

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Repairing the Legacies of Transatlantic Slavery

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by

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## **Abstract**

Recent decades have seen the emergence of calls for financial reparations to African Americans, Caribbean nations and Africa. These claims have sought to utilise legal principles of torts and unjust enrichment to create a causal chain between the history of transatlantic slavery, via colonialism and segregation, to present-day national and international racial inequality. This thesis argues that such conceptualisations of reparations oversimplify the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, and therefore what is required to repair that history and legacy. The foremost legacy is attitudinal and relational. Modern anti-black racism was developed to justify the institutionalisation of slavery in the New World by Europeans. Racism in turn has, both knowingly and unknowingly, shaped the construction of historical memory and the development of national and international European identity. These identities have in turn shaped the relationships between Europeans and Africans, leading to present-day injustice and racial inequality.

To overcome the socioeconomic legacies of transatlantic slavery, reparation must prioritise relational and attitudinal repair. This thesis utilises the theories of restorative justice, and its implementation in truth and reconciliation processes, to argue that museums and schools, by broadening the history they present to include previously suppressed events and community perspectives, can potentially contribute to relational repair at a national level in Britain and the US, and internationally via projects such as UNESCO's Slave Route Project. This thesis argues that the history of transatlantic slavery and its legacies of relational harm and socioeconomic inequality cannot be isolated or fully understood without a wider historical and present-day contextualisation of inequalities and prejudices, including class. This thesis, therefore, ties the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery firmly into wider national and international history and underlines how confronting historical injustice and its legacy is vital to the creation of a fair and just future.

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## **List of Acronyms**

AACWMM – African American Civil War Memorial and Museum

ABGM – African Burial Ground Museum

AFDC – Aid to Families with Dependent Children

AFT – American Federation of Teachers

AHA – American Historical Association

ARM (UK) – African Reparations Movement, UK

ASI – Anti-Slavery International

ASPnet – (UNESCO) Associated Schools Project Network

AU – African Union, formerly the OAU

BMAG – Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

CETA - Comprehensive Education and Training Act of 1973

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

DCMS – Department of Culture, Media and Sport

DCFS – Department for Children, Schools and Families

DFE – Department for Education

DfES – Department for Education and Skills

DfID – Department for International Development

EURESCL Project – Slave Trade, Slavery Abolitions and their Legacies in European Histories and Identities Project

GEP – Group of Eminent Persons (established by the AU in 1992 to develop a case for reparations for Africa)

HR40 – Title of a House of Representatives Bill proposed by Congressman John Conyers to establish a ‘Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans.’

HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund

HMRC – Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs

HMSO – Her Majesty’s Stationary Office

HO – Home Office

IPPR – Institute for Public Policy Research

IPUP – Institute for the Public Understand of the Past

ISM – International Slavery Museum

KKK – Klu Klux Klan

LSS – London Sugar and Slavery gallery

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MiD – Museum in Docklands

MMM – Merseyside Maritime Museum

MoC – Museum of the Confederacy

MP – Member of Parliament

N’CoBRA – National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America

NAACP – National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People

NCHS – National Center for History in the Schools

NEH – National Endowment for the Humanities

NGBWM – National Great Blacks in Wax Museum

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations

NMAAHC – National Museum of African American History and Culture

NMM – National Maritime Museum

NPS – National Parks Service

OAU – Organisation of African Unity, AU since 2001

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills’

OIEAHC – Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture

PM – Prime Minister

QC – Queen’s Counsel

QCA – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority



RAS – Royal Society for the encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce

RoV – Rendezvous of Victory

RRAA 2000 – Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

SCV – Sons of Confederate Veterans

T.E.A.C.H – Teaching Emotional and Controversial Histories, a report by the Historical Association

TAH – Teaching American History Program

TCA – Truth Commission for Africa

TST Project – (UNESCO ASPnet) Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project

TUC – Trades Union Congress

UDC – United Daughters of the Confederacy

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

URFC – Underground Railroad Freedom Centre

US – United States

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

USI – Understanding Slavery Initiative

VHS – Virginia Historical Society

VORPs – Victim Offender Reconciliation Programmes

WCAR – (UN) World Conference Against Racism and Xenophobia (Durban, 2001)

WHM – Wilberforce House Museum

WTO – World Trade Organization

WWII – Second World War

## **Introduction**

This thesis considers the question of reparations for transatlantic slavery to African Americans and to Africa. Advocates of reparations have tended to call for financial reparations through legal action or mandated by legislation. This thesis argues that this conceptualisation of reparations is unnecessarily narrow and oversimplifies the history and harm of transatlantic slavery's legacy. By exploring differing approaches to repairing historical wrongs, including apology, legislative reparations and ideas of historical truth telling, this thesis argues that legalised conceptualisations of repair that emphasise financial compensation fail to address underlying relational legacies that perpetuate the socioeconomic harms that financial compensation is called to address. This thesis argues that the harm of transatlantic slavery is first and foremost attitudinal (racism) and relational (poor race relations and racial inequality). To overcome the harms identified by advocates of financial reparations it is first necessary to repair historically shaped attitudes and relationships. This is not to say that financial reparations may not contribute to repair, or that relational repair might not lead to some forms of financial reparations. Rather, that in the long term, attitudinal and relational repair offer a potentially deeper and broader form of repair than financial compensation by itself can deliver. Financial reparations may validate the viewpoint of reparations advocates and this is important. But, if the relational and attitudinal legacies of transatlantic slavery are not addressed the harm of transatlantic slavery's legacy cannot be fully overcome.

To show how a process of relational repair for the legacy of transatlantic slavery could be developed, this thesis argues that the history presented by schools and museums could be revised to tell a broader historical narrative. By integrating formerly overlooked or suppressed historical events, perspectives and interpretations, museums and schools can create a platform for dialogue between those divided by this history and its legacy, so that empathy and repair of relationships is possible. This conceptualisation of repair draws upon the restorative justice principles of South Africa's post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). This introduction now seeks to situate this thesis within the current debate about reparations for

transatlantic slavery and to outline how subsequent Chapters develop the thesis' argument.

In 1987 the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'CoBRA) was established in the United States (US) to campaign for reparations to African Americans for the harms caused by slavery and discrimination.<sup>1</sup> At the 2001 United Nations (UN) World Conference Against Racism and Xenophobia (WCAR) in Durban, African and Caribbean nations, with the support of reparations advocacy groups from the US and Europe, called upon the West to pay reparations for transatlantic slavery and the underdevelopment of Africa.<sup>2</sup> During the 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade, calls were made for the Queen and British Government to apologise and pay financial reparation to Africa, Caribbean nations such as Jamaica and descendants of British slaves in the United Kingdom (UK).<sup>3</sup> On 22 January 2009 the Jamaican Government established a 'National Commission of Reparations' to assess how transatlantic slavery's legacy impacts upon Jamaica's relationship with Britain and the wider world.<sup>4</sup> Following assessment the Commission will provide the Jamaican Government with 'recommendations on proposals seeking compensation from countries formerly engaged in the slave trade for the descendants of slaves.'<sup>5</sup> The Commission makes clear that financial compensation is crucial to reconciliation. Its website explains:

the issue goes far beyond a request for payment in monetary terms. It involves a process of reconciliation. It may include an acknowledgment by those whose countries were enriched by the profits of slavery that a crime against humanity was committed,

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<sup>1</sup> Martha Biondi, 'The Rise of the Reparations Movement', Michael T. Martin and Marilyn Yaquinto (eds.), *Redress for Historical Injustices in the United States: On Reparations for Slavery, Jim Crow, and their Legacies* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 255-256.

<sup>2</sup> The National Commission on Reparations, 'Background', [http://www.jis.gov.jm/special\\_sections/reparations/background.html](http://www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/reparations/background.html) (Accessed 30 April 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Dominic Casciani, 'Campaigners demand slavery compensation', *BBC News* (23 August 2002), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/2210545.stm> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>4</sup> The National Commission on Reparations, 'Homepage', [http://www.jis.gov.jm/special\\_sections/reparations/index.htm](http://www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/reparations/index.htm) (Accessed 3 April 2012).

<sup>5</sup> The National Commission of Reparations, 'News, Cabinet Approves Establishment of Commission on Reparations' (22 January 2009), [http://www.jis.gov.jm/special\\_sections/reparations/news.html](http://www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/reparations/news.html) (Accessed 4 April 2012).

and the making of a solemn apology. And the natural consequence of all this includes monetary compensation in various forms, to repair the damage done.<sup>6</sup>

The Jamaican 'National Commission of Reparations' marks one of the latest developments in the debate over how to repair the legacy of transatlantic slavery and the influence of the US movement. The concept of reparations for transatlantic slavery is a large and growing area of international interest which has the potential to benefit or harm the relationships between the European/Western World and formerly colonised nations. The claims underline that, for future relationships to be healthy, past injustices must be resolved.

Claims for reparations for transatlantic slavery reflect a growing trend to call for reparations and apology for historical injustices and are especially inspired by German reparations for the Holocaust.<sup>7</sup> Other examples include the apology and reparation payments made by the New Zealand Government to Maoris for violation of the Treaty of Waitangi; apology and reparation payments by the US Government to Japanese Americans illegally interned during the Second World War (WWII); and the apology and reparations from the US Government to Native American nations.<sup>8</sup> There has also been a proliferation of public apologies by organisations such as the Catholic Church for personal and institutional wrongdoing (often involving the physical and sexual abuse of vulnerable children and adults).<sup>9</sup>

Most recent calls for reparations and/or apology for historical wrongdoing have been rejected. In 2000 President Jacques Chirac responded to the request that he 'apologize for France's use of torture during Algeria's war of independence' by claiming that to do so 'would simply "reopen old wounds"' and "'detract from the

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<sup>6</sup> The National Commission of Reparations, 'Frequently Asked Questions, 2. So, is it all about getting money?', [http://www.jis.gov.jm/special\\_sections/reparations/faq.html](http://www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/reparations/faq.html) (Accessed 4 April 2012).

<sup>7</sup> Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (with Anthony Lombardo), *Reparations to Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 44; Esther Stanford, 'Slavery, Shoah and Restitution', *TotallyJewish.com News*, [http://www.totallyjewish.com/news/special\\_reports/?content\\_id=5034](http://www.totallyjewish.com/news/special_reports/?content_id=5034) (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Mark Gibney, Rhonda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Chris Cunneen, 'Reparations and Restorative Justice: Responding to the Gross Violations of Human Rights', Heather Strang and John Braithwaite (eds.), *Restorative Justice and Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 87.

<sup>9</sup> Aaron Lazare, *On Apology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Linda Radzik, *Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

honor of those French soldiers who'd fought in the conflict.”<sup>10</sup> Others claim that it is impossible for modern citizens to apologise for the actions of their national forebears many generations removed and that it is unfair to judge historical actions by today's standards. Furthermore, many argue that it is more important to concentrate on contemporary injustices and to create a society that guarantees a just future, and that arguing about the past is unnecessarily divisive and distracting.<sup>11</sup>

Even among those who argue that there is a duty to try and repair historical wrongs, however distant, there is a disagreement about what constitutes repair. Should repair prioritise the calculation of harm in financial terms and use legal principles such as torts and unjust enrichment to establish claims in terms of inheritance of harm versus responsibility and benefit?<sup>12</sup> Or should, as Roy L. Brooks argues, efforts at repair be broader, to ‘atone – that is, both apologise and provide reparations?’<sup>13</sup>

A key argument of this thesis is that people and nations are defined and define themselves in relation to their past. It is vital that historical memory does not perpetuate past prejudice and animosity, but that nations seek to create historical memory that acknowledges and denounces national wrongdoing, and that nations seek to ensure that historical wrongs do not cause present-day harm. This thesis argues that by seeking to acknowledge and denounce past wrongdoing, nations pave the way for just relationships with those groups they have wronged in the past, and that through the restoration of just relations the material harm of past wrongdoing can also be repaired, creating a just future. This repair of material harms, or present-day socioeconomic injustice, will require financial measures to promote equality and socioeconomic justice. Whilst informed by a better understanding of the past and its impact on the present, these financial measures will be future orientated rather than reparations for past wrongdoing. Processes of relational repair are intergenerational.

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<sup>10</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> Alfred L. Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Gerry Johnstone and Joel Quirk, ‘Repairing Historical Wrongs’, *Social and Legal Studies*, 21:2 (2012), pp. 161-164.

<sup>13</sup> Roy L. Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations* (London: University of California Press, 2004), p. ix.

Whilst financial compensation is not excluded, by prioritising relational repair the limitations and often excessive divisiveness of financial reparations are avoided.

Attitudes of racism and racial social hierarchies were entrenched during the era of transatlantic slavery, defining post-slavery relations between black and white people in the Americas, Europe, colonial Africa and the Caribbean.<sup>14</sup> These attitudes informed the development of Eurocentric historical memory which blinds Europeans and European-Americans to the legacy of transatlantic slavery, specifically continuing racial prejudice and the problem of racial socioeconomic inequality. This thesis, therefore, advocates a form of relational repair that uses historical revision to correct historical memory and identify contemporary injustices formed by historical wrongs. The research conducted in the development of this thesis suggests that schools and museums are potential vehicles by which this process can be delivered at national and international levels.

The research has been extensive, involving attending conferences and visiting museum and educational bodies across England, the eastern US, Toronto and Cape Town. Research has been heavily based upon observing and interrogating new galleries and resources and conducting interviews with academics, teachers, museum educators and curators, community representatives and participants in international projects, such as the UNESCO Slave Route Project. By exploring the intentions of those involved in developing new educational resources and galleries on the history of transatlantic slavery, and how they have sought to challenge traditional ignorance and prejudiced memory, this thesis has been able to demonstrate how these initiatives have a reparative potential. The thesis has not been able to investigate the impact of these resources upon individual classes or individuals; instead, the reparative potential of the historical narrative these developments present has been assessed in comparison to previous galleries and resources. This has enabled the thesis to argue that museum galleries and educational resources have the potential to act as truth

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<sup>14</sup> The word racism is used throughout this thesis general to refer to European anti-black racism, specifically modern European anti-black racism which this thesis was significantly shaped by experiences and the development of defences for the transatlantic slave trade and chattel slavery in the New World. Racism is not limited to only this form of racism, however, it is this form which is primarily the focus of this thesis.

telling vehicles by revising the history and interpretative perspectives that they present, to include events and community perspectives previously excluded.

Many of those interviewed did not see their activities as specific forms of reparation. However, within the understanding of relational and attitudinal repair that this thesis outlines, these developments can often be viewed as potentially reparative, as the revisions of traditional historiography they represent attest to how attitudes and relationships are already starting to change. Therefore, as schools and museums disseminate revised historical understanding that is itself informed by changed attitudes and improved relationships, they have the potential to accelerate reparative processes already underway. As the thesis shall notice, however, initiatives that involve the revision of traditional historiography often face resistance from traditionalists and counter-revisionist pressures. Furthermore, the ability of such developments to influence national attitudes is often curtailed by several factors, such as schools not using these resources, low museum attendance and those who oppose these revisions avoiding museums that challenge their traditionally held historical and prejudicial understandings. Despite these challenges, this thesis argues that revising the history presented in schools and museums to include previously suppressed events and community perspectives does have a potential reparative contribution to make to processes of repairing the historical legacy of transatlantic slavery, both in individual nations and internationally.

The Introduction will now consider four significant themes that this thesis addresses in order to consider how to repair the legacies of transatlantic slavery. Firstly, what is meant by 'repairing historical wrongs and intergenerational injustice'? This thesis takes the position that it is not possible to undo past acts, but it is possible to try and identify and repair the harm caused by past wrongdoing. The debate over reparations in the US is used as a case study by which to examine three avenues of repair that are explored by those seeking reparations for historical injustices. The debate for reparations for slavery, arguably originated in the US and 'has exploded since Randall Robinson's *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* was published in 2000,' achieving greater penetration into general public awareness and discourse in

the US than elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> The US reparations debate provides a useful case study by which to consider the wider implications of claims for reparations for slavery and strengths and weaknesses of different reparative processes. One of the most important arguments made by Robinson is that the harm of slavery continues to this day as the prejudiced memory of slavery repeats the disrespect shown towards the enslaved by failing to fully acknowledge their suffering and their contribution to the US.<sup>16</sup> This harm is twofold. In continuing to deny the historical contribution of African slaves to US development, the descendants of these slaves are insulted and excluded from the historically-rooted conceptualisation of national identity. It is due to this selective historical memory, Robinson and James W. Lowen argue, that African Americans are still unequal to white Americans in socioeconomic terms.<sup>17</sup> Repairing historical wrongs of slavery in the US, therefore, involves broadening and redefining US memory so that it includes the experiences and perspectives of African Americans. Such inclusion offers a route to attitudinal and relational repair because it enables white Americans to understand and empathise with African American historical experiences, interpretations and historically based present-day grievances, and also includes African Americans within the conceptualisation of American.

This idea of relational repair facilitated by the revision of history presented by schools and museums introduces a second theme that is central to this thesis' investigation, specifically, the nature of history as a discipline and the role of history in society. History is more than just studying the past. History is central to shaping national, cultural, religious and individual identity. This is why history often causes controversy, as objective assessment of the past and its legacy runs up against pride, politics and historical grievances.<sup>18</sup> Interpretations of the past are often heavily influenced by opinions about the present and one's experiences. Similarly, interpretation of the present is often influenced by how one views the past. Clear examples of this, which are also central to this thesis, are Eurocentric and postcolonial historiographies.

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<sup>15</sup> Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con*, p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> Randall Robinson, *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* (London: Plume, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85, 92, 164, James W. Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (London: The New Press, 2007 (1995)).

<sup>18</sup> Susan A. Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', *History and Theory*, 36:4 (1997), pp. 51-60.



Eurocentricism, writes J.M. Blaut, was a learnt attitude that interpreted Europeans as racially, intellectually and culturally superior to those the Europeans colonised (Africans, Asians, Arabs, Polynesians, Amerindians and those of religions other than Christianity). In *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History*, Blaut explores the rise and persistence of Eurocentric ideas and the impact of Eurocentric attitudes on relationships between Europe and the wider world.<sup>19</sup> Blaut notices that the first Europeans to visit other cultures often respected those that they interacted with and learnt much from them, for example:

Tomé Pires said of Gujarati businessmen in 1515: "They are men who understand merchandise; they are . . . properly steeped in the sound and harmony of it" and "those of our people who want to be clerks and factors ought to go there and learn, because the business of trade is a science."<sup>20</sup>

However, as European colonial power and wealth advanced, Europeans developed arguments to explain their seeming superiority. First Europeans looked to their shared Christianity and providentialism. Later, Social Darwinism helped define theories of racial hierarchy (the nineteenth century theory of polygenesis even claiming that Europeans, Africans and Asians were not the same biological species).<sup>21</sup>

Pseudoscientific theories justified European practices of slavery and colonialism, for: 'if Africans were not truly human, why, enslaving them could not be an evil act.'<sup>22</sup> Racist attitudes existed prior to scientific arguments in support of racism and the pseudoscience 'did not do much to intensify racism,' rather it confirmed European prejudices. Sadly 'the disproving of scientific racism did not have much to do with the decline of racism's popularity in the present century. Racism emerged from prescientific roots and survived so long as it was useful, science or no science.'<sup>23</sup> Similarly, the utility and survival of Eurocentric attitudes lies in the moral justification of European privileges. In European schools, Eurocentrism was conveyed to schoolchildren through their textbooks, which provide 'an important window into a

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<sup>19</sup> J.M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (London: The Guilford Press, 1993).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

culture; more than just books, they are semiofficial statements of exactly what the opinion-forming elite of the culture want the educated youth of that culture to believe to be true about the past and present world.’<sup>24</sup>

Postcolonialism, like Eurocentricism, had a political utility and developed out of the intellectual movement of resistance towards European imperialism and US racial segregation. Individuals such as ‘W.E.B. DuBois, R. Palme Dutt, K.M. Panikkar, M.N. Roy, J.C. Van Leur, C.L.R. James, George Padmore, and Eric Williams’ challenged traditional Eurocentric narratives that argued that European colonialism had been a civilising and beneficial endeavour.<sup>25</sup> Instead of benefitting colonised peoples these individuals argued that colonialism had enriched the European colonisers whilst ‘underdeveloping’ and ‘impoverishing’ the colonised.<sup>26</sup>

The challenge to Eurocentric history coincided with the advent of the UN and the doctrine of Human Rights following WWII. The postcolonial challenge to Eurocentric historical ‘truth’ was a challenge to the historical foundations of European identity and sense of morality. For instance, the British have traditionally considered abolitionism to have been their gift to the world, due to the enlightened moral leadership of Wilberforce and the abolitionist saints. This historical interpretation, or national memory, aided the British in their desire to convince themselves and others that their colonial expansion was really a moral antislavery civilising mission.<sup>27</sup> However, Eric Williams argued British policy was far from altruistic and that transatlantic slavery provided a capital stimulus to the English economy, igniting the Industrial Revolution, and that the English only abolished their slave system when their sugar islands became uncompetitive due to soil degradation.<sup>28</sup> C.L.R. James argued that the Haitian Revolution, which ended slavery on the largest Caribbean sugar island, stimulated abolitionism due to the fear of slave insurrection.<sup>29</sup> Walter Rodney argued that the transatlantic slave trade caused the depopulation and economic

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>27</sup> Joel Quirk and David Richardson, ‘Anti-slavery, European Identity and International Society: A Macro-historical Perspective’, *Journal of Modern European History*, 7:1 (2009), pp. 68-92.

<sup>28</sup> Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

<sup>29</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 2001).

underdevelopment of Africa.<sup>30</sup> In Britain, the reparations advocacy group *Rendezvous of Victory* claims reparations should include financial compensation for all Africans in Africa and the diaspora; the redistribution of land in Africa; the re-writing of European-written international law; and the rewriting of Eurocentric history.<sup>31</sup> As this thesis shall explore, particularly in Chapter Two, the history of transatlantic slavery is complex and nuanced and has to be contextualised within a wider history of slavery, inequality, labour exploitation and violence which claims for reparations often overlook. It is clear that the traditional Eurocentric memory of slavery, colonialism and world history in general is biased and problematic; however, the postcolonial history that is the basis of the reparations claims is often reacting too much to past biases. Consequently, it too is highly selective, biased and lacking in nuance.

Nevertheless, historians argue that such problems can be overcome and that history can be objectively identified and understood. Peter Novick writes that the assessment of a historian's objectivity 'rests [upon . . .] a commitment to the reality of the past, and to truth as correspondence to that reality.'<sup>32</sup> Novick here offers a conceptualisation of the objectivity of a historian's work as being assessable by comparing the historical interpretation that they create to the available historical evidence. To utilise scientific language, Novick argues that the bias of a historian is akin to the hypothesis of a scientist embarking on research and that a good historian, like a good scientist, will use their research to either affirm or disprove their hypothesis rather than only selecting information that supports their hypothesis. Historians have to select evidence and may provide differing interpretations of the same events due to differing experience and political outlook. This is no hindrance to a reparative process of historical truth telling. Such a process will involve differing perspectives being heard. These differences must be debated in an environment where individuals are prepared to work together and have their inaccuracies and biases challenged. Such dialogue could lead to the creation of 'A collective historical consciousness . . . [which is arguably] as much a prerequisite for a healthy well-rounded society as is the proper

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<sup>30</sup> Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogel-L'Ouverture Publications, 1973).

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford, Co-Chair and Co-Founder of *Rendezvous of Victory*, 10 February, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 1.

ecological balance for a healthy forest and a healthy planet.’<sup>33</sup> A ‘collective historical consciousness’ does not mean all will have the same historical understanding and perspective or that the historical narrative will be fully true. Rather, it is a consciousness which recognises others’ feelings, understanding and perspectives of the past rather than being divided and antagonised by them.

A third theme raised by the question of repairing historical wrongs is whether it is right to judge historical actors and actions by present-day values. Claims for reparations for transatlantic slavery and its legacy (including racism and colonialism) often apply today’s morality to historical events and actors. Taking their cue from reparations for the Holocaust, reparations advocates argue that slavery and colonialism constituted a violation of human rights and that redress is therefore required. However, the apologies and reparation payments made for the Holocaust were to those directly harmed and by a nation that had committed these atrocities in living memory. This is not the case with transatlantic slavery which occurred over many generations, before human rights were a recognised concept and when other forms of slavery and labour exploitation were everyday occurrences. Many therefore dispute the validity of claims for reparations for transatlantic slavery.

The 2001 UN WCAR concluded that ‘slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so.’<sup>34</sup> The wording of this statement is significant. Whilst the WCAR appears to be making a moral judgement about past actions, in reality it is making a statement about international society’s current values. The phrase ‘and should always have been so’ emphasises that the morality and laws of today differ to those of the past. Implicit here is an argument that the actions of the past may be judged by standards not of their time, for the purpose of clarifying present-day values and how they differ to those of the past. Also implicit is a refusal to accept that any condemnation of past actions creates obligations for descendants to make amends. This view is further attested by the discussion on transatlantic slavery at

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<sup>33</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 149.

<sup>34</sup> UN, *World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance: Declaration*, <http://www.un.org/WCAR/durban.pdf> (Accessed 1 May 2012), p. 6.

the 2001 WCAR having been 'bracketed' to keep the conclusions from being legally binding.<sup>35</sup>

The reluctance of many to judge past actions reflects the traditions of historical discipline. Many historians believe that to judge the past by present-day standards is anachronistic and 'unhistorical' as the historian must 'recognise how much other ages differed from our own.'<sup>36</sup> However, as noted, the debate about reparations for transatlantic slavery and its legacies, as well as other historical injustices, intersects with debates about the wider role of history in contemporary society and how it shapes national identity and moral worth.

History, wrote E. H. Carr, is an 'unending dialogue between the present and the past.'<sup>37</sup> Its purpose is 'to promote a profounder understanding of both the past and the present through the interaction between them.'<sup>38</sup> The study of history is, therefore, often motivated by contemporary interests and a desire to learn about how things came to be the way they are. Calls for reparations for the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery reflect this. The earlier consideration of the reparations debate in the US, noted that different forms of repair are advocated. In the case of legalistic calls for financial reparations the principles of torts and of unjust enrichment contend that present-day society is unjust, because slavery denied wages to African Americans and any resulting financial inheritance to their descendants, instead enriching the slave

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<sup>35</sup> Hilary Beckles, 'Britain's Black Debt: Reparations owed for Slavery and Genocide in the Caribbean', Keynote Speech at *Enslavement, Identity and Cultural Exchange*, a conference organised by EURESCL at WISE 24-26 January 2012; Interview with Hilary Beckles, Principal of the University of West Indies, Cave Hill, 5 November 2011. Hilary Beckles was a West Indian delegate at the WCAR. He described how the US and European nations refused to discuss transatlantic slavery and reparations unless the discussion was 'bracketed' so that any conclusions would be non-binding. The phrasing of this part of the declaration would have been informed by Article 38 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice which notes that the court can only rule on international law created by 'international conventions' or treaties between the specific nations at the court, or by using 'international custom' or 'the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations.' By 'bracketing' this part of the discussion and declaration, Western nations guaranteed that no precedent for reparations for transatlantic slavery would be created under the 'general principles of law recognized by civilised nations.' See, International Court of Justice, *Statute of the International Court of Justice*, <http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/index.php?p1=4&p2=2&p3=0> (Accessed 1 May 2012); H.C. Gutteridge, 'The Meaning and Scope of Article 38 (1) (c) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice', *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 38 (1952), pp. 125-134.

<sup>36</sup> Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1965), pp. 32-35.

<sup>37</sup> E.H. Carr, *What is History* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 30.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

owners, their families and descendants. Furthermore, racism perpetuated inequality after the end of slavery by entrenching white privilege in education and employment opportunities. However, calls for repair are not motivated purely by issues of denied rightful inheritance. Others argue that slavery was wrong and that some form of reparative action is needed in order to demonstrate that the wrongness of slavery is now recognised by US society, and that those once dehumanised through legal enslavement are now recognised as equals. Repair in this sense can involve changing the way the nation remembers and commemorates the history of slavery, those who practiced slavery and those who were enslaved.

The postcolonial origins of the reparations claim reflect how history is used to define present-day understandings of the world and to construct present-day identities upon this historical narrative. Whilst Eurocentric historiography created a Eurocentric interpretation of transatlantic slavery and its legacy, postcolonial revisionism created an alternative narrative by empowering the voices of historical actors who had been denigrated or ignored by Eurocentric historians. Eurocentric and postcolonial historical narratives both seek to justify competing claims to the moral high ground of social, economic and political disputes today. This use of history is illustrated by the British Government's promotion of the US funded film *Amazing Grace* in 2007 as a way to rehabilitate the image of Britain's foreign policy following the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>39</sup> Revisionist historians often seek to change historical narrative in order to change how the contemporary world is understood and how current identities are constructed. However, historical memory is often selectively created to reinforce identity and there is therefore a resistance to such revision.

In the introduction to *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory and the Civil War*, David Blight argues that it is important to distinguish between the discipline of 'history' and the formation and function of a nation or group's historical 'memory.' Blight writes that 'memory is often owned, history interpreted;' 'Memory is often invoked in the name of the nation, ethnicity, race and religion, or someone's felt need for peoplehood.' Blight adds that collective memory 'often thrives on grievance and on the elaborate invention of traditions' and that the study of how memory is created

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<sup>39</sup> Marcus Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom: Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation* (Athens, GA.: University of Georgia Press, 2010), pp. 352-353.

can, therefore, 'enrich our understanding of the very idea of our past and our relationships to it.'<sup>40</sup> This distinction is helpful in explaining how history can be divisive and why different nations and groups develop selective narratives that reaffirm their morality and positively reinforce their identity. Memory is not necessary wrong, but it is often selective and creates an impression of the past which can be misleading. Broadening perspective through historical truth telling that highlights previously overlooked episodes of the past and introduces other groups' experiences and interpretations is therefore central to relational repair. But does such truth telling require or legitimise the judging of historical events and individuals by present-day values?

In many ways the question about the ability to judge history impartially is misleading. Socially accepted norms lead to popular opinions about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. When viewing historical events, people will interpret actions and the individuals responsible for them in terms of good or bad, just as historians comment on whether a monarch's rule was good for or bad for their country. Historians must not be too quick to pass judgement, for the historian has the privilege of hindsight. It is also right to recognise that the values and morality under which individuals acted in the past were different to standards today. It is, therefore, unfair to judge individuals and events in the past by standards that they themselves did not possess, but this does not mean that all judgement of the past is illegitimate. History is studied 'to promote a profounder understanding of both the past and the present through the interaction between them.'<sup>41</sup> As Gaddis notes, good historical understanding requires 'both angles of vision (the modern and the historical) if we are to triangulate the past' and assess the impact of past events upon contemporary society.<sup>42</sup> In other words, we can judge past events and individuals by contemporary values if this is helpful in demonstrating how society and its values have altered and how past activities that were once considered morally acceptable may have legacies which are now considered unjust or morally problematic. In taking this position, this thesis mirrors the compromise taken at the 2001 WCAR, that transatlantic slavery was

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<sup>40</sup> David W. Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory and the American Civil War* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), pp. 1-7.

<sup>41</sup> Carr, *What is History?*, p. 68.

<sup>42</sup> Gaddis, *The Landscape of History*, p. 128.

wrong by today's standards; however, slavery was a common global practice when it occurred. Therefore, saying slavery was wrong does not necessarily mean there is a case for reparations today. This introduces a fourth theme to the question of repairing the legacies of transatlantic slavery. Do present-day individuals have a moral obligation to repair the harms of transatlantic slavery that were caused by their predecessors?

Many members of the public, politicians and academics dispute claims for reparations for transatlantic slavery by arguing that it is unfair to blame those who are not directly responsible for past actions. Duncan Ivison, for example, questions the case for financial reparations by reference to counterfactual reasoning, arguing that those who are perceived as victims of transatlantic slavery could be argued to be beneficiaries because they now inhabit wealthier nations.<sup>43</sup> Stephen Kershnar argues that descendants of slaves cannot claim to be harmed by slavery even on the grounds of denied inheritance because you cannot miss what you have never had.<sup>44</sup> This thesis, however, refers to Janna Thompson, who argues that nations are collectives, bodies whose identities are not restricted to individual humans but are intergenerational and, therefore, can inherit both harm and the duty to make amends.<sup>45</sup> Thompson argues that whilst guilt itself cannot be inherited, the obligation to repair harm can if the historical act contradicts today's morality.<sup>46</sup> Linda Radzik similarly argues that by not seeking to make amends for past wrongdoing by other members of a collective, a collective denies the equality of those harmed (and those like them) adding to the original harm.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, a collective harms itself by failing to demonstrate that it is different from those members who acted wrongly, thereby undermining its moral standing and denying itself the chance of just relations with those it harmed in the past and others who condemn its past behaviour.<sup>48</sup> Thompson's and Radzik's arguments, therefore, aid this thesis' case for historical truth telling through schools and museums as a means to facilitate relational repair. Financial reparations may overcome some of

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<sup>43</sup> Duncan Ivison, 'Historical Injustice', John S. Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 507-525.

<sup>44</sup> Stephen Kershnar, 'Are the Descendants of Slaves Owed Compensation for Slavery?', *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 16:1 (1999), pp. 330-341.

<sup>45</sup> Janna Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past: Reparation and Historical Justice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>47</sup> Radzik, *Making Amends*, p. 63.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-110.



the socioeconomic harms of slavery's legacy, but without relational repair based upon a confrontation of the history of slavery and an acknowledgment of it as wrong and of the right of others previously excluded from national memory to have their opinions and experiences heard, the emotional and psychological harms of slavery will remain.

John Torpey, however, criticises the primacy reparations claims place upon historical injustice to support rectifying present-day wrongs. Torpey argues that whilst reparations for historical wrongdoings may make the ideas of human rights seem achievable, by depending upon appeals to historical wrongdoings to deliver present-day rights, activists actually undermine the concept of human rights and the worth of living individuals who are suffering.<sup>49</sup> Torpey raises an important point and prompts reconsideration about why reparations claims exist. As discussed, the claim for reparations for slavery is often motivated by a desire to see present-day inequalities addressed. However, the way that present-day society is understood is determined by historical understanding; history explains how the present came to be. The divide over the question of reparations exists because differing nations and groups have different historical memories which have been developed in order to reinforce their collective identity. Repairing the legacy of transatlantic slavery, therefore, must start prioritising attitudinal and relational repair via processes of historical truth telling and dialogue that can create empathy and understanding. Such processes, significantly, prioritise the repair of the legacies of slavery in a manner that also addresses the requirements of present and future justice.<sup>50</sup> This position leads to the main question that this thesis seeks to address: What is required to repair the legacy of transatlantic slavery? The Introduction shall now outline how each Chapter develops an argument for relational repair via a process akin to truth telling in schools and museums.

In Chapter One, Models of Repair, the differing conceptualisations of reparations and repair are considered. The Legal Model examines financial claims for reparations based upon the principles of torts and unjust enrichment. Brooks argues that these legal claims are unlikely to result in the development of a historical

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<sup>49</sup> John Torpey, *'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed': On Reparations Politics* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 31-49.

<sup>50</sup> Michael Freeman, 'Historical Injustice and Liberal Political Theory', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 55-59.

consensus due to the adversarial nature of court cases.<sup>51</sup> Instead, Brooks advocates processes of repair that prioritise atonement and ‘racial reconciliation’, such as apology and legislation that deliver financial reparations. In the US legislative financial reparations could involve establishing an investment fund for African American businesses, college funds for African American students or policies similar to affirmative action.<sup>52</sup> Internationally such legislative reparations could result in similar payments to develop education and businesses in African nations, however, as Rhoda Howard-Hassmann notes, much international aid from western countries to Africa is squandered due to corruption.<sup>53</sup> More importantly, there is no popular mandate for reparations in the US or from the West to Africa or from Britain to Jamaica. This lack of popular mandate is the result of Eurocentric historical memory differing from the Pan-African historical memory of reparations advocates. Overcoming divided memory is the key to repairing the legacies of transatlantic slavery.

In order to develop a framework for an alternative form of repair for the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, this thesis turns to restorative justice and the application of restorative techniques in transitional justice settings. Restorative justice identifies the primary harm caused by crime as the destruction of moral relationships within society, primarily between the perpetrator and their victim, but applicable also to wider relationships within society that are strained due to fear and the erosion of communal trust caused by crime. It also seeks to place the victim at the centre of the justice process and prioritises their desire to know what happened to them and the motives of the perpetrator rather than the state’s desire to demonstrate its power and ability to impose its laws. Restorative justice processes often involve dialogue between the victim and offender. Through dialogue it is hoped that the victim will gain a sense of validation by being supported by the community and a sense of closure by hopefully witnessing their offender gain insight into the impact of their wrongdoing and exhibiting remorse, a rehabilitated attitude and undertaking not to

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<sup>51</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 98.

<sup>52</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, pp. 171-176.

<sup>53</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 104.

reoffend. This process is also understood to benefit the perpetrator as reconciliation diminishes the likelihood of retribution.<sup>54</sup>

In transitional justice settings (when countries are undergoing a process of transition) restorative justice techniques and principles have been utilised in the form of truth telling and reconciliation processes, most famously in South Africa.<sup>55</sup> These processes are seen as being able to offer a scale of justice that traditional punitive justice measures are unable to offer due to the potentially huge number of perpetrators and victims and the complexity of the history of injustice. Instead justice is offered symbolically through acknowledgement and empathy.<sup>56</sup> Truth telling is also understood to offer the opportunity to create national historical memories that are more objective, inclusive and non-divisive than before and thereby offer the hope of a just and peaceful future, not just the redress of past injustices.<sup>57</sup>

To explore the reparative nature of truth telling, Chapter One utilises Deborah Posel's investigation into how the South African TRC identified processes of truth telling as involving telling formerly suppressed 'factual truths', 'personal truths' and 'social truths' which could create a 'healing truth.' Chapter One uses these conceptualisations to argue that relational repair is delivered through processes of acknowledgment of past actions previously denied and the validation of other peoples' and nations' perspectives and memory. In the US a process of historical truth telling would therefore involve recognising how slavery was more widespread and central to US development than past memory has recognised (for instance, it was not limited to the South), and including African American experiences and perspectives within the construction of national memory and the conceptualisation of what it means to be

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<sup>54</sup> Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses* (Scottsdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1995); Daniel W. Van Ness and Karen Heetberks Strong, *Restoring Justice: An Introduction to Restorative Justice* (Cincinnati, OH.: LexisNexis, 2006); Burt Galaway and Joe Hudson (eds.), *Restorative Justice: International Perspectives* (Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press, 1996).

<sup>55</sup> Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Paloma Aguilar, and Carmen González-Enríquez, 'Introduction', Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Carmen González-Enríquez and Paloma Aguilar (eds.), *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 4; Cunneen, 'Reparations and Restorative Justice', p. 86.

<sup>56</sup> Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 81; Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

<sup>57</sup> Teitel, *Transitional Justice*, p. 81; Vesna Nickolic-Ristanovic, 'The Possibilities of Restorative Justice in Serbia', Lode Walgrave (ed.) *Repositioning Restorative Justice* (Cullompton, Devon: Willan, 2003), p. 242.

American. In contrast to South Africa's TRC, it is not possible to call on former slaves to provide testimony regarding their experiences. Instead, this thesis argues that revising the historical narrative presented in museums and schools could constitute a process of truth telling. German-Polish collaboration on school textbooks that cover WWII illustrate how schools and museums can contribute to a process of creating shared historical narratives that can aid international relational repair.

Chapter Two investigates the contested historiography of transatlantic slavery to outline why differing memories of transatlantic slavery and interpretations of its legacy exist. The Chapter seeks to contextualise the history of transatlantic slavery in order to try and explain why it occurred, the extent to which it caused economic development in Europe and the Americas; and the extent to which it caused the underdevelopment of Africa. The complex history and contested historiography outlined in Chapter Two reinforces the conclusion of Chapter One, that for the legacy of transatlantic slavery to be overcome, there needs to be a process of relational repair based upon a full and holistic investigation of the history of transatlantic slavery and a dialogue over differing interpretations of this history and its legacy. In evaluating the competing interpretations of the history and legacy, the Chapter argues that transatlantic slavery developed because the practice was considered acceptable by both European and African elites who profited from this trade. The arguments of Rodney that the slave trade underdeveloped Africa have to be considered in the light of the history revealed by historians such as David Northrup, John Thornton, Paul Lovejoy, Robin Law and others who all, in differing ways, highlight the acceptance of slavery within Africa, the control exerted by African elites upon the slave trade and the mitigating factors against depopulation through the retention of female slaves by African societies.<sup>58</sup> However, the Chapter also acknowledges how scientific racism developed through the experiences of transatlantic slavery and how abolitionism by

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<sup>58</sup> David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe: 1450-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Robin Law, *Ouidah : The Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port', 1727-1892* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004).

European nations reinforced the European self-belief in their moral superiority, helping to portray later colonial expansion as a civilising mission.<sup>59</sup>

Chapter Two's examination of historiography outlines how different people and nations have different memories of transatlantic slavery and interpretations of its legacy. None of these memories are necessarily wrong, but all are selective and often emphasise those elements of the past which reflect best upon a nation or group and support that collective's claim to present-day moral standing. However, differences between European and African memory can contribute to mistrust between Western and African nations and influence international relations as well as impacting upon relations within nations between those of European and African heritage. By providing a factual outline of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery alongside an analysis of differing historical memories and the political genealogy of these differing memories, Chapter Two reaffirms the priority of creating a shared 'healing truth' between nations, as well as between communities within nations. The historiographical investigation also offers an outline of a contextualised, multi-perspective and nuanced history upon which reparative dialogue and truth telling could be established.

It is one thing to advocate a process of historical truth telling in order to contribute to relational repair; it is another to show how the repair can be achieved. This thesis argues that it is necessary to consider how national historical memories and identities are inculcated: schools, museums, national monuments and media. Margaret Urban Walter notes how schools and museums can contribute to overcoming the legacies of historical injustices by telling previously suppressed truths, arguing that:

Putting a priority on historical inquiry, dialogue, and voice of those concerned or affected, and inviting active engagement in the present with the past, open opportunities that restorative justice distinctively seeks. There can be fuller articulation of wrongs, discovery of their consequences and space for acknowledgment of responsibilities of various kinds, including past involvement or acquiescence in unacceptable practices, recognition of benefits from racial inequality, irresponsible or defensive ignorance of facts, or the ability to contribute to changing the future.

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<sup>59</sup> Quirk and Richardson, 'Anti-slavery, European Identity and International Society'.

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Local initiatives can explore forms of reparation—memorials, celebrations, history projects, museums, educational programs, genealogy projects, public art, dramatic performance, and others—that meaningfully address the nature of wrongs and moments of constructive change in particular communities whose identities and boundaries might be reconfigured by such initiatives.<sup>60</sup>

The legacy of transatlantic slavery is complex. Education must reflect that transatlantic slavery did not occur in a moral and social vacuum but was part of a wider history of social and economic exploitation. Without wider historical context the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery will not be fully understood, and what is not understood cannot be overcome. Important contexts include other historical and contemporary social constructs aside from race, such as class, citizenship and religion, which have been used to justify socioeconomic inequality and exploitation of labour. Also of significant relevance are other international and domestic slave systems and slave trades. With this in mind, Chapters Three, Four and Five respectively investigate the potential of museums and schools in Britain (mainly England), the US and at an international level to contribute to processes of historical truth telling, attitudinal change and relational repair

Chapter Three examines the recent changes to historical narrative presented by British museums and schools that coincided with the 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade. Building on a large commentary of the representation of this history in British museums, notably by Marcus Wood and John Oldfield, this Chapter utilises these developments as an opportunity to examine how historical revision can result in the construction of reparative narratives.<sup>61</sup> The Chapter places the Bicentenary developments in the context of the Labour Government's community cohesion and active citizenship agendas, which were an alternative approach to race relations that attempted to take a middle road between the left's traditional multiculturalism and the right's traditional encouragement of assimilation, and sought to encourage an inclusive British identity based on values not ancestry. This

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<sup>60</sup> Margaret Urban Walker, 'Restorative Justice and Reparations', *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 37:3 (2006), p. 389.

<sup>61</sup> Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom*; John Oldfield, *'Chords of Freedom': Commemoration, Ritual and Transatlantic Slavery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.) *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

development itself is contextualised within the changing race relations and demographics of Britain since WWII. For instance, West Indian migration encouraged academics to investigate historical British attitudes towards race, and the rediscovered historical presence of black people in Britain also brought new perspectives to British historical understanding.

By exploring the redevelopment of museum exhibitions on slavery and abolition in Liverpool, Hull and London, Chapter Three notes how increased emphasis was placed on 'African agency' in contributing to abolition and the role of slavery in British economic development. Collaboration in the 2007 Heritage Network and the Understanding Slavery Initiative is identified as an important factor in homogenising museum approaches to 2007. The revisionism of museums is also reflected in the educational resources produced by charities Anti-Slavery International and the Leeds Bicentenary Project. The Chapter notes how these revisions were responses to both academic criticism of past representations of this history and a reflection of the greater influence of previously suppressed African voices (both historical individuals such as Olaudah Equiano and modern interpretative voices). As such, Chapter Three argues that the 2007 developments highlight how museums and schools can empower previously suppressed voices and tell forgotten or suppressed historical truths, thereby altering national memory and, in turn, contributing to the repair of contemporary relationships.

Chapter Four focuses on the US and the variations in national, northern and southern memory and narrative construction and revision. The last few decades have seen US museums start to challenge biases in US memory of slavery and to tackle this sensitive history, as James and Lois Horton have documented in their edited volume *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History*.<sup>62</sup> This Chapter examines the reparative potential of these developments as forms of historical truth telling and whether this form of repair is suitable for the US as well as Britain. The location of slavery within America, and the continuing acceptance of US Exceptionalism causes US memory of slavery to be significantly inward looking. There is also a pluralism of memory in US schools and museums in contrast to Britain, where

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<sup>62</sup> James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006).

the National Curriculum and central Government funding has a homogenising influence on the presentation of history in schools and museums. US historical memory pluralism reflects the decentralised federal organisation of the US and the role of States in defining the curriculum of their schools and the role of non-governmental funding of museums. The US memory of slavery is also intrinsically tied to the memory of the Civil War, which remains highly contested, with the Lost Cause narrative of neo-Confederates still strong.<sup>63</sup>

Chapter Four explores three areas of US historical memory: national, northern and southern memory. Specifically, the forthcoming National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington D.C.; the development of the African Burial Ground in New York and the revision of amnesia about slavery in the northern US States; and the battle against Confederate apologists (nationally, but specifically in the south) in the redevelopment of the narrative presented by the Museum of the Confederacy and the Virginia Historical Association in Richmond, Virginia. The greater diversity and local nuances shaping the history presented in US museums and schools enables Chapter Four to investigate further the reparative potential of historical truth telling, providing a contrast with the centralised government-led developments in Britain.

Chapter Five builds upon Chapters Three and Four and explores the contribution that schools and museums can make to international processes of relational repair. This Chapter explores how previously suppressed historical viewpoints have become empowered due to decolonisation; in particular, the idea of decolonising history that has been popular in Africa and the Caribbean and aided by UNESCO-produced General Histories of Africa and of the Caribbean.<sup>64</sup> Of particular interest is the UNESCO Slave Route Project which has helped poorer nations, especially those from Africa and the Caribbean, influence international historical memory of transatlantic slavery and the interpretation of its legacy.<sup>65</sup> The Slave Route Project

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<sup>63</sup> Will Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 77.

<sup>64</sup> UNESCO, 'General and Regional Histories', <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dialogue/general-and-regional-histories/> (Accessed 9 December 2012).

<sup>65</sup> UNESCO, 'The Slave Route', <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dialogue/the-slave-route/> (Accessed 9 December 2012).



brings together historians, teachers and school children from across the Atlantic World, and also further afield, to explore historic East African, Trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean slave trades and slave systems. International dialogue can help broaden historical understanding and add international perspectives to national memory. This is central to correcting historically influenced prejudicial attitudes, the development of respect and trust and, ultimately, relational repair between nations divided by competing memories of transatlantic slavery.

By utilising the theories of transitional restorative justice, this thesis illustrates how historical truth telling in museums and schools can provide a form of symbolic repair through acknowledging formerly suppressed historical events and the formerly denied legacy of transatlantic slavery.<sup>66</sup> The thesis' conclusion argues that such acknowledgments are strengthened when implemented at a national level by government policy, as this denotes that the nation as a whole recognises the importance of this acknowledgment, that it seeks to learn the lessons of this history and to tackle the legacies of transatlantic slavery (this is the case for both national and international reparative processes).<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, the process of telling this history can 'lead to a renewed sense of power and pride' in communities formally excluded and denigrated. By enabling communities to tell their understanding (their truth), regarding the history and its legacy, the imbalances in relationships within and between nations can be better understood.<sup>68</sup> Further still, by deconstructing national memory, historical revision that incorporates formally suppressed events and perspectives, national self-image can be revised and the relationships within society and between nations restored. It must be emphasised, however, that the restoring of relationships is a process that will take many years and that the timeframe must itself be understood to be intergenerational. The developments explored in Chapters Three, Four and Five suggest that such a process of historical revision and truth telling is already underway in the US, Britain and in processes of international collaboration. However, these developments are arguably at a nascent stage and vulnerable to counter-revision by nationalist and Eurocentric historical apologists.

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<sup>66</sup> Brito, Aguilar, and González-Enríquez, 'Introduction', p. 25.

<sup>67</sup> Lazare, *On Apology*, pp. 245-263; Thompson, 'Apology Justice and Respect: A Critical Defence of Political Apology', pp. 31-44.

<sup>68</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 12.

In summary, restorative repair offers significant potential benefits in comparison to legal and legislative models of repair which tackle the symptoms of damaged relationships, but not the relationships themselves. Restoring relationships requires more than telling the truth. Sincerity, a promise of non-repetition and a commitment to make amends or tackle continuing injustice will also be required, including any necessary financial programmes needed to guarantee future equality and justice. By prioritising relational repair above financial reparations, this thesis advocates a process of repair that is more pragmatic and which seeks a deeper and broader form of repair, although this will be difficult to achieve and require an intergenerational commitment. Financial reparations can offer acknowledgment of historical wrongdoing and repair socioeconomic symptoms. However, if relationships and attitudes are not repaired, there will remain historically-based resentments and mistrust in society. Furthermore, if historical wrongdoing is not confronted and differing interpretations are not discussed, there remains an implicit hierarchy in society which validates one group's historical interpretation over another. Historical truth telling and relational repair is therefore central to the development of present-day and future equality. This call to repair relationships through historical truth telling echoes Hannah Arendt's argument in the *Origins of Totalitarianism* that:

We can no longer afford to take that which was good in our past and simply call it our heritage, to discard the bad and simply think of it as a dead load which by itself time will bury in oblivion. The subterranean stream of Western history has finally usurped the dignity of our tradition. This is the reality in which we live. And this is why all efforts to escape from the grimness of the present into nostalgia for a still intact past, or into the anticipated oblivion of a better future, are vain.<sup>69</sup>

Whilst Arendt was writing during the Cold War and reflecting upon the rise of Hitler and imperialism's contribution to the development of European totalitarianism, her writing is relevant to those who seek to overcome the legacy of transatlantic slavery. Only if the history is fully confronted can its legacy be overcome. Hiding from history will cause its legacy to fester to the harm of everyone.

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<sup>69</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Harcourt, 1973), p. ix.

