221n12
Pier Head Ferry Terminal 217
Pieterse, Jan Nederveen 249
Pitt, Lord 165, 166
Plan UK 122
police and policing 83, 84
Pooley, Pooley 69
Pope, David 34
Porcupine (journal) 41–42
post-abolition industry 53
postcolonial histories 2n2
Power, M.J. 34n28
prejudice 67
pride 44–46
Priestley, J.B. 70
Primark 210, 211
profit margin, slave trade 33, 33n19, 33n20
pro-slavery debates 48–49
pro-slavery discourse 40
public commemoration 3–4
public debate, analysing 15–16
public discourse 20
public imagery 238–42, **239**, **243**, 244, **245**, 246–53, **249**
public memory 10–11, 20, 25, 51–52, 166
 abolition 129
 analysis 3
 black presence and 65–66, 99
 debates about 5–6
 form 2
 framework 12
 mapping 2

Index

- poor 86–87
- shaping 3, 28
- public sculpture 141, **239**, 240–42, **243**, 244, 246, 255
- public sphere, the 2

- race, representations of 250–52
- Race Equality Management Team 95
- Race Relations Act 73
- Race Relations Liaisons Committee 84
- race riots, 1919 75–76, 91, 92
- race riots, 1948 81
- race riots, 1972 82
- racial disadvantage 84–85
- racial exceptionalism 74
- racial hierarchies 75
- racial oppression, global network of 90
- racial tensions 81
- racial wounds, healing 267
- racialized discourse 46–47
- racism 57–58, 65, 67, 74–88, 89, 93, 99, 115, 176–77, 200
 - institutionalized 22, 88
- Radio Merseyside 83
- Rathbone, William 139
- Readman, Paul 209–10
- Reconciliation Triangle, the 122n71
- Rectanus, Mark 198
- recursion, history as 66–67
- Redfern, Lawrence 147–48
- Reilly, Charles 224
- religious institutions 78
- remembering 3, 7, 17, 37, 39, 218–19, 222
- rememoration 14
- remorse 189
- restorative education 88–94
- Rhodes, Cecil 5
- ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ campaign 5
- Rice, Alan 11, 65–66, 175, 236–37, 264
- Richardson, David 31–32, 62
- Richmond Slave Trail 211–12

- Riley, Joe 120–21
- riots 65, 75–76, 81, 82, 83–85, 91, 92, 99
- rituals 203
- rival ports, influence from 55
- Roberts, W.J. 139
- Robertson’s Jam Company 88, 95
- Roman Catholic Cathedral 237
- roots tourism 234
- Roscoe, William 24, 25, 104, 105–06, 113, 114, 116, 217
 - anniversaries 134–35, 141–42, 152–53
 - anti-slavery stance 142–43, 241
 - bicentenary of birth 147–48
 - birthplace 139
 - centenary of birth 142–43
 - centenary of death 144–45
 - Chandler’s biography 146–47
 - commemorative activity, 1957 148–50
 - commemorative reframing 153
 - death 134, 135
 - eulogies 135–38
 - grave 148
 - impact on Liverpool 146–47
 - as martyr 137
 - memorial activity 138–42, 143
 - memorial cult 130, 134–53
 - memorial plaque 150, 151
 - memory artefacts 141n57
 - memory debate 134–35
 - memory of 130
 - memory puzzle 152
 - as morally balancing historical figure 152
 - pamphlets 130–31
 - poetry 130, 148–49
 - political career 131, 148–49
 - private papers 146
 - as renaissance man 148
 - Roscoeana 142–43
 - sits on Nelson Memorial committee 240, 241
 - statue debate 139–41