## **Chapter One – Models of Repair**

In 1969 James Foreman interrupted the Sunday morning service at Riverside Church in New York to declare his *Black Manifesto*, which called upon white churches and synagogues across the US to pay \$500 million to African Americans in recompense for their institutions and congregations tolerating and profiting from slavery. This \$500 million would, Foreman explained, be ““a beginning of the end of reparations due to us as a people who have been exploited and degraded, brutalized, killed and persecuted.””<sup>1</sup> Foreman’s *Black Manifesto* was arguably the start of the modern US campaign for reparations for slavery.<sup>2</sup> In 1987 the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N’CoBRA) was established and in 1989 Congressman John Conyers began an annual struggle to pass HR40, a bill which would launch an investigation into the extent of the lasting impact of slavery in the US. The bill’s name, HR40, was inspired by the 1865 Civil War Special Fields Order, Number 15, which offered forty acres and a mule to freed slaves. This order was interpreted as recognition that freed slaves needed the means to be independent. However, the order was never official policy and was reneged upon. HR40 has failed to gain enough support to pass through Congress and, although on 18 June 2009 Congress did pass a Concurrent Resolution ‘Apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African Americans,’ the US is still to take steps to address the legacies of slavery.<sup>3</sup>

Reparations advocates have been inspired by reparations and apologies for other historical wrongs, in particular the role of US courts in leading to reparations to Holocaust victims’ families, to First Nations groups, and Japanese-Americans illegally interned during WWII.<sup>4</sup> Yet, however inspiring these reparations seem, they do not

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<sup>1</sup> Randall Robinson, *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* (London: Plume, 2001), p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Martha Biondi, ‘The Rise of the Reparations Movement’, Michael T. Martin and Marilyn Yaquinto (eds.), *Redress for Historical Injustices in the United States: On Reparations for Slavery, Jim Crow, and their Legacies* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 256-257.

<sup>3</sup> S. Con. Res. 26. (111<sup>th</sup>), *A concurrent resolution apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African Americans* (18 June 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Biondi, ‘The Rise of the Reparations Movement’, pp. 258-259; Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann and Mark Gibney, ‘Introduction: ‘Apologies and the West’’, Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of

provide a precedent for reparations for slavery. Historical injustices that have resulted in financial reparation have been discrete (have clearly identifiable harms, perpetrators and victims, and a clear causal chain between historical act and contemporary harm). This is not the case with slavery, where the history is vast and where the identity of those to receive and those to pay reparations is disputed. Furthermore, successful reparations movements have had overwhelming public support. This is not the case for claims for reparations in the US as the debate falls into the US Cultural Wars in which identity politics exacerbate the traditional divide between liberals and conservatives.<sup>5</sup>

Through investigating the US reparations debate this Chapter reveals that the real legacy of slavery in the US is not financial but attitudinal and relational. Slavery in the US helped to create a race-based social hierarchy, and racist attitudes which perpetuate racial inequality to this day. Furthermore, racial prejudice fostered a US historical memory that celebrates white achievement while ignoring or denigrating African and African American achievement, helping to create a racially exclusive US identity. This racially defined national identity and prejudiced historical memory now blinds many US citizens to the present-day legacies of slavery, such as the racial inequality that often motivates reparations claims. This Chapter, therefore, argues that the foremost priority of repair is the attitudinal, relational and psychological harm of slavery. To tackle only the socioeconomic harm would be temporary at best and counterproductive at worst as financial reparations given without popular support could enflame prejudice and further undermine race relations. This Chapter utilises theories of restorative justice and their application in transitional justice settings, such as South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to advocate a process of relational repair that hinges upon the historical truth telling<sup>6</sup> in museums and schools,

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Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp.3-4; Roy L. Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for black Reparations* (London: University of California Press, 2004), p. xv.

<sup>5</sup> Alfred L. Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 62-65, 75. See also David Horowitz, *Uncivil Wars: The Controversy over Reparations for Slavery* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002); Alfred L. Brophy, 'The Cultural War Over Reparations for Slavery', *DePaul Law Review*, 53 (2004), pp. 1181-1213; John Torpey, *'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed': On Reparations Politics* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 31, 112.

<sup>6</sup> In this thesis the term 'historical truth telling' means including previously excluded or denigrated events and perspectives in order to revise a nation's (or nations') historical narrative so that it is more holistic in terms of content and inclusive in terms of opinions, experiences and perspectives. This term

as such processes can contribute to the repair of societal relationships by revising historically located concepts of national identity.<sup>7</sup>

In order to develop the argument for relational repair and how this could be delivered, the Chapter is organised in the following way. First, the Chapter considers the origins of the US reparations movement and why there is popular opposition to reparations; this contextualises the reparations debate within US history and explores how US historical memory shapes the construction of US national identity and society. The Chapter then considers the philosophical questions provoked by calls for present-day individuals to pay reparation for harm caused by others in the past. This discussion draws upon Janna Thompson and Linda Radzik to argue that nations as 'collectives' have a duty to repair harm caused by other members of their collective. The Chapter then explores different models of repair and the form of repair they offer.<sup>8</sup>

The first model of repair considered is the Legal Model which utilises the principles of unjust enrichment and torts. Whilst a legal approach to reparations can raise awareness and clarify the history of slavery and its legacy, this Chapter argues, like Roy L. Brooks, that the legal approach is unable to deliver the relational repair needed. It considers a second model of repair, legislation and state apology, which is similar to Brooks' Apology and Atonement Model.<sup>9</sup> Legislated reparations often result from failed legal attempts to gain reparations, as these can prompt public support for reparations and shame governments and corporations into paying reparations. Whilst apology has often accompanied legislated financial reparations, it has also become a popular tool for governments and organisations hoping to distance themselves from historical events that now cause embarrassment. Nevertheless, apology can have a significant symbolic weight and contribute to relational repair. However, the Chapter argues that legislative reparations and apology are still not able to offer the relational repair that is needed to overcome the legacy of slavery and looks to restorative justice,

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expands the idea of 'truth telling' used in restorative justice processes and the idea that knowing 'truth' or what happened is necessary for justice and reconciliation.

<sup>7</sup> Susan A. Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', *History and Theory*, 36:4 (1997), pp. 47-56.

<sup>8</sup> Janna Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past: Reparation and Historical Justice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), p. 27; Linda Radzik, *Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*.

which identifies the harm inflicted by crime as primarily being the violation of social relationships rather than laws.

Processes of truth telling and victim/offender mediation are central to restorative practices, as this is seen to empower the victim and to encourage offender rehabilitation and reconciliation between the parties. In transitional justice settings, such as post-apartheid South Africa, restorative principles have been utilised in truth commissions, as it is argued that the process of collective historical truth creation aids reconciliation and future justice. The Chapter expands upon these concepts to create an Intergenerational Model of repair that utilises concepts of restorative justice in a manner tailored to the intergenerational dimensions and national and international scale of transatlantic slavery's legacy. The Intergenerational Model utilises the more abstract and societal '*transformative* conception' of restorative justice rather than the more personal and individualistic '*encounter* conception' commonly associated with everyday restorative justice practice.<sup>10</sup> This thesis argues that, by adopting ideas associated with the restorative techniques inherent to personal relational reconciliation processes, but scaled up into national and international discussions, wider systemic relational healing can be facilitated, which can contribute to repairing the structural social and economic legacies of transatlantic slavery. This Chapter suggests that educational and commemorative activities in museums and schools could be vehicles for changing attitudes and restoring moral national and international relationships, as these are places that are fundamental to most peoples' 'experience of historical consciousness' and help to define a nation's historical memory.<sup>11</sup>

This Chapter focuses on the US slavery reparations debate but the thesis has a wider focus. The US debate provides a case study in which to explore different models of repair and to advocate an alternative conceptualisation of repair. This is because the US debate is arguably the oldest and most developed debate and has also garnered the greatest level of public engagement. Furthermore, the debate in the US takes place within a single nation and legal jurisdiction. As any international claim would involve multiple nations it is not clear what court would have jurisdiction to hear such a claim.

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<sup>10</sup> Daniel W. Van Ness and Karen Heetberks Strong, *Restoring Justice: An Introduction to Restorative Justice* (Cincinnati, OH.: LexisNexis, 2006), p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', p. 47.

The problems discussed with legal and legislative reparations in the US are, therefore, amplified by international claims for reparations. Similarly, the idea of historical truth telling in schools and museums is applicable to overcoming the international legacy of slavery.

### **The US Reparations Debate**

Calls for reparations for slavery in the US exist for two main reasons. First, by today's standards slavery is wrong and it is argued that there has never been reparation made for the original harms it caused. Second, it is argued that present-day harms deriving from these original harms also deserve repair. The history of the reparations movement attests to both these reasons. For twelve years following the end of the Civil War, Northern forces occupied the South during the Reconstruction, and African Americans enjoyed voting rights and the Federal Freedman's Land Bureau aimed to help 'freed slaves be economically self-sufficient.'<sup>12</sup> However, 'the collapse of Reconstruction, the dissolution of the Freedmen's Bureau, and the Supreme Court's nullification of the Civil Rights Act left black workers almost defenceless before their enemies.'<sup>13</sup> Consequently, 'Calls for reparation became dormant in years after 1877, as African Americans struggled merely to maintain voting rights and oppose the black codes.'<sup>14</sup> Aside from Walter Vaughan who, in 1890, drafted a bill in the House of Representatives 'premised on the idea that former slaves, like Union and Confederate soldiers deserved a pension,' reparations were not an issue until 1969 and Foreman's *Black Manifesto*.<sup>15</sup> In 1973 Boris Bittker released *The Case for Black Reparations* which called for financial reparations for African Americans disadvantaged by the segregated schools system. Segregated schools were established under the principle of separate but equal in the 1896 Supreme Court ruling of *Plessy v Ferguson*. In 1954 the Supreme

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<sup>12</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking, 2010), p. 142.

<sup>14</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34-37; Biondi, 'The Rise of the Reparations Movement', p. 256, disputes this, arguing reparations 'was a much more visible theme in the civil rights/black liberation movement than historical accounts generally acknowledge.'

Court ruled the concept of separate but equal unconstitutional in *Brown v The Board of Education*.<sup>16</sup>

Bittker's book, like Foreman's *Manifesto*, displayed frustration with the failure of the Civil Rights Movement's political successes to improve the socioeconomic position of most African Americans. Both felt that while 'segregation mandated by law had been eliminated . . . that elimination [had] only lead to a myth that there is no longer a problem.'<sup>17</sup> By basing his argument on an identifiable harm and identifiable victims – those sent to the unconstitutional segregated black schools – Bittker was being legally astute and pragmatic. Bittker considered a legal claim for slavery as both unlikely to be successful and unable to fully articulate 'the case for compensation' which includes how segregation was a 'caste system embodying white supremacy' through which 'Full citizenship was in effect denied' to all African Americans.<sup>18</sup> The impact of segregation was not limited to the South; in the North 'the negro's "place" could be defined by unequal enforcement of the law, even in the absence of a formal system of segregation.'<sup>19</sup> Bittker, therefore, argued that as 'racial discrimination against blacks was systematic, unrelenting, authorized at the highest governmental levels, and practiced by large segments of the population' courts are unable to deliver full repair and instead advocated a 'legislative plan of reparations' to overcome the many aspects of slavery's legacy.<sup>20</sup>

The 2003 re-release of *The Case for Black Reparations* angrily noted that racial inequality in the US remained great. Despite the emergence of a significant black middle class by 2003, inequality across society had grown since the end of the 1970s and industrial decline and white flight had left many African Americans locked into underfunded and neglected urban ghettos.<sup>21</sup> Affirmative Action, part of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, failed to withstand appeals to colour-blind policies

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<sup>16</sup> Boris Bittker, *The Case for Black Reparations* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 100.

<sup>18</sup> Bittker, *The Case for Black Reparations*, p. 12, 15, 17.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>21</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 193; Alan B. Krueger, 'Inequality, Too Much of a Good Thing', James J. Heckman and Alan B. Krueger (eds.), *Inequality in America: What Role for Human Capital Policies* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 1-75.



and the Nixon and Reagan administrations.<sup>22</sup> Thus, while the 'earnings gap between blacks and non-blacks narrowed from more than 40 percent in the early 1960s to less than 15 percent in 1975 . . . progress ceased after this point.'<sup>23</sup> The reason included declining sympathy for African Americans, typified by the 1988 presidential campaign of George Bush, which played on white prejudice and fear about the black welfare queen and violent male criminal.<sup>24</sup> At the end of the twentieth century, a dispiriting picture had evolved.

At the start of the twentieth-first century, ghettoisation maintains the effective segregation of schools, perpetuating mutual racial ignorance and prejudice; racial profiling by police targets African Americans; media representation of African Americans exacerbates racial prejudice; and social mobility is lower than in the 1960s.<sup>25</sup> Research has even demonstrated that racial prejudice influences the actions of many in the US at a subconscious level.<sup>26</sup> Government statistics document the continuing impact of race on inequality and life chances, but successive administrations have failed to enact legislation to address these problems.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 38; Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 231.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Gottschalk, 'Inequality, Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts', *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 11:2 (1997), p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> Micki McElya *Clinging to Mammy: the Faithful Slave in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 259; Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 196.

<sup>25</sup> Erica Frankenberg and Chungmei Lee, 'Race in American Public Schools: Rapidly Resegregating School Districts', *The Civil Rights Project: Harvard University* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University, 2002), p. 5; Jim Leitzel, 'Race and Policing', *Social Science and Public Policy*, (March/April 2001), pp. 38-42; Gottschalk, 'Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts', p. 35-39; Martine Gilens, 'Race and Poverty in America: Public Misperceptions and the American News Media', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60:4 (1996), pp. 515-541.

<sup>26</sup> Joel E. Dimsdale, 'Stalked by the Past: The Influence of Ethnicity on Health', *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 62 (2000), p. 163.

<sup>27</sup> Robin J. Anderson, *Dynamics of Economic Well-Being: Poverty, 2004-2006* (Washington, D.C.: US Census Bureau, March 2011), pp. 5-12; United States Census Bureau, 'Table 2. Poverty Status, by Family Relationship, Race, and Hispanic Origin', <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov2.xls>; United States Census Bureau, 'Table 4. Poverty Status, by Type of Family, Presence of Related Children, Race and Hispanic Origin', <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov4.xls> (Accessed 15 April 2012); G. William Domhoff, 'Wealth, Income, and Power', *Who Rules America?* (Santa Cruz: University of California Santa Cruz, September 2005 (updated March 2012)), <http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/wealth.html> (Accessed 15 April 2012).

Frustration with this fuelled calls for reparations for slavery at the start of the twenty-first century.<sup>28</sup>

In 2000 Randall Robinson captured the reparations zeitgeist in *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*. Robinson argues that the crime of slavery is 'still-unfolding' – 'At the dawn of the twenty-first century African Americans lag the American mainstream in virtually every area of statistical measure.'<sup>29</sup> Robinson suggests that German state and corporate Holocaust reparations offer a precedent for financial reparations to African Americans by institutions that profited from slave labour.<sup>30</sup> However, Robinson insists that, if the legacy of slavery is to be overcome, the process of repair cannot simply be monetary. Rather 'Solutions to our racial problems are possible but only if our society can be brought to face up to the massive crime of slavery and all that it has wrought,' including how racial prejudice has shaped US memory of slavery helping to develop a racially exclusive US identity.<sup>31</sup>

Robinson starts *The Debt* by reflecting on a tour of the Capitol Rotunda, on Washington D.C.'s Capitol Hill. Robinson notes that although much of the Mall was built by slaves, African Americans are absent from the monuments.<sup>32</sup> There are monuments to slaveholders, like Thomas Jefferson, but not to slaves. The closest that Washington came to having a monument to a slave was in the 1920s when Congress debated installing a monument to Mammy, the idealised loyal, female household slave and children's nurse.<sup>33</sup> The statue, like lynching, was intended to convey to African Americans the benefit of knowing their place.<sup>34</sup> While the Mammy monument was not built, the place of African Americans is nonetheless conveyed by their exclusion from the capital's monuments.

The reality of slavery, its extent, harshness and importance to US economic development, is absent from most US school textbooks and museums.<sup>35</sup> By erasing the

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<sup>28</sup> Torpey, *Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>29</sup> Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> McElya, *Clinging to Mammy*, pp. 120-145.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-145.

<sup>35</sup> James W. Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (London: The New Press, 2007), pp. 135-171.

historical contribution of African Americans to the United States the myth that America was built by the labour of white men is able to persist, in turn enabling US identity to be conceived as white.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, African Americans demand less than they should from America, and white Americans expect more than they deserve.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the history of Europe is revered while the history of Africa is ignored and denigrated, so that 'blacks and whites in America know of no era in which blacks were world innovators in the sciences and humanities.' Robinson's analysis is echoed by Brooks who suggests that prejudiced and selective national memory has left African Americans with an 'absence of identity,' an intellectual, psychological and emotional form 'of slavery in contemporary society.'<sup>38</sup> This historical absence of social and cultural capital is perpetuated, Robinson argues, as 'whites control virtually every mainstream purveyor of instruction, academic and ephemeral.'<sup>39</sup> For the history of slavery to be overcome in the US, the nation's historical memory must be corrected.

Robinson recognises that without first correcting the US's historical memory, the 'billions of dollars' of compensation he argues is needed to overcome slavery's socioeconomic legacy, is unlikely to materialise. This is why Congressman John Conyers' HR40 proposes the investigation of the legacy of slavery to provide a consensual platform for the implementation of reparative measures.<sup>40</sup> N'CoBRA also seeks to raise support for legislative reparations, recognising that a political consensus supporting reparations is the best way to deliver the 'many forms [of reparation] necessary to equitably address the many forms of injury caused by chattel slavery and its continuing vestiges.'<sup>41</sup> As such, N'CoBRA and HR40 represent the trend towards a broader conceptualisation of harm and repair.<sup>42</sup>

Creating a consensus in support of reparations is no easy task. Across the US the idea of reparations for slavery has prompted many heated reactions from those

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<sup>36</sup> Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 47.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>38</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 35.

<sup>39</sup> Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 85.

<sup>40</sup> John Conyers, 'Reparations', <http://www.johnconyers.com/issues/reparations>; HR40 (111th): *Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act 111th Congress, 2009–2010* (Text as of Jan 06, 2009 (Introduced)).

<sup>41</sup> N'CoBRA, 'About Us: What forms should Reparations take?', <http://www.ncobra.org/aboutus/index.html> (Accessed 5 May 2012).

<sup>42</sup> Torpey, *Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*, p. 123.

who believe the US to be a free and equal nation. David Horowitz typifies the arguments of opponents to reparations, although his methods are more combative than most, notably his controversial advert in US college newspapers entitled 'Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Slavery is a Bad Idea and Racist Too.'

Horowitz discusses his advert and its inflammatory impact in his book *Uncivil Wars* in which his rightwing ideology becomes apparent, highlighting how the reparations question is situated within the wider US culture wars.<sup>43</sup> Horowitz argues that the reaction to his advert 'Ten Reasons,' testifies to the 'intellectual vulgarities of American universities in an age of "political correctness."' <sup>44</sup> To Horowitz, reparations are un-American, socialist and 'an extravagant new handout that is only necessary because some blacks can't seem to locate the ladder of opportunity within the reach of others, many of whom are less privileged than themselves.' Horowitz insists that reparations have been paid already through white Civil War dead, the Great Society and Affirmative Action, and that social security has seen 'trillions of dollars in transfer payments . . . [to] redress historic racial grievances.' Furthermore, Horowitz claims, it was 'Anglo Saxons' that ended centuries of global acceptance of slavery and that:

For all America's faults, African-Americans have an enormous stake in this country and its heritage. It is this heritage that is really under attack by the reparations movement. The reparations claim is one more assault on America, conducted by racial separatists and the political left. It is an attack not only on white Americans, but on all Americans – especially African-Americans.<sup>45</sup>

Using counterfactual reasoning Horowitz further intones:

America's African-American citizens are the richest and most privileged black people alive, a bounty that is a direct result of the heritage that is under assault. The American idea needs the support of its African-American citizens. But African-Americans also need the support of the American idea. For it is the American idea that led to the principles and created the institutions that have set African-Americans – and all of us – free.<sup>46</sup>

Horowitz's history overlooks how white people benefitted from slavery; how the resistance of the enslaved themselves encouraged abolitionism; and the important

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<sup>43</sup> David Horowitz, *Uncivil Wars: The Controversy over Reparations for Slavery* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

and oft-forgotten role of African Americans in the Civil War. Furthermore, social security is not reparation for racial slavery as it is not a 'race based system.'<sup>47</sup> Nor was Affirmative Action a form of reparation as it was not designed to make amends for past discrimination but to provide equality of opportunity and prevent contemporary and future injustice.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, the idea that Union Civil War dead constitute reparation is 'a highly selective reading of both Northern war aims and the motivation for Union soldiers to fight.'<sup>49</sup>

Nevertheless, Horowitz's opinions are common, and he highlights opinion polls from *Fox News* and *Time* that suggest 75 percent of Americans share his opinion.<sup>50</sup> But these opinion polls do not reveal the divisiveness of reparations.<sup>51</sup> For example, 'When the *Mobile Register* polled Alabama citizens in the summer of 2002, it found the question of reparations was the most racially divisive issue it had ever studied. . . . Only 5% of white Alabamians support reparations for slavery from the federal government, but 67% of black Alabamians support them.'<sup>52</sup> In 2003 Chicago and Harvard universities' found that only 4 percent of whites supported reparations.<sup>53</sup> However, white opposition to reparations for slavery does not mean that reparations are not needed. Rather, this opposition reveals how prejudiced historical memory blinds white Americans to their society's continuing racial prejudice and discrimination, thereby enabling white Americans to exonerate themselves and blame African Americans for the racial dimensions of present-day US inequality. The opposition of white Americans to the reparations issue also raises important philosophical questions about the duty of individuals and nations to seek to repair the harm, or to apologise for harmful actions, committed by other people in the past.

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<sup>47</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 82.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58-62; Torpey, 'Making Whole What is Smashed', p. 112.

<sup>49</sup> Manfred Berg, 'Historical Continuity and Counterfactual History in the Debate Over Reparations for Slavery', Manfred Berg and Bernd Schaffer (eds.), *Historical Justice in International Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 83.

<sup>50</sup> Horowitz, *Uncivil Wars*, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> Torpey, 'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed', pp. 114-119.

<sup>52</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

## **Philosophical Considerations of Repairing Historical Wrongs**

Philosophers are divided by the concept of reparations for slavery and other historical injustices. John Torpey identifies the reparations movement as part of the “triumph of the therapeutic.” By this, Torpey is referring to the cultural trend for present-day society to look back and see itself as an ‘era that is “after” others – an era that is post-socialist, post-rationalist, post-modernist, post-utopian’ and which has a tendency ‘to embrace victimization.’<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately ‘efforts to rectify past wrongs have thus jostled with, and perhaps to some degree supplanted, expansive visions of an alternative human future of the kind that animated the socialist and civil rights movements of the preceding century.’<sup>55</sup> This reflects two things. Firstly, the wider popularity of identity politics in which certain ‘communities of identity and interest’ campaign for policies that suit their interests, not society’s as a whole.<sup>56</sup> Secondly, ‘reparations help to make the notion of human rights seem enforceable’ when all other arguments have failed.<sup>57</sup> Seen in this light, reparations are arguably regressive, because they suggest that present-day inequality is only problematic if caused by historical wrongdoing. This is the antithesis to human rights doctrine and ignores research that has demonstrated the wider causes of present-day inequality.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, such identity politics could potentially perpetuate ‘historical conflicts and grievances instead of resolving them.’<sup>59</sup>

Martin Freeman in ‘Historical Injustice and Liberal Theory’ discusses the ideological rivalry between human rights theory and reparations for historical injustice which involve special treatment for members of certain groups. In modern human rights theory, equality between individuals is the goal, however, reparations claims

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<sup>54</sup> Phillip Rieff, *The triumph of the therapeutic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) in Torpey, ‘*Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*’, p. 48, 159.

<sup>55</sup> John Torpey, ‘An Avalanche of History: The “Collapse of the Future” and the Rise of Reparations Politics’, Manfred Berg and Bernd Schaffer (eds.), *Historical Justice in International Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 28.

<sup>56</sup> Torpey, ‘*Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*’, p. 31.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>58</sup> Gottschalk, ‘Inequality, Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts’, pp. 35-39; Gregory Acs and Megan Gallagher, *Income Inequality among America’s Children. New Federalism: National Survey of America’s Families. Series B, No. B-6* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 2000).

<sup>59</sup> Manfred Berg and Bernd Schaffer, ‘Introduction’, Manfred Berg and Bernd Schaffer (eds.) *Historical Justice in International Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 10.

suggest that in order to gain equality, people must be treated differently.<sup>60</sup> There is then a divide between those who argue for repair of past wrongs and those who argue for a focus on present-day injustices. Duncan Ivison proposes a duty to both, although 'when historical and contemporary injustice overlap, the case for reparations is considerably stronger, but mainly because of forward-looking reasons (distributive justice, reconciliation, non-humiliation) not backward-looking ones.'<sup>61</sup> Meanwhile, David Miller argues that historical wrongs should be repaired because there is a moral obligation to right wrongs.<sup>62</sup> If, as reparations advocates argue, the recipient of any reparation is suffering present-day harms in addition to the original historic injustice, a greater obligation to provide justice exists.<sup>63</sup>

Is it possible, however, to trace with certainty the impact of a historical action upon a present-day individual or situation? As noted in the Introduction, history is not an exact science and determining how the past relates to the present is not simple. As Ivison reminds us, 'counterfactuals can cut both ways.'<sup>64</sup> Counterfactual reasoning could support Horowitz's assertion that African Americans are better off because of slavery as they live in the US and not Africa.<sup>65</sup> Stephen Kershnar argues that as the descendants of slaves could not have existed but for slavery, they cannot claim to have been harmed by slavery, as they did not experience it firsthand.<sup>66</sup> However, Kershnar does suggest that descendants of slaves deserve reparation due to the loss of rightful inheritance relating to unpaid wages.<sup>67</sup> George Sher contemplates this argument in reference to Robert Nozick who argues that inheritance rights fade over time. Sher concludes that 'even if property rights do fade completely over time, there will still be many current persons whom ancient wrongs have in one way or another prevented

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<sup>60</sup> Michael Freeman, 'Historical Injustice and Liberal Political Theory', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 48-51.

<sup>61</sup> Duncan Ivison, 'Historical Injustice', John S. Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 522.

<sup>62</sup> David Miller, *National Responsibility and Global Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 146-147.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>64</sup> Ivison, 'Historical Injustice', p. 516.

<sup>65</sup> Horowitz, *Uncivil Wars*, 15-16.

<sup>66</sup> Stephen Kershnar, 'Are the Descendants of Slaves Owed Compensation for Slavery?', *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 16:1 (1999), pp. 95-97.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

from acquiring *new* property rights.<sup>68</sup> This is the case following slavery, as segregation and racism perpetuated slavery's racial hierarchy and whites benefitted from preferential government treatment and opportunities denied to African Americans. The impact of this was both economic and psychological as through discrimination African Americans were 'deprived of self-respect, by being rendered less able to compete for opportunities when they arise, and in other related ways.'<sup>69</sup>

Critics such as Horowitz, argue that financial reparations would constitute an injustice to contemporary citizens, faultless and guiltless with regard to the historical injustice of slavery and its legacy. Thompson counters this position by referring to the concept of collectives. Collectives have interests and identities that transcend those of its individual members. Collectives are intergenerational and can enter into 'transgenerational commitments [and] create transgenerational agreements' with obligations and duties for the collective's future members.<sup>70</sup> Citizens who are not personally guilty of wrongdoing have a duty to make a sacrifice in order to repair the harm caused by their nation's / collectives' historical actions. If, as Thompson suggests, 'The demand of African Americans for reparation is really a demand for a redistribution of resources to close the gap between the living standards of white and black Americans, or for measures to increase opportunities available to African Americans,' US taxpayers have a duty to contribute to this repair due to collective obligations.<sup>71</sup>

Martin Freeman argues the duty to provide reparations is only nullified if that reparation would create more harm than it repaired, or if the harm has been 'superseded' by another more recent harm.<sup>72</sup> Reparation does not necessarily require financial sacrifice, although 'Financial reparations may serve as an acknowledgement and apology, and their symbolic value may be the more important value.'<sup>73</sup> Radzik argues that the acknowledgment of past wrongs and attempts to repair continuing harm is not only morally necessary, but that it is also beneficial for the offending group

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<sup>68</sup> George Sher, 'Ancient Wrongs and Modern Rights', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 10:1 (1981), p. 9.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>70</sup> Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p. 27.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>72</sup> Freeman, 'Historical Injustice and Liberal Political Theory', p. 55.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.



as well as the victim group. Innocent members of a collective that has caused harm through wrongdoing 'must acknowledge wrongdoing and express regret for the victims' because, if they do not, they fail to differentiate themselves from the wrongdoers and 'their moral relationships with others are thus damaged.'<sup>74</sup> Victims must also be empowered to tell their truth about their experience and members of the wrongdoing collective should seek to 'communicate renewed respect and a recommitment to shared norms in a solemn and public fashion.'<sup>75</sup> By doing so it is possible to 'rebuild normal relationships of trust' within society for the benefit of all.<sup>76</sup>

There is then an intellectual 'consensus that we have an obligation to combine justice to the victims of past wrongs with the restoration and reconstruction of society' and that 'recognition and rectification of historical injustices are . . . necessary to equal citizenship and equal justice in the present.'<sup>77</sup> However, it is not clear from these philosophical considerations how to evaluate the legacy of historical injustice and determine how best to make amends. This Chapter shall now explore how differing possible models of repair could contribute to the repair of the legacies of US slavery.

### **The Legal Model**

Legal claims for reparations have proved particularly popular in the US. One reason for this is the role of the Supreme Court in interpreting the Constitution and defining US society.<sup>78</sup> For instance, the Supreme Court has nullified much of the potential of Affirmative Action by prioritising the Constitution's commitment to race blindness (equality of legal treatment) over the commitment to non-subordination (actual equality). In *Regents of the University of California v Bakke*, 1978, the Supreme Court ruled that the use of racial quotas in university admissions was unconstitutional but that affirmative action could be used in some circumstances to address an individual

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<sup>74</sup> Radzik, *Making Amends*, p. 191 and 187.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195-196.

<sup>77</sup> Freeman, 'Historical Injustice and Liberal Political Theory', pp. 58-59.

<sup>78</sup> David Garland, *The Peculiar Institution: America's Death Penalty in the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press of University of Harvard Press, 2010), p. 50. Whilst this book focuses on the death penalty it provides a useful insight into the role of the Supreme Court.

injustice.<sup>79</sup> However, many of the Civil Rights Movement's successes also came via the Supreme Court, most notably *Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954, which ruled segregated schools unconstitutional.<sup>80</sup> Legal claims for reparations for other historical wrongs have also been successful in raising public support and prompting legislative reparations, such as for the illegal internment of Japanese Americans during WWII.<sup>81</sup>

Legal claims for reparations utilise the principles of torts and unjust enrichment. Tort law 'establishes the circumstances in which a person whose interests have been harmed by another individual can be compensated through the civil courts.'<sup>82</sup> Tort law enables compensation cases to be brought against a defendant if their victim feels that they have not been punished enough, or that they should receive compensation.<sup>83</sup> In the case of slavery in the Americas, the denial of wages to slaves and the subsequent denial of inherited wealth are often labelled torts that harm descendants, while the brutality and violence of slavery arguably only harmed those who experienced it directly.<sup>84</sup>

Claims based on unjust enrichment do not depend upon the experience of harm by the claimant. Rather, a case for unjust enrichment has 'two key requirements: that there be a benefit that is *still* retained and that the benefit is unjust.'<sup>85</sup> The benefit may not last; for instance, a company in receipt of an overpayment may cease trading due to insolvency. A successful claim for unjust enrichment must, therefore, demonstrate that a 'benefit . . . is still retained' and a clear 'connection between past wrongdoing and present benefit.'<sup>86</sup>

Courts, however, are only suitable for hearing 'discrete claims by one party against another.'<sup>87</sup> An example of a successful discrete claim for reparations for a historical wrong is that for compensation from New York Life to descendants of victims

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<sup>79</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 172-176; Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, pp. 58-62.

<sup>80</sup> Michael J. Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>81</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 114, 176-177.

<sup>82</sup> Carol Harlow, *Understanding Tort Law* (London: Sweet and Maxwell, 2005), p. 1, 61, 163.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>84</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 2-3; Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 67; Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p. 141.

<sup>85</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 111.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125, Martin and Yaquinto, 'On Redress for Racial Injustice', p. 14.

of the Armenian genocide for its failure to pay out on life insurance schemes.<sup>88</sup> Successful Holocaust reparations claims have also relied on being discrete and have often focused on tangible goods, property or confiscated bank accounts.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, 'as Holocaust lawsuits move away from seeking the return of specific assets or personal property, they face much longer odds, and several other Holocaust-era lawsuits have been somewhat less successful.'<sup>90</sup>

The claim for reparations for slavery is too large in historical scale and too vague, and fails to identify 'a tangible personal injury traceable to the defendants' conduct.'<sup>91</sup> As Bittker has noted, because of the racial classification system in the US, there may even be more white descendants of slaves than there are black.<sup>92</sup> Depending on classification, as Chandran Kukathas comments, reparations claimants 'could easily encompass the majority of the population.'<sup>93</sup> Legal claims for reparation, however, face other obstacles, primarily the legality of slavery when it occurred; statutes of limitations; and the limited jurisdiction of courts to hear claims against the state.<sup>94</sup> Legal claims for reparations for slavery have so far failed to overcome the barriers of statutes of limitations and to meet the courts' requirements for a clearly identified plaintiff and defendant and traceable and quantifiable harm, with predictable results:

In 1995, the US Courts of Appeals dismissed a reparations lawsuit brought against the US government by descendants of slaves. In January 2004, another set of cases filed against companies that profited from slavery was dismissed.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>89</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. xv, 10; Michael T. Martin and Marilyn Yaquinto, 'On Redress for Racial Injustice', Michael T. Martin and Marilyn Yaquinto (eds.), *Redress for Historical Injustices in the United States: On Reparations for Slavery, Jim Crow, and their Legacies* (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 8.

<sup>90</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 119.

<sup>91</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 123.

<sup>92</sup> Bittker, *The Case for Black Reparations*, p. 95.

<sup>93</sup> Chandran Kukathas, 'Who? Whom? Reparations and the Problem of Agency', *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 37:3 (2006), p. 335.

<sup>94</sup> Berg and Schaffer, 'Introduction', p. 2; Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 123.

<sup>95</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 3. In Federal Court System the US Court of Appeals is second only to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court only hears a limited number of cases each year and only if the constitutional veracity of the legal decision made by the lower courts is considered suspect. See also Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p.123; Martin and Yaquinto, 'On Redress for Racial Injustice', pp. 12-14.

The Legal Model has also been criticised for monetising the suffering of slaves. As Thompson notes, 'Being robbed of the fruits of their labors is only one part, perhaps a small part, of the injustice done to the forebears of African Americans.'<sup>96</sup> Jennifer Hochschild further argues that "'using the court system to debate a deeply political and moral issue [may] distort the case for reparations by framing it in 'legalese'.'"<sup>97</sup> However, legal claims for reparations do not insist that the compensation would fully repair the emotional harm suffered during slavery. Rather, as Freeman suggests (above), a legal victory in a reparations claim would instead vindicate the plaintiff's position and acknowledge past wrongdoing and harm. Furthermore, a court case, if heard, has the ability to offer a (supposedly) non-partisan evaluation of the history and legacy of slavery.

The Legal Model then, whilst flawed, has much to offer in specific discrete cases, such as the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot in which 18000 black homes and businesses were burnt and 300 black people killed. However, *Alexander v. Governor of the State of Oklahoma* which called for reparations for the Tulsa Race Riot because of the failure of the state and city police and authorities to protect the black community and ensure they received compensation, was dismissed in 2004 due to statutes of limitations.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, campaigns for court hearings and legal reparations have raised awareness of the history and legacy of slavery, segregation, racism and state complicity in racial violence.<sup>99</sup> The language of torts and unjust enrichment also help to frame the case for reparations and make the history and legacy of slavery understandable.<sup>100</sup> This is why legalised claims for reparations remain popular in the US and also internationally. For instance, the 2001 claim for reparations for Africa at the United Nations (UN) World Conference Against Racism and Xenophobia (WCAR) utilised the principles of torts and unjust enrichment. In 2003, British reparations

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<sup>96</sup> Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p. 108.

<sup>97</sup> Jennifer Hochschild, 'The Price of Reparations', *Contexts*, 1:4 (2002), p. 4 in Torpey, *Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*, p. 130.

<sup>98</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 130-131.

<sup>99</sup> Biondi, 'The Rise of the Reparations Movement', p. 263.

<sup>100</sup> Martin and Yaquinto, 'On Redress for Racial Injustice', p. 14.

advocates, Rendezvous of Victory, attempted to sue the Queen for reparations for transatlantic slavery, specifically to raise public awareness.<sup>101</sup>

In the case of claims for reparations for other historical injustices, failed legal proceedings have gained public support and precipitated legislation or voluntary corporate reparations. For example, 'In 1999, several cases seeking compensation from private companies and from Germany for their benefit from slave labor were dismissed.'<sup>102</sup> However, embarrassment prompted the German Government and German companies to establish the 'foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future" to oversee the identification of victims and to pay reparations.'<sup>103</sup> Similarly, cases brought by Japanese Americans, such as *Hohri v. United States*, over wrongful internment during WWII, helped gain popular and political support for legislated reparations.<sup>104</sup> However, like the courts, the mobilisation of public opinion tends to need discrete events with a clear causal chain between historical wrongdoing and present-day harms as well as an identifiable and easily understandable remedy. The US and international campaign for reparations is so complex and the history so wide-ranging that it is hard to mobilise public support.<sup>105</sup>

The strength of a legal approach to reparations lies in the ability of courts to correct 'the historical as well as the legal record' and apportion responsibility, identify continuing harm and mandate compensation. However, courts are only able to hear cases which are highly focused and identify specific claimants, defendant, actions and harms. In the case of slavery, 'the harms for which reparation is required include not just material losses, but psychological injuries and harms to relationships and reparation as reconciliation will invariably involve acknowledgement of, and often apology for, wrongs done.'<sup>106</sup> Courts are, unfortunately, 'too contentious, too confrontational to provide the kind of racial recognition and accord that is needed for

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<sup>101</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford, Co-Chair and Co-Founder of Rendezvous of Victory, 10 February 2011.

<sup>102</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 120.

<sup>103</sup> Claus Hofhansel, *Multilateralism, German Foreign Policy and Central Europe* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 70.

<sup>104</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 114.

<sup>105</sup> Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (with Anthony Lombardo), *Reparations to Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 50-52.

<sup>106</sup> Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p.96.

future race relations.<sup>107</sup> What is needed is a form of repair that can cope with the 'inherently political' nature of the reparations issue.<sup>108</sup>

### **The Legislation and Apology Model**

Legislative reparations and state apology offer repair through acknowledging historical wrongdoing by, or sanctioned by, the state and the harm that the continuing failure to acknowledge and amend these wrongs causes to the descendants of the original victims. State apology and legislative reparations also demonstrate a changed attitude to that which enabled the historical wrongdoing and a commitment not to repeat such behaviour.<sup>109</sup> By admitting transgression, the state also affirms the dignity and equality of the victimised party and their descendants. For advocates of legislative reparations, the symbolic nature of apology, the sincerity of which may be underlined by financial measures, offers a greater potential for 'racial reconciliation' than legally enforced financial compensation.<sup>110</sup>

Andrew Valls explains the reparative importance of acknowledgement in the following way:

If compensation is offered without acknowledgment, this may undermine the basis of the self-respect of victims and victims groups. If acknowledgment is offered without material repair, the symbolism is hollow and might reasonably be interpreted as insincere. Most important, if the material equivalent of compensation is offered, but it is not characterized as compensation but rather as a gift, or as the requirements of abstract principles of equality, then in this case too, something important is lost. In this case the material repair cannot convey the acknowledgment of the past that may be required to affirm the equal dignity of the members of a previously victimized group.<sup>111</sup>

Debra Satz underlines the importance of acknowledgment and how expressly outlining the purpose of compensation enables compensation to achieve its 'underlying purpose . . . in intergenerational contexts . . . [which] is to help re-

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<sup>107</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 98.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>109</sup> Aaron Lazare, *On Apology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 34-35.

<sup>110</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 141-171.

<sup>111</sup> Andrew Valls, 'Reconsidering the Case for Black Reparations', Jon Miller and Rahul Kumar (eds.), *Reparations: Interdisciplinary Inquiries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 127.

establish relations of trust and mutual respect.<sup>112</sup> In the case of slavery, by acknowledging the purpose of financial reparations and the desire for reconciliation it is possible that 'In conjunction with other measures, black reparation could help to create new and better relationships in a society that remains racially divided because of its past – and because of the way that past continues to shape the present.'<sup>113</sup>

The foremost legacy of US slavery is not financial; rather these financial legacies reflect a wider exclusion and denigration of African Americans. It is for this reason that Robinson highlights how African Americans are absent from the monuments on the Mall in Washington D.C. It is also why in 1969 Foreman did not just call for \$500 million, but also for the establishment of African American institutions of learning, investment funds and cultural centres, to redress the intellectual, cultural and economic imbalance between African and European Americans.<sup>114</sup> Such schemes are called for because they tackle harms to the community and not just to the individual.<sup>115</sup>

An example of legislative reparations is provided by the 1991 compensation and apology to Japanese Americans. This action constituted a symbolic gesture – the flat rate of \$20,000 per individual did not match the physical and emotional harm experienced by many. Furthermore, the compensation only totalled \$1.5 billion in contrast to the \$27 billion originally claimed. However this was enough to affirm the sincerity of the US Government's apology.<sup>116</sup> The racial nature of the internment process was deeply insulting to the Japanese American community, as it implied that they were inherently un-American. By publically and sincerely admitting that the internment and discrimination was wrong, by apologising, paying financial compensation, correcting the historical record in Congress and establishing a museum

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<sup>112</sup> Debra Satz, 'Countering the Wrongs of the Past: The Role of Compensation', Jon Miller and Rahul Kumar (eds.), *Reparations and Interdisciplinary Inquiries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 176-192.

<sup>113</sup> Valls, 'Reconsidering the Case for Black Reparations', p. 127.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>115</sup> Robert Fullinwider, 'The Case for Reparations', Michael T. Martin and Marilyn Yaquinto (eds.), *Redress for Historical Injustices in the United States: On Reparations for Slavery, Jim Crow, and their Legacies* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 129.

<sup>116</sup> Robert Sadamu Shimabukuro, *Born in Seattle: The Campaign for Japanese American Redress* (London: University of Washington Press, 2001), p. xvii, 74, 108. See also Eric K. Yamamoto, 'Racial Reparations: Japanese Americans and African American Claims', *Boston College Third World Law Journal*, 19:1 (1998), pp. 477-523.

to tell the history of internment, Japanese American loyalty and dignity was affirmed and their full citizenship was symbolically restored.<sup>117</sup> This acknowledging of wrongdoing was 'the most important thing the campaign accomplished' as it helped to heal the shame and hurt that had been caused by the 'glossing over of Executive Order 9066 in high school text books.'<sup>118</sup>

Legislative reparations offer a similar route of repair for African Americans and the history and legacy of slavery in the US. The harm caused by slavery is much greater than that caused by Japanese American internment – does this affect the potential of symbolic reparations to achieve societal healing? Brophy spells out in stark terms the challenge of overcoming the legacy of slavery in the US:

There can be no elimination of poverty in America, no rebuilding of lives for millions of Black Americans sweltering in urban chaos and isolated rural deprivation, no chance for millions of urban black youths staring through prison bars, hiding from warrants, dropping out of school or negotiating the violence of urban battlefields, to contemplate and develop their futures without reparations. Reparations is not merely long overdue, it is a finance plan to implement a change.<sup>119</sup>

Apology need not include financial reparations, but is apology without reparations able to deliver reconciliation?

Recent apologies have often fallen into one of two types. The first consist solely of verbal declarations, such as Tony Blair's apology for British failings during the Irish potato famine.<sup>120</sup> The second type involves elaborate processes of historical revision and dialogue, such as the New Zealand Government's apology to Ngai Tahu Maori for violating the Treaty of Waitangi.<sup>121</sup> This followed negotiation over the history and the wording of the apology (itself a process of reconciliation), was recorded in the national

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98, 115.

<sup>119</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 150.

<sup>120</sup> Janna Thompson, 'Apology Justice and Respect: A Critical Defence of Political Apology', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 33; Eleanor Bright Fleming, 'When Sorry IS Enough: The Possibility of a National Apology for Slavery', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 104.

<sup>121</sup> Thompson, 'Apology Justice and Respect', p. 33; Meredith Gibbs, 'Apology and Reconciliation in New Zealand's Treaty of Waitangi Settlement Process', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp.154-167.



parliamentary record and was accompanied by the return of land as well as financial compensation.<sup>122</sup> Blair's apology was an easy gesture that failed to provide an account of the wider history of Anglo-Irish relations, did not follow negotiation, and did not lead to any change in policy between Ireland and Britain.<sup>123</sup> As Thompson notes of such apologies, 'One might conclude that political leaders are willing to apologize only when they think that there will be no serious political or legal repercussions.'<sup>124</sup> The New Zealand apology, however, demonstrates how sincere processes of apology which involve historical investigation, acknowledgement of harm and culpability and effort to make amends, can enable reconciliation. Reflecting on the position of his tribe:

Tipene O'Regan, principal Ngai Tahu settlement negotiator described the Ngai Tahu claim as "a *Taniwha* [spiritual being], a monster that has consumed our tribal lives down through the years as generation after generation has struggled for 'justice,'" a *Taniwha* that needed to be laid to rest if Ngai Tahu were to take control of its own destiny.<sup>125</sup>

Sincerity, furthermore, does not depend upon the amount of the financial reparations. The UN International Law Commission recognises apology as a means of providing 'satisfaction' when restitution and compensation are not possible or suitable, as is arguably the case regarding the legacy of slavery.<sup>126</sup> As shown, apology can offer a level of repair that is better than restitution and compensation. Matt James has outlined eight principles which he believes are critical for a political apology.

1. it is recorded officially in writing
2. names the wrongs in question
3. accepts responsibility
4. states regret
5. promises nonrepetition
6. does not demand forgiveness
7. is not hypocritical or arbitrary

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<sup>122</sup> Gibbs, 'Apology and Reconciliation in New Zealand's Treaty of Waitangi Settlement Process', pp. 154-167; Thompson, 'Apology Justice and Respect', pp. 40-43.

<sup>123</sup> Thompson, 'Apology Justice and Respect', p. 50; Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p. 70.

<sup>124</sup> Thompson, 'Apology Justice and Respect', p. 33; Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann and Mark Gibney, 'Introduction: 'Apologies and the West'', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 1-9.

<sup>125</sup> Gibbs, 'Apology and Reconciliation in New Zealand's Treaty of Waitangi Settlement Process', p. 161.

<sup>126</sup> Richard B. Bilder, 'The Role of Apology in International Law', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 17-18.

8. undertakes – through measures of publicity, ceremony and concrete reparation – both to engage morally those in whose name apology is made and to assure the wronged group that the apology is sincere.<sup>127</sup>

A sincere apology could make a reparative contribution to the legacy of slavery in the US. Indeed, there have been some notable apologies by US institutions for their links to slavery, including the University of Alabama and the banks JPMorgan Chase, Lehman Brothers and Wachovia.<sup>128</sup>

At a national level there have been two significant steps by the US Congress to acknowledge and apologise for slavery and the exclusion of African Americans from US memory and identity. First, 'In late 2004, Congress authorized a \$3.9 million appropriation to study, design, and staff the National Museum of African American History and Culture as part of the Smithsonian Institution.'<sup>129</sup> Established by an Act of Congress, the new museum will be 'located on or near the National Mall in Washington D.C.,' symbolically placing African Americans at the heart of the US's commemorative landscape and national history. Second, on 18 June 2009 Congress passed a Concurrent Resolution 'Apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African Americans.'<sup>130</sup> This apology entered in the nation's official history how slavery had been fundamental to the nation's development and how the 'visceral racism against people of African descent upon which it [slavery] depended became enmeshed in the social fabric of the United States.' The apology further recognised that Jim Crow meant that emancipation was a hollow achievement and that 'vestiges of Jim Crow continue to this day.' However, the resolution also declared

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<sup>127</sup> Matt James, 'Wrestling with the Past: Apologies, Quasi-Apologies, and Non-Apologies in Canada', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 139.

<sup>128</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 14.

<sup>129</sup> James Oliver Horton, 'Slavery in American History: An Uncomfortable National Dialogue', James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 54.

<sup>130</sup> S. Con. Res. 26. In 2005 the Senate also passed a resolution apologising for its historic failure to enact an anti-lynching legislation during the first half of the twentieth century. See Martin and Yaquinto, 'On Redress for Historical Injustice', p.3; S. Res. 39 (109), 'Apologizing to the victims of lynching and the descendants of those victims for the failure of the Senate to enact anti-lynching legislation' (7 February 2005).

that 'Nothing in this resolution – (A) authorizes or supports any claim against the United States; or (B) serves as a settlement of any claim against the United States.'<sup>131</sup>

This resolution, while acknowledging past wrongdoing and lasting harm, does not constitute a fully successful apology. By ruling out financial compensation it refuses to admit that the US has failed to overcome the continuing harm caused by slavery and Jim Crow. The resolution encapsulates where the US is on its path to overcoming its history of slavery. Most people in the US believe that slavery was wrong, but do not accept that the US is still shaped by this wrong. Instead they believe that the US is exceptional, freer and better than all other nations, and that the US's progressive nature means that slavery's harm has been or is being overcome without the need for reparations.<sup>132</sup> Like Horowitz, many believe racial inequality to be the result of some African Americans' individual failings and not the legacy of slavery and segregation.<sup>133</sup> For example, when Alabama University apologised for its historical support for and use of slavery, popular opposition reflected the following beliefs:

1. The current generation is not responsible for prior crimes and an apology is, therefore, meaningless.
2. An apology dishonours the memory of the university or the South more generally, or at least distorts the role of slavery in the university's history. The request for apology might also force Alabamians into giving an apology when they do not want to give one, or it attaches moral blame to Alabamians who have no culpability and are, themselves, oppressed.
3. It [apology] causes more harm than good, because it opens old wounds and causes further conflict.
4. An apology is not sincere; it is designed for political purposes or to obtain publicity.<sup>134</sup>

These reactions demonstrate that European Americans are still to fully comprehend the extent to which slavery has shaped the US. As long as this is the case, the US will not tackle its racial inequality and thereby demonstrate the 'improved behaviour [which is a] required component of atonement.'<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> S. Con. Res. 26.

<sup>132</sup> Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, p. 213.

<sup>133</sup> Horowitz, *Uncivil Wars*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>134</sup> Alfred L. Brophy, 'The University and the Slaves: Apology and Its Meaning', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 114.

<sup>135</sup> Radzik, *Making Amends*, p. 192.

## **Healing Truth: A Restorative Model of Repair**

Practitioners of restorative justice argue that traditional punitive criminal justice measures satisfy only the state's wish to reaffirm its authority, and fail to meet the victim's desire to be respected and empowered and to rehabilitate the offender. Instead of emphasising how laws are broken by crime, restorative justice practitioners focus on broken relationships within society, and argue that the aims of justice should be relational 'repair, reconciliation and reassurance.'<sup>136</sup> At its basic level, relational repair can focus on two individuals. In a broader sense it can mean trying to repair the obstacles to peaceful and trusting relationships between communities. Central to relational repair is the affirmation of shared values and the first step towards this often involves establishing the truth about what has happened; what the motivations behind the crime were; what the impact of this crime was; and how this crime contravenes the values of society. By seeking the restoration of moral relationships between victim and offender restorative justice benefits the offender as well as the victim. The victim is reassured that their suffering is recognised and that their victimisation will not be repeated; the perpetrator regains their moral standing and is assured that the victim will not seek revenge.<sup>137</sup>

Daniel W. Van Ness and Karen Heetberks Strong outline three overlapping concepts of how restorative justice can be employed. First, the '*encounter* conception' (encounters between victim and offender provide a crucial element of the relational healing process); second, the '*reparative* conception' (justice as the repair of harm, not the punishment of the offender); and third, the '*transformative* conception' which is:

far more expansive than the other two because it has to do with broken relationships at multiple levels of society. It addresses not simply individual instances of harm but goes beyond to structural issues of injustice such as racism, sexism and classism. Each of which prevent people from living in whole, harmonious, and healthy relationships with others and with their social and physical environments.<sup>138</sup>

The first two conceptions are the most widely recognised by practitioners of restorative justice, however, it is by bringing in the more expansive '*transformative*

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<sup>136</sup> Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses*, (Scottsdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1995), p. 181.

<sup>137</sup> Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), pp. 9-24.

<sup>138</sup> Van Ness and Heetberks Strong, *Restoring Justice*, p. 42.

conception,' that restorative justice techniques can be best seen as offering a contribution to repairing the legacy of transatlantic slavery. Indeed, it is in the truth telling initiatives of nations undergoing processes of transitional justice that the personal '*encounter* conception,' the '*reparative* conception' and the structural and societal '*transformative* conception' have been utilised together, offering an insight into the contribution that restorative justice can offer to the repair of historical injustices.

In order to understand how restorative justice techniques can be applied to repairing the legacy of slavery it is first helpful to examine how restorative justice is practiced in cases of low level crime between individuals in 'victim offender reconciliation programmes (VORPs).'<sup>139</sup> VORPs seek to enable the victim of crime to explain their understanding of what happened to them and the impact that it had on them, and to ask questions about why they were victimised.<sup>140</sup> Through this process it is hoped that the victim may gain a sense of 'closure.'<sup>141</sup> VORPs are also intended to reform offender attitudes and behaviour and enable their reintegration 'back into the community.'<sup>142</sup>

Restorative justice also makes demands upon wider society, as acts of injustice violate the societal norms upon which just relationships are built. Wider society has a moral obligation to facilitate VORPs because damaged relationships harm not just those directly involved but all society. By involving the wider community, restorative justice processes enable society to investigate wider systemic forces that cause unjust relationships and to 'question [societal] norms and [perhaps] alter the existing social structures.'<sup>143</sup> Likewise, these principles can be extended to relationships between communities as Lutz Netzig and Thomas Trenzcek make clear:

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<sup>139</sup> Joe Hudson and Burt Galaway, 'Introduction', Burt Galaway and Joe Hudson (eds.), *Restorative Justice: International Perspectives* (Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press, 1996); Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses*, pp. 165-169.

<sup>140</sup> Hudson and Galaway, 'Introduction', p. 9.

<sup>141</sup> Zehr, *Changing Lenses*, p. 188.

<sup>142</sup> Hudson and Galaway, 'Introduction', pp. 8-9.

<sup>143</sup> McCold, 'Restorative Justice and the Role of Community', Burt Galaway and Joe Hudson (eds.), *Restorative Justice: International Perspectives* (Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press, 1996), p. 98; Dennis Sullivan and Larry Tifft, *Restorative Justice: Healing the Foundations of Our Everyday Lives* (Monsey, N.Y.: Willow Tree Press, 2001), pp. 38-44; James Dignan, *Understanding Victims and Restorative Justice* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005), p. 112.

Justice is essential for both individuals and society. The most frequent causes of disruption, pain, and suffering is when situations and rules are perceived as being unjust. . . . War, destruction, and personal catastrophe are based on the perception of injustice and unfairness. In contrast, when rules and relationships are perceived as fair and just, people and societies are able to develop and flourish. Further, conflicts are more likely to be solved in a manner that does not cause the destruction of the opponent, and that may lead to social peace if the social, political, and legal order is perceived as fair. But the critical question is, how are just relations established?<sup>144</sup>

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is the most well known truth telling process in a transitional justice setting, although arguably, 'It was Latin America that gave rise to the so-called "truth commissions."' <sup>145</sup> Truth commissions provide a vehicle to interrogate history and to reveal events and perspectives that have been suppressed or excluded by previous regimes. The need to confront suppressed historical events and to constructively discuss differing perspectives regarding the past, originates from the understanding that societies are defined by their memory and that for society to be harmonious a shared historical memory must exist. After divisive events, such as interethnic or religious violence, dictatorships, or civil war, interpretation of these events is subjective and differing memories can be a source of continuing tension and future violence.<sup>146</sup> The process of establishing a shared historical memory about what happened is, therefore, necessary for future peace. Truth commissions can facilitate the creation of shared historical memory by providing a platform for increasing 'Public knowledge about the past . . . through elaborate processes of representation by perpetrators, victims, and the broader society, grounding the historical inquiry with a basis for social consensus.'<sup>147</sup>

Truth telling processes are cathartic experiences but offer much more, as Ruti Teitel explains:

Truth-telling is said to address the social need for knowledge to become acknowledgement. It is said to bring victims back into the fold of society, by

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<sup>144</sup> Lutz Netzig and Thomas Trenczek, 'Restorative Justice as Participation: Theory, Law, Experience and Research', Burt Galaway and Joe Hudson (eds.), *Restorative Justice: International Perspectives* (Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press, 1996), p. 242.

<sup>145</sup> Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Paloma Aguilar, and Carmen González-Enríquez, 'Introduction', Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Carmen González-Enríquez and Paloma Aguilar (eds.), *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 4.

<sup>146</sup> Vesna Nickolic-Ristanovic, 'The Possibilities of Restorative Justice in Serbia', Lode Walgrave (ed.), *Repositioning Restorative Justice* (Cullompton, Devon: Willan, 2003), p. 242.

<sup>147</sup> Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 81.

recognizing their suffering, providing a form of distributive or social justice, and giving out non-conventional resources such as social awareness, collective memory, solidarity, and the overcoming of low self esteem. Truth has been seen as a form of social empowerment, giving to previously powerless and repressed individuals the possibility of reclaiming their lives and understanding the nature of their subjugation. . . . Truth has been seen as a form of 'justice as recognition' acknowledgement or admission. It can be seen as a form of compensatory justice, in that it restores a sense of justice that had broken down.<sup>148</sup>

Deborah Posel underlines these principles by describing how the South African TRC commissioners defined the process of truth telling as 'healing' and identified a progression of 'truths' necessary to create a 'healing truth.' The first, 'forensic or factual truth,' is what can be considered true in a legal sense.<sup>149</sup> With slavery in the US, this would include the acknowledgment that slavery occurred, that segregation followed and that both of these were race based and sanctioned by the US Government. The second 'truth' identified by the TRC was 'personal or narrative truth;' a truth which is inherently subjective but which enables individuals to explain the impact historical events (factual truths) had on them, thereby giving voice and recognition to those 'previously silenced.'<sup>150</sup> In the case of US slavery and segregation, where those who experienced slavery are no longer alive and those who experienced segregation are decreasing, this 'personal truth' can include previously overlooked historical testimonies and oral historical sources. African American perspectives of the history of slavery and their interpretation and day to day experience of its legacy can also be viewed as a 'personal truth.' Telling such personal truths also reminds us that while slavery and segregation were national experiences, they were also individual tragedies and this should not be forgotten. Hearing 'personal truths' also enables those with differing experience and historical memory to empathise with this different historical interpretation. Consequently a third truth, 'social truth' is created through 'interaction, discussion and debate.'<sup>151</sup> 'Social truth' also involves explaining how historical memory has been selectively created and excluded certain members of society and their experiences and perspectives from the national memory in order to justify inequalities in society. Explaining and discussing these differing 'truths' creates a

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<sup>148</sup> Brito, Aguila and González-Enríquez, 'Introduction', p. 25.

<sup>149</sup> Deborah Posel, 'The TRC Report: What Kind of History? What Kind of Truth?: A Preliminary exploration' (Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand, 1999), p. 11.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

fourth truth, a 'healing truth.'<sup>152</sup> This 'healing truth' or inclusive, multi-perspective national memory can then be disseminated by schools and museums to facilitate processes of increasing empathy and social reconciliation. This has been the case in South Africa and also Sierra Leone where a museum has been constructed to tell the truths revealed by the truth commission into the nation's civil war.<sup>153</sup>

By including previously ridiculed, denied or dismissed experiences and perspectives, relational repair is facilitated due to two overlapping reasons. Firstly, the act of including previously excluded events and perspectives shows respect towards those who experienced those events or whose views have not been heard, demonstrating that they are now considered equal. Secondly, incorporating these events and perspectives can potentially reshape the national memory and how present-day society is perceived to have been created. In the US, this could mean that the nation's historical memory changes from blinding US citizens to the historical causes of socioeconomic inequalities and continuing racial prejudice and damaged race relations, to revealing them. Upon this basis of increased equality of experience and perspective, and increased understanding, new and improved relationships between African Americans and European Americans could be constructed and the wider legacies of slavery addressed.

In order to create a 'healing truth' it is imperative that a holistic truth is told in all its fullness and complexity. In South Africa, atrocities committed by those resisting apartheid were included in the TRC, enabling the new regime to distance itself from past human rights violations and to affirm the human value of all members of the new South Africa. The refusal of international corporations which had traded with the apartheid regime to participate in the TRC undermined the process to an extent.<sup>154</sup> Victims of apartheid deserved to hear representatives of corporations (which are, after

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<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-15.

<sup>153</sup> Interview with Richard Freedman, Director, South African Holocaust Foundation, Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 24 November 2009; Interview with Wayne Alexander, Director of Education and Public Programmes, Iziko Museums of Cape Town, 25 November 2009; Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 'Peace Museum', <http://www.sierraleonetrhc.org/index.php/sierra-leone-peace-museum> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

<sup>154</sup> Lars Waldorf, 'Anticipating the Past: Transitional Justice and Socio-Economic Wrongs', *Social and Legal Studies*, 21:2 (2012), p. 176. The TRC's narrow field of investigation has been criticised for focusing on acts of individual violence not the wide spread and large injustices, such as the economic subjugation of black South Africans. See also Torpey, 'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed', p. 145.



all, enduring organisations which inherit responsibility), explain why they broke international sanctions and placed profit above the human rights of black South Africans.<sup>155</sup> Similarly, the failure of the US during the 1990s to participate in truth commissions researching Cold War era US-backed violent suppression of left wing groups by Latin American Governments resulted in the creation of a distorted and incomplete truth. The lesson for those seeking to repair the legacies of slavery is clear: there needs to be a broad collective endeavour to tell the history of slavery and its legacy and to understand the harm that remains in society. This means including past events that are shameful and embarrassing within the national memory, as well as incorporating perspectives and interpretations of individuals and groups previously excluded due to prejudice.

The creation of a 'healing truth,' or shared historical consciousness, does not mean that there will no longer be differing perspectives about the past. It means that those who hold different perspectives are prepared to investigate together the past and identify, to the extent that it is possible, a 'factual' historical narrative, so that differing perspectives are less divisive and can be mutually respected and understood. Restorative justice principles and practices highlight the reparative potential of acknowledgement and truth telling processes of 'social memory making.' Through such processes 'social, political, or 'collective' identities, can be revised and relationships based upon these identities can be repaired.'<sup>156</sup> As such, the politics of memory is ultimately revealing about, and relevant to, any political progress towards deeper democracy.

### **The Intergenerational Model**

There are examples of historical truth telling exercises in the US, including corporate, civic and institutional efforts to reveal previously suppressed or ignored historical involvement in slavery. For example:

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<sup>155</sup> Bonny Ibhawoh, 'Rethinking Corporate Apologies: Business and Apartheid in South Africa', Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 271-284.

<sup>156</sup> Brito, Aguila and González-Enríquez, 'Introduction', p. 29.

There has been a law passed by the state of California to require insurance companies to disclose policies written on slaves' lives. In Chicago, Detroit, and Los Angeles, ordinances require companies doing business with those cities to disclose their connections to slavery. [And . . .] on college campuses, . . . faculty, administration, or students at schools like Brown, Sewanee, Vanderbilt, Yale, and the Universities of Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia are investigating their connections to slavery and the institution's defenders.<sup>157</sup>

The 2009 Congressional apology for slavery, segregation and racism and the 2004 establishment by Congress of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) also constitute restorative gestures. As mentioned, the NMAAHC will tell the history of America from the African American viewpoint demonstrating the equality of African American historical experiences and perspectives to those of white Americans. The NMAAHC enables African Americans to tell their forebears truths to current generations and to reshape national memory. Museums and other educational, commemorative and memorial projects can enable the US to create a 'healing truth' by discussing the history and legacy of slavery within the US. As Margaret Walker observes:

Repair is in the history we make and make sure is told, but is also in the process we should expect to be intergenerational. The facets of the process include truth-telling education, and commemoration that preserves the factual and moral truth, that reasserts the dignity of victims and the shameful parts of communities' alongside their more welcome ones. These measures not only protest against the wrong, but rebel against the cruel possibility that time will bury all wounds, even if no one works to heal them. This respects victims and a community of judgement, even if it cannot entirely satisfy their resentment, grief and outrage.<sup>158</sup>

The US needs to confront its history and how the prejudicial memory of its past continues to distort US society and the life chances of citizens. Restorative racial reconciliation is necessary – not just to repair the stain of slavery on the nation's history, but to repair contemporary relationships damaged as a legacy of this history.

Museums and schools, as promoters of official history, have an important role to play in changing how the US understands its history of slavery and race. As national identity is largely constructed upon historical memory, relationships between groups,

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<sup>157</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. xi. See also Biondi, 'The Rise of the Reparations Movement', pp. 262-263.

<sup>158</sup> Margaret Urban Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relations after Wrongdoing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 144.

within and between nations, are heavily shaped by historical memory.<sup>159</sup> Museums and schools can make a significant contribution to relational repair by including previously excluded events and perspectives in the historical narratives that they present. This can demonstrate how those once denied equality on the part of those previously excluded from the national historical memory are now respected and their descendants recognised as equal. This can enable empathy and dialogue between those groups divided by the history and legacy of slavery. Revision of the history presented in schools and museums can therefore be interpreted as potentially reparative.

The relational harm inherited from transatlantic slavery has also led to calls for international financial reparations, notably from the West to Africa and from Britain to Jamaica.<sup>160</sup> The international history of transatlantic slavery and its legacy will be discussed in Chapter Two, and it is only necessary to remark here that this history is contested and that international legal claims for financial reparations are unlikely to succeed, as the impediments of statutes of limitations and lack of popular support are exacerbated by the multiple jurisdictions involved in an international claim.<sup>161</sup> There are similarities in the political background of the international and US reparations movements. The US reparations movement developed out of the intellectual milieu of the Civil Rights Movement. International reparations claims developed from anti-imperialist, nationalist movements and theories of postcolonialism and underdevelopment. Relationships between African Americans and European Americans are undermined by differing memories of slavery and the resulting differences in interpretations of the level of US socioeconomic justice. Similarly, Western relations with African and Caribbean nations are strained by differing memories of transatlantic slavery and colonialism, which in turn causes differing evaluations of the moral basis of present-day international relations. A process of historical truth telling, dialogue and collective memory creation could, therefore,

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<sup>159</sup> Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', p. 56.

<sup>160</sup> Lord Anthony Gifford, 'The legal basis of the claim for Reparations', Africa Reparations Movement', A paper presented to the First Pan-African Congress on Reparations, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 27-29 April 1993, <http://www.arm.arc.co.uk/legalBasis.html> (Accessed 22 April 2009); The National Commission on Reparations, 'Homepage', [http://www.jis.gov.jm/special\\_sections/reparations/index.htm](http://www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/reparations/index.htm) (Accessed 3 April 2012).

<sup>161</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 37, 49.

encourage international reconciliation. The empowerment of previously suppressed African and African Caribbean communities in this truth telling could offer a symbolic posthumous recognition of the humanity and worth of those who in life were dehumanised and denigrated and establish a basis of respect and trust upon which to build repaired relationships.<sup>162</sup>

The reparative potential of seeking to create an inclusive collective memory is underscored by the contrast between how Germany and Japan have dealt with the history of WWII and their damaged relationships with their neighbours. Germany's efforts to repair relations with its neighbours have involved commemoration, education, acknowledgement of harm, demonstrations of regret, and negotiation over what form reparations should take and how the history of WWII should be told.<sup>163</sup> In Polish-German relations, a moment of symbolic importance occurred on 'December 7, 1970 when Chancellor Willy Brandt knelt in front of the monument to the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.'<sup>164</sup> Such acts of public acknowledgment and contrition have been central in rehabilitating Germany's international image.<sup>165</sup> Germany has also spent billions of Deutschmarks on establishing collaborative educational projects with its Eastern European neighbours. For example, the Foundation for Polish German Reconciliation was established in 1990 with DM500 million from the German state. Similar arrangements had been reached with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Czech Republic and include "'future"-orientated activities, such as youth exchanges' to foster reconciliation.<sup>166</sup> Germany and Poland have even collaborated on the creation of school textbooks so that their national memories of WWII do not conflict.<sup>167</sup> In 2007 the exhibition 'Remembrance Preserved: Third Reich Slave and Forced Labour from Poland 1939-1945,' organised by the Foundation for Polish German Reconciliation, toured Polish and German cities.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, pp. 116-117.

<sup>163</sup> Torpey, 'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed', pp. 36-41.

<sup>164</sup> Hofhansel, *Multilateralism, German Foreign Policy and Central Europe*, p. 2.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-63.

<sup>167</sup> Torpey, 'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed', p. 75.

<sup>168</sup> 'Berlin Exhibit Focuses on Victims of Nazi Labor Camps', *Deutsche Welle* (14 May 2007), <http://www.dw.de/dw/article/0,,2513611,00.html>. See also the exhibition webpage [http://www.fpnpl.pl/publikacje/publikacje\\_en.php](http://www.fpnpl.pl/publikacje/publikacje_en.php) and English language educational resource pack, *The selection of documents of the everyday life during the repression times Historical background and formal*

In contrast, Japan is reluctant to acknowledge, apologise for, and offer state funded reparations for its WWII crimes.<sup>169</sup> Japanese school textbooks also cause new harm by playing down atrocities such as ‘The Rape of Nanking’ and presenting Japan as the victim due to the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In so doing Japan has offended its neighbours and disputed memories of WWII contribute to regional tensions.<sup>170</sup> The differences between German and Japanese approaches demonstrate how ‘reconciliation is a process of mutual accommodation that presupposes the acceptance of moral conditions and objectives’ upon which just and trusting relationships can be built.<sup>171</sup> They also demonstrate how both collectives benefit from efforts to make amends and how apologies can ‘do much to enhance [the offending nation’s moral] legitimacy, both in world opinion and in the eyes of its members.’<sup>172</sup>

There have been international efforts to create shared memory of transatlantic slavery, notably the UNESCO Slave Route Project which will be explored further in Chapter Five. Such collaboration on museums and school projects offers a route by which restorative justice ideas can be utilised to reconcile relationships and attitudes damaged as a legacy of transatlantic slavery. Martha Minow argues that historical investigation and educational activities can act as truth commissions, ‘charged not only with obtaining the facts, but also with working to overcome ignorance or denial among the general community and among government officials.’<sup>173</sup> The findings of historical research can then be acknowledged in ‘public monuments and sculptures, museums and days of memory . . . programs of public education, including curriculum developed for schoolchildren . . . to lift secrecy, celebrate transition, and warn against future

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*characteristics: Based on the holdings of the Foundation for “Polish-German Reconciliation” Archive* (Warsaw: Foundation for the Polish German Reconciliation, 2009), [http://www.fpnpl.pl/edukacja/dokumenty\\_eng.pdf](http://www.fpnpl.pl/edukacja/dokumenty_eng.pdf) (Accessed 1 June 2012).

<sup>169</sup> Torpey, ‘*Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*’, p. 71; Elizabeth S. Dahl, ‘Is Japan Facing Its Past? The Case of Japan and Its Neighbours’, Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (eds.), *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 241-255; Shogo Suzuki, ‘Overcoming Past Wrongs Committed by States: Can Non-State Actors Facilitate Reconciliation?’, *Social and Legal Studies*, 21:2 (2012), pp. 155-169; William Gao, ‘Overdue Redress: Surveying and Explaining the Shifting Japanese Jurisprudence on Victims’ Compensation Claims [notes]’, *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, 45:2 (2007), pp. 529-550.

<sup>170</sup> Dahl, ‘Is Japan Facing Its Past?’, p. 47.

<sup>171</sup> Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p. 52.

<sup>172</sup> Torpey, ‘*Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*’, p. 94.

<sup>173</sup> Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, p. 56.

recurrences of the atrocities.<sup>174</sup> Through such restorative efforts, which provide complexity, nuance, contextualisation and holistic truth, research programmes, educational curricula, commemorative museum activities and memorialisation can contribute to the repair of relationships and attitudes damaged as a legacy of transatlantic slavery.

Transformative repair suggests, however, that not only attitudes are changed but that changed attitudes led to changed behaviour and a transformed society with transformed institutions and values.<sup>175</sup> A process of truth telling is only the beginning. In South Africa the TRC has lost much of its early lustre due to its failure to tackle the socioeconomic wrongs of apartheid, instead focusing upon the violence of apartheid.<sup>176</sup> The recommendations of the TRC Commissioners that financial reparations should be made have not been acted upon and consequently the transformative potential of the TRC has not been fully realised.<sup>177</sup> Truth telling in schools and museums offers a potential contribution to overcoming the legacy of transatlantic slavery, but such a process is not a foolproof panacea. Broadening historical perspectives and narratives offers a route to relational repair; however, there is significant opposition to such historical revision and emotional attachment to traditional national narratives. Processes of repairing relationships may also require some financial measures to demonstrate sincerity and to fully overcome the legacies of slavery which are perpetuated by damaged relationships.

## **Conclusion**

This Chapter has explored the US reparations debate in order to consider why claims for reparations for slavery exist, what the continuing harm of slavery is and what repair of this harm requires. It has revealed that the underlying legacy of slavery in the US is attitudinal and relational. Slavery fostered the development of a racially exclusive US identity which denigrated African Americans and celebrated European American achievement. This racially defined identity shaped how US society developed after

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<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>175</sup> Van Ness and Heetberks Strong, *Restoring Justice*, p. 42.

<sup>176</sup> Waldorf, 'Anticipating the Past: Transitional Justice and Socio-Economic Wrongs', p. 176.

<sup>177</sup> Torpey, *Making Whole What Has Been Smashed*, pp. 145-146.

slavery and influenced the creation of a racially prejudicial US historical memory which perpetuated this racialised national identity and social inequality. This Chapter, therefore, argued that reparative efforts should prioritise attitudinal and relational repair. The most common approaches to reparation, court or legislation mandated financial reparations and state apology, are not able to offer such relational repair. Restorative justice principles, especially those employed in transitional justice settings, demonstrate how broadening historical understanding and including previously excluded perspectives can contribute to reconciliation. This argument also applies to the international relational harm caused by transatlantic slavery.

## **Chapter Two – Transatlantic Slavery and International Reparations: A Historiographical Analysis**

In 1993 the Organization of African Unity (African Union (AU) since 2001) established a 'Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) whose mandate was to pursue reparations for Africa.'<sup>1</sup> In 1999 the GEP concluded in its 'Truth Commission for Africa' that "'the root causes of Africa's problems today are the enslavement of and colonization of African people over a 400 year period.'"<sup>2</sup> In 2000, GEP member Lord Anthony Gifford QC, summarised the case for reparations thus:

Who would be the plaintiffs in a claim for reparations? All Africans on the continent of Africa and in the Diaspora who suffer the consequences of the crime of mass kidnap and enslavement have an interest in it. The impoverishment of the nations of sub-Saharan Africa, which has led to so much famine, disease, and underdevelopment, has among its major causes the devastation caused by the slave trade. It is true that a minority of Africans collaborated with the slave trade and prospered as a result; but that should not undermine the overall truth that the rape of Africa was the responsibility of the European nations that established and promoted the trade.<sup>3</sup>

The call for reparations to Africa has been influenced by the US reparations debate, and the historical narrative of European development at the cost of African underdevelopment helps to link the reparations claim with the principles of unjust enrichment and torts discussed in Chapter One. Furthermore, the Pan-African nature of the claim exemplified by Gifford subsumes the claim for reparations to African Americans within the claim for reparations to Africa. Like the US reparations claim, the GEP prioritises financial reparation, and in 1999 calculated that the West owed Africa 'US\$777 trillion in compensation (plus annual interest) and that, presumably there was no African debt to outsiders.'<sup>4</sup> This massive and unrealistic amount dwarfs Germany's Holocaust reparations.<sup>5</sup> Like the African American claim, calls for reparations to Africa

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<sup>1</sup> Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (with Anthony Lombardo), *Reparations to Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Anthony Gifford, 'The Legal Basis of the Claim for Slavery Reparations', *Human Rights: Journal of the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities*, 27: 2 (2000), pp. 16-18.

<sup>4</sup> Rhoda Howard-Hassmann, 'Reparations to Africa and the Group of Eminent Persons', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 173-174 (2004), p.86.

<sup>5</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 52.



reflect a frustration felt with present-day international inequality and poverty in Africa as much as concern about the past. As noted in Chapter One, 'Reparations help to make the notion of human rights seem enforceable.'<sup>6</sup> With regard to reparations to Africa, Howard-Hassmann underlines this, noting:

Under the rhetorical appeal of the call for reparations to Africa may lie an unwillingness to deal with far more complex causes of that continent's severe underdevelopment. Promotion of a bitter call for reparations is an easy way to deflect attention from internal African politics and the many ways African dictators have abused human rights.<sup>7</sup>

It is for this reason that western nations opposed the call for reparations to Africa made at the 2001 United Nations (UN), World Conference Against Racism and Xenophobia (WCAR), insisting: 'it [is] "misleading to attribute all of Africa's tragedies to the legacy of slavery and colonialism."'"<sup>8</sup>

The divide over how the legacy of transatlantic slavery is interpreted reflects differing historical memories of transatlantic slavery and of colonialism in Africa and Europe. These memories shape how Africa and the West view themselves and each other, contributing to present-day prejudices and damaged international relationships which perpetuate socioeconomic injustice. A process of collaborative historical investigation and dialogue could, therefore, help to repair differences in historical memory and restore a moral and trusting relationship between Africa and the West.

This Chapter explores the origins and the claims made by advocates of reparations for Africa. In order to do this, the Chapter first considers the historiographical and ideological foundations of the reparations claim, focusing on Walter Rodney's 1973 book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, and how this work reflects a wider intellectual environment of post-WWII independence movements.<sup>9</sup> This section also considers how European memory of slavery and colonialism is influenced by historic racism and Eurocentric attitudes, rendering Europeans insensitive to African perspectives and underlining how African and European memory is so divergent.

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<sup>6</sup> John Torpey, *'Making Whole What Has Been Smashed': On Reparations Politics* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 49, see also p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 85.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogel-L'Ouverture Publications, 1973).

The Chapter's main focus, however, is the historical origins and evolution of transatlantic slavery. Drawing on historical research, this Chapter argues that the origins of transatlantic slavery have to be understood within a wider context of historical slavery and labour exploitation, and economic and social change. The Chapter first considers the European context and motivation for entering into the transatlantic slave trade; the impact of transatlantic slavery on the West; and reasons for abolition; before examining the historical origins of the trade within African societies; African motivations for participating; and the impact of transatlantic slavery upon Africa. This enables the Chapter to evaluate reparations advocates' claims that transatlantic slavery enriched the West and underdeveloped Africa. The Chapter argues that both Europeans and Africans entered into the slave trade out of economic interest and sought to ensure the terms of trade maximised their own benefit. In the long run this was detrimental to African nations and beneficial to the West. However, the historical narrative presented by reparations advocates is far too simplistic and oversimplifies the legacy of transatlantic slavery and what is necessary to repair this legacy.

Through this analysis, the Chapter also cautiously outlines, in the terminology of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a 'factual truth' regarding the legacy of transatlantic slavery. To do this the Chapter surveys the latest academic research and seeks to build a narrative based upon events that are accepted and the interpretations which have the most academic support or come nearest to representing a consensus. In doing so, this Chapter reveals the inaccuracies that result from the overly selective and ideological biases of both Eurocentric and postcolonial and Pan-African historiographies. By exploring and contrasting differing perspectives and interpretations of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, this Chapter underlines how differing memories of groups and nations divided by the reparations debate, constitute part of transatlantic slavery's harmful legacy. A process of relational repair inspired by restorative justice and truth commissions and outlined in Chapter One's Intergenerational Model, suggests that these competing perspectives need to be discussed and understood. For instance, Western nations need to understand that their dismissal of Africa's historical civilisations and contributions to global economic development is insulting. African nations also need to acknowledge why Western

nations may feel proud and want to celebrate their realisation that slavery was wrong and decision to abolish it, even if in doing so they congratulated themselves as racially superior. By outlining a cautious 'factual truth' narrative of transatlantic slavery and its legacy, this Chapter outlines a potentially mutually acceptable narrative upon which differing perspectives could be debated in a manner that could encourage mutual understanding and ultimately relational reconciliation.

### **The Claim for Reparations to Africa: Origins and Content**

The intellectual foundations for the claim for reparations to Africa and African Americans is found in the collaboration between African Americans fighting for civil rights and African and African Caribbean campaigners for independence from empire.<sup>10</sup> The process of decolonisation began following WWII. In 1947 India gained independence and 1957 Ghana became the first independent sub-Saharan African nation.<sup>11</sup> Decolonisation began slowly. The British feared the loss of empire would relegate them to the status of a second tier international power, behind the US and Soviet superpowers.<sup>12</sup> For nations such as France, Belgium and the Netherlands, imperial reconsolidation provided a means to regain international prestige following their humiliations during WWII.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, whilst Franklin D. Roosevelt had shown disdain for colonialism during the war, his successors Harry S. Truman and Dwight D.

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<sup>10</sup> Jason C. Parker, *Brothers Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jason C. Parker, "'Capital of the Caribbean': The African American-West Indian 'Harlem Nexus' and the Transnational Drive for Black Freedom, 1940-1948" *The Journal of African American History*, 89:2 (2004), pp. 98-117; Jason C. Parker, "'Made-in-America Revolutions'? The 'Black University' and the American Role in the Decolonization of the Black Atlantic", *The Journal of American History*, 96:3 (2009), pp. 727-750; Sean Hawkins and Philip D. Morgan, 'Blacks and the British Empire: An Introduction', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 16-17.

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas J. White, *Decolonisation: The British Experience Since 1945* (Harlow, Longman, 1999), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> David Killingray, 'Imperial Defence', Robin W. Winks (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 349; John Darwin, 'Decolonization and the End of Empire', Robin W. Winks (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 547-551.

<sup>13</sup> James E. Genova, 'Constructing Identity in Post-War France: Citizenship, Nationality, and the Lamine Guèye Law, 1946-1953', *The International History Review*, 26:1 (2004), pp. 56-57.

Eisenhower saw colonial influence as an important counter to Soviet influence in the developing Cold War.<sup>14</sup>

The acceleration of decolonisation in the 1960s resulted less from the arguments of independence movements than changing attitudes to what constituted civilised behaviour. WWII had revealed the horror of taking racial theory to its conclusions.<sup>15</sup> In the Cold War era, with the development of the UN, with the Human Rights Charter at its centre, empire became seen as an embarrassing anachronism that undermined the moral capital of European nations and their criticism of the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe.<sup>16</sup> As John Darwin notes of the British in the 1960s:

They [the British] were also, especially in 1960s, extremely anxious to avoid the stigma of being 'old-fashioned' imperialists when their rivals for influence in the Afro-Asian world, and even fellow colonial powers like France, were competing to show their sympathy for Afro-Asian aspirations. There were, in London's view, too many important irons in the fire for an inflexible colonial policy to make sense. Colonial rule must die that influence might live: empire must be sacrificed to world power. The contrast with backward poverty-stricken Portugal is illuminating. Paradoxically the weakest and poorest of European colonial powers retained its colonies longest and fought hardest to keep them. But in Lisbon colonial policy was not so complicated by the pursuit of other conflicting interests, nor by the belief that the dissolution of colonial rule was the price of remaining a great power – quite the reverse.<sup>17</sup>

The embarrassment surrounding colonialism did not stop Europeans congratulating themselves on decolonisation being enlightened (as they had with abolitionism in the previous century). This idea of willing decolonisation helped Europeans overlook their increasing economic and military inability to maintain disparate empires, and the

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<sup>14</sup> John Springhall, *Decolonization Since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p. 11, 209; Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa* (London: Free Press, 2006), pp. 93-115; Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (London Pan Books, 2006), pp. 3, 301-303; Martin C. Thomas, 'Innocent Abroad? Decolonisation and US Engagement with French West Africa, 1945-56', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36:1 (2008), pp. 47-73.

<sup>15</sup> Genova, 'Constructing Identity in Post-War France', p. 57; Ali Rattansi, *Racism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 69-72.

<sup>16</sup> P.L. Pham, *Ending 'East of Suez': The British Decision to Withdraw from Malaysia and Singapore 1964-1968* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Frank Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation, 1945-1963: Scrutinising the Official Mind* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 296-299.

<sup>17</sup> John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation* (London: MacMillan Press, 1988), p. 334.

atrocities they committed in the areas where they overstayed their welcome, such as the French in Algeria and the British in Kenya.<sup>18</sup>

The idea of beneficial colonialism, which remains popular in Europe, was systematically undermined by independence movements which argued that imperialism served to enrich the imperial power at the expense of the colonised. Kwame Nkrumah, later Ghana's first president, argued in 1947 that colonialism "has reduced the native population to economic slavery and degradation from which it must free itself."<sup>19</sup> Nkrumah reasoned that 'the first objective in order to surmount a state of underdevelopment is political independence.'<sup>20</sup> Nkrumah's theories found support in the UN where Marxist economic theories of Latin American Dependency and African Underdevelopment were in vogue.<sup>21</sup> Underdevelopment Theory provided an intellectual framework to arguments already advanced by Pan-African scholars, such as Marcus Garvey, who had promoted 'race pride and love' and encouraged a racial historical consciousness by linking the struggles for African American Civil Rights and African and West Indian independence.<sup>22</sup> The historical narratives presented by historians and politicians such as C.L.R James (*The Case for West Indian Self Government*, 1933 and *Black Jacobins*, 1938), Eric Williams (*Capitalism and Slavery*, 1944 and first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, 1962-1981), helped

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<sup>18</sup> Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p. 3; Darwin, 'Decolonization and the End of Empire', p. 547; Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation*, pp. 187-189; Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005); Matthew Connelly, 'Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization: The Grand Strategy of the Algerian War for Independence', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 33:2 (2001), pp. 221-245.

<sup>19</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: 1957), p. 46-47, in Kenneth W. Grundy, 'Nkrumah's Theory of Underdevelopment: An Analysis of Recurrent Themes', *World Politics*, 15:2 (1963), p. 441.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 442.

<sup>21</sup> J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela, 'Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment', *Comparative Politics*, 10:4 (1978), p. 543; Vincent Ferraro, 'Dependency Theory: An Introduction', Giorgio Secondi (ed.), *The Development Economics Reader* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 58-64.

<sup>22</sup> Howard Johnson, 'The Black Experience in the British Caribbean', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 326; Winston James, 'Black Experience in Twentieth Century Britain', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 345-386; Kwame Anthony Appiah, 'Language, Race and the Legacies of the British Empire', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 387-407; Parker, *Brothers Keeper*; Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), p. 261.

independence movements advance by challenging Eurocentric historiographical justifications for colonialism.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, when the African Union issued a call for reparations to all Africans in Africa and the diaspora, the Pan-African identity first spoken of by Alexander Crummel in the nineteenth century and echoed by W.E.B. Du Bois, Garvey and Nkrumah is in evidence.<sup>24</sup>

The claim for reparations to Africa originates from this intellectual history, and is nowhere better demonstrated than in Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 1973. His influence on the claim for reparations to Africa is clear:

Agaja Trudo, Dahomey's greatest king, appreciated that European demand for slaves and the pursuit of slaving in and around Dahomey was in conflict with Dahomey's development. Between 1724 and 1726, he looted and burnt European forts and slave camps; and he reduced the trade from the Slave Coast to a mere trickle, by blocking the paths leading to the interior. European slavers were very bitter, and they tried to sponsor some African collaborators against Agaja Trudo. They failed to unseat him or to crush the Dahomian state, but in turn Agaja failed to persuade them to develop new lines of economic activity, such as local plantation agriculture; and being anxious to acquire firearms and cowries through the Europeans, he had to agree to the resumption of slave trading in 1730.<sup>25</sup>

Rodney suggests that the slave trade was imposed by Europeans who exploited African economic and military weaknesses and divisions. However, this Chapter shall provide evidence that West African polities had much greater control over their interaction with Europeans during the period than Rodney portrays.

The exact nature of the transatlantic slave trade and its impact is still highly contentious. Eurocentric historiography has denied the contribution of Africans to western development; however, the underdevelopment thesis overemphasises the role of Europeans. At the 2001 WCAR, some reparations advocates claimed that more than 100 million Africans were forced into the transatlantic slave trade.<sup>26</sup> Randall Robinson has similarly claimed that 10-25 million Africans died in the middle passage

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<sup>23</sup> Hilary Beckles, "'The Williams Effect': Eric Williams's Capitalism and Slavery and the Growth of West Indian Political Economy", Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman, *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 303-315. Robinson, *Black Marxism*, pp. 185-286; J.M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (London: The Guilford Press, 1993), p. 55.

<sup>24</sup> Appiah, 'Language, Race and the Legacies of the British Empire', p. 391.

<sup>25</sup> Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, p. 32.

<sup>26</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 62.

alone.<sup>27</sup> However, extensive academic research suggests that the number of people embarked onto European slavers as 12.5 to 13.5 million, about one eighth of the top estimates, and the average death rate during the Atlantic crossing as around 12 percent.<sup>28</sup> These wildly differing estimates of the numbers involved lead to wide variations in the assumed harm. First, a trade that extracted 100 million individuals over four centuries is much larger than one that extracted 13 million over the same period. That these over-estimates still hold currency, despite the impressive Transatlantic Slave Trade Database's cataloguing of the actual size of the slave trade, demonstrates that the legacy of transatlantic slavery includes a serious mistrust of European and American academics (who mainly worked on the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database) by Pan-African organisations. This strengthens this thesis' argument that relationships of trust need to be created in order to repair the legacy of transatlantic slavery. It also underscores the necessity of this Chapter's investigation of historical research and cautious attempt to outline a 'factual truth' regarding the history of transatlantic slavery upon which dialogue about its legacy can take place.

### **Transatlantic Slavery and the European World**

European involvement in the transatlantic slave trade cannot be divorced from wider European political, social and economic developments. From its start, transatlantic slavery was intrinsically linked to the geopolitical ambitions of European nations and would become a central part of economic and imperial rivalries. European involvement in transatlantic slavery reflected European attitudes towards labour relations; as these changed, so did attitudes to slavery, eventually resulting in the rise of abolitionism. By exploring the history and outcomes of European involvement in transatlantic slavery, it is possible to assess whether the European/Western world was unjustly enriched by transatlantic slavery.

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<sup>27</sup> Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 33.

<sup>28</sup> 'Average percentage of slaves embarked who died during voyage', *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* (2009), <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces> (Accessed 16 June 2012); Robert Louis Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century: An Old Regime Business* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), p. xv.

In the 1420s the Portuguese became the first European nation to navigate the west coast of Africa and trade with sub-Saharan West Africans. The Portuguese were an expanding power looking to strengthen their position in the Mediterranean and break the Arab monopoly on the eastern spice trade and import of gold from Africa via the trans-Saharan trade.<sup>29</sup> Although it was not until 1492 that all Muslim kingdoms were defeated in Iberia, the Portuguese captured Ceuta, 'the northern terminus of several caravan routes in Africa' in 1415.<sup>30</sup>

The Portuguese first entered slave trading by purchasing slaves in Dahomey (the Slave Coast) for exchange for gold on the Gold Coast.<sup>31</sup> The Portuguese, therefore, entered a pre-existing West African coastal slave trade.<sup>32</sup> The ease with which they did so reflects how slavery was common at this time in both Africa and Mediterranean Europe.<sup>33</sup> North African Barbary Pirates raided European coasts for slaves, even as far north as the British Isles.<sup>34</sup> There also existed a slave trade from Eastern Europe into the Mediterranean and through the Caucasus into the Ottoman Empire.<sup>35</sup>

Slavery and unfree labour characterised European colonial expansion. As the Europeans first established their colonies in the Americas they enslaved indigenous peoples. However, European diseases caused the indigenous populations to crash and prompted the Europeans to look to import labour.<sup>36</sup> European criminals and political prisoners were sent to labour in the Americas and in slave factories on the African coast.<sup>37</sup> European indentured servants were also commonly employed in the Americas,

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<sup>29</sup> Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), p. 191.

<sup>30</sup> Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The history of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870* (London: Picador, 1997), pp. 51-52.

<sup>31</sup> John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 111; Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> J.D. Fage, 'Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Context of West African History', *The Journal of African History*, 10:3 (1969), p. 396.

<sup>33</sup> David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 49.

<sup>34</sup> Jacques Heers, *The Barbary Corsairs: Warfare in the Mediterranean, 1480-1580* (London: Greenhill Books, 2003), p. 196; William Gervase Clarence-Smith, *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery* (London: Hurst and Company, 2006), pp. 28-29; Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, pp. 33-48.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Hellie, *Slavery In Russia, 1450-1725* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> Thornton, *Africa and African's*, p. 133.

<sup>37</sup> Philip D. Curtin, 'Epidemiology and the Slave Trade', *Political Science Quarterly*, 83:2 (1968), p. 193; Don Jordan and Michael Walsh, *White Cargo: The Forgotten History of Britain's White Slaves in America*



however, in contrast to African slaves they were more susceptible to disease and, if they reached the end of their indenture, had to be released and provided with land. Many of the English sailors involved in the slave trade were press ganged; Philip Curtin has estimated that their death rate was often higher than that of enslaved Africans due to their lack of immunity to tropical disease.<sup>38</sup>

Europeans entered into the transatlantic slave trade not because of racism, but because African slaves were available, Europeans needed labour for their American colonies and because Atlantic currents aided this trade (for an illustration of how currents in the North Atlantic and South Atlantic enabled the 'triangular trade' between Europe, the West Coast of Africa and the Caribbean and the two way trade between Brazil and West Central Africa, see map on page 78). However, transatlantic slavery also coincided with the development of European statehood and identity which contributed to the development of ideas of race. The 'process of state formation in England, Spain, France and the Netherlands [included] appeal[s] to concepts of nationhood and liberty of the subject' and consequently slavery disappeared in these nations.<sup>39</sup> Whilst slavery remained legal in Spain, Portugal and Russia it was, nevertheless, increasingly in need of new justifications. Christianity provided a lasting defence, as it was argued that slavery and colonisation could aid conversion, and that for those already enslaved in Africa it was surely better to have a Christian master in the New World.<sup>40</sup> That slavery was practised by the people Europeans were enslaving and that the early European colonies were often surrounded by hostile peoples, helped to excuse European slaving 'beyond the line' in the non-European world.<sup>41</sup> This development of national and pan-European Christian identity laid the foundation of later racist ideology.

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(Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2007), pp. 160-161; Emma Christopher, *A Merciless Place: The Lost Story of Britain's Convict Disaster in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Emma Christopher, *Slave Ship Sailors and Their Captive Cargoes, 1730-1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Curtin, 'Epidemiology', p. 204.

<sup>39</sup> Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern 1492-1800* (London: Verso, 1997), p. 61.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>41</sup> Seymour Drescher, 'From Consensus to Consensus: Slavery and International Law', Jean Allain (eds.), *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 85-89.

The real motivation and justification of transatlantic slavery, from the outset, was personal and national profit. Precious metals plundered from Central and South America made the Spanish the richest and most powerful nation in Europe. Other European nations established colonies in the New World in the hope of finding similar bounties; however, they were disappointed. The early New World activities of the English, French and Dutch, therefore, largely consisted of privateers intercepting Spanish precious metal shipments.<sup>42</sup> However, the introduction of sugar to Brazil (from the Mediterranean via the coast of West Africa, see map on page 79) by the Portuguese offered a cash crop which could make the northern European nations' colonies pay for themselves. However, sugar was labour intensive. Following the Portuguese example, European nations turned to African slaves to provide this labour. African slaves, then, enabled the colonisation of the Americas and Caribbean by Europeans.

The Portuguese and Spanish (united under King Philip of Spain in 1580) dominated the early period of the transatlantic slave trade. The Spanish American colonies were the main destinations for slaves until the eighteenth century when British and French colonies became dominant. Prior to Spanish decline, the right to trade to the Spanish colonies (the *asiento*) was an area of competition between European nations. Portuguese rebellion 'created a real dilemma for the Spanish because the other European maritime powers had acquired African bases; England, Holland and France were at this time at war with Spain.'<sup>43</sup> The Dutch were economic and industrial pioneers and developed advanced banking techniques and overseas trade networks challenging Portuguese interests in Asia and Brazil. Although unable to dispossess the Portuguese of Brazil, the Dutch did gain a monopoly on the *asiento* in 1667.<sup>44</sup>

The English entered the slave trade during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Protestant England had been aiding the Dutch in their rebellion against Spain which prompted Spanish attempts to invade England, including the famous Armada of

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 82; Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London: Penguin Books, 1985), pp. 32-37.

<sup>43</sup> Johannes Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade 1600-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 31.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.7-25; Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, pp. 185-215.

1588.<sup>45</sup> The English remained a small player in transatlantic slave trade until the seventeenth century. Barbados was settled in 1627 and the 1655 invasion of Jamaica enabled the English to meet their demand for sugar from within their Empire.<sup>46</sup> In the seventeenth century, England was dominated by internal religious and political conflict and wars with neighbouring states. Stability was only achieved following the 1688 Glorious Revolution and subsequent establishment of a constitutional monarchy. Dutch-influenced fiscal reforms, including the creation of the Bank of England and system of National Debt, provided England with the economic wherewithal to become a European great power.<sup>47</sup>

Administrative organisation was central to the rise of England as a great power in Europe and as an empire and the eighteenth century was dominated by Britain's (following the 1707 Act of Union) rivalry with France. The threat of French domination of Europe was avoided with French defeat in the Spanish War of Succession, 1701-1713, which also initiated British dominance in the slave trade as Britain gained the *asiento* in the Treaty of Utrecht.<sup>48</sup> As the eighteenth century ended, however, the beginnings of slavery's downfall appeared as popular abolitionism developed in Britain and the Haitian Revolution liberated over 400,000 French slaves.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Colin Martin and Geoffrey Parker, *The Spanish Armada* (Manchester, Mandolin, 1999).

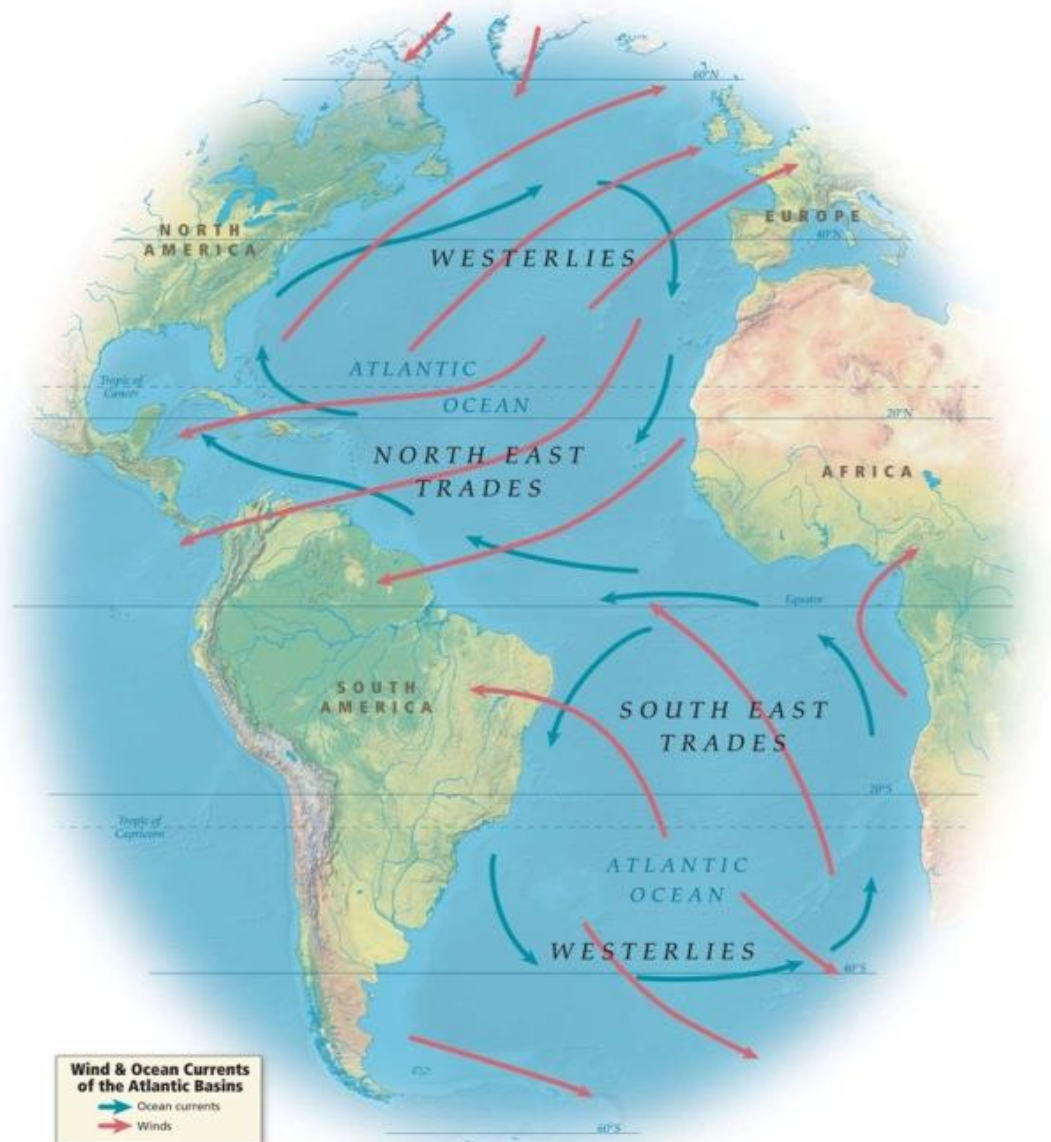
<sup>46</sup> Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, pp. 35-39.

<sup>47</sup> Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, pp. 261-271; Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade 1600-1815*, p. 36; Stanley L. Engerman, 'Institutional change and British supremacy, 1650-1850: some reflections', Leandro Prados de la Escosura (ed.), *Exceptionalism and Industrialisation: Britain and Its European Rivals, 1688-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 282; Stephen Quinn, 'The Glorious Revolution's Effect on English Private Finance: A Microhistory, 1680-1705', *The Journal of Economic History*, 61:3 (2001), pp. 593-615; Jonathan Scott, "'Good Night Amsterdam'. Sir George Downing and Anglo-Dutch Statebuilding', *English Historical Review*, 118:476 (2003), p. 355; D.W. Jones, 'Sequel to Revoulution: the economics of England's emergence as a Great Power, 1688-1712', Jonathan I. Israel (ed.), *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: The Glorious Revolution and its World Impact* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 389.

<sup>48</sup> Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, pp. 227-231.

<sup>49</sup> Stein, *The French Slave Trade*, pp. 43-46.