The Persistence of Memory

- status 134, 150
- support for abolition 136–38, 143–47, 150, 153
- vote in favour of abolition 130, 131, 134
- Roscoe Circle, the 131–32
- Ross, Michael 196, 197
- Rothberg, Michael 11, 52, 181–82, 258
- Rowe, Michael 75
- Rowse, Herbert J. 238–39
- Roxby, Percy Maude 77
- runaways 68–69
- Rupprecht, Anita 263, 264, 265
- rupture 66
- Rushton, Edward 132
- Saeed, P. 62
- St George's Hall 141, **245**, 246–53, **249**, 255, 259
- St James, Church of 27, 232–37
- Sam, Dicky 46–47
- Samuel, Raphael 91
- schematic narratives 20–22, 39
- Schloelcher, Victor 130
- Schudson, Michael 15
- Scott (walking tour guide) 88–90, 97, 172, 187–88, 192, 206–07, 253–54
- Scouseness 72
- sculptural symbolism **245**, 246–53, **249**
- Scumann, Karina 196, 197
- Second World War 11, 18, 47, 59–61, 71, 81, 112, 182, 222
- segregation 110
- shame 45, 46–47, 167, 187, 189
- Sharp, Granville 262
- Shennan, Sir Alfred 146–47
- Shepherd, William 40, 132, 132–33, 229
- Shimmin, Hugh 42, 58–59
- shipbuilding 32
- shipping, decline 47
- silences 27, 101, 104, 115–16, 220–21, 255, 260
- Simey, Margaret 84
- sites of memory 13–14, 26–27, 218–56, 260
 - built environment 219–31, **221**, 259
 - Goree Piazza/Warehouses **221**, 222–26, 228–29, 230–31
 - graves and ghosts 231–37, 256
 - layered 226, 229
 - Nelson Memorial **239**, 240–42, **243**, 244, 246, 255
 - public imagery 238–42, **239**, **243**, 244, **245**, 246–53, **249**
 - River Mersey 221–22
 - St George's Hall 141, **245**, 246–53, **249**, 255, 259
 - slave cellars 226–28, 228
 - slave presence 219–31, **221**
 - unofficial 253–56
- Skyscraper City* website 173
- slave burials 27, 235–36
- slave cellars 226–28, 228
- slave presence, sites of memory 219–31, **221**
- slave sales
 - invoice 224–26, 228–29
 - mythologies 220–31
- slave trade
 - acceptability at the time 52
 - agency 43
 - crime against humanity 87
 - dependence on 33–34
 - image 54–55
 - importance of 40, 120–21, 121n68
 - justification 47
 - legacy of 90
 - Liverpool involvement 29–35, 35, 36, 49–50, 59–63, 63–64, 79–80, 96, 190
 - profit margin 33, 33n19, 33n20
 - scale 29–30, 45, 49
 - and social aspiration 34
- Slave Trade Jibe, 1978 61–62
- Slavery: An Introduction to the African Holocaust* (Black History Resource Working Group) 94–95