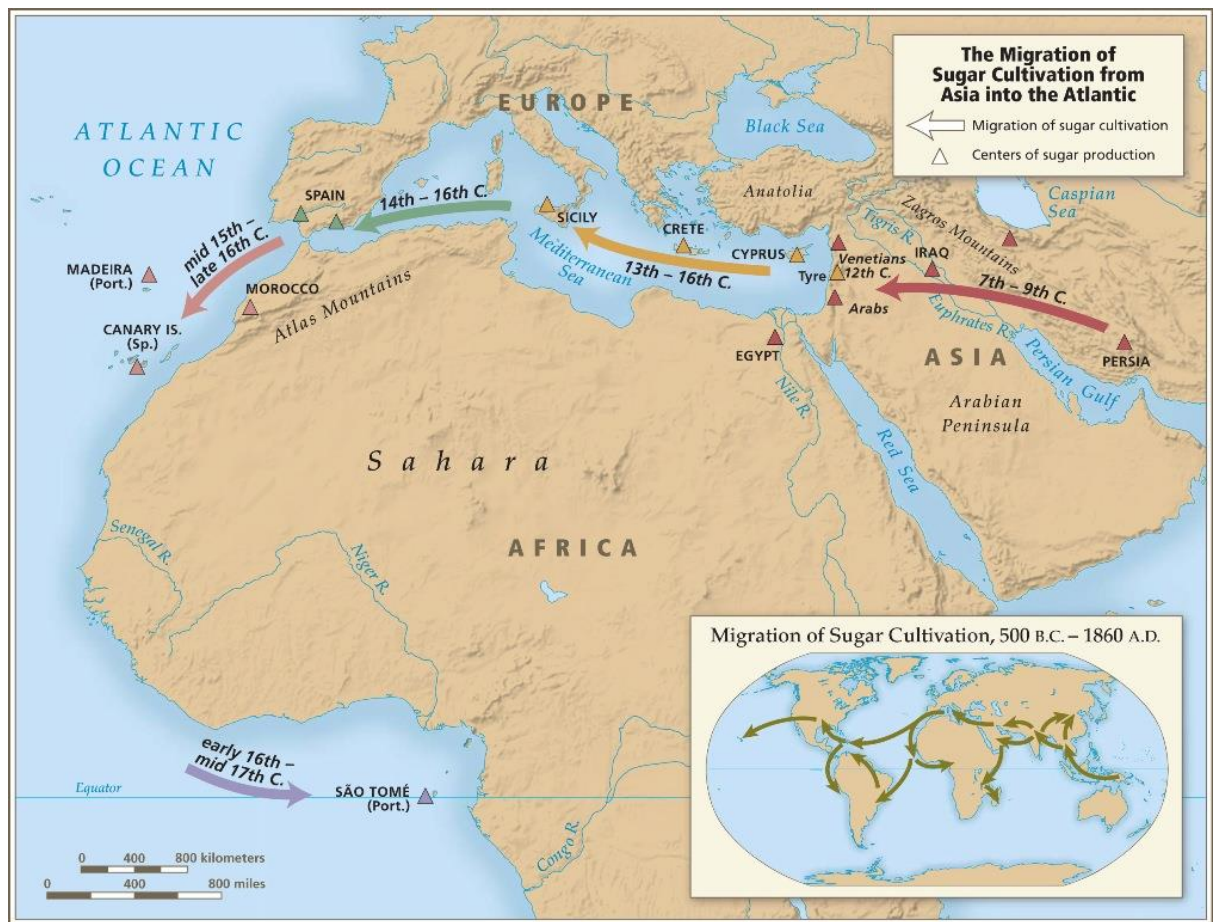
## Wind and Ocean Currents of the Atlantic Basins



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<sup>50</sup> 'Map 4: Wind and ocean currents of the Atlantic basins, JPEG', *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/intro-maps/04.jsp> (Accessed 10 February 2010).

## The Migration of Sugar Cultivation from Asia into the Atlantic



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## Transatlantic Slavery, Colonisation and Industrialisation

African slave labour was central to European colonisation of the Americas. Across the US, Brazil, Cuba and wider Central America, South America and the Caribbean, slaves produced agricultural produce for export, cotton, sugar, coffee and tobacco; built transport infrastructure, roads, canals, railways; and provided labour in urban environments as porters, skilled manufacturers and domestic servants.<sup>52</sup> The importance of African labour is highlighted by the fact that between '1500 and 1800 African migrants to the New World outnumbered European migrants by four to one,' however, due to the severity of slavery those of African descent were in the minority in

<sup>51</sup> 'Map 2: Migration of sugar cultivation from Asia into the Atlantic, JPEG', *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/intro-maps/02.jsp> (Accessed 10 February 2010).

<sup>52</sup> Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery Emancipation and Human Rights* (London: Verso, 2011), pp.275-328.

1800.<sup>53</sup> Qualifying and quantifying centuries of suffering into an evaluation of debt to Africans in the Americas and Africa is virtually impossible. It is also difficult to evaluate the benefit of transatlantic slavery to European nations and the lasting benefit of profits from slavery. As noted above, British success in the slave trade was enabled by good administration and military successes in Europe, whilst Spain's early dominance could not stop its relative decline. Did slave trading foster economic and industrial development, or did advances in the later enable the former?

Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* not only challenged the traditional Eurocentric narrative of benevolent abolition but argued that transatlantic slavery was central to British economic development and industrialisation.<sup>54</sup> Influenced by Marxist theory, Williams' arguments are summarised by Barbara Solow and Stanley Engerman thus:

Eric Williams in *Capitalism and Slavery* presented four important themes: (1) Slavery was an economic phenomenon; and thus racism was a consequence, not the cause, of slavery; (2) the slave economies of the British West Indies caused (the strong version) or contributed greatly (the weaker version) to the British Industrial Revolution; (3) after the American Revolutionary War the slave economies declined in profitability and/or importance to England; and (4) abolition of the slave trade and emancipation in the British West Indies were driven not by philanthropy or humanitarianism but by economic motives within England.<sup>55</sup>

Solow and Engerman further note that 'While all of these themes have been debated, it is the second and fourth themes that have had the most impact upon subsequent scholarship.'<sup>56</sup> These themes have shaped the unjust enrichment element of claims for reparations to Africa, but do they justify reparations?

Firstly, most historians accept that transatlantic slavery was closely tied to developing British industry and economic institutions, as Kenneth Morgan notes:

The development of commercial institutions was another important connection between Atlantic trade and eighteenth-century British economic development. Although these aspects of trade are not always quantifiable, they contributed much to

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 240-249.

<sup>55</sup> Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman, 'British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams: An Introduction', Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman (eds.), *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

the commercial dynamism of Britain. *Capitalism and Slavery* drew attention to the links between slave trading and the worlds of insurance and banking by pointing to the participation of the Liverpool slave trading families such as Heywood and Leyland in local banks, the recruitment of tobacco lords into the ranks of bankers in Glasgow and the London sugar refiners. More recent research has enabled us to identify more fully the connection between Atlantic trade and business developments, indicating the level of penetration between international trade, business institutions and the domestic economy; and it has provided enough material to emphasise the long-term benefits that this mix of economic factors gave to British capitalism.<sup>57</sup>

However, most historians recognise that British economic and industrial revolutions occurred in advance of its European rivals for many reasons.<sup>58</sup> As noted, the Glorious Revolution led to a fiscal and institutional modernisation and this is why, as Stanley Engerman notes, most discussions on the British Industrial Revolution have the start date of 1688.<sup>59</sup> Other important factors unique to Britain include land inheritance practices, enclosure, population growth, inventiveness and greater productivity than its European rivals.<sup>60</sup> Whilst Joseph Inikori dismisses the identification of such factors as 'inward looking analysis,' the general historical consensus is more muted.<sup>61</sup> David Eltis and Stanley Engerman conclude that whilst slavery:

had important long-run economic implications, it did not, by itself cause the British Industrial Revolution. It certainly "helped" that revolution along, but its role was no greater than that of many other economic activities, and in absence of any one of

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<sup>57</sup> Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 74

<sup>58</sup> Joel Mokyr, 'Editors Introduction', Joel Mokyr (ed.), *The British Industrial Revolution: an Economic Perspective* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), p. 76.

<sup>59</sup> Engerman, 'Institutional change and British supremacy, 1650-1850: some reflections', p. 282.

<sup>60</sup> J.U. Nef, 'The progress of technology and the growth of large-scale industry in England', *The Economic History Review*, 5:1 (1934), pp. 22-23; David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, 'The Importance of Slavery and the Slave Trade to Industrializing Britain', *The Journal of Economic History*, 60:1 (2000), pp. 131-141; Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation: The Economic History of Britain, 1700-1914* (London: Routledge, 1993); Nicholas F.R. Crafts, 'British Industrialisation in an International Context', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 19:3 (1989), pp. 419-428; C. Knick Harley, 'Reassessing the Industrial Revolution: A Macro View', Joel Mokyr (ed.), *The British Industrial Revolution: an Economic Perspective* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 224-226; Gregory Clark, 'Agriculture and the Industrial Revolution: 1700-1850', Joel Mokyr (ed.), *The British Industrial Revolution: an Economic Perspective* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), p. 233; Escosura (ed.), *Exceptionalism and Industrialisation*.

<sup>61</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, 'Slavery and the development of industrial capitalism in England', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 27:4 (1987), p. 783; Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). See also Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery* and *The American Crucible*, p. 110.

these it is hard to believe that the Industrial Revolution would not have occurred anyway.<sup>62</sup>

In reflecting upon the exploitation of Africans in the new world, it is also worth remembering that British industrialisation depended upon exploitation of the industrial classes too (the long hours, use of child labour, use of combination laws and state force to maintain the supply of labour).<sup>63</sup> Like slave-owners, factory owners defended harsh conditions and practices by arguing that the lower classes would only waste any surplus wages on drink as they were unable to better themselves and therefore needed the coercion of hunger to work.<sup>64</sup>

### The Economics of Slave Trade Abolition: The European Experience

Williams' fourth argument, that British abolitionism was motivated by economic pragmatism rather than humanitarian concern, has also provoked much debate. Williams' 'Decline Thesis' countered the patriotic narrative presented by British historians in the early twentieth century, such as Sir Reginald Coupland, who Jack Gratus denounced in 1973 for 'defending rather than examining objectively his nation's past' and for perpetuating the 'hero worship' of Wilberforce.<sup>65</sup> Williams was inspired by another West Indian historian and advocate of West Indian independence, C.L.R. James, who taught Williams when he was a schoolboy.<sup>66</sup> James' 1938 book, *Black Jacobins*, challenged traditional ideas of abolition constituting a benevolent gift,

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<sup>62</sup> Eltis and Engerman, 'The Importance of Slavery and the Slave Trade to Industrializing Britain', p. 141.

<sup>63</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 233.

<sup>64</sup> Mokyr, 'Editors Introduction', pp. 54-112; Sydney Pollard, 'Factory Discipline in the Industrial Revolution', Sydney Pollard and Colin Holmes (eds.), *Essays on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2000), pp. 98-116. Originally published in *The Economic History Review*, 16:2 (1963), pp. 254-271.

<sup>65</sup> Reginald Coupland, *The British anti-slavery movement* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1933); Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce* (London: Collins, 1945); Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce: a narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923); Jack Gratus, *The Great White Lie: Slavery, Emancipation and Changing Racial Attitudes* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), p. 13.

<sup>66</sup> Kenneth Morgan, 'Williams, Eric Eustace (1911–1981)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 (online edition May 2008)), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/65183> (Accessed 7 June 2013).



by emphasising the role of the enslaved in achieving their own independence and the importance of the Haitian Revolution.<sup>67</sup>

James' influence on Williams is seen in Williams' argument that the success of the Haitian Revolution, meant 'every white slave owner, in Jamaica, Cuba or Texas, lived in dread of another Toussaint L'Ouverture' and that it is 'inconceivable' that the pressure of slaves upon the system of bondage did not also contribute to abolitionist momentum in Britain, just as abolitionist campaigning encouraged the enslaved to resist.<sup>68</sup> As David Brion Davis notes, 'since the 1960s' historians have interpreted 'revolts' as 'legitimate resistance' and increasingly recognised the importance of African and slave 'agency' in shaping the terms and ending of slavery.<sup>69</sup> However, Williams' argument that the British sugar islands were in decline and losing out to the younger, larger and more fertile plantations of Cuba and Brazil has been significantly disputed.<sup>70</sup> So has the idea that Britain only ended its slave trade because manufacturing exports had become constrained by the transatlantic economy's dependence upon the closed mercantilist system.<sup>71</sup>

The foremost critique of Williams' decline theory was provided by Seymour Drescher in *Econocide*, 1977. Drescher argued that, at the height of the Napoleonic Continental Blockade, the transatlantic economy was more important to Britain than it had ever been and that, since France's loss of St. Domingo through the Haitian Revolution, British sugar production was rocketing.<sup>72</sup> Even more significant perhaps, the British had learned how to incorporate 'New Africans' (recently arrived slaves) into their colonial military defences.<sup>73</sup> Drescher, therefore, argues not only that 'Decline

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<sup>67</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 2001).

<sup>68</sup> Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 202.

<sup>69</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 205 and 157-174, 205-230.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 240-241.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 240-249; J.R. Oldfield, *Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: The Mobilisation of Public Opinion against the Slave Trade, 1781-1807* (London: Frank Cass, 1998); Robert William Fogel, *With or Without Consent: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), p. 231;

<sup>72</sup> Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), p. 71; Drescher has been supported in the thesis by David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 5.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 168-170.

followed abolition,' but that abolition was irrational as 'When all the economic and demographic indicators pointed in one direction, the empire took the other.'<sup>74</sup>

David Ryden has questioned Drescher's conclusions and argued that Napoleon's Continental Blockade and increased warfare had caused a crisis in the sugar industry by the start of the nineteenth century.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, Drescher's argument that abolitionism triumphed due to the development of a social movement opposed to slavery has won considerable academic support. Drescher argues that the 1806 Manchester petition demonstrates that abolitionism was a moral campaign as it 'did not present a single economic argument in behalf of abolition. It merely stated that the petitioners were "strongly impressed with a deep sense of the wisdom, sound Policy, and Humanity which dictated" the presentation of the bill.'<sup>76</sup> For Drescher, abolitionism represented 'a new balance of social power' that was able to 'redefine a thriving trade as manstealing, and then to destroy that trade, regardless of either its economic value or its stage of development.'<sup>77</sup>

Davis places the rise of abolitionism within the development of the enlightenment and nonconformist religion.<sup>78</sup> In contrast to Drescher, who identifies abolitionist success as the result of working class mobilisation, Davis prioritises the leadership of elites and suggests abolitionism was a tool for social control.<sup>79</sup> John Oldfield supports Davis's position and credits the leadership of the central London Abolition Committee for the movement's triumph.<sup>80</sup> Judith Jennings similarly argues that abolition was centred in 'bourgeois benevolence ... characterized by national pride

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<sup>74</sup> Drescher, *Econocide*, p. 161; Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Anti-Slavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>75</sup> David Beck Ryden, 'Does Decline Make Sense? The West Indian Economy and the Abolition of the Slave Trade', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 31:3 (2001), pp. 384-373.

<sup>76</sup> Drescher, *Econocide*, p. 138.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>78</sup> David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 385; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 246.

<sup>79</sup> David Brion Davis, 'Reflections on Abolition and Ideological Hegemony', *The American Historical Review*, 92:4 (1987), p. 804; Drescher, *Capitalism and Anti-Slavery*, pp. 89-91; Seymour Drescher, 'Whose Abolition? Popular Pressure and the Ending of the British Slave Trade', *Past and Present*, 143:1 (1994), p. 147

<sup>80</sup> J.R. Oldfield, 'The London Committee and Mobilization of Public Opinion against the Slave Trade', *The Historical Journal*, 35:2 (1992), pp. 331-341; Oldfield, *Popular Politics*, pp. 104-105.

... marked by the paternalistic sense of superiority.<sup>81</sup> Christopher Brown, in *Moral Capital*, meanwhile highlights the impact of the American War of Independence in linking slavery to the idea of national virtue.<sup>82</sup> British abolitionists, Brown suggests, linked the loss of the North American colonies in 1783 to a collective guilt that slavery cast upon the nation. Following the end of the Revolutionary War abolitionism developed strongly in both Britain and the US.<sup>83</sup>

It is impossible to detach abolitionism from the changes in European religious and intellectual thought outlined by Davis.<sup>84</sup> In practical terms Quaker business networks helped to inform those in England of the practices and barbarity of slavery in the colonies and to spread the radical ideas of the colonial settlers.<sup>85</sup> Quakers in German Town first passed a resolution against slavery in 1688 (although this remained unknown to abolitionists).<sup>86</sup> In 1777 Vermont abolished slavery and in 1780 so did Pennsylvania.<sup>87</sup> The rise of abolitionism in England was linked to the work of abolitionists in the American colonies. For many early abolitionists, slavery itself was not wrong, but the corrupting influence of the absolute power granted by chattel slavery was problematic and imperilled the nation's soul.<sup>88</sup> Anthony Benezet, a Quaker from Philadelphia, in describing the excesses of slavery concluded that: 'must not the inevitable consequence be pouring forth of the judgements of God upon their

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<sup>81</sup> Judith Jennings, *The Business of Abolishing the Slave Trade 1783-1807* (London: Frank House, 1997), p. 135.

<sup>82</sup> Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 153.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>84</sup> Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*; David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolutio, 1770-1823* (London: Cornell University Press, 1975).

<sup>85</sup> Jennings, *The Business of Abolishing the Slave Trade 1783-1807*; Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*; Roger Anstey, 'The pattern of British Abolitionism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (eds.), *Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Anstey*, (Chatham: W. and J. Mackay Ltd, 1980), pp. 19-43; Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: occidental, oriental, and African slave trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.149; Coupland, *Wilberforce*, pp. 75-77.

<sup>86</sup> Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, pp. 337-338.

<sup>87</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 277; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 126.

<sup>88</sup> Brown, *Moral Capital*, pp. 162-169; Srividhya Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade: Rhetoric of British National Identity, 1759-1815* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009); Joel Quirk, *The Anti-Slavery Project: From the Slave Trade to Human Trafficking* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 32-33.

oppressors.’<sup>89</sup> Clarkson echoes this thinking in the start of his first volume chronicling the abolitionist campaign and triumph, writing: ‘while we rejoice to think that the sufferings of our fellow-creatures have been thus, in any instance, relieved, we rejoice to think that our own moral condition must have been improved by the change.’<sup>90</sup> As Vincent Brown notes of the abolition campaign, appeals to morality resulted in ‘Popular antislavery politics [being . . .] a campaign to rid the British Empire of a great evil.’<sup>91</sup>

In the propaganda battle over the slave trade, abolitionists faced a powerful vested interest and credible information was vital to the abolitionist cause.<sup>92</sup> Complementing the information provided by Quakers, and later missionaries in the Caribbean, was the research by Thomas Clarkson in English slave ports. The testimonies of John Newton and Alexander Falconbridge also helped to convince the public of the barbarity of the slave trade and the huge loss of life for English sailors.<sup>93</sup> Testimony from former slaves such as Olaudah Equiano was also vital in revealing the barbarity of slavery and in countering racist proslavery claims that Africans were fit only for slavery.<sup>94</sup>

Whilst the propaganda organised by the London Committee was vital to the abolitionist campaign, its success and popularity cannot be disassociated from the political ramifications of industrialisation and urbanisation which broke down traditional social relations. The French Revolution had awoken British elites to the power of the people.<sup>95</sup> Working class petitioning; West Indian sugar boycotts by women; and intellectual change must all be included as factors in abolitionism’s

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<sup>89</sup> Anthony Benezet, *A Caution to Great Britain and Her Colonies in a Short Representation of the Calamitous State of the Enslaved Negroes in the British Dominions* (Philadelphia, London (reprinted): James Phillips, George-Yard, Lombard-Street, 1785), p. 12.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade by the British Parliament* (London: R. Taylor and Co., 1808), pp. 1-2.

<sup>91</sup> Vincent Brown, *The Reaper’s Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, MA.: University of Harvard Press, 2010), p. 199.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157-200.

<sup>93</sup> Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade*, pp. 100-110, 142-155.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111-125; Victor C.D. Mtubani, ‘The Black voice in Eighteenth Century Britain: African writers against slavery and the slave trade’, *Phylon*, 45:2 (1984), pp. 85-97; Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 366.

<sup>95</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 233; Coupland, *Wilberforce* (London: Collins, 1945), p. 217.

success.<sup>96</sup> Abolitionism corresponded with the development of wider radical politics in Britain and of calls for greater political representation for the working classes and women (trends which were to dominate the nineteenth century), although the contribution of women, the poor and Africans has been overlooked in the celebration of elite, white male abolitionist saints.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Enlightenment and nonconformist religious thought also informed campaigns to ameliorate the conditions of labour and the urban poor, particularly women and children.<sup>98</sup> The enslavement of Africans by Europeans and the abolition of slavery by Europeans reflect wider trends regarding socially accepted labour practices.<sup>99</sup>

Once Britain had ended its slave trade it sought to persuade other European nations to abolish their own trade. This was for two main reasons: continued abolitionist pressure, and to protect British sugar producing islands which could no longer import fresh labour.<sup>100</sup> The Royal Navy was employed to suppress illegal slave trading by British merchants, which led to the searching of suspected British ships flying flags of convenience (an activity that contributed to the War of 1812 against the US).<sup>101</sup> During the Napoleonic Wars, Spain and Portugal were dependent on British military support and both signed treaties allowing the British to search their ships and committed to take steps to suppress their own traffic.<sup>102</sup> At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Britain used her power to make the abolition of the slave trade a goal of all

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<sup>96</sup> Clare Midgley, 'Slave sugar boycotts, female activism and the domestic base of British anti-slavery culture', *Slavery and Abolition*, 17:3 (1996), p. 150; Elizabeth J. Clapp and Julie Roy Jeffrey (eds.), *Women Dissent and Anti-Slavery in Britain and America, 1790-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>97</sup> Oldfield, *Popular Politics*, pp. 14; 33-43; Clare Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-6; Manning, *Slavery and African Life*, p. 150; Drescher, *Capitalism and Anti-Slavery*, p. 142.

<sup>98</sup> Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), pp. 208-209; Manning, *Slavery and African Life*, p. 149.

<sup>99</sup> Brown, *Moral Capital*, p. 79; Oldfield, *Popular Politics*, p. 4; M.J. Daunton, *Progress and Poverty: An Economic and Social History of Britain: 1700-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 562.

<sup>100</sup> Suzanne Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Problem* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2003), p. 7.

<sup>101</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 270. Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, pp. 557-785; Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade: The suppression of the African Slave Trade in the Nineteenth century* (London: Frank Cass, 1968), p. 39.

<sup>102</sup> Leslie Bethel, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the slave trade question, 1807-1869* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 7; Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade*, p. 43.

European nations.<sup>103</sup> The Dutch abolished their slave trade in 1815, but Spain and Portugal were disinclined to risk revolution by 'powerful planter and commercial interests' in their American colonies by imposing an unpopular British agenda.<sup>104</sup> France too, following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, was too weak to push through an unpopular abolition of a trade which it needed for economic recovery, and was distrustful of British intentions.<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, over the course of the nineteenth-century, through bribes and coercion, Britain developed a series of bilateral treaties with European and later African and Middle Eastern nations that would increase the abolition and suppression of slave trading.<sup>106</sup>

The economic cost of abolition was great; Eltis has estimated that suppression of the slave trade cost the British government more than it ever gained in revenues from tax on the trade.<sup>107</sup> For the abolition of slavery itself the British government paid £20 million in compensation to slave owners for the loss of their property; slaves received no compensation.<sup>108</sup> Britain nevertheless still profited from slavery. British financial institutions provided the capital for the expansion of slavery in Cuba and Brazil; British manufactured goods were still exchanged in the slave trade; and British railways enabled slavery to penetrate much further into the interior of Brazil than

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<sup>103</sup> Paul Michael Kielstra, *The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1814* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: MacMillian Press Ltd, 2000). See also Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade*, pp. 43-48.

<sup>104</sup> Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade*, p. 290; David R. Murray, *Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain and the ending of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.51; Bethel, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*.

<sup>105</sup> Kielstra, *The politics of slave trade suppression in Britain and France*, p. 19.

<sup>106</sup> W.E.F. Ward, *The Royal Navy and the Slavers: The Suppression of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 72; B. Fladeland, *Men and Brothers: Anglo-American anti-slavery cooperation* (London: University of Illinois Press, 1972); Leslie Bethel, 'The mixed commissions for the suppression of the transatlantic slave trade in the nineteenth century', *Journal of African History*, 7:1 (1966), pp. 79-93; Donald L. Canney, *Africa Squadron: the US Navy and the slave trade, 1842-1861* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2006); Serge Daget, 'A model of French abolitionist movement and its variations', Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (eds.), *Anti-Slavery, Religion and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Anstey* (Folkestone: Dawson, 1980); Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 208-211; Kielstra, *The politics of slave trade suppression in Britain and France*, p. 138; Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 290-294; Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 14-17.

<sup>107</sup> Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, p. 97.

<sup>108</sup> James Walvin, *Black Ivory: Slavery in the British Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), p. 264.

would have otherwise been economically viable.<sup>109</sup> British commerce could profit from slavery so long as it was one step removed. This seeming contradiction enabled the British to consider themselves more enlightened and civilised than slave practitioners, whilst still profiting from its practice – an attitude that, as will be evidenced, later characterised colonial expansion.

### Abolition of Slavery across the Americas

In Britain, a campaign against slave trading merchants was politically easier than a direct attack on the propertied planter class heavily represented in Parliament. It was hoped that abolition of the slave trade would improve the conditions of slaves.<sup>110</sup> This was not the case. However, abolition in 1807 saw the abolitionist movement seize the moral high ground. Following the abolition of the trade, Parliament and Britain congratulated itself on moral righteousness, and this idea of national moral enlightenment seeped into a self-conceived national identity.<sup>111</sup>

In the years after 1807 abolitionist efforts concentrated on ameliorating the conditions of slavery. In 1819 a slave register was introduced to prevent inter-island trafficking and to measure the slave population and gauge slavery's effects.<sup>112</sup> This gradual approach mirrored the campaign to abolish the slave trade and also served to demonstrate that the institution, like the trade, was unable to reform and should be abolished.

In the 1820s the work of missionaries in the British Caribbean further helped to discredit the planter class and to redefine how slave rebellions were perceived.<sup>113</sup> From the 1820s onwards, abolitionists portrayed slave rebellion as a legitimate demonstration of how slaves desired liberty – like Englishmen did.<sup>114</sup> In 1823 the

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<sup>109</sup> David Eltis, 'The British contribution to the Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Slave Trade', *Economic History Review*, 32:2 (1979), pp. 211-227.

<sup>110</sup> Coupland, *Wilberforce*, pp. 382-383.

<sup>111</sup> Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade*.

<sup>112</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 211.

<sup>113</sup> Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, p. 219.

<sup>114</sup> Gelien Matthews, *Caribbean Slave Revolts and the British Abolitionist Movement* (Baton Rouge, LA.: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); Gad Heuman, 'From Slavery to Freedom: Blacks in the

missionary John Smith was arrested and imprisoned on Demerara, accused of inciting slave rebellion. Smith died before his trial, prompting outrage in Britain that was exploited by 'abolitionist leader Henry Brougham [who] explained to Parliament in 1824' that the rebellion was a demonstration of how the 'slaves were "inflamed with a desire for liberty."' <sup>115</sup> The brutal response of colonial authorities to the Baptist War in Jamaica in 1831 further discredited the planter class 'just as the Reform crisis was coming to a head in 1832.' <sup>116</sup> Abolition was passed by the enlarged Parliament and both abolition and the Reform Act represent significant landmarks in British history. Significantly, but often overlooked, slave rebellions not only helped abolitionists to claim the moral high ground but also warned 'that if emancipation would not come from above, it would come from below. The British government responded to this signal.' <sup>117</sup>

Since the English Civil War, national identity had partnered Englishness/Britishness with liberty. <sup>118</sup> In the 1772 Somerset case, Lord Mansfield had helped to cement the idea of slavery being incompatible with the free air of England. But what was England/Britain and who could be an Englishman/Briton? <sup>119</sup> Proslavery interests had argued that Africans were 'a savage subspecies' that was unable to qualify as British. <sup>120</sup> Writers such as Mary Prince, and abolitionist interpretations of slave rebellion, helped to convince many in Britain that Africans aspired to British freedoms once exposed to them. <sup>121</sup> In this way, the process of abolition helped to

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Nineteenth Century British West Indies', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 147.

<sup>115</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 279.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279; Fogel, *Without consent or contract*, p. 231.

<sup>117</sup> Verene A. Shepherd, *Livestock, Sugar and Slavery: Contested Terrain in Colonial Jamaica* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), p. 160;

<sup>118</sup> Derek R. Peterson, 'Introduction: Abolitionism and Political Thought in Britain and East Africa', Derek R. Peterson (ed.), *Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain, Africa, and the Atlantic* (Athens, OH.: Ohio University Press, 2010), pp. 10-11.

<sup>119</sup> Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade*, p. 207.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* p. 166.

<sup>121</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 281; Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*, p. 306; James Walvin, *Passage to Britain: Immigration in British History and Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984), pp. 17-39.



develop the idea of colonialism as a civilising mission that later justified colonial expansion in Africa.<sup>122</sup>

Robin Blackburn identifies the social changes brought about by industrial development as critical to the development of abolitionism, and hence why Britain led the abolitionist tide. However, Britain's abolition process was not typical.<sup>123</sup> As noted earlier, the French mistrusted British antislavery motives, and under the restored monarchy 'to speak of abolition was to get oneself accused of both subversive and anti-national tendencies.'<sup>124</sup> French abolitionism was also hindered by the lack of a nonconformist tradition and the Catholic Church's ambivalence to overseas missions. Consequently, the French abolitionist movement remained small and limited to elite Parisian circles.<sup>125</sup>

The end of French slavery, however, like the British, coincided with a period of political upheaval – the 1848 Revolution.<sup>126</sup> Slave rebellions had ended the hope of maintaining slavery peacefully, most notably in Martinique where rebellion effectively granted freedom to the slaves in advance of the official proclamation reaching the island.<sup>127</sup> Like in Haiti, the French Caribbean slave system was destroyed by rebellion in both the Caribbean and France, although this time France did not reinstate slavery as Napoleon had done in 1801.

Across the Americas and Caribbean, abolition coincided with one or more factors: British pressure, revolutionary independence movements, and slave rebellion.

Slavery was overturned in the Danish Virgin Islands in 1848, with slaves again taking an active role in ensuring this outcome and freeing the colony's few thousand slaves. The revolutionary impulses of the time also saw the winding up of slavery in Colombia, Argentina and Venezuela. However the Caribbean colonies of the two European states

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<sup>122</sup> Quirk, *The Anti-Slavery Project*, pp. 92-94; Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade*, pp. 203-10, 216-217.

<sup>123</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 327.

<sup>124</sup> Daget, 'A model of the French abolitionist movement and its variations', p. 69.

<sup>125</sup> Seymour Drescher, 'Two variants of anti-slavery: religious organization and social mobilization in Britain and France, 1780-1870', Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (eds.), *Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Anstey* (Chatham: W. and J. Mackay Ltd, 1980), p. 50; Drescher, *Capitalism and Anti-Slavery*, p 115; Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, p. 234

<sup>126</sup> Daget, 'A model of the French abolitionist movement and its variations', p. 258.

<sup>127</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 363, 395.

that survived 1848 without either a revolution or a slave revolt – Spain and the Netherlands saw the institution survive.<sup>128</sup>

In the Netherlands, Calvinism had not been usurped by Arminianism and the nonconformist roots of British antislavery were mistrusted.<sup>129</sup> The 'Dutch Reformed church was strictly a "white" church' whose missionaries did not interest themselves with slaves.<sup>130</sup> The Dutch slave trade was abolished in 1818 due to British exploitation of Dutch weakness during the Napoleonic era; however, not until the 1860s was slavery actually abolished in the Dutch colonies.<sup>131</sup>

Abolition in Cuba (1886) arrived later than elsewhere due to its revolution from Spain occurring later. Initially, Cuban planters had resisted timid Spanish moves towards abolition. As a colony, Cuba was so large and its planter class so wealthy that the Imperial Government in Madrid had little influence. Furthermore Spain, like France, was Catholic and only in the '1860s and 1870s did an abolitionist movement arise in Spain itself.'<sup>132</sup> Abolition in Cuba did not result from Spanish legislation, but from the Cuban War of Independence, as abolitionism provided the independence movement with a moral legitimacy and the support of the large free black, mixed race and slave populations.<sup>133</sup>

Revolutionary independence did not lead to emancipation in Brazil and the US.<sup>134</sup> As Blackburn notes, 'The post-independence American slave order was far less vulnerable than the colonial slavery of the French or British Caribbean as planters were not at the mercy of a distant metropolis, nor did they confront a large slave majority.'<sup>135</sup> Brazil like the US had a plantation-based economy in large parts of the country which proved resistant to abolitionist sentiments and prevented the ending of slavery for a long time. Abolitionism in Brazil was slow to develop and resulted largely

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 396.

<sup>129</sup> P.C. Emmer, 'Anti-slavery and the Dutch: abolition without reform', Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (ed.), *Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Anstey* (Chatham: W. and J. Mackay Ltd, 1980), p. 86.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93. See also P.C. Emmer, *The Dutch Slave Trade, 1500-1800* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), pp. 125-128.

<sup>132</sup> Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 284.

<sup>133</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, pp. 350-351.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 285-299.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

from British abolitionist influences.<sup>136</sup> The development of 'non slave sectors' of the economy was also important in the development of a 'domestic abolitionist movement.' As Davis notes, in Brazil, as in Britain, the US and France: 'emancipation was made possible only by the growing militancy of urban industrialists, bureaucrats, engineers, and military officers, who saw the slave system as a primary obstacle to economic progress.'<sup>137</sup> Shame was also important; as Blackburn notes, the end of slavery in the Americas was made inevitable by the end of slavery in the US. Firstly, combined Anglo-American antislavery pressure was hard to resist. Secondly, once slavery had been abolished by European powers and the foremost American power, it became seen as outdated and the antithesis to the idea of 'progress.'<sup>138</sup>

Nowhere was abolitionism more contested than in the US, where emancipation followed the Civil War, which marked the climax of decades of competition between the free labour states of the North and the slave states of the South. The constitutional convention had created an uneasy balance of power between the two competing conceptions of US society which the western expansion of the US kept threatening to destroy. The election of Abraham Lincoln represented the point at which the balance of power tipped towards the North and prompted the South to secede from the Union in order to retain slavery.<sup>139</sup>

The US Civil War did not occur in an international vacuum. US national identity was based upon its birth in Revolution and the idea that it stood for freedom and liberty. The abolition of slavery by the old tyrant Britain posed a challenge to the US

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<sup>136</sup> Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, p. 230; Leslie Bethel, 'The Independence of Brazil and the Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Anglo-Brazilian Relations, 1822-1826', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 1:2 (1969), pp. 115-147.

<sup>137</sup> Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, pp. 268-69; Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, pp. 446-449.

<sup>138</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, pp. 440-444.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 384-386; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *Fruits of Merchant Capital: Slavery and Bourgeois Property in the Rise and Expansion of Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 41-42; Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, p. 427; Mark M. Smith, *Debating Slavery: Economy and Society in the Antebellum American South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Harold D. Woodman, 'The Profitability of Slavery', Allen Weinstein and Frank Otto Gatell (eds.), *American Negro Slavery: A Modern Reader* (2nd Edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of Negro Slavery* (London: Wildwood House, 1974).

sense of self and moral worth and stimulated US abolitionism.<sup>140</sup> As in other nations, abolitionism reflected a desire to be seen as moral and civilised; the shame of being seen as backward helped to steel the Union resolve to fight to end slavery.

The abolition of slavery across the Americas occurred for two primary reasons. The first was the resistance of the slaves. The second was changing attitudes towards labour and morality in the European world. As such slavery in the Americas shaped not only the economic but the ideological and moral development of the western world. This has often been overlooked when remembering slavery and assessing its legacy.

### Legacies of Slavery, Memories of Abolition

Across the European and American world abolition has distorted the memory of slavery. In the French Caribbean slaves were informed upon their emancipation that they were now French citizens and that they should forget the past.<sup>141</sup> The British used the narrative of an enlightened gift of emancipation to justify colonial rule.<sup>142</sup> In the US, the sacrifice of white Union troops has been presented as a cleansing of the nation's guilt over slavery and an affirmation of 'American Exceptionalism.'<sup>143</sup>

As noted earlier, abolitionism became a central theme in the development of modern British identity as a humanitarian nation, and changing ideas of civilised behaviour and the shame of being seen as uncivilised aided the spread of abolition.<sup>144</sup> During slavery, Christianity and later theories of racial hierarchy were used to define Africans as heathens or lesser beings and, therefore, legitimately enslave-able.<sup>145</sup> Instead of breaking down this religious and racial differentiation and hierarchy,

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<sup>140</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 251.

<sup>141</sup> Catherine A. Reinhardt, *Claims to Memory: Beyond Slavery and Emancipation in the French Caribbean* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), p. 9; Ariela J. Gross, 'All Born to Freedom? Comparing the Law and Politics of Race and Memory of Slavery in the US and France Today', *University of Southern California Legal Studies Working Paper Series*, Paper 82 (2011), p. 8.

<sup>142</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 475.

<sup>143</sup> David W. Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory and the American Civil War* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), p. 122.

<sup>144</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, pp. 395-441.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88; Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, pp. 314, 322-325; Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the other: the "East" in European identity formation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 39-54; Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, p. 13; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 69.

abolitionism reaffirmed the European sense of racial and cultural superiority and contributed to justifications of colonialism as a civilising mission and 'White Man's Burden.'<sup>146</sup> In the US and other American nations, these same ideas contributed to the development of segregation and maintenance of slavery's racial and social hierarchies after the end of slavery.<sup>147</sup>

The failure of anti-black racism to die with slavery reflected the ingrained nature of racism within European society at this time, where ideas of racial hierarchy shaped attitudes to colonialism and ideas of degeneracy and racial purity became increasingly influential towards the close of the nineteenth century.<sup>148</sup> Racism did not just influence defences of slavery but also arguments for abolition. Paternalistic racism characterised the ideas of abolitionists, such as sending missionaries to convert and civilise slaves in the Caribbean and the establishment of the Sierra Leone Company to introduce civilisation, Christianity and legitimate commerce to Africa.<sup>149</sup> The collapse of the British sugar islands following abolition and the failure of the Sierra Leone Company reinforced the racist beliefs of both slavery's defenders and abolitionists that Africans were innately lazy and backward.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Quirk, *The Anti-Slavery project*, pp. 54-110; Joel Quirk and David Richardson, 'Anti-slavery, European Identity and International Society: A Macro-historical Perspective', *Journal of Modern European History*, 7:1 (2009), pp. 68-92; Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade*, pp. 171-210; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 214.

<sup>147</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, pp. 433-446.

<sup>148</sup> Racism is a wider issue than just the anti-black racism that became refined during the era of transatlantic slavery, Jim Crow in the US and the colonisation of Africa by European nations. Ideologies of race and racism were intrinsically tied to European colonial expansion and shaped Eurocentric attitudes towards non-Europeans and non-Christians throughout the world. Racial prejudice has also commonly been exhibited by non-European peoples, often in justifying labour exploitation, for example see Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 50-52.

<sup>149</sup> Christopher L. Brown, 'Envisioning an Empire without Slavery, 1772-1834', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 135-136; William A. Green, 'Emancipation to Indenture: A Question of Imperial Morality', *Journal of British Studies*, 22:2 (1983), pp. 98-121; Patrick Brantlinger, 'Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent', *Critical Inquiry*, 12:1 (1985), pp. 166-203; Brian Stanley, '"Commerce and Christianity", Providence theory, the Missionary Movement, and the Imperialism of Free Trade, 1842-1860', *The Historical Journal*, 26:1 (1983), pp. 77-94; J. Gallagher, 'Fowell Buxton and the New African Policy, 1838-1842', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 10:1 (1950), pp. 36-58; Lovejoy, *Transformations*, p. 283; Manning, *Slavery and African Life*, p. 144; Andrew Porter, 'Trusteeship, Anti-Slavery, and Humanitarianism', Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 209.

<sup>150</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 73-74, 189.

In the US, slave-owners watched these developments with apprehension. Slavery depended upon violence and therefore slave owners feared rebellion and, if abolition came, violent revenge from former slaves as well as economic collapse. Fear encouraged racism and racism encouraged fear. This explains why the South was so prepared to fight to retain slavery and also why the Klu Klux Klan was organised by former Confederate troops to terrorise African Americans in an effort to maintain the racial hierarchy of slavery.<sup>151</sup> Fear of black people was not restricted to the US; prejudice and violence typified the policing of black people by the British and other Europeans during the colonial era abroad and subsequently at home.<sup>152</sup>

Historical memory and its role in national identity construction were central to this continuation of racism and inequality. By excluding the contribution of African Americans in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars in the construction of US memory of these events, African Americans were depicted as passive and outside the concept of 'American' freedom which white men had earned through sacrifice. Post-Civil War North-South reconciliation was built upon the celebration of white men's valour and excluded African Americans and justified to many the developing segregation.<sup>153</sup> Meanwhile the geographical disconnection between metropolitan memory construction and historical slavery enabled Britain, France and other European nations to exclude former slaves from their construction of national identity.<sup>154</sup> The achievement of abolitionism in humanising Africans was, sadly, not lasting.

### **Africa and Transatlantic Slavery**

Advocates of reparations to Africa argue that Europe imposed the slave trade on Africa and reject claims that Africans willingly participated and share responsibility for the

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<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153; Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1968), pp. 403-426, 482-569.

<sup>152</sup> Jordan, *White Over Black*, pp. 150-163; Homer Hawkins and Richard Thomas, 'White policing of black populations: a history of race and social control in America', Ellis Cashmore and Eugene McLaughlin (eds), *Out of Order? Policing Black People* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 65-86.

<sup>153</sup> Blight, 'A Quarrel Forgotten or a Revolution Remembered? Reunion and Race in the Memory of the Civil War, 1875-1913', *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 120-152.

<sup>154</sup> Krishan Kumar, 'English and French national identity: comparisons and contrasts', *Nations and Nationalism*, 12:3 (2006), pp. 413-432.

harm caused. For example, Lasiné Kaba insists that ‘The Atlantic Slave Trade was not a “Black on Black Holocaust,”’ but that:

The woe [of transatlantic slavery] was felt on both sides of the Atlantic. Enslavement and uprooting were traumatizing for both the victims who made the voyage and for those who did not, including those who stayed home and those who died on the ships. They all were victims of the same tragedy. The memory of slavery exists as a crucial marker in both worlds and should not be used to sever the umbilical ties of their identity.<sup>155</sup>

This historical narrative unites black people on both sides of the Atlantic in shared victimhood. However, this Pan-African identity is unhistorical. The concept of a shared African racial identity developed in the Americas in response to European racism.<sup>156</sup> As Davis notes, ‘Europeans profited from the total lack of any “Pan-African consciousness”’ and the willingness of Africans to enslave members of competing African communities.<sup>157</sup>

The Africa that first engaged in the slave trade was far from homogenous. As Marcus Rediker describes, even in 1700:

West and West-Central Africa had a population of about 25 million people, who lived in a complex range of kin-ordered and tributary societies along four thousand miles of coastline that stretched from Senegambia to Angola. The smallest were stateless, many more were of modest size but possessed some degree of internal stratification, and a few were big, class-based states that controlled extensive territory, lucrative trade, and mass armies.<sup>158</sup>

In Western Africa, ‘Slavery was an ancient and widely accepted institution,’ and from ‘the seventh century to the nineteenth, more than nine million souls were carried northward in the trans-Saharan trade organized by Arab merchants.’<sup>159</sup> The broad acceptance of slavery by Africans is further attested by the retention of slavery by runaway and Maroon communities. Also plotters of slave rebellions often intended to overthrow the existing elites but not abolish slavery because, as John Thornton notes,

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<sup>155</sup> Lasiné Kaba, ‘The Atlantic Slave Trade Was Not a “Black-on-Black Holocaust”’, *African Studies Review*, 44:1 (2001), pp. 10-11.

<sup>156</sup> James Sidbury, *Becoming African in America: Race and Nation in the Early Black Atlantic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>157</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 88.

<sup>158</sup> Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (London: John Murray, 2007), p. 75.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

they did not object to slavery in general but *their* own enslavement.<sup>160</sup> Thus 'when European traders arrived on the coast, they simply entered pre-existing circuits of exchange and did not immediately alter them.'<sup>161</sup> However, Rediker, like Rodney, argues that the huge demand of Europeans for slaves destabilised Western Africa and caused slavery to become more prominent and harsh.<sup>162</sup> The importation of European firearms, Rediker argued, enabled the larger centralised states to further increase their power and influence. Slave catching became an important part of the economy, a slave trading merchant class developed and society became increasingly stratified as power and wealth were institutionalised. In short, Rediker argues, the 'number of slaves held and the importance of slavery as an institution in African societies expanded with the Atlantic slave trade' and as a direct result of European influence.<sup>163</sup>

However, whilst Rediker interprets these developments in a manner similar to Rodney's underdevelopment theory, these trends could be interpreted differently. The development and expansion of slavery; near constant warfare; the creation of standing armies; and increasing social stratification and labour exploitation, all occurred in Europe and the Americas during this era, but have been tied to economic and industrial development. Perhaps then, as Thornton suggests, the changes in slavery in Africa during the period of the transatlantic slave trade should be considered as a parallel to the worsening conditions of the working class during the industrial revolution and a reflection of similar increases in economic activity.<sup>164</sup> These differing interpretations reflect modern political ideologies and historical memories and must be interrogated if the legacies of transatlantic slavery are to be overcome.

### Slavery in Africa: Benign in comparison to the Americas?

Advocates of reparations claim that slavery in the Americas was exceptional due to its barbarity and racialisation. In contrast, slavery within African societies has been labelled as benign, but is this the case? It is first worth considering why slavery existed

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<sup>160</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, pp. 282-303.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, *The Slave Ship*, p. 77.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>164</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, pp. 72-97.



at all. Slavery is often associated with economic backwardness, but this is the result of European, self-congratulatory labelling of abolitionism as progressive and the rise of free labour ideology. Slavery can and does exist in modern economies, peaking in Europe during the Second World War.<sup>165</sup> It has also been suggested that slavery tends to exist when there is a shortage of labour and an excess of land, as controlling labour becomes essential to control the means of production. This argument has been used to explain why slavery died out in Europe but not in Africa or in European colonisation of the Americas.<sup>166</sup> Thornton instead argues that slavery existed in Africa because it was 'legally divergent' to Europe, not because it was less developed.<sup>167</sup> He explains: 'Slavery was widespread in Atlantic Africa because slaves were the only form of private, revenue producing property recognized in African law.'<sup>168</sup> This 'legal feature made slavery and slave trading widespread, and its role in producing secure wealth linked it to economic development.'<sup>169</sup> The economic role of slavery in Africa also meant that as the economy changed, the nature of slavery was also bound to change, just as the labour relations changed in Europe during industrialisation.

The economic role of slavery made slavery a central part of Western African geopolitical negotiation and penal systems. Vassal states paid tribute to their powerful neighbours with slaves and slavery was a form of criminal punishment (the British practice of exporting convict labour could be interpreted similarly).<sup>170</sup> Judith Spicksley identifies the concept of debt as vital to understanding these practices.<sup>171</sup> Death would be expected to follow defeat in battle or as punishment for certain crimes, and reprieve in such situations therefore created a life debt of slavery. Similarly, the self enslavement of starving families constituted a situation where a debt of life was repaid by a life of servitude. These practices also legitimated hereditary slavery, because saving an individual's life also saves the lives of their future children. Indeed, European

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<sup>165</sup> Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Drescher, 'From Consensus to Consensus', pp. 86-102.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-97; J.D. Fage, 'Slaves and Society in Western Africa, c. 1445-c. 1700', *The Journal of African History*, 21:3 (1980), p. 309.

<sup>167</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 76.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 25-47; Christopher, *A Merciless Place*.

<sup>170</sup> Rediker, pp. 75-77; Lovejoy, *Transformations*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>171</sup> Judith Spicksley, 'Death, obligation and the origins of slavery' (Forthcoming), p. 1; Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (London: Harvard University Press, 1982).

proslavery interests argued that they were saving the lives of the slaves that were transported out of Africa to the Americas.<sup>172</sup>

Debt not only provided an intellectual rationale for slavery but was also a part of its economic sophistication. Systems of debt and credit enabled the transatlantic slave trade to draw slaves hundreds of kilometres from the interior of Africa to the coast to be brought by Europeans.<sup>173</sup> The economic complexity of slavery highlights how slavery could be a part of a growing and dynamic economy. This is especially the case in Africa where transportation and trade relied upon manpower provided by slaves.<sup>174</sup>

Advocates of reparations for Africa claim that African slavery was more benign than New World chattel slavery, and that the transatlantic slave trade caused slavery to become harsher and more prevalent, especially in Western Africa. It is hard to evaluate this claim as slavery varied in nature between time and place. Nevertheless, it has been argued that rates of manumission were higher in Western African societies due to the integration of slaves within kinship structures.<sup>175</sup> Indeed, Herbert Foster insisted in 1966 that because slaves were expensive in Africa they were 'cherished' and that 'serfdom, villeinage, vassalship, or domestic service' better describes African labour relations than slavery.<sup>176</sup>

It is also argued that slaves within Africa had opportunities to develop their own independent economic enterprises and acquire personal wealth.<sup>177</sup> However, becoming part of another kinship group and being a slave wife or concubine is not

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<sup>172</sup> Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, pp. 182-3.

<sup>173</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson, 'The Business of Slaving: Pawnship in Western Africa, c. 1600-1810', *The Journal of African History*, 42:1 (2001), p. 85; Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson, 'Trust, Pawnship, and Atlantic History: The Institutional Foundations of the Old Calabar Slave Trade', *The American Historical Review*, 104:2 (1999), p. 339.

<sup>174</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations*, p. 233.

<sup>175</sup> Walter Rodney, 'African Slavery and Other Forms of Social Oppression on the Upper Guinea Coast in the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade', *The Journal of African History*, 7:3 (1966), p. 440; Lovejoy, *Transformations*, p. 122; Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, 'Women, Marriage, and Slavery in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Nineteenth Century', Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers and Joseph C. Miller (eds.), *Women and Slavery: African, the Indian Ocean World, and the Medieval North Atlantic* (Athens, OH.: Ohio University Press, 2007), p. 48.

<sup>176</sup> Herbert J. Foster, 'Partners or Captives in Commerce?: The Role of Africans in the Slave Trade', *Journal of Black Studies*, 6:4 (1976), pp. 421-429.

<sup>177</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations*, pp. 9-15.

dissimilar to the sexual exploitation of black slaves by white men on the slave ships and plantations.<sup>178</sup> Orlando Patterson argues: 'One of the problems with many anthropological accounts of slavery in kin-based societies is that the emphasis on structural aspects of social life often leads to a neglect of the purely human dimension.' Patterson adds, it is important to recognise that the sexual exploitation of powerlessness and 'degradation' of slaves exists in all forms of slavery.<sup>179</sup> It must be noted too, that US planters often described their slaves as part of their family and that in doing so they were seeking to emulate the British gentry who self-identified their societal role as benevolent and paternal in order to justify their privilege.<sup>180</sup> Slavery in the Americas, as in Africa, was diverse. Not all slaves worked in tar pits and sugarcane fields, many were skilled labourers, household servants, or urban traders and some were manumitted.<sup>181</sup> Slaves in the Americas could also develop their own independent means of economic enterprise, most commonly growing their own produce to sell at the Sunday market (which became of particular importance in the Caribbean).<sup>182</sup>

Slavery in both Africa and the Americas varied in severity.<sup>183</sup> The variations in conditions for slaves in Africa and the Americas were intended to create divisions within the slave community and to incentivise loyalty.<sup>184</sup> Similarly, violence, or the threat of it, served to protect the status quo by instilling fear.<sup>185</sup> In Asante, human sacrifice of slaves was practiced at funerals and some other religious ceremonies.<sup>186</sup> On

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<sup>178</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 86.

<sup>179</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p. 64.

<sup>180</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 194; Micki McElya, *Clinging to Mammy: the Faithful Slave in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 4-13; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and faith in the Southern Slaveholder's World View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 170-171, 265-382; Daunton, *Progress and Poverty*, pp. 562-563.

<sup>181</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 180-181; Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 177-180; Stanley L. Engerman and B.W. Higman, 'The Demographic Structure of the Caribbean Slave Societies in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', Franklin W. Knight (ed.) *General History of the Caribbean, Volume III. The Slave Societies of the Caribbean* (London: UNESCO/MacMillan, 1997), pp. 94-95.

<sup>182</sup> Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in the Caribbean, 1650-1838* (Kingston: Heinemann Publishers, 1990), pp. 46-50; Shepherd, *Livestock, Sugar and Slavery*, pp. 140-143; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, p. 116.

<sup>183</sup> David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 113-122.

<sup>184</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 194-198.

<sup>185</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, pp. 2-4.

<sup>186</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, p. 180; Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port', 1727-1892* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004), p. 139; Clifford Williams, 'Asante: Human

board slave ships exemplary violence was used to deter rebellion.<sup>187</sup> As Ira Berlin notes of slave ship violence: 'When it came to subduing the slave, the captains' autocratic power was extended to the crew, and men who had been brutalized often felt little compunction in brutalizing others.'<sup>188</sup> This utilisation of violence for control reflected the role of violence in the European penal system as both a deterrent to criminal activity and an affirmation of the societal status quo.<sup>189</sup> In short, the concept of benign slavery must be rejected as in all slave systems there was the potential for rewards but also for grave dehumanisation, sexual violence, and horrific punishment.<sup>190</sup> Slavery in all societies has involved stigmatisation and shame for both slaves and their free descendants, sometimes to this day.<sup>191</sup> But more than this, slavery must be understood as an extreme form of social control and intimidation present in other unequal but non-slave societies.

The notion of benign African slavery has also been revealed to be heavily influenced by paternalistic colonial attitudes. Antislavery often provided a legitimisation for colonial expansion, but imposing abolition was difficult. To defend their inaction colonial administrators argued that indigenous societies could not be expected to grasp free labour principles as quickly as Europeans and that, in any case, indigenous slavery was benign.<sup>192</sup> As will be outlined below, the idea that Africa was less developed than Europe at the beginning of the slave trade reflects European ideas of racial hierarchy. Moreover, it is a small step to suggest that the greater level of outrage felt at the historical sexual exploitation of enslaved black women by white masters in the Americas, in contrast to that felt at the historical sexual exploitation of

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Sacrifice or Capital Punishment? An Assessment of the Period 1807-1874', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 21:3 (1988), pp. 433-441; Ivor Wilks, 'Asante: Human Sacrifice of Capital Punishment? A Rejoinder', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 21:3 (1988), pp. 443-452; Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>187</sup> Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, p. 240.

<sup>188</sup> Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking, 2010), p. 60.

<sup>189</sup> David Garland, *The Peculiar Institution: America's Death Penalty in the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press of University of Harvard Press, 2010), pp. 24-27; David Philips, 'Crime, law and punishment in the Industrial Revolution', Patrick O'Brien and Ronald Auinault (eds.), *The Industrial Revolution and British Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 156; Coupland, *Wilberforce*, p. 355; Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, pp. 137-144.

<sup>190</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 194-199.

<sup>191</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p. 247; Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (London: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 116-117.

<sup>192</sup> Quirk and Richardson, 'Anti-slavery, European Identity and International Society', pp. 82-88; Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, p. 248.

black women by black men in Africa, is itself a legacy of traditional European racist anxieties over racial mixing, and also of elements of inverse racism on the part of black people towards white.

### The African-European Balance of Power During the Transatlantic Slave Trade

GEP member Sir Anthony Gifford claims that African involvement in transatlantic slavery was limited to a small number of collaborators, but this is not so.<sup>193</sup> Instead of the transatlantic slave trade being an imposition, Africans participated for the same reasons as Europeans: profit.<sup>194</sup> African monarchs and political leaders who sanctioned the trade benefitted from the tax revenues produced in their ports.<sup>195</sup> Of all the products traded by the Europeans for slaves, 'none were "essential commodities."' Rather, as Thornton argues 'Africa's trade with Europe was largely moved by prestige, fancy, changing taste, and a desire for variety – and such whimsical motivations were backed up by a relatively well developed productive economy and substantial purchasing power.'<sup>196</sup>

Far from being economically backward, many areas of Western Africa had developed sophisticated industry and manufacturing and were integrated into continental and intercontinental trade networks.<sup>197</sup> Indeed, Africa had already imported European goods and exported slaves and gold through trade links with North Africa.<sup>198</sup> During the transatlantic slave trade 'Cloth arriving from Europe and Asia . . . accounted for about 2 percent of total consumption' and 'African regions both exported their own cloth to Europeans and imported cloth from Europe, at times in the same transaction.' As such 'European trade with Africa can scarcely be seen as disruptive in itself, for it did not oust any line of African production, nor did it thwart

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<sup>193</sup> Gifford, 'The Legal Basis of the Claim for Slavery Reparations'.

<sup>194</sup> Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, pp. 153-181.

<sup>195</sup> Stephen H. Hymer, 'Economic Forms in Pre-Colonial Ghana', *The Journal of Economic History*, 30:1 (1970), p. 42; Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, pp. 51-53.

<sup>196</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 45.

<sup>197</sup> Hymer, 'Economic Forms in Pre-Colonial Ghana', p. 39.

<sup>198</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 48.

development by providing items through trade that would have otherwise been manufactured in Africa.<sup>199</sup>

Even if Europeans wished to impose their will upon Africans they were ill equipped to do so. European muskets were ineffective in damp tropical conditions and when Europeans fought African groups by themselves they were 'slaughtered.'<sup>200</sup> To wage war successfully Europeans had to have African allies.<sup>201</sup> Whilst European ships were suited to ocean-going trade, African boats were designed for river and coastal trade and were more suited to quick raiding coastal and river warfare. Further, the greater firepower of the European ships did not make any difference inland, where Europeans, until the medical advances of the nineteenth century, quickly succumbed to tropical diseases.<sup>202</sup> Consequently, 'Not only did African naval power make raiding [slave raiding by Europeans] difficult, it also allowed Africans to conduct trade with the Europeans on their own terms, collecting customs and other duties as they liked.'<sup>203</sup>

European nations did develop coastal areas of dominance, the Portuguese in Angola and the Dutch at Elmina. However, European forts, often interpreted as signs of European military impositions upon local Africans, were actually factories where slaves were held until the arrival of a slave ship.<sup>204</sup> This reduced the time spent on board the ship in conditions of disease and with limited supplies. Far from testifying to African exploitation, these forts represented the competition between European powers to trade. As David Northrup notes: 'the cannon on the walls of these forts pointed outward to sea to defend against attacks from European rivals, not inward against the African partners.'<sup>205</sup>

Successful trade depended on good relations with African trade partners. Gifts were presented to African 'kings' before trading could occur and as competition

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<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-53.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>201</sup> R.A. Kea, 'Firearms and Warfare on the Gold and Slave Coasts from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries', *The Journal of African History*, 12:2 (1971), p. 188.

<sup>202</sup> Andrew Porter, 'Introduction: Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth Century', Andrew Porter (ed.) *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 14.

<sup>203</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 39.

<sup>204</sup> Larry W. Yarak, 'West African Coastal Slavery in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Afro-European Slave owners of Elmina', *Ethnohistory*, 36:1 (1989), pp. 44-60.

<sup>205</sup> Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, p. 57.

between Europeans increased so did the value of the gifts.<sup>206</sup> African polities sought to control the trade with Europeans and between the coast and the interior. The Dahomians, in contrast to Rodney's description earlier in this Chapter, perfected this. They became middlemen between the coast and the interior, and enforced a policy of open trade and prohibited violence between Europeans in the port of Ouidah.<sup>207</sup>

Goods of exchange varied in popularity along the coast. For instance, the Gold Coast consumer was 'brand conscious' and sometimes the 'Fante would only accept products of one or two firms' whilst in Sierra Leone and the Grain Coast tobacco was important to trade, but it had to be Brazilian.<sup>208</sup> Far from being a military imposition, violence against coastal trading communities was generally harmful to European long-term trade goals. The exchange of slaves between Africans and Europeans was largely a 'peaceful regulated trade.'<sup>209</sup> Violence was central to the trade, but violent enslavement usually occurred in the interior and was carried out by Africans. The enslaved were, of course, always victims of violence; however, violence was not central to the acquisition of slaves by Europeans on the coast of Western Africa.

Reparations advocates argue that the importation of European firearms into Africa was a deliberate European effort to promote warfare and increase the supply of slaves.<sup>210</sup> Inikori has noted that the sale of guns went primarily to slave traders and links this to warfare and raiding for slaves.<sup>211</sup> Northrup, however, undermines the notion of a slave-gun cycle by pointing to Senegambia, where the increasing import of guns correlated with decreasing slave exports, and the Bight of Biafra where 'warfare played no significant role in obtaining slaves . . . [as most] were victims of kidnapping or persons sold for debt or as the result of judicial processes.'<sup>212</sup> Furthermore, the

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<sup>206</sup> Law, *Ouidah*, p. 127; Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, pp. 56-59.

<sup>207</sup> Law, *Ouidah*, pp. 123-127.

<sup>208</sup> George Metcalf, 'A Microcosm of why Africans sold slaves: Akan consumption patterns in the 1770s', *Journal of African History*, 28 (1987), pp. 379-389.

<sup>209</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, p. 38.

<sup>210</sup> J.E. Inikori, 'The Import of Firearms into West Africa 1750-1807: A Quantitative Analysis', *The Journal of African History*, 18:3 (1977), p. 352, 361; Foster, 'Partners or Captives in Commerce?', pp. 429-433.

<sup>211</sup> Inikori, 'The Import of Firearms into West Africa', p. 352, 361.

<sup>212</sup> Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, pp. 92-96.

Asante were able to maintain their export of slaves after the Asante Empire had ceased to expand.<sup>213</sup>

Thornton argues that wars for slaves in Africa have to be viewed in much the same way as wars fought for land in Europe.<sup>214</sup> Europeans, therefore, cannot be held responsible for these wars nor the changing power relations and state boundaries in Africa during the era of transatlantic slavery. Whilst guns did become more prevalent in African armies, good military organisation remained the primary factor in the success of growing states such as the Asante.<sup>215</sup> Military and economic organisation similarly enabled Dahomey to take control of smaller coastal states but not, despite its good supply of guns, larger states in the interior equipped with cavalry.<sup>216</sup>

While Inikori and Rodney interpret the entering of states into the slave trade as a sign of European influence, participation reflected how 'economic arguments were becoming increasingly important in the minds of ruling segments in West African societies.'<sup>217</sup> Increasing slave exports correlated with rising prices and it is likely that this 'may have persuaded owners that it would be better to forgo domestic use in exchange for the higher price available from the Atlantic trade.'<sup>218</sup> Rising prices would also have covered the increased cost of bringing slaves to the coast from further inland. Thornton, therefore, argues that 'comparisons between the trade of the sixteenth and seventeenth century and that of the present day linking industrialized with less developed countries are invalid.'<sup>219</sup> Instead the decision to export slaves represented the rationally beneficial decisions for many slave owners.<sup>220</sup> He concludes:

African participation in the slave trade was voluntary and under the control of African decision makers. This was not just at the surface level of daily exchange but even at

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<sup>213</sup> Kea, 'Firearms and Warfare on the Gold and Slave Coasts', p. 212.

<sup>214</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, pp. 102-107.

<sup>215</sup> Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, pp. 90-98; Kea, 'Firearms and Warfare on the Gold and Slave Coasts', p. 210.

<sup>216</sup> Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, p. 94.

<sup>217</sup> Fage, 'Slavery and the slave trade in the Context of West African History', p. 401.

<sup>218</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 119.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>220</sup> Lovejoy and Richardson, 'The Business of Slaving', p. 85; Lovejoy and Richardson, 'Trust, Pawnship, and Atlantic History', p. 339.



deeper levels. Europeans possessed no means, either economic or military, to compel African leaders to sell slaves.<sup>221</sup>

Supporting Thornton's conclusion, Paul Lovejoy has noted that Muslim elites disliked the selling of slaves to infidels, except those convicted of murder or political crimes, and that Muslim West Africa consequently sold more slaves into the trans-Saharan and East African trades than the Atlantic trade.<sup>222</sup> Lovejoy further argues that Muslim West Africa 'could have supplied the transatlantic market to a much greater extent than it did.'<sup>223</sup> Elsewhere, where such scruples did not exist, Western African elites, like their European counterparts, sanctioned the trade based on considerations of profit.<sup>224</sup>

### Transatlantic Slavery and Africa: Development or Underdevelopment?

Walter Rodney used the conflict between King Agaja Trudo of Dahomey and the Europeans to argue that the Europeans forced the slave trade onto Africans who resisted the commerce as they knew it to be disadvantageous to their long term development. Robin Law, however, paints a rather different picture of the transatlantic slave trade at Ouidah, Dahomey's primary port and which, between the 1670s and 1860s was port of disembarkation for a phenomenal 22 percent of all slaves exported to the Americas. Ouidah was a free town and open to all European traders on payment of tax to the town's royalty.<sup>225</sup> The rate of slave exports increased in response to the increase in slave prices and Ouidah grew wealthy, although the wealth 'was not, of course, equally spread within Ouidah, but disproportionately enriched the wealthy merchant class.'<sup>226</sup> In contradiction to Rodney, Law argues that Ouidah and Dahomey demonstrate how African nations willingly participated in the slave trade for the purposes of profit. He highlights how 'there has been until very recently, a local

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<sup>221</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 124.

<sup>222</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, 'Internal Markets or an Atlantic-Sahara Divide? How Women Fit into the Slave Trade of West Africa', Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers and Joseph C. Miller (eds.), *Women and Slavery: Africa, the Indian Ocean World, and the Medieval North Atlantic, Volume One* (Athens, OH.: Ohio University Press, 2007), pp. 259-279.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273.

<sup>224</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, p. 69.

<sup>225</sup> Law, *Ouidah*, p. 2.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

consensus that the slave trade was a good thing for Ouidah.<sup>227</sup> The slave trade is remembered for the wealth it brought and how it had positioned Ouidah at the forefront of the introduction of 'European civilisation' to Africa had been considered a source of civic pride.<sup>228</sup>

Francisco Felix de Souza, 'a Brazilian slave trader who settled permanently in Ouidah in the 1820s' became a dominant slave trader, acquiring massive wealth in the era after Anglo-Portuguese treaties had banned the slave trade in the North Atlantic.<sup>229</sup> De Souza's success highlights how the authorities in Ouidah wished to continue the slave trade despite British efforts to suppress it, and how an African Brazilian community coordinating the slave trade between Ouidah and Brazil developed.<sup>230</sup> The familial wealth of many elites in Benin, and other Western African nations, can be traced back to slave trading. Descendants of de Souza have included the head of the military junta during 1969-1970 and a Cardinal prominent in the 1990 democratic revolution.<sup>231</sup> Such experiences and memory emphasise how reparations to Africa are based on ideologically influenced assumptions about the past, rather than an objective analysis of it.

The continuing desire of Ouidah to export slaves after the abolition of the slave trade by Britain attests to the level of acceptance within the society of Ouidah and the states with which they traded, and the extent to which Ouidah was economically reliant upon slave trading. Indeed, the replacement of slave trading with palm oil exports was not as profitable for the Dahomian state.<sup>232</sup> Ouidah was also tied into other slave trading and commercial networks through the links between Dahomey and the inland Yoruba state of Oyo, a large Islamic state of which Dahomey was a vassal. It was also linked to the Trans-Saharan trade networks which offered an alternative

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<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155; Elisée Soumonni, 'The Afro-Brazilian Communities of Ouidah and Lagos in the Nineteenth Century: A Comparative Analysis', Jose C. Curto and Renée Soulodre-La France, *Africa and the Americas: Interconnections During the Slave Trade* (Trenton N.J.: Africa World Press, 2005), p. 233.

<sup>230</sup> Robin Law and Kristin Mann, 'West Africa in the Atlantic Community: The Case of the Slave Coast', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 56:2 (1999), pp. 307-334; Soumonni, 'The Afro-Brazilian Communities of Ouidah', pp. 231-242.

<sup>231</sup> Law, *Ouidah*, p. 279.

<sup>232</sup> Elisée Soumonni, 'Slave and Palm Oil Trades in Dahomey, 1818-1858', Robin Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The commercial transition in nineteenth-century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 89.

outlet for slaves.<sup>233</sup> The commonality and centrality of slavery and slave trading was replicated across Western Africa in both Islamic and non-Islamic areas.<sup>234</sup> For instance the Sokoto Caliphate, which expanded rapidly in the nineteenth century through Jihad, 'At the time of colonial conquest (1897-1903)... had a huge slave population, certainly in excess of 1 million and perhaps more than 2.5 million.'<sup>235</sup> The Akan states of the Gold Coast and the Wolof States in Senegambia all used slavery to aid their development and expansion.<sup>236</sup>

In assessing the rise and evolution of slavery in West Africa, in particular Asante and Dahomey, Fage suggests that there 'seems to be a correlation in West Africa between the economic development (and political development, because indigenous commercial activity was largely king- or state-directed) and the growth of the institution of slavery.'<sup>237</sup> Demand for European goods not only encouraged Africans to sell slaves but also to expand trade networks. Goods gained from trade often went through multiple exchanges as they were traded further inland, often for slaves.<sup>238</sup>

Slavery then was central to African social and economic development, but did this development lead to long-term economic harm and underdevelopment? Lovejoy argues, in his transformation thesis, that transatlantic trade caused slavery within Africa to become harsher, more prevalent and to have caused depopulation.<sup>239</sup> He argues that transatlantic slavery was more harmful than other forms of slavery within Africa and criticises those who, like David Eltis, argue that the impact of the transatlantic slave trade was minimal. Lovejoy writes:

Eltis has concluded that neither the scale nor the value of the Atlantic trade was sufficiently large to have had more than a marginal influence on the course of African history. According to Eltis, "the slave trade for most regions and most periods was not

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<sup>233</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations*, pp. 54-56.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-61.

<sup>235</sup> Lovejoy and Hogendorn, *Slow Death for Slavery*, p. 1.

<sup>236</sup> Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, pp. 18-29; Fage, 'Slavery and the Slave trade in the context of West African History'; James F. Searing, 'Aristocrats, Slaves, and Peasants: Power and Dependency in the Wolof States, 1700-1850', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 21:3 (1988), pp. 475-503.

<sup>237</sup> Fage, 'Slavery and the Slave trade in the context of West African History', p. 397.

<sup>238</sup> E.W. Evans and David Richardson, 'Hunting for rents: the economies of slaving in pre-colonial Africa', *Economic History Review*, 48:4 (1995), pp. 665-686.

<sup>239</sup> Paul Lovejoy, 'The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa: A Review of the Literature', *The Journal of African History*, 30:3 (1989), pp. 365-394.

a critically important influence over the course of African history. At the very least, those who would place the slave trade as central to West African and west-central African history should be able to point to stronger common threads, if not themes, across African regions than have so far come to light.”<sup>240</sup>

Patrick Manning supports Lovejoy’s thesis and argues that the slave trade caused the depopulation of Africa.<sup>241</sup> However, as Lovejoy also notes, Joseph Miller who, in *Way of Death*, argues that the sex ratios of slaves in West Africa during the transatlantic slave trade era became increasingly female.<sup>242</sup> Polygamy increased due to slaves being integrated into wider kinship structures and possibly limited the demographic impact of exporting so many slaves. The exportation of males could also have left a more controllable slave population.<sup>243</sup>

It is difficult to determine the full impact of transatlantic slavery upon Africa in contrast to other social, economic and political forces, however, it is clear that reparations narratives and ‘popular accounts of ... Africans as victims – and little else’ are overly simplistic.<sup>244</sup> Africans like Europeans entered into trade for the purpose of profit and the centuries of successful trading suggests that arrangements largely ‘satisfied both sides most of the time.’<sup>245</sup> Indeed, to suggest otherwise, as Northrup argues, ‘demeans African intelligence and exaggerates European strength.’<sup>246</sup> Nevertheless, ‘In entering into Atlantic exchanges, they [Africans and Europeans] would test the strengths and expose the weaknesses of their own societies.’ In the long run, Africa would come off worse as African labour built the economies and colonies of the New World and industrialisation saw Europe develop in advance of Africa. However, the elites of Western Africa sought personal profit in their dealings with the Europeans and their descendant communities cannot ignore their collectives’

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<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 365-366; Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, p. 77.

<sup>241</sup> Lovejoy, ‘The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa’, p. 387; Manning, *Slavery and African Life*; Patrick Manning, ‘Migrations of Africans to the Americas: The Impact on Africans, Africa, and the New World’, *The History Teacher*, 26:3 (1993), p. 289; Patrick Manning, ‘The Enslavement of Africans: A Demographic Model’, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 15:3 (1981), p. 521.

<sup>242</sup> Lovejoy, ‘The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa’, pp. 388-389; Joseph Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

<sup>243</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations*, pp. 122-130; Coquery-Vidrovitch, ‘Women, Marriage, and Slavery in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Nineteenth Century’, p. 48.

<sup>244</sup> Northrup, *Africa’s Discovery*, p. 51.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

historical responsibility for the long-term disadvantage caused by their short-term greed.

### Abolition and Colonialism

In the era after slavery, the gap between European and African levels of development grew due to European industrialisation. Increased industrial and economic power, along with medical advances, enabled colonial expansion in Africa. Reparations advocates argue that the system of colonialism was another form of slavery inflicted upon all colonised subjects, and in many ways this was the case. But once again, this is too simplistic a picture. Colonialism, while not an equal partnership, was not the total imposition of European rule by industrial and military power often assumed. Rather, colonialism was less secure than often assumed and depended on negotiation, collaboration and an assumption of mutual benefit (albeit at the elite level). Colonial governments relied upon indigenous troops for military control of the colonies and everyday policing, and traditional elites and power structures were often co-opted to source labour for civil works and the military in return for the maintenance of their own privilege.<sup>247</sup>

Nevertheless, it is without doubt that European colonialism was based upon a racist ideology. Some of the racism was paternalistic, including efforts to end traditional forms of slavery, although, ironically, colonial governments often used forced labour for public work and infrastructure projects, arguing that such projects benefitted the colonised peoples.<sup>248</sup> At its worst, colonialism could be barbaric as Europeans sought to pillage Africa of its natural resources or sought to exterminate

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<sup>247</sup> Timothy H. Parsons, 'African Participation in the British Empire', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 260; Colin Newbury, *Patrons, Clients and Empire: Chieftaincy and Overrule in Asia, Africa and the Pacific* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 101-124; A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, 'The Thin White Line: The Size of the British Colonial Service in Africa', *African Affairs*, 79:314 (1980), pp. 25-44.

<sup>248</sup> Quirk and Richardson, 'Anti-slavery and European Identity', p. 86; Kwabena Opare Akurang-Parry, 'Colonial Forced Labor Policies for Road-Building in Southern Ghana and International Anti-Forced Labor Pressures, 1900-1940', *African Economic History*, 28 (2000), pp. 1-25; T.C. McCaskie, 'Cultural Encounters', p. 187; Etienne Felix Berlioux, *The Slave Trade In Africa in 1872: Principally carried on for the Supply of Turkey, Egypt, Persia and Zanzibar* (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, (first edition 1872) 1971), p. 77.

groups resisting colonial rule.<sup>249</sup> In the era of decolonisation, struggles to maintain colonies also often led to horrific acts of violence.<sup>250</sup>

Many of the harms caused by colonialism were not intentional but resulted from the arrogance of European paternalistic racism. Throughout Africa (and elsewhere), Europeans sought to develop societies in which white people were elites and the colonial population (indigenous or imported from elsewhere in the empire) would provide the labour and menial services.<sup>251</sup> Colonial education systems often limited the education that indigenous people could access and created a racialised 'caste' system in which educated people of colour were limited to positions of clerical support for the colonial administration.<sup>252</sup> Frustration with such curtailed opportunities is one of the reasons why many nationalist independence movements emerged from the western educated middle classes.<sup>253</sup> Nevertheless, the arguments of such movements, that imperial economies were designed to benefit the metropole before the periphery, is true.<sup>254</sup> However, colonial withdrawal also resulted because maintaining an empire became seen as a cost rather than an economic benefit.<sup>255</sup>

Africa's present-day problems are not the result of colonialism alone. The end of colonialism saw many African nations unprepared for independence, without enough people qualified to run their administrations.<sup>256</sup> However, many of Africa's

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<sup>249</sup> Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*; Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 88.

<sup>250</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 90; Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*.

<sup>251</sup> Robert A. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in the British Self-Governing Colonies, 1830-1910* (London: Cornell University Press, 1976); Rhoda Howard, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Ghana* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), p. 15; Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, pp. 98-99; Paul Basu, 'Confronting the Past? Negotiating a Heritage of Conflict in Sierra Leone', *Journal of Material Culture*, 13:2 (2008), p. 234.

<sup>252</sup> Johnson, 'The Black Experience in the British Caribbean in the Twentieth Century', pp. 319-321; Chinweizu, *The West and the Rest Of Us: White Predators, Black Slavers and the African Elite* (Lagos: Pero Press, 1987), p. 76.

<sup>253</sup> R.F. Holland, *European Decolonization, 1918-1981* (London: MacMillan Press, 1985), pp. 5-11, 130-135; Jost Dülffer and Marc Frey (eds.), *Elites and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).

<sup>254</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 98; Howard, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Ghana*, pp. 88-89; Chinweizu, *The West and the Rest Of Us*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>255</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 100; K. O'Brien, 'The Costs and Benefits of British Imperialism 1856-1914', *Past and Present*, 120:1 (1988), pp. 163-200; Anver Offer, 'Costs and Benefits, Prosperity, and Security, 1870-1914', Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 690-711.

<sup>256</sup> Stephanie Decker, 'Postcolonial Transitions in Africa: Decolonization in West Africa and Present Day South Africa', *Journal of Management Studies*, 47:5 (2010), p. 794.

present problems have been inflicted by the corruption and greed of post-independence government officials.<sup>257</sup> Indeed, 'according to an African Union study, every year corruption costs Africa \$148 billion.'<sup>258</sup> Just as during the era of transatlantic slavery and colonialism, there are elites in Africa who prioritise their own wealth and benefit over that of their people. Therefore, whilst Europeans do bear some responsibility for Africa's current problems, so do the African leaders who call for reparations.<sup>259</sup>

A legal claim for financial reparations for colonialism suffers from the same structural weaknesses as a claim for reparations for slavery: specifically, the legality of colonialism when it occurred and the difficulty of quantifying and tracing the benefit and harm of colonialism to European nations. Again, the real legacy of colonialism is not financial but relational and attitudinal. Many Europeans still view empire as a proud achievement and believe colonialism was, when all is considered, beneficial as it bequeathed modern government and economic institutions to the colonised.<sup>260</sup> These attitudes need to be challenged, but so do African efforts to escape any blame.

### **Legacies of Transatlantic Slavery**

This Chapter has revealed how transatlantic slavery must be contextualised within a wider history of slavery and inequality if it is to be fully understood. As Philip Morgan notes:

Few Atlantic peoples before the late eighteenth century found servile labour embarrassing or evil; rather, slavery was fundamental and acceptable, bearing an ancient pedigree to be sure, but readily adaptable to a variety of needs and circumstances. Prior to 1820 two to three times as many Africans as Europeans crossed the Atlantic to the New World. Much of the wealth of the Atlantic economy

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<sup>257</sup> Meredith, *The State of Africa*, pp. 162-178.

<sup>258</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 116.

<sup>259</sup> Amnesty International, *Petroleum, Pollution and Poverty in the Niger Delta* (London: Amnesty International, 2009), pp. 39-55; Monica Mark, 'Africa's super-rich put their foot down and leave the poor in their wake: Nigeria's mini-elite in Lagos and Abuja enjoy charmed lives as inequality gap yawns', *The Guardian* (23 March 2012), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/23/africa-super-rich-luxury-cars> (Accessed 2 March 2013).

<sup>260</sup> Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain made the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 366; Hirsch, *King Leopold's Ghost*, p. 312; Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, p. 6; Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, pp. 143-145.

derived from slave-produced commodities in what was the world's first system of multinational production for a mass market. Slavery defined the structure of many Atlantic societies, underpinning not just their economies but their social, political, cultural and ideological systems. . . . Both Europeans and Africans participated in the trade, and four continents were deeply influenced by it.<sup>261</sup>

Many Africans also recognise this historical reality. For example, Rhoda Howard-Hassmann highlights Wole 'Soyinka's 'scorn' towards claims for reparations for Africa for slavery by African politicians and warns against their 'abdication of responsibility for their own crimes.'<sup>262</sup> Howard-Hassmann notes, however, that 'the fact that Africans were badly treated by their own rulers or captors does not absolve the West of its own responsibility.' Howard-Hassmann concludes: 'Regardless of whether in retrospect, it was legally a crime against humanity, this was a moral crime of enormous magnitude.'<sup>263</sup>

By analysing the historiography of transatlantic slavery and slavery within Western Africa, this Chapter has sought to outline a 'factual' truth of transatlantic slavery by selecting the most supported and evidenced aspects of competing historiographical interpretations. The Chapter has been cautious in this endeavour and does not claim to present a whole or complete truth of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. What it has sought to do, is provide a narrative of history that is cautious and which could potentially provide a basis upon which those who hold competing interpretations could discuss their views of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery; this could contribute to a process of relational repair. By also outlining the emotional and ideological reasons why differing individuals, groups and nations interpret the history and legacy differently, this Chapter has underlined why such a process of dialogue and 'collective memory' making are potentially reparative.<sup>264</sup>

The most damaging attitudinal harm of transatlantic slavery's legacy is racism. Relationships established during transatlantic slavery and ideologies developed to

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<sup>261</sup> Philip D. Morgan, 'The cultural implications of the Atlantic slave trade: African regional origins, American destinations and new world developments', *Slavery and Abolition*, 18:1 (1997), pp. 122-123.

<sup>262</sup> Wole Soyinka, *The Burden of Memory, the Muse of Forgiveness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 73, 86, in Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 86.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>264</sup> Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 81.



defend the enslavement of Africans in the Americas helped to refine and codify anti-black racism. The violence, intimidation and sexual abuse that occurred in the slave ship set the tone for the institution of slavery in the Americas.<sup>265</sup> At first Christianity provided the justification for European use of African slaves, but over time scientific racist theories largely supplanted religious justifications. In the New World blackness and African quickly became associated with ideas of backwardness, inferiority, violence and promiscuity.<sup>266</sup>

New world slavery was barbaric in the extreme.<sup>267</sup> In the English and French colonies the violence of slavery was legalised in the Slave Codes and Code Noir.<sup>268</sup> Furthermore, the racial element of slavery dehumanised all black people, not just those who were enslaved.<sup>269</sup> In contrast, all white people benefitted from the racism of slavery and whiteness became associated with national identity and 'manhood'.<sup>270</sup> The social capital provided by race-based slavery made poor whites defend a system and society that was hugely unjust and which did not benefit them economically, while also providing elite whites with a controlled labour source and the social stability to grant suffrage to property-less white men.<sup>271</sup>

White society suffered from the barbarity of slavery, too. White people lived in fear of rebellion and expected emancipation to lead to race war reflecting their recognition (sub-consciously at least) that slavery was wrong and punishment was due.<sup>272</sup> As discussed, abolitionists such as Benezet, Clarkson and Wilberforce had advanced similar arguments by suggesting that slavery was a national sin and that nations would be punished by God if they did not reform.

The barbarity of slavery eroded the moral capital of the nations practicing slavery and the failure to recognise this historical wrongdoing undermines their

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<sup>265</sup> Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, pp. 7-10; Berlin, *The Making of African America*, pp. 61-64, 114, 166.

<sup>266</sup> Brown, *Moral Capital*, p. 58; Jordan, *White Over Black*, pp. 18-37; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 48-76; Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, pp. 66-76; Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, p. 156.

<sup>267</sup> Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*; Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, p. 324.

<sup>268</sup> Philip D. Morgan, 'Black Experience in the British Empire, 1680-1810', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 97-100; Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 92; *The Making of New World Slavery*, p. 324.

<sup>269</sup> Blackburn, *The American Crucible*, p. 365.

<sup>270</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, pp. 255-261.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255-261.

<sup>272</sup> Fox-Genovese and Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class*, p. 644.

present-day moral capital.<sup>273</sup> This is reflected in the refusal by African and other former colonial nations to accept moral upbraiding over human rights from Western powers.<sup>274</sup> However, as this Chapter has discussed, the harms caused by transatlantic slavery are not only the responsibility of Europeans. Rather, the differing memory of slavery and differing interpretations of its legacy reflect the relational harm caused by racism and the differing political ideologies of those claiming reparations and those against whom the claim is made.

To repair the harm of transatlantic slavery a process of relational repair is necessary between Africa and the west and between black and white people within countries across the Atlantic World. Ira Berlin notes that the memory of slavery in the US is interpreted through a binary of black and white identity.<sup>275</sup> In contrast, the history of exploitation of the working class in the US's northern industrial cities (or of British industrialisation, or of slavery within African societies) is not interpreted through such a frame of racial identity.<sup>276</sup> But wider histories of exploitation need to be included in our interrogation of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. As Davis notes, Rousseau argued that 'only a madman could *truly consent* to any form of subordination. And in Rousseau's eyes, the myth of consent disguised the fraud and coercion that kept most of mankind in bondage. The justifications of slavery were no more absurd than the justifications for all forms of privilege and inequality.'<sup>277</sup> It is for these reasons that Marx, Engels and working class radicals used the language of slavery to describe the living and working conditions of the industrial working class in the 1840s.<sup>278</sup> Danny Dorling describes the urban conditions caused by the industrial revolution that Marx and Engels witnessed as:

Some of the worst ever living conditions and highest ever death rates recorded during peacetime and outside of a pandemic anywhere in the world. For the first fifty years of

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<sup>273</sup> Janna Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past: Reparation and Historical Justice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), p. 27, 142; Linda Radzik, *Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 195-197.

<sup>274</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 30.

<sup>275</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>276</sup> Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Cost of Economic Power* (Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2009), p. 331.

<sup>277</sup> Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*, p. 489.

<sup>278</sup> Malcolm I. Thomis, *Responses to Industrialisation: The British Experience 1780-1850* (London: Archon Books, 1976), p. 85; Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*, pp. 467-468; Peterson, 'Introduction: Abolitionism and Political Thought in Britain and East Africa', pp. 4, 15-18.

the nineteenth century, staggering levels of infant and childhood mortality meant that average life expectancy in Manchester rarely exceeded an average of twenty-five years.<sup>279</sup>

Instead of examining the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery through the ideologies of race, postcolonialism and identity politics, this history needs to be viewed as a human history. Vincent Brown, at the end of *Reaper's Garden* notes that 'If people look to the past to find the roots of contemporary forms of inequality, domination, and terror, rather than the origins of freedom, rights, and universal prosperity, they might see early Jamaica as home to the people who made the New World what it became.'<sup>280</sup> Meanwhile, Berlin argues that African Americans (and this advice can be applied more widely), must not overlook the legacies of slavery in the US and its association to other social injustice just because a 'slavery-to-freedom narrative also integrates their history into an American story of seemingly inevitable progress.'<sup>281</sup> In the US, in Britain and internationally, transatlantic slavery must be contextualised within wider historical and present-day realities of suffering, injustice and inequality, recognising that the economic, industrial and technological advances made by mankind have often come at extreme human cost across the Atlantic World.

### **Conclusion: A Route to Repair**

By exploring the history of transatlantic slavery, its origins, nature and impact upon Europe, Africa and the Americas, this Chapter has outlined a cautious 'factual truth' that reveals how transatlantic slavery played a central role in the development of the relationships, attitudes, wealth and wealth distribution of the world today. The claim of reparations advocates that transatlantic slavery constituted a process of Africa's underdevelopment by Europe has been revealed as overly simplistic. Nevertheless, this Chapter has argued that transatlantic slavery has and continues to cause much harm.

That harm is primarily attitudinal and relational. Racism distorts how the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery is perceived by the European West and how Africa continues to be viewed paternalistically as fit for charity but not business

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<sup>279</sup> Danny Dorling, *So You Think You Know About Britain* (London: Constable, 2011), p. 14.

<sup>280</sup> Brown, *Reaper's Garden*, p. 260.

<sup>281</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p.10.

investment.<sup>282</sup> Opposing this Eurocentric historical interpretation is the Pan-African and postcolonial historical narrative of underdevelopment and reparations. This historical understanding is shaped not just by the political goal of reparations but by the resentment of Western racism and condescension, continued global inequality and memories of colonialism. These different historical interpretations highlight different events as symptomatic of the wider history in order to develop an argument that European actions were wholly negative and harmful and often intentionally so. This Chapter's limited historical narrative, based on cautiously identified 'factual truth,' lies somewhere between the Eurocentric narrative and the postcolonial and Pan-African historical narrative, as it incorporates both perspectives as well as wider aspects of history that both narratives have often overlooked. As such, this Chapter's narrative could provide a basis upon which to debate competing perspectives.

Howard-Hassmann makes a similar observation in considering the concept of a Truth Commission for Africa (TCA) in *Reparations to Africa*. She notes how it is vital for Africa and the West to overcome historical differences, but that the past should not just be forgotten. In envisioning a TCA, Howard-Hassmann argued:

Its commissioners should be respected and unbiased scholars, lawyers, and activists, from both the West and Africa. Its mandate should be to construct a historically based social truth based in large part on scholarly research but also based on the narrative voices of individual Africans. The mandate should cover not only Western but also non-Western relations with Africa: it should also assess African responsibility for African problems. It should be sponsored by an official international organization, such as the United Nations or the AU. Its report should be accessible to the lay public, widely distributed in Africa and the West, and incorporated into educational curricula. Such a TCA might result in reconciliation and might result in forgiveness, where necessary; but these should not be amongst its formal aims.<sup>283</sup>

The Intergenerational Model advanced in Chapter One further contributes to how such a process of repair could be delivered. This Chapter has utilised academic resources to cautiously create, to the extent that it is possible, an objective 'factual truth' historical narrative of transatlantic slavery and its legacy. The following Chapters explore how museums and schools in Britain, the US and internationally, could contribute to the

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<sup>282</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, 'Stereotypical Representations of Black People in Modern Western Societies', *Abolition of the slave trade 1807*, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/black\\_imagery\\_gallery\\_06.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/black_imagery_gallery_06.shtml) (Accessed 10 April 2008).

<sup>283</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 166.

repair of the legacies of transatlantic slavery by confronting formerly suppressed historical events and including previously suppressed perspectives.

## **Chapter Three – The 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British**

### **Slave Trade: A Reparative Moment?**

In 2007 Britain commemorated the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade. The centre piece of the commemorations was a memorial service at Westminster Abbey presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, attended by the Queen and Prime Minister, and televised nationally. This service was intended as a symbolic acknowledgment of the evil of the slave trade and how Britain had benefitted from it, but also a celebration of how, because of this history, Britain was now a multicultural nation and better because of its multiculturalism. However, this is not why the service is remembered. Rather, it is remembered for the controversial interruption by Pan-Africanist and reparations for Africa advocate Toyin Agbetu who was offended that African guests were being prompted, alongside the Queen and Prime Minister and other white members of the congregation, to kneel in prayer and repent of transatlantic slavery. Agbetu interrupted the service and called on the Queen to apologise and pay financial reparations to Africa, saying the slave trade was a 'Holocaust' in which the 'British are the Nazis.'<sup>1</sup>

Agbetu's outburst did not receive sympathy from most of the British public.<sup>2</sup> Throughout 2006 and 2007, discussion of apologising or paying financial reparations for slavery provoked bemused and negative reactions from most. 'Yes, slavery was bad but I have nothing to say sorry for', many white British citizens argued. Others suggested that the past was a different time with different standards, and that Britain should not pay reparations for slavery to Africa unless the Italians paid reparations to Britain for the Roman invasion and occupation.<sup>3</sup> Most British people recognised slavery

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<sup>1</sup> Toyin Agbetu, 'My protest was born of anger, not madness', *The Guardian* (3 April 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2007/apr/03/features11.g2> (Accessed 24 June 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Paul Gallan and Richard Palmer, 'How did he get so close?', *The Daily Express* (28 March 2007), <http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/2918/How-did-he-get-so-close> (Accessed 24 July 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Comments below Richard Palmer, 'Why the Queen will be saying sorry for Slavery', *The Daily Express* (23 March 2007), <http://www.express.co.uk/blogs/post/267/blog/2007/03/23/2793/Why%20The%20Queen%20will%20be%20saying%20sorry%20for%20slavery> (Accessed 24 July 2008); The Daily Mail, 'Blair in rush to apologise for our part in slave trade', *The Daily Mail* (17 November 2006),

and the slave trade as wrong, but wished to take pride in Britain's championing of abolitionism. Tony Blair anticipated this public mood when he expressed 'deep sorrow' over the history of transatlantic slavery in a 2006 article for the black newspaper *New Nation*.<sup>4</sup> While this expression of remorse did not satisfy those calling for a full apology and financial reparations to Africa and Britain's former Caribbean colonies, this level of acknowledgment was largely supported by the public and welcomed by those who opposed apology and reparations.<sup>5</sup> For example, in response to the *express.co.uk* article, 'PM Balks at Apology on Slavery', Jenny commented:

this is the first right and proper stance blair [sic] has taken since coming into power,i [sic]do not see why we should make any apology for past events,i am not responsible for what my forebears did or didnt [sic] do, when are these people going to stand up and start shouting for apologies from thier [sic] own fore-fathers, after all there wouldnt [sic] have been half so many slaves if it hadnt [sic] been for people of their [sic] own race going deep in the jungle and bringing them to the shore for sale,they wont [sic] shout about that for the simple reason there is no money to be made from it, just the brits [sic] yet again being seen as a soft touch!<sup>6</sup>

For Marcus Wood, the Bicentenary commemorations reflected a typically British, cynical self-righteousness. Wood argues:

The problem in England is that there is still an ugly enjoyment in the ownership of guilt. There is a feeling that it is enough for the white British establishment to parade the spectre of an easily assumed and rather superior sorrow, to shed a bitter tear, and that this show of emotion is true and proper and just what the slaves' descendants deserve and want. ... such theatricalised sadness also provides the support for its emotional counterbalance, the celebration of the "heroes of abolition."<sup>7</sup>

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<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-416946/Blair-rush-apologise-slave-trade.html> (Accessed 23 July 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Tony Blair, 'PM's Article for the New Nation newspaper' (27 November 2006), <http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page10487> (Accessed 28 April 2008); BBC, 'Blair 'sorrow' over slave trade', *BBC News* (Monday, 27 November 2006), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/6185176.stm> (Accessed 20 January 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (with Anthony Lombardo), *Reparations to Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> Comment below Jessica Johnson, 'PM Balks at Apology on Slavery', *The Daily Express* (Monday 26 March 2007), <http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/2737/PM-balks-at-apology-on-slavery> (Accessed 10 September 2012); Ross Wilson, 'A Kindly Act – newspaper coverage of the bicentenary of the 1807 Abolition Act', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/media/analysis/kindly.html> (Accessed 10 July 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Marcus Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation* (Athens, GA.: University of Georgia Press, 2010), p. 356.

Indeed, many of the public events of 2007 did smack of 'superior sorrow' and celebration of "'heroes of abolition,'" especially events as the 'So sorry march' and the Hollywood blockbuster *Amazing Grace*, showings of which the British Council provided for school children in Ghana.<sup>8</sup>

The 2007 Bicentenary was the first time that the British government commemorated the abolition of the slave trade and it provided £20 million to commemorative activities through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).<sup>9</sup> Significantly, 2007 saw four new permanent museum galleries open, dealing with the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Slavery and Abolition also became a compulsory part of the Key Stage Three (KS3, ages 11-14) Nation Curriculum in England from September 2008.<sup>10</sup> These developments sought to counter past Eurocentric historiography and to empower the voices of African and African Caribbean community groups within the new historical narratives they developed. To John Oldfield these new narratives 'forced Britons to look again at the paradoxes embedded in national histories that first enslaved and then liberated persons of African descent.'<sup>11</sup> Catherine Hall similarly argues that these developments are significant, but cautions 'It will be a long time before we know what this all adds up to.'<sup>12</sup>

The history presented in British schools and museums has traditionally been Eurocentric, encouraging a concept of Britishness that excludes Britons of African and African Caribbean heritage. As Oldfield and Hall suggest, the revision of the historical narrative presented in British museums and schools to encompass previously excluded historical events and interpretative perspectives, could have a significant impact upon

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 309-310, 335-336, 344-353; Making Our Mark, 'Walk of Witness', <http://www.makingourmark.org.uk/>; 'The March of the Abolitionists: Remembering the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the UK', *The Lifeline Expedition*, <http://www.lifelineexpedition.co.uk/mota/>; BBC, 'Archbishops lead slave trade walk', *BBC News* (Saturday 24 March 2007), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6490625.stm> (Accessed 29 August 2012); Wilson, 'A kindly Act'. See also 'Reviews', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/media/reviews/> (Accessed 10 September 2012).

<sup>9</sup> John Oldfield, 'Repairing Historical Wrongs: Public History and Transatlantic Slavery', *Social and Legal Studies*, 21:2 (2012), p. 253; Catherine Hall, 'Afterword', Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.), *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), p. 199.

<sup>10</sup> James Meikle, 'Compulsory history lessons on Britain's role in slavery', *The Guardian* (2 February 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/feb/02/politics.britishidentity?INTCMP=SRCH> (Accessed 12 September 2012).

<sup>11</sup> Oldfield, 'Repairing Historical Wrongs', p. 253.

<sup>12</sup> Hall, 'Afterword', p. 199.



British historical memory and the formation of British identity. Such reparative developments can, interestingly, be identified as occurring even when not presented as deliberate acts of reparations. This is because they give an insight into how attitudes and relationships are improving and how further dialogue over the history of transatlantic slavery and its legacy in present-day Britain, can facilitate relational repair.

In order to investigate the reparative potential of the developments surrounding the Bicentenary, this Chapter first explores the origins of debate over British reparations to Africa and the Caribbean. This places this discussion within the history of post-WWII West Indian migration to Britain and British race relations. This includes how British schools and museums have traditionally presented a Eurocentric historiography but how, during the 1990s, museums had begun to revise how they presented the history of slavery, which had been criticised as Eurocentric by African and African Caribbean groups and by academics. Museums were also motivated to explore the history of transatlantic slavery, to understand Britain's problems with racism and to comment on the 'race riots' in Liverpool, London, Bristol, Birmingham and Leeds, which had flared in the early 1990s due to racial inequality, urban poverty and racist policing practices.<sup>13</sup>

The attempts of museums to reconsider how they presented the history of slavery and abolition was further encouraged in the build-up to the 2007 Bicentenary commemorations by the Government's community cohesion and active citizenship agendas and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA 2000). These initiatives sought to encourage a national identity that was inclusive and based upon values, not racial background; the RRAA 2000 enshrined a legal duty of government bodies to be inclusive not just non-discriminatory. This Chapter explores how the Bicentenary commemorations further encouraged the revision of British historical memory of transatlantic slavery and abolition through developments in the museum and educational sectors. It argues that it was significant that historical narrative revision was partly determined by the empowerment of previously excluded community

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<sup>13</sup> Marika Sherwood, 'Race, Empire and Education: Teaching Racism', *Race and Class*, 42:3 (2001), p. 20; Anthony Tibbles, 'Interpreting Transatlantic slavery: the role of the museums' (September 1999), [http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/museum\\_interpretation.aspx](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/museum_interpretation.aspx) (Accessed 12 September 2012).

voices, as this is central to the reparative process outlined by the Intergenerational Model in Chapter One.

This Chapter also notes how the new narrative told in 2007 failed to provide a wider historical and present-day contextualisation, linking the history of slavery to labour exploitation, particularly during industrialisation and poverty resulting from deindustrialisation. Whilst the traditional Eurocentric narrative was broadened, other historical contexts and their legacies were still excluded, undermining the wider potential reparative impact this process could have assisted. However, the process of repair offers the potential for dialogue and further voicing of competing perspectives. Unfortunately, as this Chapter also reveals, the Conservative-led Coalition Government's desires to restore a traditional history curriculum endangers the steps taken and their reparative potential.

### **The British Reparations Debate**

The British reparations movement first came to prominence thanks to Guyana-born MP for Tottenham, Bernie Grant.<sup>14</sup> Grant chaired the African Reparations Movement, UK (ARM (UK)), which grew from Grant's links with Pan-African bodies, including the African Union's Group of Eminent Persons, and his involvement in trade unionism in Britain.<sup>15</sup> In a typical mix of passion and humour, Grant called upon Tony Blair for reparations during Prime Minister's Question Time in 1999 by first informing the Prime Minister that his 'mother's maiden name was Blair.' Grant suggested that Britain 'set the historic record straight' and 'apologise to people of African origin . . . for the part that Britain played in the transatlantic slave trade.' To support his claim, Grant argued that of 'the last 1000 years, 400 were taken up with enslavement 200 with colonisation' and that 'there has been no acknowledgement of the contribution to the

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<sup>14</sup> The Bernie Grant Archive, 'About Bernie Grant', <http://www.berniegrantarchive.org.uk/> (Accessed 29 March 2011).

<sup>15</sup> The Bernie Grant Archive, 'Showcase', <http://www.berniegrantarchive.org.uk/archive/showcase.asp> (Accessed 2 September 2012).

wealth of Britain and Europe and America by millions of Africans; instead places such as the Guildhall in London have monuments to the enslavers, not the enslaved.’<sup>16</sup>

Blair’s response to Grant, like his 2006 article in *New Nation*, was deft. Appearing informed and contrite, Blair argued that Britain should recognise the economic benefit of slavery and the cultural, economic and political enrichment of Britain by black people, but also how Britain had changed and how abolitionism provides a moral lesson for today.<sup>17</sup> Blair’s response exemplifies a tension in British memory, between affection for traditional memories that emphasise Britain as a force for good in the world, and a recognition that these rose-tinted views of the past obscure moments that contradict this positive memory.

The reparations movement in Britain lost an important advocate with Grant’s death in 2000. However, the movement continues, for example, Rendezvous of Victory’s (RoV) lawsuit against the Crown for reparations to Africa in 2003 and participation in international reparations conferences alongside bodies such as N’CobRA.<sup>18</sup> Like Grant, the reparations that RoV calls for are not purely financial. RoV co-founder Esther Stanford calls for ‘holistic’ reparations that include, alongside financial initiatives, changes to the history curricula taught in schools because the Eurocentric memory of transatlantic slavery, abolitionism, and colonialism perpetuates ignorance of Africa and African contributions to global development, racism and the wider legacies of transatlantic slavery.<sup>19</sup> Grant had similarly argued that ‘Only if we understand our past can we as Black People move forward in the future.’<sup>20</sup> This Chapter argues that it is not only black British people who need to understand the

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<sup>16</sup> The Bernie Grant Archive, ‘House of Commons - Prime Minister’s Question Time, 24 Nov 1999, Bernie Grant historically requesting a formal apology for slavery and Tony Blair’s response’, ‘Showcase’, [http://www.berniegrantarchive.org.uk/video/blairquestion\\_player.html](http://www.berniegrantarchive.org.uk/video/blairquestion_player.html) (Accessed 29 March 2011).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford, Co-Chair and Co-Founder of Rendezvous of Victory, 10 February 2011; Dominic Casciani, ‘Campaigners demand slavery compensation’, *BBC News* (23 August 2003), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/2210545.stm>. See also Esther Stanford, ‘Esther Stanford-Xosei (Pan African Reparations Council of Europe (PARCOE)) on reparations’, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mx8hyRaR70o> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford; Esther Stanford-Xosei, ‘Biography’, [http://estherstanford.com/about\\_esther.html#bio](http://estherstanford.com/about_esther.html#bio) (Accessed 3 September 2012); BBC, ‘Head-to-head: Slavery ‘sorrow’’, *BBC News* (27 November 2006), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6186980.stm> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>20</sup> The Bernie Grant Archive, ‘Showcase’, <http://www.berniegrantarchive.org.uk/archive/showcase.asp> (Accessed 29 March 2011).

history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, but all British people. This Chapter emphasises the importance of embedding the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery in wider British history and present-day social inequality in order to overcome its legacy.