Index

- slavery memory, sites of 27
- Slavery Remembrance Day 26, 55, 124, 167–68, 181, 198–213, 214–16
- ceremony 202–09
 - events 199–200, 201, 214–15
 - origins 198, 214
 - postcard **202**
 - props 205
 - public representation 201–02
 - ritual text 202–07
 - role 200–01
 - significance 198–99, 200
 - speeches 202–03, 205–07
 - support 198
 - Walk of Remembrance 209–14
- slavery walking tours 88–90, 178
- slavery-memory chronology 102
- slave-traders, philanthropy 12
- slum clearances 71
- Small, Stephen 94n115, 173, 174
- Smirke, Robert 246
- Smith, Anthony 16–17
- Smith, George Herbert Tyson 238–39
- Society for the Suppression of the Slave Trade 131
- Solnitt, Rebecca 209, 211, 213
- source genres 18–19
- sources 21–22
- South Africa 5, 90, 115
- South Shields 147
- speech acts 186–87, 190, 197–98
- Spiegl, Fritz 178, 252
- Stanley House 81, 83
- Staying Power: Black Presence in Liverpool* exhibition 155–56
- Steele, Murray 38
- Steers, Thomas 107
- Stevens, Alfred **245**, 247–48, **249**
- Stevens, Ian 116–17
- Stewart, Thomas 136n32
- Stoler, Ann Laura 2n2, 66–67
- Stop the Traffik 174, 180
- Storey, Mike 200
- Story of Liverpool, The* (1935) 80
- Story of Liverpool, The* (Corporation of the City of Liverpool) 113
- Stranger, The* (guidebook) 44–45
- strategic avoidance 9
- street names 255
- subordination 250
- Sunday Times* (newspaper) 162–63
- symbolic associations 220–21
- Takoradi 197
- Tavuchis, Nicholas 186
- Terdiman, Richard 37
- terminology 161–62
- Thatcher, Margaret 87
- Thomas, Hugh 32
- Thompson, Ibrahim 251–52
- Thompson, Janna 186
- Tibbles, Anthony 160, 161, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 186, 198, 258
- The Times* (newspaper) 166, 178, 252
- tokenism 96
- Top 100 things that made Liverpool great 121
- Touchstone 133
- Toummanah, D.T. Aleifasakure 76
- Tourist Development Project 158
- Touzeau, James 49, 116n53
- town hall 238
- Toxteth riots, 1981 83–85, 91–92
- Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity* exhibition 156, 158
- Transatlantic Slavery Gallery 25, 44, 55, 156, 157, 169, 170, 177, 179–80
- advisory committee 159–60
 - black perspective 160
 - challenge 159
 - client participation approach 163–64
 - curatorial team 159
 - debate around 160–64
 - emotional engagements 163–66
 - funding 158
 - impetus for 158
 - intended outcomes 167
 - intentions 164–65

The Persistence of Memory

- linguistic approach 161–62
- links to the ISM 168
- opening 166–67
- representation issue 161–62, 164–65
- traumatic histories 181–82, 184
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph 184, 190
- True and Wonderful Story of Dick Liver, The* (Touchstone) 133
- true memory 218
- Trump, Donald 5
- Tulloch, Alexander 51
- Tunbridge, J.E. 17–18
- Turner, J.M.W. 262
- Tyndale Harries, William 49, 80

- unemployment 47, 81
- UNESCO
 - International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition 198
 - Slave Routes Project 11, 182–83
 - Year for Commemoration of the Struggle Against Slavery and its Abolition 201
- United States of America
 - apologies 185
 - civil rights movements 82
 - Confederate statues 5
 - heritage of enslavement 8–9
 - pageantry 108, 108n26
 - Richmond Slave Trail 211–12
 - segregation 110

- Vale, Edmund 226–28, 229
- Vinitzky-Seroussi, Vered 39
- visibility, black presence 65, 72

- Waddington, Marc 234
- Walk of Remembrance 209–14
- Walker, Anthony, murder of 171, 176

- Walker Art Gallery 105, 141
- Wallace, James 36, 38, 40–41
- Wardle, Arthur C. 53–55, 61, 226–28, 229
- Waterton, Emma 173
- Wedgwood, Josiah 246
- Wertsch, James 38–39, 39
- Wesleyan African Mission 78
- West Africa 10–11
- West Indians 81
- Westgaph, Laurence 120–21, 151–52, 254–55
- Westmacott, Richard 240, 248
- White, Lenford 95, 252
- white supremacy 90
- Wilberforce, Rachel 174
- Wilberforce, William 78, 106, 113, 116, 130, 134, 145, 146, 153, 174, 231, 262
- William* (slave ship) 261
- William Brown Library 114–15
- Williams, Eric 33n19
- Williams, Gomer 33n19, 144
- Winter, Jay 23, 182
- Wood, John, of Bath 238
- Wood, Marcus 9, 10, 52, 129, 164, 164–65, 179–80, 247
- Wootton, Charles 75, 91, 92
- World Museum Liverpool 142
- Writing on the Wall arts festival 124

- Yarrington, Alison 241
- Year for Commemoration of the Struggle Against Slavery and its Abolition 201
- Young, James 13, 202–03
- Young, Martin 83–84
- Young Panthers 82

- Zerubavel, Eviatar 44
- Zerubavel, Yael 39
- Zong* slave ship massacre 261–66