### A Contextualised Legacy

The argument that Grant presented to Parliament in favour of reparations in 1999 reflects the historical narratives presented by Eric Williams and Walter Rodney discussed in Chapter Two. Grant's historical interpretation was also informed by his experiences of racism at Heriot-Watt University in 1969 and his witnessing of race riots during the 1980s as a Haringey Councillor.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, Grant's experiences reflect both the legacy of transatlantic slavery in Britain, and the development of calls for reparations in Britain.

West Indian migration to Britain is often said to have begun when the Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury in 1948. The number of migrants on board was tiny compared to the number of Eastern Europeans working in Britain at that time. The British were grappling with the onset of decolonisation; India's independence in 1947 and the migration of black people to Britain threatened the British imperial sense of racial superiority.<sup>22</sup> Churchill's wartime speeches had emphasised the myth of Britons as an 'Island Race'.<sup>23</sup> West Indian migration threatened 'miscegenation' and the decline of this 'Island Race'.<sup>24</sup> Historically rooted prejudice that portrayed black men as sexually aggressive led white gangs and police to use violence to intimidate black men, lest they cross social divides. During the 1950s and 1960s Metropolitan Police Constables referred to their unofficial policy of harassing black men as 'nigger

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<sup>21</sup> The Bernie Grant Archive, 'About Bernie Grant', <http://www.berniegrantarchive.org.uk/bernie/councillor.asp> (Accessed 29 April 2011).

<sup>22</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain*, (London: HarperCollins, 1998), pp. 72-79; James Walvin, *Passage to Britain: Immigration in British History and Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 79; Paul Gilroy, 'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': *The cultural politics of race and nation* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 74-75.

<sup>23</sup> Walvin, *Passage to Britain*, p. 176.

<sup>24</sup> Gilroy, 'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack', p. 79.

hunting.<sup>25</sup> Although racist attitudes were denounced by most mainstream politicians, these popular fears and prejudices were voiced in Enoch Powell's infamous 'rivers of blood' speech.<sup>26</sup> By the 1980s and 1990s the popular press' bogeyman had become the black mugger.<sup>27</sup> Instead of 'nigger-hunting' the police in the 1980s and 1990s abused 'stop and search' to harass black men.<sup>28</sup>

This reaction to West Indian immigration resulted from the racial ideological underpinnings of empire. In order to explain their colonial dominance, Europeans determined that they must be more intelligent, rational and entrepreneurial than Africans and Asians who they denounced as 'savage' and 'despotic.' This helped colonialism appear 'beneficial for the colonized as well as the colonizer.'<sup>29</sup> Abolition also contributed to the process of othering, as it provided both moral capital and 'an essential quality of difference against which Britishness could emerge.'<sup>30</sup> This racialised and morally sanctimonious national identity penetrated all spheres of British culture and, bolstered by eugenics at the end of the nineteenth century, was taught in schools and by organisations such as the Boys Brigade.<sup>31</sup>

The result of this historically institutionalised national racism is significant. Today, black Britons are more likely to be imprisoned, unemployed, poorly educated, poor, and experience a lower level of social mobility than the national average.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79-85; F.O. Shyllon, *Black People in Britain 1555-1833* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. ix-x; Ben Bowling and Coretta Phillips, *Racism, Crime and Justice* (London: Longman, 2002); Michael Keith, "'Policing a Perplexed Society?'" No-go areas and the mystification of police-black conflict', Ellis Cashmore and Eugene McLaughlin (eds.), *Out of Order?: Policing Black People* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 189-214; Simon Holdaway, *The Racialisation of British Policing* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1996), pp. 72-104, 111; Michael Rowe, *Policing, Race and Racism* (Cullompton: Willan, 2004).

<sup>26</sup> Paul Foot, *The Rise of Enoch Powell: An Examination of Enoch Powell's Attitude to Immigration and Race* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), p. 113; Gilroy, 'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack', p. 85.

<sup>27</sup> Daniel James, 'Police – Black Relations: the Professional Solution', Simon Holdaway (ed.), *The British Police* (London: E. Arnold, 1979), p. 71; Bowling and Phillips, *Racism, Crime and Justice*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>28</sup> Keith, "'Policing a Perplexed Society?'" , p. 190.

<sup>29</sup> J.M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (London: The Guilford Press, 1993), p. 28.

<sup>30</sup> Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *The Journal of British Studies*, 31:4 (1992), p. 325; Walvin, *Passage to Britain*.

<sup>31</sup> Sherwood, 'Race, Empire and Education', p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> Gordon Barclay, Angie Munley and Tony Munton, *Race and the Criminal Justice System: An Overview to the Complete Statistics 2003-2004* (London: Home Office, 2005); Alex Jones and Lawrence Singer, *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System – 2006/2007: A Ministry of Justice Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991* (London: Ministry of Justice, 2008); John Hills et al, *An*

Discrimination and prejudice are so engrained in the British mindset that even those who are anti-racist are still influenced by racist stereotypes.<sup>33</sup>

However, Britain is not just divided by race. Modern Britain is one of the most unequal and least socially mobile nations in the developed world. Socioeconomic background, or class, more than anything determines life chances.<sup>34</sup> As black people are more likely to be poor than white people, black people are disproportionately affected by the debilitating consequence of poverty. However, white children in poverty often fare worse than black people in poverty. For instance, 'by 16 the position of White British boys receiving free meals (alongside boys from mixed White and Black Caribbean backgrounds on free meals) was below that of any of the groups identified in this way, with the exception of Gypsy and Traveller children.'<sup>35</sup> As Owen Jones explores in *Chavs*, poor people in Britain are frequently segregated, excluded and stigmatised. Much mocked in the media, the poor are largely seen as feckless and aggressive, a problem for the rest of society rather than victims of society's structural inequalities.<sup>36</sup> While this does not deny the existence of and harm caused by racism, including the psychological harm of being excluded from the conceptualisation of British, it is clear that without a wider contextualised understanding of inequality, efforts to provide racial equality will have limited impact.

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*anatomy of economic inequality in the UK: Report of the National Equality Panel* (London: Government Equalities Office, 2010); Sarah Isal and Sharon Yenoh, *Racism in the United Kingdom ENAR Shadow Report 2007* (Brussels: European Network Against Racism, 2008); Alex Jones and Lawrence Singer, *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market: Final Report* (London: Cabinet Office, 2003); Julie Glenndenning, *Statistical First Release: Key stage 4 Attainment by Pupil Characteristics, in England 2008/2009* (London: DCSF, 4 March 2010); REACH, *An independent report to Government on raising the aspirations and attainment of Black boys and young Black men* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007); Ali Rattansi, *Racism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 156-158.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard, Parrington* (New York, 1968), p. 3, in Geoffrey Cubit, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 41.

<sup>34</sup> Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone* (London: Penguin, 2010), pp. 159-166; OECD, *Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising* (OECD, 11 January 2012), or see 'Country Note: United Kingdom', *Divided We Stand*, <http://www.oecd.org/els/socialpoliciesanddata/49170234.pdf> (Accessed 30 August 2012). See also OECD, 'A Family Affair: Intergenerational Social Mobility across OECD Countries', *Going For Growth 2010* (OECD, 11 March 2010).

<sup>35</sup> Hills et al, *An anatomy of economic inequality in the UK*, p. 375.

<sup>36</sup> Owen Jones, *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Classes* (London: Verso, 2011).

Discrimination based on race and class are historically entwined, and so are their legacies. For example, in *Sweetness and Power*, Sydney Mintz highlights how profits from West Indian slave-produced sugar contributed to the growth of the British economy and also provided cheap and essential calories for the industrial poor.<sup>37</sup> Both the industrial poor and slaves were dehumanised and exploited, and the profits of both their labour made Britain the richest and most powerful nation in the world, yet neither benefitted from this wealth.<sup>38</sup> Following the abolition of the British slave trade the British sugar islands entered into a slow decline and economic stagnation.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, in the late twentieth-century deindustrialisation in the British industrial heartlands has been allowed in favour of cheaper imports.<sup>40</sup> In both these instances, although separated by 150 years or more, capital accumulation and the economic interest of elites took precedence over the human cost of those who laboured.

The exploitation of the industrial poor was justified in similar ways to slavery. First, social inequality was said to represent God's will, then later eugenicists argued poverty was the result of degeneration.<sup>41</sup> As J.M. Blaut argues, 'elites have had a common set of interests in relation to the working classes of their own countries and of the non-European world, and they have together underwritten the production of a coherent belief system about the European world, the non-European world, and the interactions between the two.'<sup>42</sup> Indeed, 'George Bernard Shaw . . . proclaimed that nothing but a eugenic religion could save our civilization. It was important, he went on,

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<sup>37</sup> Sydney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London: Penguin, 1985), pp. 183-184.

<sup>38</sup> Joel Mokyr, 'Editors Introduction', Joel Mokyr (ed.), *The British Industrial Revolution: an Economic Perspective* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 54-98; Sydney Pollard, 'Factory Discipline in the Industrial Revolution', Sidney Pollard and Colin Holmes (eds.), *Essays on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2000), pp. 104-111. Originally published in *The Economic History Review*, 16:2 (1963), pp. 254-271.

<sup>39</sup> Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), p. 20.

<sup>40</sup> Mike Kitson and Jonathan Michie, 'Britain's Industrial Decline since 1960: Underinvestment and Relative Decline', *The Economic Journal*, 106:434 (1996), pp. 196-212; Christina Beatty and Stephen Fothergill, 'Labour Market Adjustment in Areas of Chronic Industrial Decline: The Case of the UK Coalfields', *Regional Studies*, 30:7 (1996), pp. 627-640; Jones, *Chavs*, p. 140.

<sup>41</sup> Richard Soloway, 'Counting the Degenerates: The Statistics of Race Deterioration in Edwardian England', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17:1 (1982), pp. 137-164.

<sup>42</sup> Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, p. 33.

“that we never hesitate to carry out the negative side of eugenics with considerable zest, both on the scaffold [at home] and on the battlefield [overseas].”<sup>43</sup>

Parallels between the ideologies of historical racial and class prejudice highlight how present-day class and racial inequality are, largely, a single complex issue rather than two separate issues. For example, the 1980s witnessed both race riots and the miners’ strike. In both cases violence flared between civilians and police, and the press demonised what they saw as threats to British society.<sup>44</sup> The 1982 *Scarman Report* into the riots of 1981 and the popular press argued that black people were criminal because they lacked a cultural heritage of discipline, meanwhile miners were labelled the ‘enemy within’ by Margaret Thatcher.<sup>45</sup> The most recent serious civil disorder in British history occurred in the summer of 2011. Like the race riots of the 1980s, 1990s and 2001, the first rioting was caused by a controversial police incident, the shooting of Mark Duggan on 4 August 2011.<sup>46</sup> The spread of rioting across the country revealed a high level of frustration in communities alienated by perceived police harassment and socioeconomic exclusion.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Andrew Marr, *The Making of Modern Britain: From Queen Victoria to VE Day* (London: Pan MacMillan, 2010), p. 24; Bernard Semmel, ‘Karl Pearson: Socialist and Darwinist’, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 9:2 (1958), p. 122.

<sup>44</sup> Michael Bailey, ‘Unfinished Business: Demythologising the Battle of Orgreave’, Granville Williams (ed.), *Shafted: The Media, the Miners’ Strike and the Aftermath* (London: Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, 2009), p. 124; Yvette Vanson, *The Battle for Orgreave*, <http://www.yvettevanson.com/the-battle-for-orgraves.php> (Accessed 2 September 2012); Francis Beckett and David Hencke, *Marching to the Fault Line: The 1984 Miners Strike and the Death of Industrial Britain* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2009).

<sup>45</sup> Gilroy, ‘*There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack*’, p. 104; Keith, ‘“Policing a Perplexed Society?”’, p. 194; Seumas Milne, *The Enemy Within: Thatcher’s Secret War Against the Miners* (London: Verso, 2004); Paul Wilenius, ‘Enemies within: Thatcher and the unions’, *BBC News* (5 March 2004), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/3067563.stm> (Accessed 2 September 2012); Jones, *Chavs*, pp. 39-72.

<sup>46</sup> Gilroy, ‘*There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack*’, p. 99; Keith, ‘“Policing a perplexed society?”’, p. 202; Holdaway (ed.), *The British Police*, p. 17; James, ‘Police – Black Relations’, p. 71; Derek McGhee, *Intolerant Britain: Hate, Citizenship and Difference* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005), pp. 15-40; M. Farrar, ‘The Northern “Race Riots” of the Summer of 2001 - Were They Riots, Were They Racial?’ Presentation to Parallel Lives and Polarisation workshop, BSA ‘Race’ Forum, City University, [www.maxfarrar.org.uk/docs/HarehillsBSARace2May02.doc](http://www.maxfarrar.org.uk/docs/HarehillsBSARace2May02.doc) (Accessed 17 October 2007); Bowling and Phillips, *Racism, Crime and Justice*.

<sup>47</sup> The Guardian, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England’s summer of disorder* (London School of Economics, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Open Society Foundation, 2011), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/sep/05/reading-riots>; in particular Paul Lewis, Tim Newburn, Matthew Taylor and James Ball, ‘Rioters say anger with police fuelled summer unrest’, *Reading the Riots*, *The Guardian* (5 December 2011), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/dec/05/anger-police->



It is understandable that the reparations claim presented in Britain does not seek to address wider issues of historically-rooted inequality in Britain. Rhoda Howard-Hassmann has argued that reparations for slavery is too broad an issue to mobilise popular support.<sup>48</sup> Introducing class into discussion about the legacy of slavery complicates things. Furthermore, an individual's class can change due to social mobility whilst race remains fixed. However, both race and class are used in processes of othering and by disassociating the racial aspects of transatlantic slavery from wider issues of historically influenced present-day inequality and injustice; thus the claim for reparations and the historical account that reparations depends upon is oversimplified.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, an important source of support from marginalised and impoverished white working class communities is alienated. The development of Grant's support for reparations for slavery arguably reflects not just his experiences of racism but also his involvement in trade unionism. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the reparations movement and the historiography that it presents, does not often recognise this wider history of class exploitation and struggle, instead of solely arguing in terms of race.

### **Museum and Educational Policy on Transatlantic Slavery Prior to the 2007 Bicentenary**

The Intergenerational Model, outlined in Chapter One, argued that for nations to overcome the legacy of transatlantic slavery, a process of relational repair is needed. It argued that revising the traditional and selective national memory to include previously excluded perspectives of African and African Caribbean communities could contribute to this. This process could be delivered by schools and museums, as they play a central role in the formation of a nation's historical memory and, therefore, how

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fuelled-riots-study (Accessed 1 September 2012); Mark K. Smith, 'Young people and the 2011 'riots' in England – experiences, explanations and implications for youth work', *The encyclopaedia of informal education* (2011), [http://www.infed.org/archives/jeffs\\_and\\_smith/young\\_people\\_youth\\_work\\_and\\_the\\_2011\\_riots\\_in\\_england.html](http://www.infed.org/archives/jeffs_and_smith/young_people_youth_work_and_the_2011_riots_in_england.html) (Accessed 1 September 2012).

<sup>48</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 48.

<sup>49</sup> David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 49-50.

a nation perceives itself and others. The role of history in society was explicitly recognised in Britain in the 1988 Education Reform Act, which introduced the National Curriculum on the basis that: 'Education both influences and reflects the values of our society, and the kind of society we want to be.'<sup>50</sup>

In 1985 the *Swann Report* on education had echoed the *Scarman Report* on the 1981 race riots, and argued that the ignorance of white people regarding ethnic minorities contributed to widespread racial prejudice and discrimination, which were a central cause of the riots. To prevent future violence, Swann argued, schools needed to teach white children about the history and culture of ethnic minorities. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) welcomed Swann's recommendations: 'We believe that a failure to broaden the perspectives presented to all pupils – particularly those from the ethnic majority community – through their education not only leaves them inadequately prepared for adult life but also constitutes a fundamental *miseducation*.'<sup>51</sup> The Conservative Government, however, rejected the inclusion of 'critical stances about racism in the curriculum.' As Chris Gaine summarises, the Conservatives instead 'set about rescuing British history from criticism and shame' and 'The report of the committee established by the Government to advise on the multicultural element of the National Curriculum was never published – indeed it was shredded.'<sup>52</sup> The Conservatives, writes Gaine, were supported in this endeavour by the press 'invoking the bogey of Political Correctness.'<sup>53</sup> This stance endorsed Eurocentric historiography which excluded ethnic minorities from British identity.

British museums have also traditionally presented Eurocentric histories, particularly regarding transatlantic slavery and abolition. The first museums to deal with the history of transatlantic slavery were monuments to local abolitionists: Wilberforce House Museum in Hull (WHM) and Wisbech Museum in the home town of Thomas Clarkson.<sup>54</sup> It was not until the 150th anniversary of West Indian Emancipation

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<sup>50</sup> QCDA, 'Aims, values and purposes', <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3and-4/aims-values-and-purposes/index.aspx> (Accessed 7 February 2011).

<sup>51</sup> DES, 1985, p. 319 in Chris Gaine, *We're All White Thanks: the persisting myth about 'white' schools* (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Print Design, 2005), (original emphasis), p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>54</sup> John Oldfield, *'Chords of Freedom': Commemoration, Ritual and British Transatlantic Slavery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 89-90, 119.

in 1983 that WHM sought to include the story of the slave trade alongside its celebration of William Wilberforce. WHM's effort, however, was criticised for objectifying Africans and depicting them as passive agents.<sup>55</sup>

The racial violence of post-WWII Britain encouraged many historians, both black and white, to investigate the history of Africans in Britain and of transatlantic slavery.<sup>56</sup> Museums in cities which had dominated the slave trade and which had witnessed some of the worst rioting, Liverpool (Against Human Dignity, Merseyside Maritime Museum (MMM), 1994), London (Trade and Empire, National Maritime Museum (NMM), 1997) and Bristol (A respectable Trade? Bristol and Transatlantic Slavery, Bristol City Art Gallery, 1999), used galleries on transatlantic slavery to comment on contemporary race relations and highlight how the legacy of slavery is 'racism, personal and institutional.'<sup>57</sup> In contrast to Eurocentric narratives of abolition, these new galleries all placed a 'greater emphasis on black "agency" and African "voices"' in explaining both the process of abolition, and the development of their civic wealth.<sup>58</sup>

These new galleries were contentious, underlining how museums can challenge traditional historical interpretations and provoke dialogue and retrospection about a nation's historical actions and how they reflect upon the nation today. The NMM in particular was criticised by some of its traditional members who felt the exhibition pandered to political correctness and betrayed the national image.<sup>59</sup> African and Caribbean community groups still felt excluded from the process of developing these

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>56</sup> Oldfield, 'Repairing Historical Wrongs', pp. 244-245; James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro and English Society, 1555-1945* (London: Allen Lane, 1973); Walvin, *Passage to Britain*; Gretchen Hobeck Gerzina (ed.), *Black Victorians – Black Victoriana* (New Brunswick N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1993).

<sup>57</sup> Sherwood, 'Race, Empire and Education', p. 20; Tibbles, 'Interpreting Transatlantic slavery: the role of the museums'; Tracy Lang Teslow, 'Reifying race: science and art in *Races of Mankind* at the Field Museum of Natural History', Sharon MacDonald (ed.), *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture* (London: Routledge, 1998) pp. 53-76; Keith, "'Policing a perplexed society?'"', p. 202.

<sup>58</sup> Anthony Tibbles, 'Against human dignity: the development of the Transatlantic Slavery Gallery at the Merseyside Maritime Museum', Adrian Jarvis, Roger Knight and Michael Stammers (eds.), *Proceedings, IXth International Congress of Maritime Museums* (Liverpool: MMM, 1996), [http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/against\\_human\\_dignity.aspx](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/against_human_dignity.aspx) (Accessed 12 September 2012).

<sup>59</sup> Interview with John McAleer, Curator of 18th Century Imperial and Maritime History, National Maritime Museum, 17 May 2010.

galleries and telling the history of their ancestors. This was echoed by academic criticism of galleries' silencing and portraying Africans as passive.<sup>60</sup>

### New Labour Reforms and the Build-up to 2007

The decision of the New Labour Government to finance the commemoration of the abolition of slavery was unprecedented. It is impossible to understand the decision to support the creation of new museum and educational resources without understanding how the Bicentenary tied into New Labour's integration of museums and schools within its race relations policies. New Labour's policies on race, especially community cohesion, encouraged the inclusion of minority groups within museums, leading to their voices and historical interpretations finding a level of representation within the national historical narrative previously denied. This enabled formerly suppressed African and African Caribbean community perspectives to broaden the historical narrative presented by museums in 2007.

The 1994 introduction of National Lottery Funding and the 2001 duty for national and local authority funded museums to provide free access 'underlined the message, amplified by many black and Asian community groups, that museums had a "public duty to make provisions for all parts of society."<sup>61</sup> These calls were further amplified by the 1999 *MacPherson Report* which identified 'institutional racism' as the cause of the Metropolitan Police's bungling of the investigation into the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence.<sup>62</sup> In response to *MacPherson* the RRAA 2000 altered the statutory duty for public bodies from obligations not to discriminate to an

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<sup>60</sup> Helen Weinstein, 'Interview with Jayne Tyler', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/interviews/tyler.html> (Accessed 8 July 2007); Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual representation of Slavery in England and America, 1780-1865* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 300.

<sup>61</sup> Oldfield, *Chords of Freedom*, p. 121; Museum Association, 'Free Admission and the lottery', *Museums Association*, <http://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/free-admission-and-the-lottery> (Accessed 3 September 2012); Home Office, *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: The Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion* (London: Home Office, 2005); Matthew Evans et al, *Renaissance in the Regions* (London: The Council for Museums Libraries and Archives, 2001), p. 43.

<sup>62</sup> Sir William MacPherson of Cluny, *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny* (London, HMSO, 1999).

obligation 'to promote equality.'<sup>63</sup> Also in 2000 Bhikhu Parekh in *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, highlighted that national identity was racially exclusive, with 'whiteness' and 'Britishness' widely considered interchangeable.<sup>64</sup> Parekh, therefore, advocated policies to foster cohesion.

The urgency of encouraging community cohesion was brought to the fore by the 2001 race riots in Northern England. Reports into the disturbances identified different communities living 'parallel lives' as a cause of ignorance, prejudice and ultimately violence.<sup>65</sup> The promotion of shared British values and an inclusive national identity lay at the centre of the community cohesion and active citizenship agendas.<sup>66</sup>

In the museum sector the policy of *Renaissance in the Regions* identified museums as safe places in which to try and 'foster social cohesion' by enabling members of differing local communities to meet and learn about one another's heritage.<sup>67</sup> In schools:

Citizenship became part of the non-statutory framework for Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship in primary schools from September 2000, and a statutory subject in secondary schools from September 2002. This ensures that for the first time, all pupils will be taught about the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding. It provides distinct opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of fairness and

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<sup>63</sup> Act of Parliament, *Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000*, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Bhikhu C. Parekh, *The Future of Multi-ethnic Britain: Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (London: Profile, 2000), pp. 23-26.

<sup>65</sup> Ted Cantel, *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team* (London: Home Office, 2001), p. 9; Arun Kundnani, 'The Death of Multiculturalism', *Institute of Race Relations* (2002), <http://www.irr.org.uk/2002/april/ak000001.html> (Accessed on 7 June 2008); Sir Herman Ouseley, *Community Pride not Prejudice: making diversity work in Bradford* (Bradford: Bradford District Council, 2001); David Ritchie, *Oldham independent Review: One Oldham, One Future* (Oldham: Oldham Independent Review, 2001); Lord Tony Clark, *Burnley Task Force: Report* (Burnley: Burnley Task Force, 2001); Farrar, 'The Northern "Race Riots" of the Summer of 2001 - Were They Riots, Were They Racial?'.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Claire Worley, "It's not about race. It's about the community': New Labour and 'community cohesion'", *Critical Social Policy*, 25:4 (2005), pp. 483-496; Runnymede Trust, *Developing Community Cohesion: Understanding the Issues, Delivering Solutions. Based on Proceeding of the Runnymede Conference of October 2002 held at the Barbican Conference Centre, London* (London: Runnymede Trust, 2003); Ben Rogers and Rick Muir, *The Power of Belonging: Identity, citizenship and community cohesion* (London: IPPR, 2007); Neil MacGregor, 'The Best of Britishness', *Museum Journal* (March 2006), pp. 14-15; Jill Rutter, Maria Latorre and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, *Beyond Naturalisation: Citizenship policy in an age of super mobility* (London: IPPR, 2008).

<sup>67</sup> Evans et al, *Renaissance in the Regions*, p. 97; Emily Keany, *From Access to Participation: Cultural Policy and Civil Renewal* (London: IPPR, 2006).

social justice; the nature of prejudice; anti-social and aggressive behaviours like racism and bullying; and develop skills to challenge them assertively.<sup>68</sup>

Furthermore, the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* introduced the promotion of community cohesion to the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills' (Ofsted) framework for evaluating school performance.<sup>69</sup> *Aiming High* meanwhile sought to arrest underachievement by groups, such as African Caribbean boys, that have frequently been failed by British schools.<sup>70</sup>

Community cohesion and active citizenship created space for the promotion of previously overlooked minority history and historiographical viewpoints. In 2003 the Understanding Slavery Initiative (USI) was established with £925,000 from the DfES. The USI brought together staff from the NMM, Hull Museums and WHM, National Museums Liverpool (later ISM), Bristol's British Commonwealth and Empire Museum and Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives, to create educational resources on transatlantic slavery for teachers, building on an earlier project run by the NMM.<sup>71</sup> In 2006 the *Black History 4 Schools* initiative was launched, 'dedicated to the promotion of Black and Asian British history in schools [and provides free resources on] topics ranging from the Romans to Windrush.'<sup>72</sup>

It is not surprising that the 2007 Bicentenary became interpreted through the rubric of the 'government's community cohesion agenda.'<sup>73</sup> For Culture Secretary, David Lammy, the Bicentenary was an opportunity to promote black abolitionists, such as Olaudah Equiano, as positive role models to disaffected black young men.<sup>74</sup> To the

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<sup>68</sup> DfES, *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils* (London: DfES, 2003), p. 17.

<sup>69</sup> Ofsted, *Inspecting maintained schools' duty to promote community cohesion: guidance for inspectors* (London: Ofsted, February 2009), p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> DfES, *Aiming High*.

<sup>71</sup> DCMS, 'Bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade' (25 March 2007), <http://www.culture.gov.uk/3377.aspx> (Accessed 28 April 2008).

<sup>72</sup> *Black History for Schools*, <http://www.blackhistory4schools.com> (Accessed 21 April 2010). Also see Global Dimension, a charitable organisation which receives funding from the Department for International Development, the European Union, Oxfam and ActionAid, and which collates educational materials for all Key Stages on topic such as Black History, Slavery, Social Justice, Identity, Global Citizenship, Discrimination, Equality, Colonialism and Racism. 'Resources for teachers', *Global Dimensions*, <http://www.globaldimension.org.uk/resources/browse/?type=topic> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>73</sup> Hall, 'Afterword', p. 196.

<sup>74</sup> David Lammy, 'speech at the "Where now for Black & Minority Ethnic heritage?"', DCMS (24 October 2005), [http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/minister\\_speeches/2038.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/minister_speeches/2038.aspx) (Accessed 28 April

Government, the abolition of transatlantic slavery was ‘an historic example of a multi-racial, cross-community and international campaign for justice and freedom which still has the power to inspire today.’<sup>75</sup> Schools, museums and archives were encouraged to use the Bicentenary to promote an inclusive British identity and political engagement amongst pupils.<sup>76</sup>

James Walvin identifies David Lammy and other ‘Ministers and MPs either of West Indian origin or West Indian constituencies [as central to the Government’s recognition that the Bicentenary provided ...] an opportunity to go high-profile on something that was not merely historical but also had a kind of contemporary resonance to it.’<sup>77</sup> The nature of the Government’s engagement with the Bicentenary illustrates not just a changing historical understanding, but how this changing view of history altered the conception of British identity by the mainstream British left, then in Government.

### **The Importance of Community Engagement**

The Government sought to influence the narrative of the Bicentenary commemorations through two means. The first was by shaping the requirements for funding from the HLF, ‘a non-departmental public body accountable to Parliament via the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).’<sup>78</sup> The HLF provided some £20 million for Bicentenary events. The largest contributions went to the larger museums,

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2008); David Lammy, ‘Thirteen Local Authorities in England to Become “Cultural Pathfinders”’, *DCMS* (17 February 2005), [http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/media\\_releases/3068.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/3068.aspx) (Accessed 17 August 2008); David Lammy, ‘What Black History Month means to me in the abolition commemoration year’, *David Lammy’s website* (7 October 2007), <http://davidlammy.co.uk/da/64500> (Accessed 29 May 2008); Cubit and Weinstein, ‘Interview with James Walvin’, *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/interviews/walvin.html> (Accessed 10 July 2008).

<sup>75</sup> Paul Goggins, Home Office Minister for Race Equality, *The 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade: Reflecting on the Past and Looking to the Future*, *DCMS Press Release* (25 March 2006), [http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/media\\_releases/2610.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/2610.aspx) (Accessed 28 April 2008).

<sup>76</sup> David Lammy, ‘Identity Papers – The role of Archives in teaching diversity and citizenship’, speech to the Archives Awareness Conference, *DCMS* (24 April 2007), [http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/minister\\_speeches/2041.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/minister_speeches/2041.aspx) (Accessed 28 April 2008).

<sup>77</sup> Geoff Cubbit and Helen Weinstein, ‘Interview with James Walvin’, *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/interviews/walvin.html> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>78</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund, ‘About Us’, <http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/Pages/AboutUs.aspx#.UQpg5b-bVCg> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

such as Liverpool's new International Slavery Museum (ISM), but many smaller community projects also benefitted.<sup>79</sup> The Government also established the Bicentenary Advisory Committee chaired by Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott. The Committee brought together bodies including the BBC, Anti-Slavery International (ASI), USI, the Equiano Society and academics such as Walvin.<sup>80</sup> The Committee first met on 19 January 2006, arguably too late to significantly shape the detail of many events, particularly the new museum galleries.<sup>81</sup> However, the BBC's *Abolition Series* and much 2007 newspaper coverage did reflect the Government's desired celebration of Britain's historical moral leadership and present-day multiculturalism.<sup>82</sup>

The 2005 *London Mayor's Commission on Asian and African Heritage* report illustrates how Government policy created space for community voices to shape the narrative presented in 2007. The report noted how the Bicentenary offered an opportunity to meet the RRAA 2000 requirement for schools and museums to be more inclusive towards black and minority ethnic groups. The report reflected on how London has 'always been a culturally diverse city' but that 'the practice of historical amnesia . . . wrongly portrays African and Asian communities as recent immigrants and postwar economic migrants with no real claim or place in London.'<sup>83</sup> It added that 'Through the establishment of Black History Month, the African community negotiated its own space with which to tell its own stories,' and that 'African and Caribbean

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<sup>79</sup> Oldfield, 'Repairing Historical Wrongs', pp. 246-249.

<sup>80</sup> Bicentenary Advisory Committee, *Membership of the Bicentenary Advisory committee*, [http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/dpm/slave\\_trade\\_bicentenary/membership\\_of\\_advisory\\_group.htm](http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/dpm/slave_trade_bicentenary/membership_of_advisory_group.htm) (Accessed 28 April 2008).

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*; Cubit and Weinstein, 'Interview with James Walvin'.

<sup>82</sup> Ross Wilson, 'Representation equals recognition? The portrayal of slavery on screen: from *Roots* to *Amistad*, *Mansfield Park* and *Amazing Grace*', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/media/analysis/representation.html> (Accessed 12 July 2008); Ross Wilson, 'Remembering to Forget: the BBC *Abolition Season* and public memory', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/media/analysis/remembering.html> (Accessed 12 July 2007); BBC, *Abolition Season*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/abolition/about.shtml> (Accessed 10 April 2008); Wilson, 'A Kindly Act'.

<sup>83</sup> Lee Jasper, 'Statement, Policy Director Equalities and Policing', Jocelyn Barrow et al, *Delivering shared heritage: The Mayor's Commission on African and Asian Heritage* (London: Greater London Authority, July 2005), pp. 4-5.



communities are already preparing to mark 2007 . . . Consultation with the museums, archives and libraries sector is well under way,' but more needed to be done.<sup>84</sup>

In London, both the NMM and Museum in Docklands (MiD) opened new permanent galleries on transatlantic slavery, titled *Atlantic Worlds* and *London, Sugar and Slavery*, respectively. Both sought to engage with African and African Caribbean community groups in designing these new galleries, with differing levels of success. Many community representatives found the NMM's consultation process 'disrespectful' and felt that their community knowledge and understanding of this history and its present-day relevance was not valued.<sup>85</sup> The language used by the museum was also criticised. Arthur Torrington (co-founder and secretary of the Equiano Society) disagreed with the use of the word 'trade' to describe the acquisition of enslaved Africans by Europeans, arguing that it excused European actions by implying that the traffic was voluntary on the part of the enslaved.<sup>86</sup> The NMM took the position, shared by most historians, that the process was a trade in enslaved Africans sanctioned by African and European states.

In contrast to the NMM, the MiD community consultation process was 'Perhaps the best known example of this work in 2007' and a guide for future projects.<sup>87</sup> Community perspectives were engaged early and helped to shape all aspects of the gallery. *The Making of London, Sugar and Slavery: a toolkit for community participation* describes this process:

During 2005 – 2008, the *London, Sugar and Slavery* (LSS) team participated in many debates and discussions, such as those organised by the Rendezvous of Victory cross-community forum, on the controversial issues linked to the British involvement in the transatlantic slave trade. . . . we also learned a significant amount through our regular contact with UK colleagues attending the 2007 Heritage Network Group. Co-ordinated by Anti-Slavery International (ASI), the forum included representatives from 18 national and regional museums as well as NGOs such as Rendezvous of Victory. This Group met regularly from 2005. ASI was uniquely and strategically positioned as a non-

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford; Interview with Arthur Torrington, Project Director of the Windrush Foundation and co-founder and secretary of the Equiano Society, 9 June 2010; Interview with John McAleer; Kalliopi Fouseki, 'Community voices, curatorial choices': community consultation for the 1807 exhibitions', *Museum and Society*, 8:3 (2010), pp. 180-192.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Arthur Torrington.

<sup>87</sup> Ross Wilson, 'Rethinking 1807: museums, knowledge and expertise', *Museum and Society*, 8:3 (2010), p. 175.

governmental organisation to capture the real problems, challenges and opportunities that museum heritage professionals were encountering with this highly-charged subject. The 2007 Heritage Network Group was an important agency in the 2007 process as it provided a safe, supportive and open forum for us to discuss difficult issues such as race and racism and to share and learn from best practice.<sup>88</sup>

Engagement with formerly excluded community voices led the MiD to reconsider the traditional celebration of parliamentary abolitionists and to ask what is 'Black History?', 'Whose history is this?' and 'What is meant by celebration?' The museum concluded that in modern London there are many complex and layered interpretations of the legacies of transatlantic slavery. In *What does 2007 mean to you?*, participants explored their heritage, identity and sense of inclusion through themes such as "Africans in London", "Freedom", "The Price of Sweetness", "Representation", "Legacy" and "Resistance".<sup>89</sup> These questions reflect wider thought processes amongst British academics and museum curators in interrogating the traditional Eurocentric memory of slavery and abolition in Britain, as well as how the MiD sought to empower formerly excluded perspectives. The narrative presented by LSS, therefore, reflected the interests of the local community and addressed 'concerns of colonialism, capitalism, racism and multiculturalism and places them forefront within the exhibition space.'<sup>90</sup> This is significant as relational repair depends upon broadening perspectives to encourage empathy and an inclusive 'collective memory.'

The 2007 Heritage Network Group contributed to a degree of uniformity in how museums prepared for 2007 and how they sought to discuss the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Community consultation was also central.<sup>91</sup> Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery (BMAG) collaborated with members of the African Caribbean community of Handsworth (an area of Birmingham which has a large African Caribbean population and witnessed race riots in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s), and the Equiano Society to produce an exhibition which drew parallels between the life and

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<sup>88</sup> David Spence, 'Introduction', Museum in Docklands, *The making of London, Sugar and Slavery: a toolkit for community participation* (London: Museum of London, 2008), pp. 3-4.

<sup>89</sup> Museum in Docklands, 'Abstract 1', Museum in Docklands, *The making of London, Sugar and Slavery*, p. 31.

<sup>90</sup> Wilson, 'Rethinking 1807', p. 175.

<sup>91</sup> Helen Weinstein and Kalliopi Fouseki, 'Interview with Jane Batty', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/interviews/batty.html>; Laurajane Smith, Geoff Cubbit and Helen Weinstein, 'Interview with Tony Tibbles', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/interviews/benjamin.html> (Accessed 8 July 2008).

experiences of Equiano and that of post-WWII West Indian migrants to Birmingham.<sup>92</sup> Meanwhile the ISM and WHM sought to engage with both academics and local African and African Caribbean community representatives, to avoid the past criticism for silencing and 'othering' Africans.<sup>93</sup>

For Justina Oraka, a participant in WHM's community consultation process, the outreach of WHM was welcome; however, the decision to redevelop the museum to mark the Bicentenary of abolition rather than the start of slave trading was symptomatic of how the museum was still shaped by traditional Eurocentric assumptions.<sup>94</sup> This suspicion is shared by academics Marcus Wood and Ross Wilson and journalists Sunny Hundal and Joseph Harker, who rhetorically asked 'why has Britain not commemorated the first slave trading voyage instead of abolition?'<sup>95</sup> For a museum to facilitate a reparative historical truth telling process, Oraka suggests, the community must be given total control over the curatorial decisions and the narrative

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with Clare Parsons, Curator Project Manager of the Equiano Project, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 21 July 2008; Interview with Arthur Torrington. See also Clare Parsons and Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, *Equiano (exhibition DVD): an exhibition of an extraordinary life* (Birmingham: It's about Time Productions, 2008); Geoff Cubit, 'Interview with Rita McLean', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/interviews/mclean.html> (Accessed 3 September 2012).

<sup>93</sup> Weinstein, 'Interview with Jayne Tyler'; Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2006), pp. 35-36; Wood, *Blind Memory*, p. 300; Tibbles, 'Interpreting Transatlantic Slavery'; Madge Dresser, 'Remembering Slavery and Abolition in Bristol', *Slavery and Abolition*, 30:2 (2009), pp. 223-246; Susan Capes, *Representing Slavery: Do British Museums perpetuate visions of 'Self' and 'Other' or are they creating balanced representations of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery?* (University of Leicester: Unpublished MA Thesis, 2006); Katherine Prior, 'Commemorating Slavery 2007: a Personal View from Inside the Museums', *History Workshop Journal*, 64:1 (2007), pp. 200-210; Douglas Hamilton, 'Representing slavery in British museums: the challenges of 2007', Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.), *Imagining transatlantic slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 181-200; Interview with Vanessa Salter, of Wilberforce House, Hull Museum, 7 July 2008; Interview with Richard Benjamin, 8 July 2008; Interview with Clare Parsons.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Justina Oraka, Community Consultant on the redevelopment of Wilberforce House Museum, 28 July 2008.

<sup>95</sup> Marcus Wood, 'Significant Silence: Where was Slave Agency in the Popular Imagery of 2007?', Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.), *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), pp. 162-190; Wilson, 'Rethinking 1807'; Sunny Hundal, 'This commemoration farce', *The Guardian* (Wednesday 28 March 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/mar/28/slaverycommemorationareafa> (Accessed 5 September 2012); Interview with Joseph Harker, Journalist, *The Guardian*, 10 July 2008; Joseph Harker, 'A shameful open sore', *The Guardian* (Saturday 24 March 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2007/mar/24/comment.comment?INTCMP=SRCH> (Accessed 5 September 2012).

presented by the museum.<sup>96</sup> However, the intention of museums to consult with and empower the historical perspective of previously excluded groups does, nevertheless demonstrate the reparative potential of revising the history presented in museums. The consultations were not always successful and community groups sometimes wanted more influence and control than they received but in comparison to previous endeavours by British museums, the level of involvement of the African and African Caribbean community was unprecedented. The creation of a shared historical memory, or 'healing truth', requires not only the empowerment of previously excluded voices to replace past narratives, but dialogue to develop a new historical narrative that is shaped by competing perspectives. This process was started in 2007 and deserves applause. However, the process still has some way to go.

### Educational Resources

The development of educational resources in 2007 involved the empowerment of previously suppressed voices and a national dialogue over how the history and legacy should be taught and discussed in schools. The USI played a central role in this, bringing together museums from across the country. However, ASI's Recovered Histories Project (RHP) arguably created an even larger discussion. The RHP brought together academics, museum professionals, members of the USI, campaigners and community groups, including RoV, the Equiano Society and Leeds Bicentenary Project, together with teachers to discuss the importance of transatlantic slavery and the difficulty of teaching this history. The project included a series of seminars, in London, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester and Edinburgh, organised by RoV during 2007-2008 and also produced the educational resources, *Recovered Histories: Reawakening the Narrative of Enslavement, Resistance and the Fight for Freedom* and *Breaking the Silence*, a website and 12 copies of a 14 panel portable exhibition that was displayed across the country.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Interview with Justina Oraka.

<sup>97</sup> Angelina Osborne, *Recovered Histories: Reawakening the Narratives of Enslavement, Resistance and the Fight for Freedom – a digitisation and outreach project: final report* (London: Anti-Slavery International, 2009).

The RHP also provided continuing professional development for teachers (CPD) by ASI, Inner Vision and the MiD during September/October 2008. CPD has also been provided by the USI and individual museums such as the ISM. The provision of CPD reflects how it was increasingly recognised that teachers felt unprepared to teach the history of transatlantic slavery and to cope with the racial sensitivities involved, as highlighted by the 2007 DfES funded, Historical Association project, T.E.A.C.H. (Teaching Emotional and Controversial Histories). Numerous articles in *Teaching History* during 2007 also emphasised how the traditional teaching of transatlantic slavery had alienated students of African heritage.<sup>98</sup>

The USI CPD days sought to enable teachers to make lessons on transatlantic slavery socially beneficial exercises that tackled historically rooted prejudice instead of reinforcing old stereotypes.<sup>99</sup> In contrast to the NMM's museum curators, 'who often think in facts and figures,' the USI CPD days encourage teachers to think more about approaches to teaching which emphasise the 'humanity' of those enslaved rather than the numbers of individuals involved.<sup>100</sup> The USI emphasises the importance of language and semantics, explaining to teachers that 'Terms used when entering dialogue about enslavement are very important: for example, the terms 'enslaved' rather than slave; 'history' rather than story; and referring to 'transatlantic slavery' rather than the slave trade.'<sup>101</sup> The CPD prioritised enabling teachers to overcome their

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<sup>98</sup> The Historical Association, *Teaching Emotive and Controversial History 3-19* (London: The Historical Association, 2007); Kay Traill, "'You should be proud about your history. They made me feel ashamed": teaching history hurts', *Teaching History*, 127 (2007), pp. 31-37; Peter Lee and Dennis Shemilt, 'New alchemy or fatal attraction? History and citizenship', *Teaching History*, 129 (2007), pp. 14-19; Jamie Byrom and Michael Riley, 'Identity-shakers: cultural encounters and the development of pupils' multiple identities', *Teaching History*, 127 (2007), pp. 22-29; Dan Lyndon, 'Integrating Black British History into the National Curriculum', *Teaching History*, 122 (2006), pp. 37-42; Mary Woolley, Arthur Chapman, Tony McConnell and Christine Counsel, 'Sense and Sensitivity', *Teaching History*, 127 (2007), p. 2; Robert Guyver, 'More than just the Henries: Britishness and British history at Key Stage 3', *Teaching History*, 122 (2006), pp. 15-23; Helena Stride, 'Britain was our home': Helping Years 9, 10 and 11 to understand the black experience of the Second World War', *Teaching History*, 112 (2003), pp. 54-59; Rupert Gaze, 'Uncovering the hidden histories: black and Asian people in the two world wars', *Teaching History*, 120 (2005), pp. 46-51; David Nichols, 'Building a better past: plans to reform the curriculum', *Teaching History*, 128 (2007), pp. 60-66; Alf Wilkinson, 'The New Key Stage 3 Curriculum: the bigger picture', *Teaching History*, 131 (2008), p. 51.

<sup>99</sup> Understanding Slavery, *Unlocking Perceptions: Understanding Slavery's approach to the history and legacies of the transatlantic slavery* (London: Understanding Slavery, 2007).

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Ruth Fisher, Understanding Slavery Initiative Project Manager and Anna Salaman, Head of Formal Learning, National Maritime Museum, 17 May 2010.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

apprehensions when dealing with the sensitivities of transatlantic slavery and race.<sup>102</sup> This concern reflects the influence of postcolonial criticism of how Eurocentric historiography and language has excluded minority groups from the conceptualisation of British identity.

The RHP culminated in a conference entitled 'Fostering Community Cohesion and Global Citizenship through Teaching the Transatlantic Slave Trade', hosted at the MiD. The conference highlighted how the Government's community cohesion and active citizenship agendas created space for telling revisionist historical narratives during 2007, and how these narratives reflect the pressure of academics, NGOs and community campaigners and wider international trends in historiography. Conference attendees included government, academic, museum and third sector representatives, including Sir Keith Ajegbo, author of *Curriculum Review: Diversity and Citizenship* (2007), which encouraged the government to make Slavery and Abolition a compulsory part of the National Curriculum in History and Citizenship at KS3.<sup>103</sup> Further illustrating this point, ASI's *Recovered Histories* resource and *Breaking the Silence* website were developed with support from UNESCO and RoV, whilst also being designed to promote 'community cohesion and active citizenship' and enable schools to meet the requirements of the RRAA 2000.<sup>104</sup>

In preparing these resources ASI sought not to promote its historic role in the abolition campaign, but to tell forgotten aspects of the history of transatlantic slavery

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<sup>102</sup> Interview with Richard Benjamin, Head of International Slavery Museum, Stephen Carl-Lokko, Collections Development Officer, International Slavery Museum and Angela Robinson, Curator of Transatlantic Slavery, International Slavery Museum, 11 November 2010; Interview with Vikky Evans-Hubbard, Education Manager, International Slavery Museum, 22 February 2011; Interview with Suzanne Schwarz, Professor of History, Liverpool Hope University (now University of Worcester), 10 November 2010. See also Nicholas J. Evans and Suzanne Schwarz, 'Pedagogical Responses to the Teaching of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its Diasporic Legacies in British Schools', Benjamin Bowser and Paul Lovejoy (eds.), *Defining New Approaches For Teaching The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 2012), pp. 115-121.

<sup>103</sup> Osborne, *Recovered Histories: final report*; Michaela Alfred-Kamara and Jenny Mitchell, *Education Aspect of the Recovered Histories Project* (London: Anti-Slavery International, 2009); Interview with Michaela Alfred-Kamara, Education Officer, Anti-Slavery International, 8 June 2010.

<sup>104</sup> Alfred-Kamara and Mitchell, *Education aspect of the Recovered Histories project*; Anti-Slavery International, *Recovered Histories: Reawakening the Narrative of Enslavement, Resistance and the Fight for Freedom*, <http://www.recoveredhistories.org/>; Anti-Slavery International and UNESCO, *Breaking the Silence: Learning About the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, <http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/> (Accessed 25 January 2012).

and its abolition.<sup>105</sup> This reflected the influence of RoV discussions with ASI and how they had emphasised transatlantic slavery's legacies of racism and racial inequality.<sup>106</sup> ASI also recognised how it 'had, since the 1780s taken an increasingly ambivalent position in terms of its utilisation of the languages and theory of scientific racism' and that this had contributed to the development of the Eurocentric memory of abolition.<sup>107</sup> The *Recovered Histories* resources, therefore:

follow the ethos of teaching the Transatlantic Slave Trade as not via a deficit or victimisation model, but through an active agency and citizenship model. In practice this means, teaching about the history of Africa prior to the slave trade as a functioning continent equal or in some instances surpassing its European contemporaries, the action of the enslaved Africans in securing their freedom and not being passive victims, as well as the role of working classes in Britain.<sup>108</sup>

The Leeds Bicentenary Transformation Project is a clear example of the empowerment of previously suppressed voices during 2007 by HLF funding. Based in the Leeds West Indian Centre, the Project sent members into schools across Leeds to teach about the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery from a West Indian perspective.<sup>109</sup> Following the introduction of Slavery and Abolition as a compulsory part of the KS3 National Curriculum, the Project developed the educational resource pack *African Achievements, Liberation and Aspirations* (for Key Stages One-Four, (KS1, ages 5-7; KS2, 7-11; KS3, 11-14; KS4, 14-16)) which was provided free to every school in Leeds.<sup>110</sup>

These processes of consultation and dialogue reflect important restorative justice principles of broadening national historical memory identified in the Intergenerational Model in Chapter One. In the *2007 Heritage Network Group* and the *Recovered Histories Project* community groups and academics shaped the narrative of museum galleries and educational resources by incorporating previously suppressed

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with Michaela Alfred-Kamara.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*; Interview with Esther Stanford.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Michaela Alfred-Kamara; Wood, *Blind memory*, p. 144.

<sup>108</sup> Alfred-Kamara and Mitchell, *Education Aspect of the Recovered Histories Project*.

<sup>109</sup> Rehana Minhas and Arthur France, 'Foreword', Carl Hylton, Saluka Saula and Michelle Wittleton, *African Achievements, Liberation and Aspirations* (Leeds: Leeds Transformation Project, Gbakhanda Publishing in association with Afrikan Curriculum Development Association, 2009).

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Carl Hylton, Chairperson of the Leeds West Indian Centre Charitable Trust and co-author of *African Achievements, Liberation and Aspirations*, 8 November 2010.

historical events and interpretations. These developments included some of the necessary ingredients for the potential construction of a reparative narrative.

### **A Reparative Narrative?**

The existence of potential for a reparative narrative to be created in 2007 does not necessarily mean that this occurred. All four new permanent museum galleries on transatlantic slavery sought to prioritise African agency and the economic contribution of slavery to Britain.<sup>111</sup> Does this mean that the narrative they told in 2007 contributed to a recalculation of the history and legacy of slavery in Britain? This Chapter will now try to outline the reparative benefits and shortcomings of the narratives presented in 2007.

The development of the ISM to replace MMM's 1994 gallery *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, was viewed as an opportunity 'to tell a bigger story' and 'to address ignorance and misunderstanding by looking at the deep and permanent impact of slavery and the slave trade on Africa, South America, the US, the Caribbean and Western Europe. Thus we will increase our understanding of the world around us.'<sup>112</sup> The ISM's revisionist message and promotion of African agency is made clear by words from former slave, William Prescott, which greets museum visitors: 'They will remember that we were sold, but not that we were strong. They will remember that we were bought, but not that we were brave.' Resistance and African Agency are major themes of the ISM. The museum's Wall of Resistance charts African resistance from the Haitian Revolution to the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and the British race riots of the 1980s.<sup>113</sup> By linking the resistance to slavery to the resistance to racism, the museum highlights the role of transatlantic slavery in developing European ideas of racism, the present-day repercussion of which is brought home by the naming of the museum's education room after Anthony Walker, murdered in a racist attack in Liverpool in 2005. But the

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<sup>111</sup> Wilson, 'Rethinking 1807', p. 173.

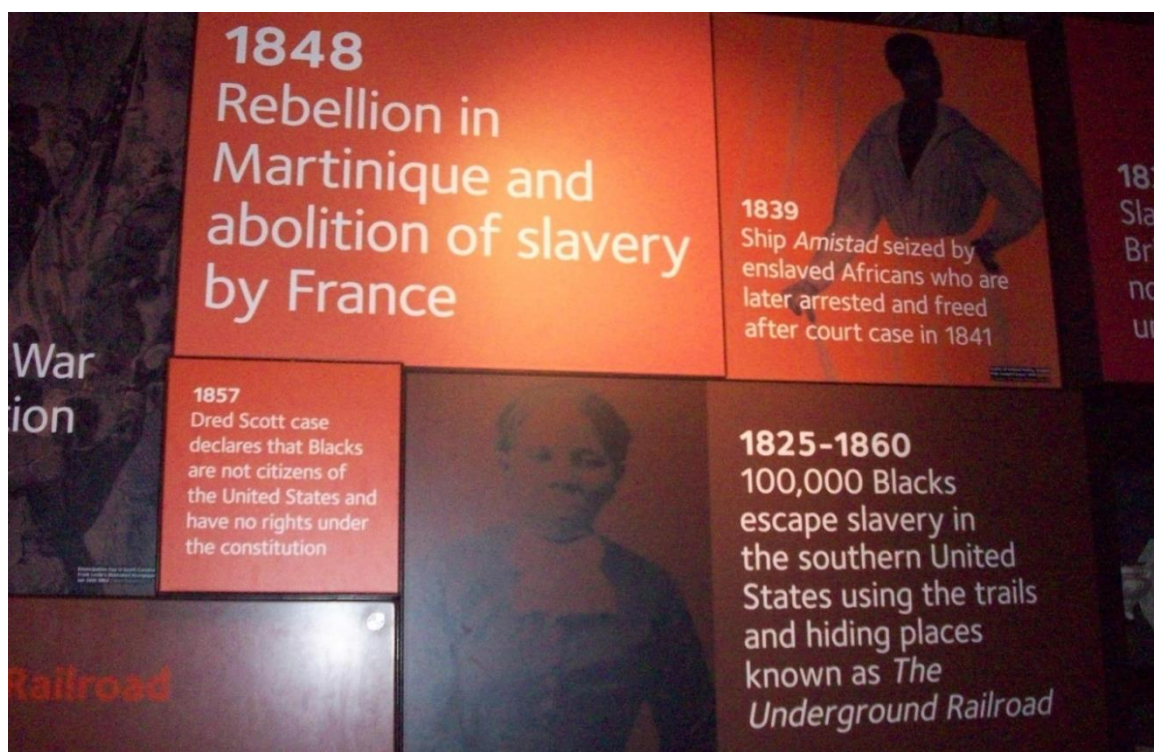
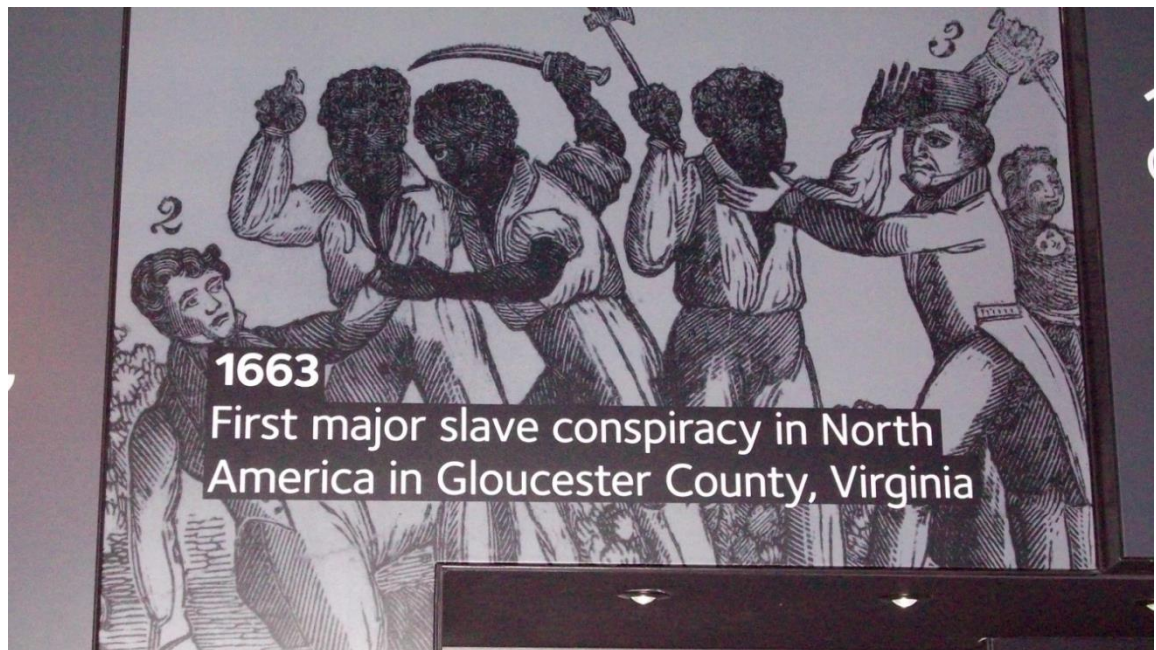
<sup>112</sup> David Fleming, Director of National Museums Liverpool, 'Our vision for the museum', *National Museums Liverpool*, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/about/> (Accessed 6 September 2012).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*



ISM also emphasises how Africans have overcome and survived these historical difficulties and should, therefore, find pride in this history, not shame.<sup>114</sup>

Sections from the International Slavery Museum's Wall of Resistance



<sup>114</sup> Interview with Richard Benjamin, Stephen Carl-Lokko and Angela Robinson.

## A Panorama of the International Slavery Museum's Wall of Resistance



The ISM provides little wider contextualisation to transatlantic slavery. A brief section illustrates the richness and sophistication of West African life and culture prior to the arrival of Europeans. However, the museum's primary focus is the transatlantic slave trade; slavery in the Caribbean and Americas; resistance to slavery; and the legacy of slavery. Given that the museum is called the International Slavery Museum, it could be expected that it would consider in more detail other slave systems. That the museum does not, could suggest that including 'international' in the museum's title reflects its desired profile and its role in Liverpool's regeneration.

The MiD's LSS gallery also fails to contextualise its history of transatlantic slavery with a history of other slave systems and forms of exploitation. The MiD occupies a former sugar warehouse in London's docklands, and was developed to chart the area's history from Roman times, via a hub of imperial trade, to modern global centre of banking at Canary Wharf. MiD Director, David Spence hopes that due to the chronological nature of the museum, visitors will identify parallels within the museum – such as the exploitation of labour in London's docks and the exploitation of African slaves in the Caribbean – and how both systems of exploitation created wealth for a small elite and left legacies of poverty and racism.<sup>115</sup> However, such links are not made explicit and LSS feels detached from the wider history presented by the museum.

This sense of disconnect is influenced by the gallery's opening discussion of the language used in the gallery and an emphasis of the subject matter's sensitivity. Visitors are told the LSS uses the words 'Enslaved Africans' instead of slaves, except in quotations, because it does not want to reinforce negative Eurocentric stereotypes of 'African' and 'slave' being synonymous. This arguably could have been better achieved

<sup>115</sup> Interview with David Spence, Director of Museum in Docklands, 19 May 2010.



by detailing other historic slave systems. The gallery's appeals to sensitivity and seriousness jars with the museum either side of the gallery. Prior to entering LSS, hangs a gibbet, like those in which people executed for piracy were exhibited over the Thames in, and a panel describes how sailors ashore were often tricked by women, who got them drunk, stole their money and sold them to ship captains. After LSS, visitors walk through a mocked-up historic East End street, with posters warning of vicious serial murders.<sup>116</sup> The tone of these exhibits contrasts starkly with the appeal to semantic sensitivity in LSS. It seems visitors are being told to consider the history of slavery separately from the suffering, poverty and violence that characterised the history of London's docks.

An extract from the LSS gallery's explanation of its use of language

We have tried to be careful in our use of language in this gallery. In particular we have tried to avoid using terms that strip individuals of their humanity – since this was a tactic central to the imposition of slavery.

The word 'slave', for example, implies a thing or commodity rather than a human being. We have used the term 'enslaved African' wherever possible.

In the main we have avoided using the terms 'Black' and 'White', preferring 'African' or 'European'. But in the Legacies section of the gallery we engage with the word 'Black' as it is used to refer to the non-White post-war migrant settlers in Britain.

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<sup>116</sup> Caroline Bressey and Tom Wareham, *Reading the London, Sugar and Slavery gallery* (London: Museum of London Docklands, 2010), pp. 40-46.

This linguistic and stylistic disconnect partly reflects that the gallery is a late insertion into the museum, following the realisation in the build-up to 2007 that not to include transatlantic slavery would be an oversight for a museum based in a former sugar warehouse.<sup>117</sup> It also results from the influence of community voices, NGOs such as RoV, and academic consultants, including Catherine Hall, who adhere to the Rodney/Williams historiography. Past academic criticism of transatlantic slavery exhibitions have rarely commented on a lack of historical contextualisation regarding other slave systems, labour exploitation and class inequality, and these parallels were, therefore, not significantly considered in the development of LSS or the other galleries.

It is not surprising, therefore, that some comments left on the index cards provided at the ISM and MiD, argued that these museums placed unfair blame on the British and ignored other factors such as the role of Africans in the transatlantic slave trade, other slave systems in Africa and the exploitation of the poor in industrialising Britain.<sup>118</sup> Academics have tended to dismiss such reaction as a 'distancing mechanism that works to manoeuvre Britain away from messages of responsibility, while also firming up Britain's role as a *leading* – or, more accurately, *the lead* – player driven by moral and politically progressive motivations.'<sup>119</sup> For Esther Stanford, such negative reactions reflect the inability of white people to reflect on their own identity and whiteness; because race is not something they think about as they are the majority and cannot comprehend being racially discriminated against.<sup>120</sup> This may be the case in some circumstances. Criticism in newspaper comment forums, such as that from Jenny above, often crossed into raging against political correctness and the idea that white working people are discriminated against in favour of asylum seekers, immigrants and minorities (a viewpoint explored in the BBC's *White Series* in 2008).<sup>121</sup> However,

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<sup>117</sup> Interview with David Spence.

<sup>118</sup> Emma Waterton, 'Humiliated Silence: Multiculturalism, Blame and the Trope of "Moving On"', *Museum and Society*, 8:3 (2010), pp. 128-142; Laurajane Smith, "'Man's inhumanity to man' and other platitudes of avoidance and misrecognition: an analysis of visitor responses to exhibitions marking the 1807 bicentenary', *Museum and Society* 8:3 (2010), pp. 193-214.

<sup>119</sup> Waterton, 'Humiliated Silence', p. 134; Smith, "'Man's inhumanity to man'".

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford.

<sup>121</sup> Richard Klein, 'White and working class . . . the one ethnic group the BBC has ignored', *The Daily Mail* (29 February 2008), <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-523351/White-working-class---ethnic-group-BBC-ignored.html> (Accessed 10 September 2012); Joseph Harker, 'White wash', *The Guardian* (Thursday 6 March 2012), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/mar/06/whitewash> (Accessed 10 September 2012).

because some members of the white working class use language that offends academic sensibilities in blaming immigration for shortages of decent housing and jobs, does not mean that white working class communities are not also victims of social inequality, exclusion and discrimination by the middle and upper classes. Nor does it invalidate their claim that the history of transatlantic slavery and its legacy is more complex than that presented.

Typed up feedback to LSS with responses to the original comments

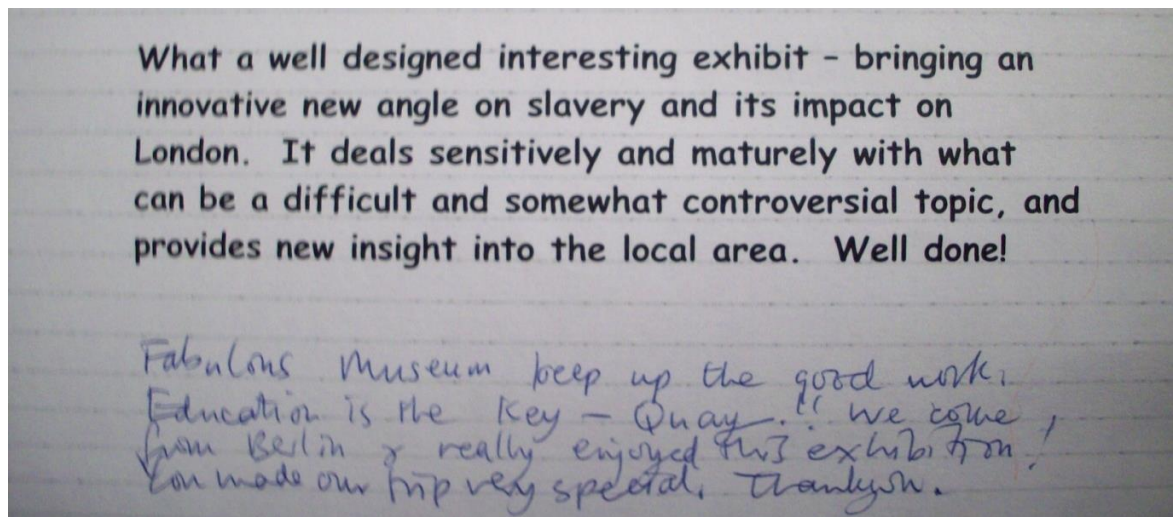
This museum up to now has been very interesting and informing. It is wrong that we should apologise for something that happened in a previous life. It is also wrong that we should have "politically correct" thrust upon us in this way. Whoever compiled this museum should keep politics out of it. Just show it how it was !!!

It was like that  
you just don't want to know

Yeah!

I am astonished that a supposed museum of "history" should stoop to - or feel pressured to do so - the use of politically correct "terminology" to describe the historical facts of slavery - as per the display under "terminology". That is nothing less than actually trying to rewrite the basic facts of history.

This makes me very sad! That was very unfair to the Africans.  
Fighting for freedom and all they got was death. Shut it



In contrast to the ISM and MiD, WHM and *Atlantic Worlds* at the NMM are less explicitly revisionist in the historical narratives they present. Indeed, the NMM's botched community consultation process has contributed to the gallery being criticised, somewhat unfairly, for retaining traditional narrative biases. The curatorial intention behind *Atlantic Worlds* was not to focus on transatlantic slavery alone, but on how the Atlantic Ocean had facilitated a long history of trade tying the development of all four bordering continents together. *Atlantic Worlds* was to be joined by a gallery exploring similar themes in the Indian Ocean World.<sup>122</sup> Whilst offering less of a discussion of the legacy of racism in present-day Britain than LLS and the ISM, *Atlantic Worlds* does nevertheless revise traditional absences in British memory. The gallery explores how 'wealth generated by the new empire of the seas underpinned population growth stimulating the growth of cities in Britain and fuelling the Industrial Revolution.'<sup>123</sup> It also emphasises 'Toussaint L'Ouverture, Olaudah Equiano and Samuel Sharp whose acts of resistance and rebellion were crucial to the turning of European public opinion against the trade.'<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Caroline Worthington, 'Review: Atlantic Worlds, NMM London', *Museum Journal* (February 2008), p. 48; Interview with John McAleer; Hamilton, 'Representing slavery in British museums', p. 189.

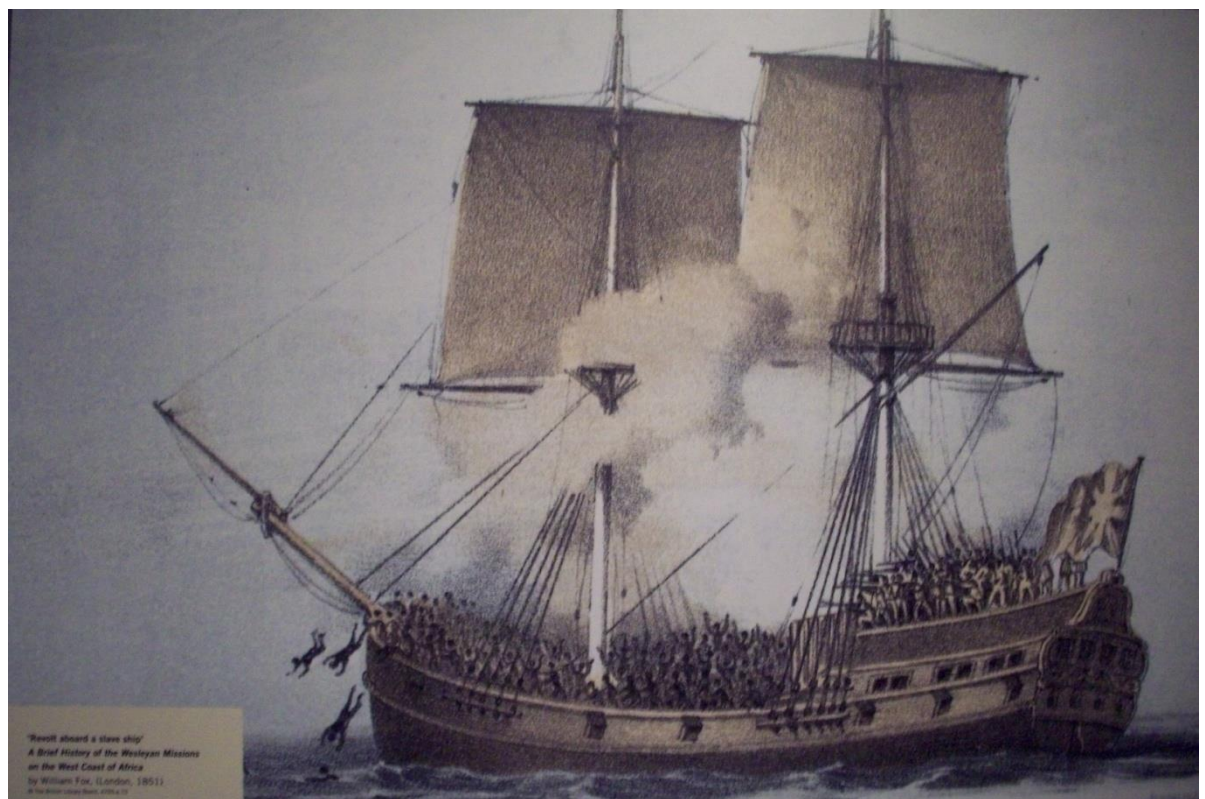
<sup>123</sup> Royal Museums Greenwich, 'National Maritime Museum launches New 'Atlantic Worlds' Gallery', <http://www.rmg.co.uk/about/press/archive/national-maritime-museum-launches-new-atlantic-worlds-gallery> (Accessed, 23 August 2012).

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*



*Atlantic Worlds* also challenges Eurocentric denials of African and indigenous American cultural and economic sophistication prior to European interaction with these peoples. It 'explores the encounters and exchanges made by travellers upon reaching North America and West Africa with peoples including the Edo and Akan – sophisticated African societies founded on riches from gold mining and extensive trading' using 'African artefacts.'<sup>125</sup> It also acknowledges the central role of slavery within many West African societies' socioeconomic development and in shaping their integration into wider African trade networks.<sup>126</sup>

*Atlantic Worlds* exhibit 'Revolt aboard a slave ship.'



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<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> Interview with John McAleer.

Atlantic Worlds exhibit 'Restraining irons.'



WHM perhaps offers a greater historical and contemporary contextualisation of slavery. The museum traces the history of slavery back to Roman and Byzantine institutions as well as slave systems in African cultures, albeit very briefly, before moving to the transatlantic slave trade, Middle Passage, slavery in the Americas, African resistance and the survival of African religious and cultural practices, and abolitionism. The museum concludes by considering legacies of racism and problems of contemporary slavery. As with the ISM and MiD, WHM also localises the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Wilberforce is prominent, but not dominant. In the legacies section, the refusal of Hull dock workers to unload South African produce during apartheid is noted, offering arguably more than any other museum, a glimpse of past examples of solidarity between class and race based movements and interests. This illustrates how past and present racial and class inequality should be recognised as entwined within larger histories of socioeconomic inequality, exploitation and othering.

Despite the criticisms offered above, all four museums/galleries revised traditional Eurocentric biases and explored previously excluded historical events and African and African Caribbean perspectives. The result was a new historical narrative that both 'recognises (and applauds) the specific, British roots of abolition, but at the



same time also acknowledges the true horror and enormity of transatlantic slavery, and its role in transforming Britain into a major mercantile and military power.<sup>127</sup> None of the museums tell a complete, contextualised holistic truth; it would be impossible for any museum to do so. As the NMM's John McAleer notes, covering the complexity and nuance of transatlantic slavery in panels of 150 words that are designed for an average reading age of 12 (to cater to the KS3 curriculum and to be widely accessible) is difficult and you are unlikely to satisfy all interested parties.<sup>128</sup> However, the purpose of these galleries was to broaden the historical memory of slavery and abolition beyond its traditional Eurocentric parameters and to spark interest amongst visitors to find out more about previously overlooked aspects of this history. Museums, therefore, suggest further reading and stock a range of age appropriate books in their shops.<sup>129</sup>

### Education Resources and Museum School Activities

The foremost education resource for teaching the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery is the USI's *The Citizen Resource: Citizenship and the legacies of transatlantic slavery*. Primarily designed to enable teachers to teach transatlantic slavery within the KS3 Citizenship and History curriculum, it develops four themes: 'Activism', 'Heritage', 'Identity' and 'Routes.' The 'Activism' section 'looks at the mechanics and legacy of

<sup>127</sup> Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield, 'Introduction', Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.), *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), p. 10.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with John McAleer.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*; Interview with David Spence; Interview with Richard Benjamin; ISM, 'Reading List', <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/slavery/booklist.aspx> (Accessed 13 September 2012); Common in the museums shops were, for adults: Adam Hoschchild, *Bury the Chains: The British struggle to abolish the slave trade* (London: Pan, 2006); James Walvin, *A Short History of Slavery* (London: Penguin, 2007). For older children, James Walvin, *The Slave Trade* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2011), which contained ten reproduced historical documents including the abolitionist pamphlet *The Brookes Slave Ship* and the US and Brazilian emancipation proclamations. James Walvin, *Slavery to Freedom: Britain's Slave Trade and Abolition* (Andover, Hampshire: Pitkin, 2007), p. 28 includes a list of permanent and temporary museums. Nigel Sadle, *The Slave Trade* (Oxford: Shire, 2009). For younger children and young teens respectively, Sarah Courtauld (History Consultant: James Walvin), *The Story of Slavery* (London: Usbourne, 2007); Robert Hume, *Equiano: The Slave with the Loud Voice and his fight against the slave trade* (Broadstairs, Kent: Stone Publishing House, 2007), based on Equiano's own narrative. Regionally specific resources included, at MiD, Susan Okono, *Black Londoners: a History* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009), which is accompanied KS3/4 resources from [www.blacklondoners.com](http://www.blacklondoners.com) (Accessed 13 September 2012). At ISM, David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz and Anthony Tibbles (eds.), *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008).

campaigning in Britain, inherited from the movement to abolish the transatlantic slave trade, and links this to contemporary campaigning.<sup>130</sup> 'Heritage', 'Identity', and 'Routes' enable schools to examine how transatlantic slavery and Africans in Britain benefitted the nation and society. For instance, 'Heritage' asks pupils to consider the history of transatlantic slavery, how it has been remembered and how they think it should be remembered. 'Identity' leads pupils to consider how African people and those of African heritage have been perceived and stereotyped in the past. By examining the influence of prejudice in identity formation, pupils are encouraged to reflect on how this, in turn, shapes relations of power in society. 'Routes' asks school children to consider how transatlantic slavery 'uprooted' people and how it has influenced British cultural identity and diversity, especially in politics, music and food.<sup>131</sup>

Background information and lesson plans are provided online. The resource advises that:

Teachers who are unfamiliar with the history of the transatlantic slave trade would benefit from initially using the lesson plans in the first seven themes on the teachers website: West African History, the Triangular Trade, the Middle Passage, Slavery, Resistance and Rebellion, Abolition and Emancipation to introduce students to the history prior to developing study programmes within the Citizenship curriculum. The eighth and ninth themes – Legacy and Diaspora include material related to the four themes in this resource.<sup>132</sup>

The accompanying students' *Citizen* website further encourages a critical analysis of the history and historiography of transatlantic slavery and abolition.<sup>133</sup> By challenging traditional memory – for instance, prompting students to ask why the memory of slavery and abolition has traditionally centred on elite white men such as Wilberforce and ignored other contributors to abolitionism, such as Equiano, and near-total British ignorance of Maroon communities and other forms of resistance and rebellion that hastened the end of British transatlantic slavery – British identity itself is deconstructed so that it can be reconfigured in a more inclusive manner.

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<sup>130</sup> Understanding Slavery, *The Citizen Resource: Introduction Booklet* (London: Understanding Slavery. 2007), p. 4.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>133</sup> Understanding Slavery, *Citizen Website*, <http://www.understandingslavery.com/citizen> (Accessed 25 April 2008).

The *Citizen Resource* typified the resources and teaching materials produced by museums and other bodies in 2007, such as the *Equiano* educational resource pack produced by BMAG and the Equiano Society, the museums partnered in the USI, and the BBC.<sup>134</sup> For museums, the USI provides useful resources that can be supplemented and ‘sets the benchmark for standards on teaching sensitive subjects.’<sup>135</sup> The resources provided by ISM, MiD, NMM and WHM often explore local historical specificities. For instance, pupils visiting the MiD can follow a local walking tour that highlights sites linked to the slave trade and to eighteenth century Africans in Britain in the docklands and the City of London.<sup>136</sup> The ISM similarly provides information about local street names and buildings associated with transatlantic slavery in Liverpool, challenging children to consider what this reveals about the city’s past.

The Government’s community cohesion and active citizenship agendas had a clear influence in resources developed around 2007. The British Library’s 2007 project

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<sup>134</sup> Arthur Torrington (eds.), *Equiano: Enslavement, Resistance and Abolition* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 2007); NMM, *Atlantic Worlds: Key Stage 3 Teacher’s Pack*; NMM, *Freedom: A History and Citizenship Key Stage 3 resource to investigate the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, DFES, DCMS and HLF, 2007); NMM, *Atlantic Worlds: Key Stage Three Teacher’s Pack* (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2007); NMM, *Greenwich: A Transatlantic Slavery Trail*, [http://www.rmg.co.uk/upload/pdf/Transatlantic\\_Slavery\\_Trail.pdf](http://www.rmg.co.uk/upload/pdf/Transatlantic_Slavery_Trail.pdf); NMM, *National Maritime Museum: Programme for Secondary Schools, 2011-2012*, [http://www.rmg.co.uk/upload/pdf/NMM\\_Secondary\\_2011-12.pdf](http://www.rmg.co.uk/upload/pdf/NMM_Secondary_2011-12.pdf); National Museums Liverpool, *Resource for Schools: International Slavery Museum*, [http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/worksheets/ISM\\_teachers\\_pack.pdf](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/worksheets/ISM_teachers_pack.pdf); ISM, *Slave Stories (an interactive learning resource)*, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/slavery/slave-stories/index.aspx>; ISM, *Contemporary Slavery: Teachers’ Resource*, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/learning/slavery-today/contemporary-slavery-teachers-resource.pdf>. See also ISM, ‘The history of the transatlantic slave trade’, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/slavery/>; MiD, *London, Sugar and Slavery: Support Materials, Key Stage 3*, (London: Museum of London, 2007); Museum of London, *Barbados: Sugar and Slavery*, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/B63E9DCC-0E54-4DF2-B55E-2809777F04AC/0/BarbadosWorksheetTeacher.pdf>, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/5B532DEC-A551-4FC6-ACD6-BB8E2C02D97A/0/Barbados.pdf>; WHM, ‘William Wilberforce’, *MyLearning*, <http://www.mylearning.org/william-wilberforce/p-693/>; *The Abolition Project*, (MLA East of England, 2009), <http://abolition.e2bn.org/index.php> (All accessed 7 September 2012); BBC, *World Class*, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/freedom\\_abolition.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/freedom_abolition.shtml); BBC History, ‘The Abolition of the Slave Trade’, *BBC History*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/> (Accessed 15 July 2008).

<sup>135</sup> Interview with Vikky Evans-Hubbard.

<sup>136</sup> Museum in Docklands, *London, Sugar and Slavery: revealing our city’s untold history, a short walk that shows some of the city of London’s connections to transatlantic enslavement*, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/64C929D2-717B-4100-AD09-AE81ACCB7611/0/LSSETrail.pdf> (Accessed 10 September 2012).

*Campaign! Make an Impact*, piloted in Hull with WHM, used 'the campaign to abolish the transatlantic slave trade as a means for [school children] to consider how to be active [citizens] in society today.'<sup>137</sup> After 2007 the project was expanded nationally.<sup>138</sup>

WHM, like the other museums, offers a variety of lessons for visiting schools for KS1-4.<sup>139</sup> At WHM schools are able to pick and mix lessons from a selection of cross-curricular options. Children can practice West African drumming as a means to learn about traditional West African culture. Such exploration is particularly important for school children in Hull and the surrounding East Riding of Yorkshire, as these areas are largely homogenous white areas where children gain little exposure to African and other cultural heritages.<sup>140</sup> There are also more academic lessons, including interpreting historical Western African artefacts and documentary evidence from the abolitionist and proslavery campaigns. WHM Education Officer, Esther Lockwood derives great satisfaction from introducing artefacts to school children (and their teachers) and witnessing their attitudes change when they are challenged to think about how the objects can be interpreted differently, depending upon one's experiences and background. Pupils are given a pair of slave manacles and asked to think about what insight the object provides into the history and nature of the slave trade and what sensitivities may exist in the displaying of such an item.<sup>141</sup> Interestingly, this technique contrasts with the 'fetishisation' of objects which Marcus Wood

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<sup>137</sup> DC Research, *Local Government Improvement Evidence Toolkit: Final Report* (Carlisle and Leicester: DC Research, August 2010), p. 14; British Library, 'Background to Campaign! Make an Impact', <http://www.bl.uk/learning/citizenship/campaign/teachers/about/background/howitbegan.html> (Accessed 7 September 2012); Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, Jocelyn Dodd, Claire Creaser, Richard Sandell, Ceri Jones and Anna Woodham, *Inspiration, Identity, Learning: The Value of Museums, Second Study* (London: DCMS, June 2007), pp. 308-323.

<sup>138</sup> British Library, *Campaign! Make an Impact*, <http://www.bl.uk/campaign> (Accessed 12 January 2012).

<sup>139</sup> Hull Museums Education, *Schools Programme 2009/10 Key Stages 1 and 2* (Hull: Hull Museums, 2009); Hull Museums Education, *Schools Programme 2009/10 Key Stages 3 and 4* (Hull: Hull Museums, 2009).

<sup>140</sup> For instance, East Riding of Yorkshires School Improvement team tested the impact of their *Wilberforce* project to assess whether their teaching on the diverse and rich history of African cultures and nations was successful in countering the frequent misconception and perception of Africa as one homogenous nation rather than a diverse continent of many nations. Interview with Yvette Fox, Schools Improvements Office for East Riding of Yorkshire County Council, 4 June 2010; Yvette Fox, *Wilberforce – Slavery and Abolition: Final Project Report* (Skirlaugh: East Riding of Yorkshire School Improvement Service, 2008).

<sup>141</sup> Interview with Esther Lockwood, Education Officer, Wilberforce House Museum, 3 February 2011.

identified as a shortcoming of the Bicentenary exhibition at Parliament.<sup>142</sup> Other museums similarly offer sessions in which school children are introduced to historical artefacts associated with transatlantic slavery and educational resources that utilise primary source material to help make 'personal engagement more likely.'<sup>143</sup>

Museums have been keen to measure whether their exhibitions and lessons have challenged the prejudices and Eurocentric memory of visitors. The ISM has, for example, developed a sophisticated feedback programme which includes electronic feedback points in the museum, and a system of anonymous feedback by children from visiting school groups. This enables the museum to design follow-up projects for these classes and to change the lessons it offers.<sup>144</sup> By monitoring the impact of the museum and its educational resources, the ISM seeks to improve how it conveys its historical narrative and its ability to challenge prejudices based upon Eurocentric historical memory.<sup>145</sup>

ASI's *Recovered Histories* provides 10 lesson plans that are linked to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) units for Citizenship, History and Geography: Africa; Capture and Enslavement; The Middle Passage; Enslavement in the Caribbean; Resistance and Rebellion; The Anti-Slavery Movement; The Pro-Slavery lobby; Religion; Abolition and Emancipation; Legacies in a Global World.<sup>146</sup> These lessons counter traditional Eurocentric narratives of abolitionist saints, but do not offer a significantly wider contextualisation, or explore the links between the exploitation of slaves in the Caribbean and of workers in Britain. Michaela Alfred-Kamara, author of

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<sup>142</sup> Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom*, pp. 333-335.

<sup>143</sup> ISM, 'Learning Sessions at the International Slavery Museum, Understanding Transatlantic Slavery Handling Session', <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/learning/learning-sessions.aspx?id=303> (Accessed 10 September 2012); Nikki Spalding, 'Learning to Remember and Imagine Slavery: The Pedagogies of Museum Field Trips in the Representation of 'Difficult' Histories', Douglas Hamilton, Kate Hodgson and Joel Quirk, *Slavery, Memory and Identity: National Representations and Global Legacies* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012), pp. 131-149; The Historical Association, *Teaching Emotive and Controversial History* 3-19, p. 20.

<sup>144</sup> Interview with Paul Khan, Deputy Director of Education, Communities and Visitors at National Museums Liverpool, 22 February 2011. See also ISM, 'My visit – tell us what you think', [http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/groups/my\\_visit.aspx](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/groups/my_visit.aspx) (No longer available).

<sup>145</sup> 'Audience Reports', *1807 Commemorated* (IPUP), <http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/audiences/reports/> (Accessed 10 September 2012).

<sup>146</sup> Michaela Alfred-Kamara, *Recovered Histories: Reawakening the Narratives of Enslavement, Resistance and the Fight for Freedom. Teaching Enslavement and its Legacies Across the Curriculum* (London: Anti-Slavery International, 2008), pp. 5-7.

*Recovered Histories*, recognises that the resource contains gaps and is particularly disappointed that there was not space to explore the development of Asian indentured labour following the abolition of slavery in the West Indies.<sup>147</sup>

However, the changes to the National Curriculum in 2008 only ‘incorporated six one-hour lessons on the rise and abolition of the British slave trade within History.’<sup>148</sup> It would be difficult to cover all that is contained within *Recovered Histories*’ ten themes within these six hours and that is why it is important that the packs’ themes are also linked to the Citizenship and Geography curricula. Linking the resource to multiple subjects, especially Citizenship which in 2008 was a Foundation level subject which all students had to study, ensured that the topic of slavery and abolition would reach a greater number of students than if it was only included in the History curriculum, which Nicholas Evans and Susan Schwarz estimate would only reach ‘one in three of all 13-14 year olds.’<sup>149</sup> The *Recovered Histories* resource, therefore, underlines both the potential impact that revising the history schools present could give to overcoming the relational legacies of transatlantic slavery, and the difficulties of such an endeavour in a crowded school curriculum.<sup>150</sup>

The Leeds Transformation Project’s *African Achievements, Liberation and Aspirations* is an interesting resource, representing a West Indian community view of transatlantic slavery and its legacy. Like other resources and the museums in 2007, *African Achievements* emphasises African agency and states that ‘enslaved Africans were the protagonists of their own liberation, achievements and aspirations.’ This narrative of African agency is motivated by present-day concerns. The resource argues that ‘Educationalists realise that only if the true story of the African slave trade is taught, can its impacts and legacies on our world today begin to be understood; particularly amongst our young people, raising awareness that unfortunately enslavement is unfinished business and contemporary forms exist today.’<sup>151</sup> The pack develops five themes: ‘Before the Trans-Atlantic African Slave Trade’, ‘Trans-Atlantic and Trans-Saharan Enslavement’, ‘Rebellion, Resistance and Abolition’, ‘Legacies of the

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<sup>147</sup> Interview with Michaela Alfred-Kamara.

<sup>148</sup> Evans and Schwarz, ‘Pedagogical Responses’, p. 121.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, p. 121.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*., pp. 121-122.

<sup>151</sup> Hylton, Saluka and Wittleton, *African Achievements*, p. v.

Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade’ and ‘Human Rights.’<sup>152</sup> Reflecting the Pan-African historiography utilised by reparations advocates, the resource argues:

The trans-Atlantic African slave trade was an atrocity from which the world has not yet recovered. Between 1441 and 1867, millions of enslaved Africans were shipped westwards across the ocean in unimaginable cruel conditions to suffer further lives of degradation, brutality and enslavement. The devastation suffered physically, mentally and emotionally by African people is morally wrong. The legacy of slavery lives on in the veins of African descendants today. This is a fact that needs to be understood by all peoples. This Curriculum Pack will play its part in its attempt to help that process of understanding, beginning with our young people in schools today. In the creative learning environment of a classroom, an effective teacher will do something to open the eyes of every student and at best bring about some empathetic understanding.<sup>153</sup>

Unfortunately, in seeking to counter traditional Eurocentric historiography, *African Achievements* presents a history that is overly simplistic. It claims that ‘the trans-Saharan slave trade was not established on grounds of ‘race’ like the trans-Atlantic slave; it was purely economic.’<sup>154</sup> It argues that all present-day problems within Africa and the African diaspora can be traced to either transatlantic slavery or European racism. African poverty is purported to result from Europeans viewing Africans as ‘nonessential and apparently dispensable.’ It claims that ‘The apparent breakdown of the Black family in today’s society can be attributed to the Trans-Atlantic Slave period, another horrific legacy.’<sup>155</sup> These statements overlook wider contexts of labour exploitation and inequality within Britain and fail to acknowledge how the Arab slave trade networks in Africa also used racial justifications to legitimise black African enslavement, with well-documented legacies in modern slavery in Mauritania.<sup>156</sup> By overlooking these wider historical and present-day contexts, *African Achievements* places too much blame for the transatlantic slave trade and Africa’s present-day problems on Europeans. This resource could, therefore, be divisive rather than

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<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. v.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. viii.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

<sup>156</sup> Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 80-120; Humphrey J. Fisher, *Slavery in the History of Muslim Black Africa* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), The curse of Ham as justification for black people’s enslavement in Islam, pp. 26-27, racial discrimination in Mauritania, p. 64, and colour hierarchies within Muslim slave systems, pp. 195-197; Jok Madut Jok, *Sudan: Race, Religion and Violence* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007); Galy Kadir Abdelkader and Moussa Znagaou, *Wahaya: Domestic and sexual slavery in Niger* (Anti-Slavery International and Association Timidria, 2012).

reconciliatory, and the potential reparative impact of its promotion of previously overlooked Western Africa's cultural and economic achievements undermined.

The new museum galleries and educational resources developed for 2007 and the introduction of slavery and abolition to the National Curriculum were largely successful in empowering previously suppressed African and African Caribbean perspectives.<sup>157</sup> For Ruth Fisher, USI project manager from 2007, the inclusion of formerly overlooked events and perspectives is a matter of personal importance. Living in London, and of African Caribbean and Canadian heritage, Fisher feels that her own school education was Eurocentric and that this denied her knowledge of who she was. She was devalued in comparison to those students whose history and ancestry was upheld, examined and valued. Fisher believes that African Caribbean students in Britain should know their history and the contribution people like them have made to British history and development.<sup>158</sup> The integration of the African and African Caribbean historical experience and historical interpretation reflects part of what Esther Stanford calls 'holistic reparation.'<sup>159</sup> Whilst most new museum galleries and educational resources were not presented as acts of reparation, those involved viewed their work as correcting biases in how Britain remembered the history of slavery and abolition. These developments can, therefore, be seen as offering a potential reparative impact within the framework of the Intergeneration Model outlined in Chapter One.

### **A Transformative Impact?**

Prime Minister Gordon Brown hailed the opening of the ISM as 'bringing the story of slavery "into the mainstream of our cultural and historical understanding."<sup>160</sup> Oldfield argues that the developments surrounding 2007 have significant long-term potential impact and that: 'bodies like the HLF, working in co-operation with the museums, archives and community groups, have dramatically reshaped representations of British

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<sup>157</sup> Understanding Slavery, *Unlocking Perceptions*.

<sup>158</sup> Ruth Fisher, Interview with Ruth Fisher and Anna Salaman.

<sup>159</sup> Interview with Esther Stanford.

<sup>160</sup> Number 10 Government Press Release, 'Gordon Brown hails UK's first slavery museum' (23 August 2007), [www.Number10.gov.uk](http://www.Number10.gov.uk) (Accessed 20 April 2008).



transatlantic slavery . . . in doing so, they have forced Britons to look again at the paradoxes embedded in national histories that first enslaved and then liberated persons of African descent.’<sup>161</sup> Wood, however, dismisses the idea that as a nation ‘we have moved on’ and argues that ‘if you stand back and look at the bigger map of popular cultural responses to Atlantic slavery . . . the original myths in which the emancipation moment of 1807 was enshrined . . . for the most part remained, and remain, in place.’<sup>162</sup> Whilst this arguably encapsulates many of the popular public commemorative events, the reform of the National Curriculum and the revision of the historical narrative presented in museums do have a reparative potential as they could, overtime, contribute to a process of attitudinal and relational repair.

The Equiano Society’s Arthur Torrington and historian and consultant Angelina Osborne fear that the momentum witnessed in 2007 has been squandered.<sup>163</sup> Torrington feels that the interest in slavery has passed with the Bicentenary and highlights how it has been very difficult to secure funding and political support for a memorial to the enslaved in Hyde Park; in contrast a memorial to Princess Diana was quickly erected. Torrington also highlights apathy among politicians, typified by Conservative Boris Johnson who, since becoming Mayor of London in 2008, has slashed funding for London’s Black History Month in favour of America Day (to promote transatlantic links and encourage US tourists to visit London).<sup>164</sup> In Liverpool, campaigners from the city’s black community highlight how, while apologising for slavery in 1999 and annually marking International Slavery Remembrance Day, the city has contradicted these public statements by withdrawing funding for the Charles Wootton Centre in 2000. This centre provided non-mainstream education for many black Liverpoolians and also ran a newspaper that was highly political and challenged council policies.<sup>165</sup> The transitory nature of Bristol’s Bicentenary commemorations

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<sup>161</sup> Oldfield, ‘Repairing Historical Wrongs’, p. 253.

<sup>162</sup> Wood, ‘Significant Silence’, p. 187.

<sup>163</sup> Interview with Angelina Osborne, former freelance consultant with Anti-Slavery International and PhD student at WISE, 10 October 2011; Interview with Arthur Torrington.

<sup>164</sup> Interview with Arthur Torrington; Lester Holloway, ‘Boris Johnson – a catalogue of failure’, *Lee Jasper Official Blog* (1 November 2011), <http://leejasper.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/boris-johnson-catalogue-of-failure-by.html> (Accessed 11 September 2012).

<sup>165</sup> Discussions at the conference ‘Liverpool Black Atlantic’ at the International Slavery Museum, 29 May 2012. Discussions followed a presentation by Myrna Juarez, a city councillor and former student at the Charles Wootton Centre. The centre is named after Charles Wootton, a black man who was killed by a white mob in Liverpool in 1919.

have also been criticised: 'As Hilary Banks of the Consortium of Black Groups in Bristol put it . . . "Just like the Crack cocaine in our community, Abolition/Wilberforce 2007 is a short term hit with a short term high!"'<sup>166</sup>

Many of these criticisms are valid. However, the revision of how transatlantic slavery is taught in schools and portrayed in museums has long-term reparative potential. Evans and Schwarz emphasise the reparative potential of the introduction of slavery and abolition into the National Curriculum by highlighting the launch of the 'Who Do We Think We Are' (WDWTWA) Initiative in 2008.<sup>167</sup> WDWTWA focused on the idea of national identity and diversity and provided lessons on individuals and groups who have often been forgotten from the national memory: Muslim Tommies focuses on the role of Muslim Indian troops on the Western Front, which 'means British Muslim pupils can see people of their faith represented in the history curriculum and other pupils are made more aware of that identity and its contribution to British identity as a whole.'<sup>168</sup> Evans and Schwarz caution, however, that as only one in three students are likely to study slavery and abolition in KS3 History, the potential impact of such resources is curtailed. Furthermore, despite new resources and CPD, teachers remain undertrained and ill-informed to teach transatlantic slavery and Evans and Schwarz argue transatlantic slavery and abolition should be covered in teacher training.<sup>169</sup> It appears unlikely that this will happen.

2010 witnessed the election of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition with the Conservatives as the senior partner. Conservatives had opposed many of the New Labour educational reforms discussed earlier. Boris Johnson, former Conservative Shadow Minister for Education, commented in 2006 that Citizenship and the promotion of community cohesion meant the 'education establishment has cowed to the doctrines of multiculturalism and . . . deprecated all the institutions and symbols that unite the country.'<sup>170</sup> Since 2010, Conservative Education Secretary,

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<sup>166</sup> Dresser, 'Remembering Slavery and Abolition in Bristol', p. 234.

<sup>167</sup> Evans and Schwarz, 'Pedagogical Responses', pp. 121-126.

<sup>168</sup> Andrew Wrenn, 'Introduction, Muslim Tommies', *The Historical Association* (3 May 2011), [http://www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary\\_resource\\_4063,4129\\_11.html](http://www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary_resource_4063,4129_11.html) (Accessed 28 January 2013).

<sup>169</sup> Evans and Schwarz, 'Pedagogical Responses', p. 121.

<sup>170</sup> Boris Johnson comments in response to the announcement of Ajegbo's Curriculum Review quoted in Paul O'Hare and Oonagh Gay, *The Political Process and Citizenship Education* (London: Parliament and

Michael Gove, has sought to lessen 'the promotion of community cohesion' as an Ofsted criterion for evaluating schools.<sup>171</sup> Further, in the delayed curriculum review (now expected in 2014) it is likely that Citizenship will lose its foundation subject status and the History curriculum will be radically rewritten in a return to traditional and inward looking history of the British Isles.<sup>172</sup>

Gove has been highly critical of what he views as the dumbing-down of the History curriculum by its discussion of opinions and interpretations instead of chronological 'narrative' and 'facts'.<sup>173</sup> The Education Secretary has thus managed both to misunderstand the discipline of history and to advocate a history curriculum that focuses on lower cognitive skills (rote learning) rather than the critical evaluation of differing arguments and the creation of one's own opinions and arguments. For support, Gove has looked to popular historians, Professors Niall Ferguson and Simon Schama.<sup>174</sup> It is likely that the new curriculum will be heavily influenced by Sean Lang (a former history teacher; senior lecturer at Anglia Ruskin University; advisor on history education to the Conservative Party when in opposition; and currently an advisor to David Willetts, Minister of State for Universities) and Cambridge Assessment's 'Better History Curriculum Group'.<sup>175</sup>

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Constitution Centre, 17 August 2006), [www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN04125.pdf](http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN04125.pdf) (Accessed 19 December 2012), p. 26.

<sup>171</sup> Michael Gove, 'What is Education For? A speech by Michael Gove MP to the RSA', *The Royal Society for the encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce* (30 June 2009), pp. 9-12, [http://www.thersa.org/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/213021/Gove-speech-to-RSA.pdf](http://www.thersa.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/213021/Gove-speech-to-RSA.pdf) (Accessed 22 May 2012); Department for Education, 'Community Cohesion: Freedom of Information disclosure', *Department of Education* (17 May 2011), <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/foi/disclosuresaboutchildrenyoungpeoplefamilies/a0077108/community-cohesion> (Accessed 22 May 2012).

<sup>172</sup> Michael Gove, 'Review of the National Curriculum in England', *DfE* (19 December 2011), <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum/a00201093/review-of-the-national-curriculum-in-england> (Accessed 11 September 2012). Revision of the National Curriculum likely to follow the suggestions of Tim Oates, Mary James, Andrew Pollard and Dylan William, *The Framework for the National Curriculum: A report by the Expert Panel for the National Curriculum review* (London: DfE, 2011).

<sup>173</sup> Gove, *What is Education For?*, pp. 9-12.

<sup>174</sup> Charlotte Higgins, 'Rightwing historian Niall Ferguson given school curriculum role', *The Guardian* (30 May 2010), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/may/30/niall-ferguson-school-curriculum-role> (Accessed 11 September 2012).

<sup>175</sup> The Better History Group, 'Better History Group unveils proposals for radical shake up of school history curriculum' (Anglia University, 26 November 2010), [http://www.anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/news/better\\_history\\_group.html](http://www.anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/news/better_history_group.html); Cambridge Assessment,

On 14 October 2010 the Better History Group presented a draft new curriculum at the 'Building a Better History Curriculum' conference. Lang argued that Citizenship was a waste of money and that initiatives including Every Child Matters have led to schools discouraging students from taking history in favour of 'easier' subjects.<sup>176</sup> Such comments reflect a widespread right-wing concern that history is becoming less popular at GCSE and should become compulsory up to 16.<sup>177</sup> To minimise opposition, the Better History Group suggests that 'History take on some of the more specifically political aspects of the citizenship curriculum' within the proposed curriculum's themes of Government, Society and Belief.<sup>178</sup> However, the curriculum Lang proposes turns the history curriculum further inward, arguing that 'If we really want to reawaken a sense of British identity, then it is time to bring back more British history.'<sup>179</sup>

The proposed curriculum would cover British history from Roman times to the twentieth century over the course a child's education. Slavery is retained within the curriculum for year 9 students (age 14). Students would ask: 'Why did it take so long to abolish slavery in the British Empire?'; 'What part did Britain play in combating the slave trade after abolition?'; 'How did British people make money out of African slavery?' and; 'Why did Africans, slave owners and abolitionists have such different ideas about equality?'<sup>180</sup> These questions suggest that transatlantic slavery would be studied from British perspectives and that African agency would recede in importance. Furthermore, in this new curriculum each topic would only receive 'two to three lessons teaching,' as opposed to the present system of term length modules and

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'Building a Better History Curriculum (11-19)', *Cambridge Assessment*,

[http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/Better\\_History](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/Better_History) (Accessed 11 September 2012).

<sup>176</sup> Sean Lang, comments made during a speech at 'Building a Better History Curriculum' conference.

<sup>177</sup> Graeme Paton, 'Children 'forced to drop history at 14'', *The Telegraph* (14 October 2010), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/8064444/Schoolchildren-forced-to-drop-history-at-14.html>; Laura Clark, '14-year-olds should be denied choice of school subjects as they drop academic disciplines for 'trivial' reasons', (14 October 2010), <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1320555/14-year-olds-denied-choice-school-subjects-14-favour.html> (Accessed 22 May 2012).

<sup>178</sup> History Practitioners' Advisory Team, *A proposed History Curriculum 11-16, Appendix*, p. 21.

<sup>179</sup> Mike Baker, 'How about some British History?', *BBC News* (27 January 2007), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6303901.stm>, in Sean Lang, *Better History: a radical manifesto for change. A submission to the Secretary of State for Education from the Better History Group* (Cambridge: Anglia Ruskin University, 2010), p. 18.

<sup>180</sup> History Practitioners' Advisory Team, *A proposed History Curriculum 11-16, Appendix* (May 2007), [http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/187373\\_A\\_proposed\\_History\\_Curriculum\\_11-16\\_History\\_Practitioners\\_Advisory\\_Team\\_May\\_2007.pdf](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/187373_A_proposed_History_Curriculum_11-16_History_Practitioners_Advisory_Team_May_2007.pdf) (Accessed 11 September 2012), p. 26.

minimum of six hours for the study of slavery and abolition. It is unlikely that in such a short time the wider context and legacy of transatlantic slavery could be explored.<sup>181</sup>

The authors of the 'Better History Curriculum' recognise that 'An understanding of Britain's distinctive history is crucial to any sense of national identity and shared values.'<sup>182</sup> The report to the Education Secretary explains: 'It should be stressed that our call for more teaching of British history does NOT preclude teaching the history of other countries; on the other hand it does mean paying much greater attention than is currently the case to the history of other parts of the United Kingdom.'<sup>183</sup> The proposed curriculum seeks to emphasise shared values of 'a sense of liberty, freedom of expression and tolerance' yet, as discussed in Chapter Two, the development of these ideas in Britain is tied to the development of European enlightenment, revolutions in Haiti and South America, and African abolitionists campaigning in Britain.<sup>184</sup> The proposed curriculum would again exclude those students whose ancestry is not limited to the British Isles and suggest to them and their fellow students that they are less British. When questioned about the importance of the history curriculum including the ancestry of black and minority ethnic British students, Conservative MP Chris Skidmore was dismissive, commenting only that that debate seemed to happen every year in his home town of Bristol, without any benefit.<sup>185</sup>

The proposed changes to the History Curriculum in *The National Curriculum in England: Framework document for consultation*, published in February 2013, show a clear influence of the Better History Group's proposals.<sup>186</sup> Starting in KS2 and lasting through KS3, students would study a chronology of British history and its links with the world from the Stone Age and 'Roman conquest and rule' up to the end of the Cold War and fall of the Berlin Wall. Importantly, 'the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, the role of Olaudah Equiano and free slaves' remains in the KS3 section, 'The development of the modern nation,' which covers the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Within this section, developing empire is tied to industrialisation, European

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<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>183</sup> Lang, *Better History: a radical manifesto for change*, p. 6.

<sup>184</sup> History Practitioners' Advisory Team, *A proposed History Curriculum 11-16, Appendix*, p. 22.

<sup>185</sup> Chris Skidmore was responding to a question I posed following his address to the conference.

<sup>186</sup> *The National Curriculum in England: Framework document for consultation* (London: DfE, February 2013), pp. 165-171.

revolutions, the Peterloo massacre and the later development of trade unionism, Parliamentary Reform Acts and the changing role of women including Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole.<sup>187</sup>

The introduction of slavery and abolition to the National Curriculum in 2008 and the educational resource created to help teach this new module, saw previously overlooked aspects of this history and interpretative perspectives given new prominence in the national memory, potentially contributing to a process of relational repair. Unfortunately, the National Curriculum is subject to political influence and Conservative reforms have threatened the potential impact of these revisions. Significant criticisms have been presented to the Conservatives' proposed revision and return to a 1950s style curriculum. The curriculum under consultation since February 2013 has reflected some of these criticisms. For instance, Mary Seacole has not been removed as had been suggested.<sup>188</sup> Indeed, it could be argued that, if taught well, this history curriculum ties the history of British transatlantic slavery into wider British history better than the resources developed during 2007. However, the chronological approach of the history curriculum does also suggest that topics will be covered in much less depth than was previously possible, limiting the ability of teachers to make these connections. Furthermore, there has been no effort to provide teachers with the necessary training and support they need to teach the history of transatlantic slavery. It is, therefore, likely that nuanced, sensitive and difficult histories, such as transatlantic slavery, will be avoided by all but the most motivated teachers.

## **Conclusion**

The developments in the British museum and educational sectors around the 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade have provided a case study by which to interrogate the Intergenerational Model outlined in Chapter One. This Chapter has explored how new museum galleries and educational resources sought to

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<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>188</sup> Kevin Rawlinson, 'Coalition set to clash over removal of 'greatest black Briton' Mary Seacole from National Curriculum', *The Independent* (29 January 2013), <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/coalition-set-to-clash-over-removal-of-greatest-black-briton-mary-seacole-from-national-curriculum-8471631.html> (Accessed 29 January 2013).

revise the traditional Eurocentric narratives and include, to a greater extent than before, the perspectives of the British African and African Caribbean community. The inclusion of previously excluded events and perspectives could alter how Britons understand the history of transatlantic slavery, its abolition and its legacy in present-day Britain. By bringing to the fore the experiences and positive contributions of Africans to Britain's economic development; the influence abolitionism had on the development of British democracy; and the historical presence of African people in Britain; it is possible that the conceptualisation of Britishness and its conflation with whiteness could be challenged and become more inclusive. Through such a process of revising attitudes towards race and national identity it is possible that the problematic race relations of present-day Britain could be improved. In the case of 2007, their reparative potential is further underlined by how this process of historical revision was also tied to the wider efforts of the community cohesion and active citizenship agendas, thus encouraging conceptualisation of British identity based upon shared values.

The empowerment of African and African Caribbean voices during 2007 can be seen as being part of a reparative process. Symbolically, their promotion testified to how these communities' perspectives on Britain's history of slavery and abolition are now considered equal to the perspectives of white British people. This marks a significant development in British society, and demonstrates how dialogue in academia and between campaigners and museums has resulted in a shifting historical understanding in the museum and education sectors and amongst some on the political left. The developments of 2007 can be seen as being part of a process of relational repair even though the new resources and galleries were not presented as acts of reparation and their designers did not tend to view them as such.

This Chapter, however, has criticised the new resources for failing to contextualise the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. In particular, this Chapter has argued that by excluding wider historical and present-day contexts – especially related to British industrial labour exploitation and issues of class – these galleries and resources have missed an opportunity to make wider insights into present-day British inequality and injustices, alienating some members of the white working class and

undermining the reparative potential of these initiatives. Addressing such issues could further increase the reparative potential of such initiatives.

The developments surrounding 2007 represent the embryonic stages of a reparative process of historical revision. This process is vulnerable to being overpowered by supporters of traditional Eurocentric historiography. Worryingly, the Conservative-led coalition and Education Secretary are ideologically opposed to the reforms introduced by the Labour Government which had the greatest potential for reparative impact, specifically the community cohesion agenda, the subject of Citizenship, and a history curriculum that dares to be critical of past national actions. This Chapter has demonstrated the potential impact that processes of historical truth telling could make, but also the challenges to implementing such a process.



## **Chapter Four – Confronting the Legacy of Slavery in the United States**

In 1903 W.E.B. Du Bois predicted in *The Souls of Black Folk* that:

The problem of the Twentieth century is the problem of the color-line, - the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea. It was a phase of this problem that caused the Civil War; and however much they who marched South and North in 1861 may have fixed on the technical points of union and local autonomy as a shibboleth, all nevertheless knew, as we know, that the question of Negro slavery was the real cause of the conflict.<sup>1</sup>

In this statement Du Bois encapsulates the contested nature of the history of slavery in the United States (US), in particular how slavery caused the Civil War and how memories of slavery are complicated by the contested memory of the Civil War. By using the phrase 'color-line,' Du Bois identifies how the continuing harm of slavery's legacy is relational, as racism defined all social and economic interaction between black and white people in the US. Furthermore, Du Bois highlights how US memory was a self-deceiving construct that justified this 'color-line.' A century later, David Blight lamented that the US still has to confront 'all the unfinished questions of healing and justice, of causes and consequences, of racial disharmony that still bedevil our society and our history.'<sup>2</sup>

This thesis has utilised theories of restorative justice to argue that schools and museums can, by confronting historical bias, correcting historical amnesias and incorporating previously excluded perspectives, help to revise attitudes, identities and relationships. This Chapter explores recent developments in museum and school historiography in the US to ask whether past Eurocentric historiography is being broadened to create a racially inclusive 'collective memory.' Studying the US offers a beneficial contrast to Britain. There is no national curriculum and private finance has a much greater role in museums and education. In the US there is, therefore, a greater historical narrative pluralism visible in museums and schools than in Britain and historical revision is a more fluid and uneven process.

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<sup>1</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Mineole, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1994), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> David W. Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory and the American Civil War* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), p. 280.

In order to advance this discussion, this Chapter first considers how race and slavery are central to the history of the US, but downplayed in the national creation myth and conceptualisation of American identity. This section considers events, such as the Revolutionary War, the Declaration of Independence and Constitution; the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation; and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s; and explores how, at the centre of these events, was often a battle between two competing conceptualisations of what the US was and who could be American. The history and legacy of slavery in the US is fraught with political baggage and historical grievances. Central is the North-South divide and the memory of the Civil War which continues to impact upon interpretations of slavery in both the North and South.<sup>3</sup>

The Chapter then examines the way in which national, northern and southern museums and educational bodies are revealing previously suppressed or forgotten aspects of the US history of slavery. This regional division of focus reflects both the decentralisation of US educational and museum policy and the geographical divisions within US history of slavery, the Civil War and Jim Crow. While it is beyond the scope of this Chapter to cover all the regionally specific developments, these variations offer a good insight into national contrasts and complexity. At the national level, the Chapter explores how Federal organisations such as the National Parks Service (NPS) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) shape wider national trends in historical revision. In the North, the Chapter focuses on how forgotten links to slavery in New York, Rhode Island, Cincinnati and Baltimore, are being revealed and how African Americans are increasingly taking ownership of history, telling 'their' truths and reshaping national memory. The investigation of the Southern historical narrative focuses on Virginia, and how organisations such as the Museum of the Confederacy (MoC) and Virginia Historical Society (VHS) are revising neo-Confederate Lost Cause historiography and promoting African American viewpoints.

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<sup>3</sup> Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 8.

## History and the Idea of America

A nation's historical memory helps to shape the formation of national identity and informs how a nation evaluates its society, the relationships within it and how it understands and evaluates its relations with other nations. This is why broadening the content and perspectives of national historical memory can potentially contribute to the repair of the legacy of transatlantic slavery. In the US national historical memory is perhaps even more important to national identity than most nations, as the US is a relatively young nation, formed in rebellion against Britain, against whom it had to quickly develop a rival and distinct identity. As Seymour Lipset describes, 'Born out of revolution, the United States is a country organized around an ideology . . . Americanism.'<sup>4</sup> This ideology of Americanism depends upon a historical memory that portrays the US as a beacon of hope to the world and the epitome of true democratic, egalitarian social and political freedoms.<sup>5</sup> The centrality of slavery to the history and wealth of the US challenges this self-conception. In seeking to marry the history of slavery to the ideals of freedom and hope, slavery has been subsumed into the theories of US Exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny, in which US progress and power are inevitable. In this narrative, abolition is seen as inevitable as slavery is seen as a legacy of the British (and European) society the US rejected.

Revolution against supposed British tyranny did not lead to abolition, except in the northern states. Rather the freedom of the white population was largely made possible by the enslavement of African Americans. Slavery provided the economic power to fight for and attain political independence in 1783.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, white supremacy provided the social bonds upon which to construct a new national identity as 'the creation of a black subclass enabled the poor to identify with and support the policies of the upper-class. And large landowners, with the safe economic advantage provided by their slaves, were willing to grant poor whites a larger role in the political

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<sup>4</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-edged Sword* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Exceptionalism in American History* (Chicago: Encounter Paperbacks, 1963), p. 17, 225.

<sup>6</sup> Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking, 2010), p. 68.

process.<sup>7</sup> As Michael Morrison summarises, ‘freedom existed as a symbol because the symbol of slavery existed.’<sup>8</sup>

The revolution entrenched the idea of the US as a white man’s country. The British had offered freedom to slaves if they fought for the Crown and had also blocked westward expansion into the territory of British allies, denying poor whites the opportunity for their own land. Therefore, in the Revolutionary War African American slaves and indigenous Americans were barriers to US independence and prosperity.<sup>9</sup>

For the new Republic slavery and westward expansion enabled economic growth.<sup>10</sup> The US banned the importation of slaves from Africa in 1808, but the US had a self-sustaining slave population and ‘Between the elections of Thomas Jefferson in 1800 and Abraham Lincoln in 1860, more than one million black people – slave and free – were forced’ south and west, mainly for cotton production.<sup>11</sup> This internal slave trade became ‘the largest enterprise in the South outside of the plantation itself, rivalling the transatlantic trade of centuries past.’<sup>12</sup> By 1860 there were 4 million slaves in the US, ‘estimated to be worth \$2 billion to \$4 billion.’<sup>13</sup> To many in the South, slavery was an economic necessity. White supremacy developed to justify and protect this economic system.<sup>14</sup>

Most US citizens are yet to realise the manifold debt America owes to its citizens of African and slave heritage. As seen in Chapter One, the issue of reparations is highly divisive with most white Americans opposed to the idea of apology or reparations for slavery, believing slavery to be consigned to the past with no

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<sup>7</sup> Derrick Bell, ‘White Superiority in America: Its Legal Legacy, Its Economic Costs’, *Villanova Law Review*, 33:5 (1988), p. 767.

<sup>8</sup> Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, p. 277; David R. Roediger, *How Race Survived US History: From Settlers and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon* (London: Verso, 2008), p. 43; Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1968), pp. 304-325, 335-341.

<sup>9</sup> Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, pp. 6-7; Roediger, *How Race Survived US History*, pp. 1-63; Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery Emancipation and Human Rights* (London: Verso, 2011), pp. 94-95, 131-144.

<sup>10</sup> Jordan, *White Over Black*, pp. 316-321; Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Cost of Economic Power* (Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2009), pp. 27-84.

<sup>11</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 100.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>13</sup> Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, p. 85.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

meaningful impact on present-day US society. Furthermore, it is hard for Americans, 'taught to revere the Founding Fathers as statesmen with exalted ideals, [to comprehend that] these men were earthbound and very much concerned with business and economic survival.'<sup>15</sup> However, it is undeniable that 'black rights have been sacrificed throughout the nation's history to further white interests.'<sup>16</sup> There is a moral duty to those victimised throughout the nation's past to acknowledge their mistreatment and their contribution to US development. Such acknowledgment could also contribute to a process of relational repair between black and white Americans today.

### Slavery and the Civil War

The memory of slavery in the US cannot be detached from the Civil War, the seeds of which were sown by the 'Framers [of the Constitution who] built a government that protected slavery at every turn.'<sup>17</sup> Despite the Constitutional Convention not mentioning slavery by name, the Three Fifths rule, which included disenfranchised slaves in weighting votes within the Electoral College, enabled the southern slave states to dominate the Presidency and Congress.<sup>18</sup> The 1803 Louisiana Purchase brought national tensions over slavery to the fore.<sup>19</sup>

While most Americans believed it was the nation's Manifest Destiny to expand westwards, they could not agree whether or not slavery should be allowed within these new territories. The 1820 Missouri compromise, despite being a 'struggle to secure stability in the American political system resulted paradoxically in further instability.'<sup>20</sup> Slave interests were powerful and engineered war with Mexico and the annexing of Texas, and 'what are now ... Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Nevada and New

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Bell, 'White Superiority in America: Its Legal Legacy, Its Economic Costs', p. 767.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Finkelman, 'The Root of the Problem: How the Proslavery Constitution Shaped American Race Relations', *Barry Law Review*, 4:1 (2003), p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-8; Paul Finkelman, 'The Proslavery Origins of the Electoral College', *Cardozo Law Review*, 23:4 (2002), p. 1155; Jordan, *White Over Black*, p. 322.

<sup>19</sup> Brian Holden Reid, *The Origins of the American Civil War* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1996), pp. 27-28.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45; Hugh Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 294.

Mexico.<sup>21</sup> The 1846 Wilmot Proviso sought to impose gradual abolition within states joining the Union; however, southern interests claimed the proposal violated 'states' rights.<sup>22</sup> The 1850 Compromise, like the 1820 Missouri Compromise, exacerbated tensions with an enhanced Fugitive Slave Act.<sup>23</sup> The 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act destroyed the last vestiges of the 1820 Missouri Compromise by allowing individual states to determine their slave status, prompting a proxy war between slave and free soil interests in accession states.<sup>24</sup> The 1857 Supreme Court Dred Scott Decision declared that Africans brought to America as slaves and their enslaved or free descendants were not US citizens, and that the Federal Government did not have the right to intervene in slavery.<sup>25</sup> This decision aimed to defuse the sectional contest over slavery, but destroyed the Missouri Compromise and became a central topic of the debates between presidential hopefuls Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln in 1858-1860.<sup>26</sup>

The election of Lincoln represented the reversal of the South's dominance of the Presidency and Congress, and introduced the possibility of the appointment of anti-slavery Supreme Court judges.<sup>27</sup> This threat prompted southern secession and the Civil War. As future Confederate President Jefferson Davis articulated to Republican colleagues on leaving Washington D.C.: "your platform . . . denies us equality. Your votes refuse to recognise our domestic institutions . . . [and] our property which was guaranteed by the Constitution. You refuse us that equality without which we should be degraded if we remain in the Union."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, p. 297.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 298-299.

<sup>23</sup> Hugh Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 105.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>25</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, p. 307; Paul Finkleman, 'Scott V. Stanford: The Court's Most Dreadful Case and How It Changed History', *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, 82:3 (2007), pp. 3-5.

<sup>26</sup> Finkleman, 'Scott V. Stanford', pp. 4, 12-13, 38, 43-48; Reid, *The Origins of the American Civil War*, p. 167.

<sup>27</sup> Reid, *The Origins of the American Civil War*, pp. 244-245; Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, pp. 256-257.

<sup>28</sup> Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, p. 254.

In going to war Lincoln primarily sought to preserve the Union.<sup>29</sup> Lincoln disliked slavery, but abolition was not a war aim until it became clear how valuable African Americans were to the Union war effort. The constitutional right of states to secede has proven a contentious topic – neo-Confederates still insist the war be referred to as the ‘War Between the States’ or the ‘War of States’ Rights’.<sup>30</sup> A legacy of this interpretation includes paranoia about the dangers of ‘big government’ and complaints that the Federal Government’s integration of segregated schools violated states’ rights and southern social values.<sup>31</sup> It is clear that the slavery, the Civil War and race continue to cast a long shadow on US society.

### A War Won, A Peace Lost. Racism after Slavery

In the Civil War both sides claimed to be the true heirs of the Founding Fathers.<sup>32</sup> Slavery was the dividing line between two Americas.<sup>33</sup> As Morrison explains:

Northerners saw slavery and what they saw as the civilisation that it had produced as un-American, not following from the revolutionary principles. Southerners believed that what they saw as the capitalist urban society of the North did not represent the true America. Northern values were not harmonious with the national character as shaped by the Revolution. Considered from the voter’s perspective, the sectional conflict was not the North versus South. It was America versus the South, or America versus the North. The ideals and standards of the Revolution shaped the perceptions

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<sup>29</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, pp. 315-329; James W. Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (London: The New Press, 2007), pp. 139-142.

<sup>30</sup> Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War*, p. 104; Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, p. 141; Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 1999), pp. 26, 36-37; John Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag: America’s Most Embattled Emblem* (Cambridge MA.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> Will Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 81; Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*, pp. 66-70, 152-154; Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag*, pp. 132-160; Bruce Levine, ‘In Search of a Usable Past: Neo-Confederates and Black Confederates’, James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 194.

<sup>32</sup> Levine, ‘In Search of a Usable Past’, p. 193; Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, pp. 267-276; Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era*, pp. 110-113; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholder’s World View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 11-122.

and actions of both sides. The meaning of freedom and democracy was at stake in this battle over the essence of the American character.<sup>34</sup>

This ideological battle has continued. As Jim Cullen notes, 'Officially the Civil War ended in 1865, but culturally, it was just beginning.'<sup>35</sup> Following the war, Neo-Confederates successfully cultivated the historical narrative of the Lost Cause; that the Confederate cause was states' rights and the image of a southern society of gentlemen planters who protected their women and benevolently treated their slaves as their children (ignoring that they often were).<sup>36</sup> Historical memory formation enabled the South to win the peace despite losing the war.

Northern troops occupied the South in 1865 during Reconstruction.<sup>37</sup> The 1875 Civil Rights Act enfranchised African American men and some African Americans attained political office across the South and at Federal level.<sup>38</sup> However, the rights of African Americans in the South were abandoned by the North in order to assist reconciliation between the white Americans from both North and South.<sup>39</sup> This reconciliation was facilitated by the exclusion of African Americans from full citizenship, underlining the ubiquity of racism in the US at this time.<sup>40</sup>

Whites in the northern states feared an influx of blacks escaping the South following Emancipation, depressing wages for the white working class. The influx never occurred, as African Americans wanted rights to the land they had worked as slaves and which 'their "fathers" bones were laid upon.'<sup>41</sup> Former slave owners also sought to retain control over their former slaves, and the Federal Government acquiesced in the restriction of African American rights to help southern economic recovery. With the 'Hayes-Tilden agreement of 1877, federal troops were withdrawn from southern

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<sup>34</sup> Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, p. 278.

<sup>35</sup> Jim Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture: A Reusable Past* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), p. 16.

<sup>36</sup> Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era*, pp. 104-108; Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture*, pp. 1-37; Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 120-152; Micki McElya, *Clinging to Mammy: the Faithful Slave in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 8-9.

<sup>37</sup> Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: 1863-1877* (New York: Harper Row, 1988).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 364-379.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 556; Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era*, p. 113; Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 120-152, 191-210.

<sup>40</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 132.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.



capitals and federal supervision of southern elections ended.<sup>42</sup> In 1883 the Supreme Court overturned the 1875 Civil Rights Act.<sup>43</sup> Finally, in 1896 *Plessey versus Ferguson* accepted the principle of separate but equal, paving the way for Jim Crow.<sup>44</sup>

As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, southern states cemented the disenfranchisement of African Americans and accelerated legal segregation.<sup>45</sup> Share cropping developed into a system of debt bondage that entrapped the majority of the former slave population. Southern legislatures effectively re-enslaved African Americans as ‘false pretence laws . . . criminalized the right of breaking off a contract’ and removed the ‘right to quit,’ and ‘Vagrancy laws’ provided the state with convict labour to lease to private land, mine and factory owners. Thus, ‘at the end of the nineteenth century, according to one estimate, convict-leasing ensnared more than one-third of black agricultural workers in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi at one time or another.’<sup>46</sup> In Georgia in 1930: ‘Of 1.1 million African Americans in the state that year, approximately half lived under the direct control and force of whites – unable to move or seek employment elsewhere under the threat of doing so would lead to the dreaded chain gang.’<sup>47</sup>

Like slavery, the use and threat of violence was used to ‘secure racial subordination.’<sup>48</sup> As David Lyons explains:

No longer valuable private property, blacks could be killed with impunity. . . . Anti-lynching legislation, frequently proposed, never survived in Congress. The United States had officially committed itself to civil and political rights for blacks, but it failed to enforce those rights. It made a promise that it did not keep. African Americans were betrayed, and a brutal white supremacist regime was allowed to replace chattel slavery.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> David Lyons, ‘Corrective Justice, Equal Opportunity, and the Legacy of Slavery and Jim Crow’, *Boston University Law Review*, 84:5 (2004), p. 1388.

<sup>43</sup> Mitch Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Celebrations, 1808-1915* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), p. 187.

<sup>44</sup> Michael J. Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 8-60.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>46</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 143.

<sup>47</sup> Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009), p. 371.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 198-200.

<sup>49</sup> Lyons, ‘Corrective Justice, Equal Opportunity, and the Legacy of Slavery and Jim Crow’, p. 1389.

In the North, racism curtailed African American employment opportunities. Consequently, 'In 1910, nearly half of black men in Chicago worked in four occupations – janitor, porter, servant, or waiter – and some two-thirds of employed black women labored as cooks, laundresses, maids, and other domestic servants.'<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, the North offered greater freedom and African American political and social organisations were able to develop for the minority of African Americans that lived there.<sup>51</sup>

The failure of Reconstruction constitutes a deliberate and fought-for victory for Confederate interests. As defeat became inevitable, Confederate leaders vowed that slavery would end on their terms: 'Confederate Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin' vowed that "“ultimate emancipation” would come to southern blacks only after they had passed through “an intermediate state of serfage or peonage” of unspecified duration.'<sup>52</sup> Following the war Confederate apologists, such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), built on pre-war 'claims that slavery had served a civilising function for people of African descent' and promoted the image of the faithful slave and Mammy to discourage northern intervention in southern social practices.<sup>53</sup>

Confederate apologists built this narrative into the memorial landscape of the US, foremost at Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia and the Confederate memorial at the Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>54</sup> Later the idea of Mammy was used to sell Aunt Jemima pancakes, linking an 'African American's place in modern life with servility, obedience, and joviality.'<sup>55</sup> The romanticised image of the South popular in antebellum and Reconstruction era literature was perpetuated in the twentieth century by films such as *Gone with the Wind* and *The Birth of a Nation*, which celebrated the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) and contributed to a resurgence in the KKK's membership and in lynching.<sup>56</sup> Tellingly, in the 1920s Congress simultaneously

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<sup>50</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 177.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>52</sup> Levine, 'In Search of a Usable Past', pp. 209-210.

<sup>53</sup> McElya, *Clinging to Mammy*, p. 143; Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 191-210.

<sup>54</sup> McElya, *Clinging to Mammy*, pp. 130-131.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture*, pp. 4-5, 19-20, 28-31; Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture*, pp. 65-107; Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 128, 272; Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, pp. 21, 164-169.

considered erecting a Monument to Mammy on the Washington D.C. Mall whilst rejecting Federal anti-lynching legislation.<sup>57</sup>

At the fiftieth anniversary of Gettysburg the valour of white soldiers from North and South was celebrated – the cause of war was forgotten and African Americans were excluded.<sup>58</sup> This racist reconciliation necessitated forgetting the contribution of slavery to US economic development as well as the contribution of African Americans to the Union war effort as spies, soldiers, labourers and saboteurs. This selective memory caused the Federal Government to refuse to consider Congressman Walter R. Vaughan's 1890 bill 'premised on the idea that former slaves, like Union and Confederate soldiers, deserved a pension.'<sup>59</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt similarly rejected a 1934 petition for slave pensions, turning down perhaps the last opportunity to pay compensation to those who had directly experienced slavery in the US.<sup>60</sup>

African Americans such as Frederick Douglass led the campaign against the Lost Cause narrative and fought to maintain African American memories of slavery against those who argued that the past is best forgotten.<sup>61</sup> Du Bois continued this battle into the twentieth century, linking this historical understanding of slavery to the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-twentieth century.<sup>62</sup> This process of community identity and memory construction itself had pre-Civil War origins in the form of slave communities and free black communities, schools, churches and freedom festivals.<sup>63</sup> Political and campaigning bodies such as Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Agency and the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP, co-founded by Du Bois in 1909), helped further develop both a US and an international Pan-African identity. Alongside African American universities these organisations

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<sup>57</sup> McElya, *Clinging to Mammy*, pp. 116-159.

<sup>58</sup> Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom*, p. 155.

<sup>59</sup> Alfred L. Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 34.

<sup>60</sup> David W. Blight, 'If You Don't Tell It Like It Was, It Can Never Be as It Ought to Be', James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), pp. 31-32; Roy L. Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations* (London: University of California Press, 2004), p. 10.

<sup>61</sup> Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 93-119; Blight, 'If You Don't Tell It Like It Was', pp. 27-29.

<sup>62</sup> Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>63</sup> Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom*; James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Black Bostonians: Family life and struggle in the Antebellum North* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979).

campaigned for rights for African Americans and aided resistance to European colonialism.<sup>64</sup>

### The Return of Civil Rights

The World Wars, especially WWII, 'provided new leverage for civil rights advocates.'<sup>65</sup> The March on Washington and the Double V campaign prepared the ground for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>66</sup> The war prompted Roosevelt to act against the worst abuses of the convict labour systems due to their potential propaganda value to America's enemies.<sup>67</sup> Wartime service motivated many African Americans not to submit to racism and discrimination, while the Holocaust revealed to many white servicemen the horrors of unrestrained racism.<sup>68</sup> Important technological advances had also reduced the labour requirements of cotton cultivation, undermining the economic rationale of slavery and sharecropping.<sup>69</sup> Significantly, 'by 1950 NAACP boasted a winning record of well over 90 percent in the high court.'<sup>70</sup> Despite this, the US was still highly racist, and post-WWII Government policies, including the GI Bill which financed college education and suburban homeownership for ex-servicemen and 'red-lining,' which identified areas for mortgage assistance, discriminated against African Americans and aided white flight and the development of urban ghettos.<sup>71</sup>

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s utilised non-violent protest, sit-ins, boycotts and freedom rides, to shame the US into reform.<sup>72</sup> In the television age, northerners could no longer ignore southern practices, especially as these practices became an international embarrassment that undermined the US's Cold War

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<sup>64</sup> Jason C. Parker, *Brothers Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, pp. 619-620.

<sup>65</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 155, 185.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>67</sup> Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, pp. 377-382.

<sup>68</sup> Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*, pp. 18-182.

<sup>69</sup> Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, p. 361.

<sup>70</sup> Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*, p.173.

<sup>71</sup> George Lipsitz, 'The Passive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the "White" Problem in American Studies', *American Quarterly*, 47:3 (1995), pp. 396-387; Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 190; Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, pp. 67-70

<sup>72</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, pp. 626-644.

aims.<sup>73</sup> The NAACP understood this and during 1946-47 'embarrassed the Truman administration by filing petitions with the United Nations that called for investigations and redress for human rights violations in the South.'<sup>74</sup>

In 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled segregated schools unconstitutional, paving the way for the end of segregation through the courts; but direct action, possibly inspired by the advance of decolonisation in Africa, forced the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 1965 Voting Rights Act and Affirmative Action and the War on Poverty under President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society.<sup>75</sup> Whilst Civil Rights legislation addressed the institutional problems of the South, Great Society programmes aimed to raise living standards and promote equality.<sup>76</sup> As Johnson explained: "You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains, and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line, and then say, "You are free to compete with all the others"."<sup>77</sup>

Civil Rights victories enabled a black middle class to develop by the end of the 1960s. However, by:

the late 1960s, there was frustration that change was not happening fast enough. The assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King in 1968 and the riots that followed, as well as the election of Richard Nixon later that year, signalled the declining confidence in the Civil Rights Movement and the idea of integration. Ideas that emphasized not integration but empowerment of the black community were growing in popularity.<sup>78</sup>

The development of black power politics alienated many white supporters of civil rights.<sup>79</sup> Consequently, Affirmative Action and the War on Poverty were gradually eroded during the Nixon and Reagan administrations by appeals to race blindness and equal opportunity. Improvement to the socioeconomic position of African Americans

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 633.

<sup>74</sup> Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*, pp. 183.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 368-377; Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 36.

<sup>76</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, p. 639.

<sup>77</sup> Ali Rattansi, *Racism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 148.

<sup>78</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 38.

<sup>79</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, pp. 643-644.

was also stalled by deindustrialisation and 'between 1975 and 1980, black unemployment increased by 200,000.'<sup>80</sup>

As with slavery, African American poverty has been interpreted by whites as a reflection of African American failings (the stereotype of the African American violent criminal and welfare queen) and not the failings of US society.<sup>81</sup> Consequently, Lyons notes:

Nutritional, educational, medical, employment, and housing programs that were developed in the 1960s faced cutbacks, which were severe by the 1980s and are worse today. New construction of affordable public housing has virtually ceased. Federal subsidies for low-income families to rent private housing have decreased. CETA programs have ended. Eligibility for food stamps has been restricted. AFDC has been terminated; its replacement, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, sets lifetime limits on receipt of aid, requires more work from mothers of young children, and denies four-year college study as a means to improved employment.<sup>82</sup>

The conservative reforms of Nixon and Reagan affected all poor Americans and caused social mobility to decline from the 1970s onwards.<sup>83</sup> With deindustrialisation education has increasingly determined an individual's life chances; however, due to the poverty of inner city school systems, the chances of achieving the grades to gain access to college are less for those from poorer backgrounds.<sup>84</sup> Whilst inequality has increased across the whole nation, African Americans have been disproportionately harmed due to being disproportionately poor.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter One, racial prejudice continues to influence US policing, healthcare provision, media coverage and schooling as the US's 'passive investment in whiteness' continues.<sup>86</sup> As Brooks explains in *Atonement and Forgiveness*, slavery created African American

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<sup>80</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 193.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196; McElya *Clinging to Mammy*, p. 259.

<sup>82</sup> Lyons, 'Corrective Justice, Equal Opportunity, and the Legacy of Slavery and Jim Crow', p. 1391.

<sup>83</sup> Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone* (London: Penguin, 2010), pp. 54-55.

<sup>84</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, p. 48; Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 9.

<sup>85</sup> Peter Gottschalk, 'Income Growth, and Mobility: The Basic Facts', *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 11:2 (1997), pp. 31-39; Emmanuel Saez, 'Striking It Richer: The Evolution of Top Incomes in the United States (Update with 2007 estimates)', (5 August 2009) <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/8dp1f91x> (Accessed 7 April 2010); Arthur F. Jones Jr. and Daniel H. Weinberg, 'The Changing Shape of the Nation's Income Distribution, 1947-1998', *Current Population Reports* (Washington, D.C.: US Census Bureau, 2000).

<sup>86</sup> Lipsitz, 'The Passive Investment in Whiteness', pp. 369-387.

impoverishment; Jim Crow created an unfair playing field further entrenching poverty; and poverty now blocks African American improvement.<sup>87</sup>

A significant obstacle to changing the US is white historical ignorance. Brophy surmises: 'There is little interest among white Americans in atonement; indeed, there is little sense among them that there is anything to atone for.'<sup>88</sup> Blight writes:

Societies and the groups within them remember and use history as a source of coherence and identity, as a means of contending for power and place, and as a means of controlling access to whatever becomes normative in society. For better and worse, social memories – ceaselessly constructed versions of a group past – are the roots of identity formation.<sup>89</sup>

The arguments of Robinson and Brooks discussed in Chapter One are therefore right. For the US to overcome the legacy of slavery, US history must be confronted and the central role of slavery and racism in building the US and the resulting unequal and racially prejudiced reality of US society must be acknowledged.<sup>90</sup>

### **National Trends in US Historiography**

James W. Lowen in *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*, observes how US textbooks have sought to justify the past, in a misplaced motivation to create proud Americans and loyal citizens. US history textbooks tend to present a 'Eurocentric,' 'culturally relativist' narrative of a moral, good and heroic US, perpetuating ideas of US Exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny.<sup>91</sup> This narrative overlooks the human costs and wrongs of US history (the annihilation of indigenous Americans and slavery) as well as past ideological and policy contests.<sup>92</sup> By promoting the idea of the American Dream and of the US as equal and fair, white and privileged students are reassured but African American, Native American, poor working class and female students are alienated and demoralised.<sup>93</sup> Lowen argues that school history fails to prepare students to think critically as citizens by leaving them

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<sup>87</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>88</sup> Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 74.

<sup>89</sup> Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, p. 120.

<sup>90</sup> Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness*, pp. 158-159; Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 107.

<sup>91</sup> Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, pp. 11-30, 280-299, 301-339.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31-69, 135-203.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344, 353.

uninformed about the realities of US history and society, and ill-equipped to recognise and remedy future social, economic and environmental problems facing the US.<sup>94</sup>

Lowen is not a lone critic of US history textbooks. Since the 1980s educational reformers and historians have argued that 'traditional textbook narratives based primarily on white males' contributions no longer reflect the findings of contemporary scholarship.'<sup>95</sup> Indeed, the Federal Government has recognised that 'Public education prepared children to think about slavery and race in ways consistent with the assumption of white supremacy built into twentieth century American law and custom.'<sup>96</sup> Unsurprisingly, as Terrie Epstein observed in 1998, African American students 'perceived school-based historical accounts as "white people's history."<sup>97</sup> Yet, in 2006, James Oliver Horton criticised school history for still providing a:

romanitized notion of America as the land of the free. . . . Americans call their history a freedom story. . . . For a nation steeped in this self-image, it is embarrassing, guilt-producing, and disillusioning to consider the role that race and slavery played in shaping the national narrative. Any attempt to integrate these aspects of the national past into the American memory risks provoking defensiveness, anger, and confrontation.<sup>98</sup>

The problem partly results from the limited ability of the Federal Government to shape curricula. The US does not have a national curriculum. Individual states and schools boards set their own standards and there is a greater role for private bodies in shaping curricula. Larger states, such as Texas and California, have a disproportionate influence on the textbook market. In the case of Texas, this influence is conservative and often Confederate-friendly.<sup>99</sup> However, concern over national educational standards, which prompted the 1983 *Nation at Risk* report by the National Commission

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 280-299.

<sup>95</sup> Terrie Epstein, 'Deconstructing Differences in African-American and European-American Adolescents' Perspectives on US History', *Curriculum Inquiry*, 28:4 (1998), p. 397.

<sup>96</sup> James Oliver Horton, 'Slavery in American History: An Uncomfortable National Dialogue', James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 41.

<sup>97</sup> Epstein, 'Deconstructing Differences in African-American and European-American Adolescents Perspectives on US History', pp. 418-419.

<sup>98</sup> Horton, 'Slavery in American History', p. 36.

<sup>99</sup> Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, pp. 214, 284, 308-315.



on Educational Excellence, and growing academic criticism of textbook content, prompted the Federal Government to seek to revise school history curricula.<sup>100</sup>

In the 1990s the Federal Government developed non-statutory national curricula guidelines.<sup>101</sup> These included K-12 (grades kindergarten to 12) standards for US History and World History released in 1994 (revised 1996) by the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), established at the University of California Los Angeles in 1988 with Federal funding from the National Endowments for the Humanities (NEH).<sup>102</sup> Supported by the American Historical Association (AHA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), these new standards were opposed by conservatives.<sup>103</sup>

The new history standards downplayed traditional heroes and tackled negative aspects of US history and controversial topics in an attempt to promote 'equality' and appeal to all US school children regardless of demographic background.<sup>104</sup> Conservatives labelled these developments unpatriotic and un-American and neo-

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<sup>100</sup> Robert J. Mazano, John S. Kendall and Louis F. Cicchinelli, *What Americans Believe Students Should Know: A Survey of US Adults* (Aurora, Colorado: Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory, 1999 ), p. 1; Gary Nash and Charlotte Crabtree, 'Preface', Gary Nash and Charlotte Crabtree (eds.), *National Standards for History: Basic Edition* (Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools, 1996), pp. v-ix; For an insight into these standards and the role of private educational bodies see Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel), [www.mcrel.org](http://www.mcrel.org). In particular 'Purpose of this work', <http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/docs/purpose.asp>; 'History of the Standards', <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/docs/history.asp>; 'Historical Understanding', <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/SubjectTopics.asp?SubjectID=3>; 'Grades k-4 History', <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/SubjectTopics.asp?SubjectID=4>; 'United States History', <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/SubjectTopics.asp?SubjectID=5>; 'World History', <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/SubjectTopics.asp?SubjectID=6>. Further details on grade specific learning benchmarks, topics and lesson plans are available. For example: 'Abolition of the slave trade', <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/topicsDetail.asp?topicsID=1081&subjectID=6>, (Accessed 15 October 2012).

<sup>101</sup> Horton, 'Slavery in American History', p. 43.

<sup>102</sup> National Center for History in Schools, 'About NCHS', <http://www.nchs.ucla.edu/about/about> (Accessed 20 May 2011); Mazano, Kendall and Cicchinelli, *What Americans Believe Students Should Know*, p. 1; Nash and Crabtree, 'Preface', pp. v-ix.

<sup>103</sup> H-Net Discussion, 'National Standards for History Discussion on H-Net Lists', *H-Net*, <http://www.h-net.org/~teach/threads/standard.html> (Accessed 20 May 2011); Mazano, Kendall and Cicchinelli, *What Americans Believe Students Should Know*, p. 9.

<sup>104</sup> John S. Kendall, Lisa Rode, Chris Snyder, *Exemplary History Benchmarks Among the Seven States in the Central Region* (Aurora, Colorado: Mid-continent Regional Education Laboratory, 2004); H-Net Discussion, 'National Standards for History Discussion on H-Net Lists'; Nash and Crabtree (eds.), *National Standards for History*, p. 11.

Confederates denounced the reforms as 'Cultural Marxism.'<sup>105</sup> Gary Nash (head of the NCHS and a historian who has written extensively on history education and on US history, revising traditional histories and promoting African and Native American perspectives<sup>106</sup>), argued that including negative aspects of US history 'is not dismal history but dismal history overcome.'<sup>107</sup> This dissonance between academics and conservatives underlines how historical interpretation is tied into the identity politics of the US culture wars.<sup>108</sup>

Horton argues: 'As more public schools teach students a broader, more comprehensive American history that includes issues of slavery and race, they better prepare them to function in the multiracial and multicultural society that characterizes our modern nation.'<sup>109</sup> Horton further illustrates the importance of broadening historical narrative, arguing that history:

provides our national and our personal identity. It structures our relationships, and it defines the terms of our debates. Our tendency is to turn away from history that is unflattering and uncomfortable, but we cannot afford to ignore the past, even the most upsetting parts of it. We can and must learn from it, even if doing so is painful.<sup>110</sup>

While the historical curriculum may be gradually changing, teachers in the US, like those in Britain, often feel unprepared to teach a broader history of slavery and race, having been taught traditional narratives themselves.<sup>111</sup> Since 2001 the Teaching American History Program (TAH), 'the largest Federal history education program in the country' has provided funding for 'intensive summer institutes, academic year workshops or colloquia, some form of mentoring or collaboration with Master

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<sup>105</sup> Levine, 'In Search of a Usable Past', p. 194; H-Net Discussion, 'National Standards for History Discussion on H-Net Lists'.

<sup>106</sup> Gary B. Nash, *Race, Class and Politics: Essays on American Colonial and Revolutionary Society* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986); Gary B. Nash and Richard Weiss, *The Great Fear: Race in the Mind of America* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1970); Gary B. Nash, 'For Whom Will the Liberty Bell Toll? From Controversy to Cooperation', James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), pp. 75-101.

<sup>107</sup> Gary Nash, Reflections of the National History Standards, *National Forum* (Summer 1997), <http://www-personal.unmich.edu/~mlassite/discussions261/nash.html> (Accessed 20 May 2011), p. 13.

<sup>108</sup> Alfred L. Brophy, 'The Cultural War Over Reparations for Slavery', *DePaul Law Review*, 53 (2004), pp. 1181-1213.

<sup>109</sup> Horton, 'Slavery in American History', p. 43.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>111</sup> Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, pp. 315-324.

Teachers, lesson plan development, and technology integration' in order to enable teachers to teach a broader, more nuanced and inclusive US history of slavery and race.<sup>112</sup> Commonly run in conjunction with historians from universities and museums, including Stanford, Yale, Colonial Williamsburg and the Smithsonian Institute, these institutes provide history teachers with access to primary materials and the latest academic research, countering common textbook deficiencies.<sup>113</sup>

Private bodies have also sought to facilitate improved teacher knowledge. Since the mid 1990s, the Gilder Lehrman Institute has funded 'summer seminars for public school teachers and provided significant assistance in the creation of History High Schools, public high schools with a special focus on American history.'<sup>114</sup> Headquartered in New York, the Gilder Lehrman Institute shares its benefactor with the Gilder Lehrman Center at Yale University, which also organises teacher institutes, including bringing US and Ghanaian teachers together to explore the history of transatlantic slavery.<sup>115</sup> There is then, a perceptible shift in the US to broaden the history and perspectives that are presented in schools and museums, potentially contributing to the US overcoming slavery's legacy of racism and racial exclusion.

Further testament to this trend and the role of private bodies is provided by AP US History Course, *Traces of the Trade and Facing History and Ourselves*. Produced by the non-profit College Board, the AP US History Course is designed by school and university history teachers to provide high school students with a first year college level, nuanced and critical curriculum, similar to that suggested by the NCHS History Standards.<sup>116</sup> All of its twelve themes, which include 'American Diversity', 'American Identity' and 'Slavery and Its Legacies in America,' encourage the examination of social

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<sup>112</sup> Margarita L. Meléndez, 'Teaching American History Article', *Society for History in the Federal Government*, 2:19 (2008), <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory/shfg-article.pdf> (Accessed 2 March 2011).

<sup>113</sup> Meléndez, 'Teaching American History Article'. See also US Department of Education, 'Teaching American History: Resources', <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/teachinghistory/resources.html> (Accessed 2 March 2011).

<sup>114</sup> Horton, 'Slavery in American History', p. 43.

<sup>115</sup> The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, [www.gilderlehrman.org](http://www.gilderlehrman.org); The Gilder Lehrman Center, 'Middle Passages: A Shared History of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade', [www.yale.edu/glc/mpi/index.htm](http://www.yale.edu/glc/mpi/index.htm) (Accessed 12 February 2013). I attended the 2010 Middle Passages Institute at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut.

<sup>116</sup> The College Board, *AP United States History: Course Description, Effective Fall 2010*, (College Board, 2010), p. 4; The College Board, *About Us*, <http://about.collegeboard.org/> (Accessed 13 August 2011).

relations within America involving race and sex, and the exclusive/limited definition of citizenship.<sup>117</sup>

Traces of the Trade and Facing History and Ourselves are educational charities that seek to tackle injustices in contemporary US society by teaching history and promoting shared identity and citizenship values of anti-racism and pro-social justice and equality. Traces of the Trade arose from the work of Katrina Brown in researching her ancestors, the DeWolfs', role as leading Rhode Island slave traders, which resulted in the film *Traces of the Trade: Stories from the Deep North*.<sup>118</sup> The organisation now seeks to use the film, and the learning experiences of the extended family members involved, to promote inter-racial dialogue and reconciliation and to challenge the continuing influence of white privilege in US society.<sup>119</sup> Traces of the Trade seeks to work in schools, churches and other community bodies to facilitate these reparative dialogues.<sup>120</sup> In seeking to enable personal processes of historical dialogue and reconciliation, Traces of the Trade reflects a burgeoning movement. Its ideology is mirrored by Coming to the Table, a restorative justice based project organised by the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University. This project literally invites people to 'come to the table' to talk about historical and present-day

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<sup>117</sup> The College Board, *AP United States History*, pp. 8-12; Tom Meltzer and Jean Hofheimer Bennett, updated by Susan Babkes, *Cracking the AP US History Exam, 2011 Edition* (New York, Random House, 2010).

<sup>118</sup> *Traces of the Trade*, <http://www.tracesofthetrade.org/>. See also PBS, *Traces of the Trade*, <http://www.pbs.org/pov/tracesofthetrade/> (Accessed 15 September 2012). The DeWolf family is not the only family confronting their ancestral links to slavery, see Edward Ball, *Slaves in the Family* (London: Viking, 1998).

<sup>119</sup> Discussion guides are available from the above websites, as is a lesson plan for discussing slavery, legacies and reparations tailored to 'Grades 6-12' and suitable for subjects 'US History, Economics, Geography, Civics and Current Events.' The lesson plan also includes links to other educational resources and the mcrel standards and benchmarks website, see Faith Rogow, *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North and P.O.V. Discussion Guide* (PBS and Traces of the Trade, 2008), [http://www.tracingcenter.org/library/discussion\\_guide.pdf](http://www.tracingcenter.org/library/discussion_guide.pdf); PBS, 'Lesson Plan: The History and Legacy of Slavery', *Trace of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*, [http://www.pbs.org/pov/tracesofthetrade/lesson\\_plan.php#.UUs0sxy9Cg](http://www.pbs.org/pov/tracesofthetrade/lesson_plan.php#.UUs0sxy9Cg) (Accessed 12 September 2012).

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Kristin Gallas, Director of Education and Public history at Traces of the Trade, 20 August 2010.

racism in the hope that, through speaking truth, justice, healing and reconciliation can occur.<sup>121</sup>

Facing History and Ourselves produces educational resources on historical events, such as the Civil Rights era Freedom Riders.<sup>122</sup> Martha Minow, who advocates history teaching as a form of reparative truth telling and who has developed education materials with Facing History and Ourselves, describes the importance of tackling painful, shameful and controversial historical episodes in schools thus:

What lessons can be learned – and what can be taught – to young people growing up in a world of violence and torture? Would it be better to shield young people from the fact of those patterns until they grow up? The wager made by programs like Facing History and Ourselves is that young people would do better to learn about the horrors that have occurred at the hands of adults than to be subject to silence about the events that still shape their world. Young people, understandably, want to know what has been done, and what can be done, to respond, redress, and prevent future occurrences. They ask whether it is possible to find a stance between vengeance and forgiveness, a stance for survivors, bystanders, and the next generations.<sup>123</sup>

Such organisations demonstrate how non-governmental organisations can shape the history that is taught in US schools and how this history is open to political ideology. Traces of the Trade seeks to challenge traditional historical ignorance by going beyond the scope of school textbooks, to overcome the ‘trash, whitewashed history’ they often embody.<sup>124</sup> The motivation of Traces of the Trade and Facing History and Ourselves mirrors that of British organisations, such as the Understanding Slavery Initiative, International Slavery Museum and Anti-Slavery International, as they all seek to use history to help make school children better citizens who will create a society no longer defined by past injustices.

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<sup>121</sup> Coming to the Table, ‘Mission/Values’, [http://www.comingtothetable.org/about\\_us/missionvalues/](http://www.comingtothetable.org/about_us/missionvalues/) (Accessed 4 May 2011). DeWolf, *Inheriting the Trade*, pp. 219-251; Thomas DeWolf and Sharon Morgan, *Gather at the Table: The Healing Journey of a Daughter of Slavery and a Son of the Slave Trade* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012).

<sup>122</sup> Facing History and Ourselves, *Choosing to Participate* (Brookline, MA.: Facing History and Ourselves, 2009), p. v. See also [www.choosingtoparticipate.org](http://www.choosingtoparticipate.org); Facing History and Ourselves, *Choices in Little Rock: Teaching Guide* (Brookline, MA.: Facing History and Ourselves, 2009); Facing History and Ourselves and American Experience, PBS, *Democracy in Action: A study Guide to Accompany the Film Freedom Riders* (Brookline, MA.: Facing History and Ourselves, 2011); [www.facinghistory.org/freedomriders](http://www.facinghistory.org/freedomriders) or [www.pbs.org/freedomriders](http://www.pbs.org/freedomriders) (Accessed 20 May 2011); Facing History and Ourselves, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1985* (Blackside, 2006).

<sup>123</sup> Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), p. 7.

<sup>124</sup> Interview with Kristin Gallas.

Publicly owned broadcaster PBS has also helped to disseminate academic historical revision to the general population.<sup>125</sup> Ken Burns' 1990 series *Civil War*, for example, was criticised by the UDC and Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) for identifying slavery as the fundamental cause of the Civil War. Although academics felt the series focused too much on emotion rather than fact, 39 million watched at least one episode of *Civil War* and many popular aspects of neo-Confederate historiography were challenged.<sup>126</sup> Reparations advocate and Harvard academic Henry Louis Gates has countered traditional prejudices and ignorance about African history with his series (and book) *Wonders of the African World*.<sup>127</sup> Similarly, James Oliver Horton's *Slavery and the Making of America* highlighted the centrality of African Americans to the founding, viability and development of America.<sup>128</sup> Accompanying DVD and online resources seek to further disseminate academic opinion into classrooms, authoritatively countering traditional historical narratives and textbook deficiencies.<sup>129</sup>

Unlike the BBC, PBS is not funded by a license fee and, therefore, seeks funding and collaborative opportunities with bodies such as the NEH and Facing History and Ourselves.<sup>130</sup> Collaboration with PBS helps Facing History and Ourselves raise its own profile, aiding its objective of engaging 'students from diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote a more humane and informed citizenry.'<sup>131</sup> A notable example of such collaboration is *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1985*.<sup>132</sup> The activity of these media and educational organisations underline how broadening the scope and perspective of the present-day history presented in schools and museums can potentially contribute to repair of the legacy of slavery.

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<sup>125</sup> PBS, *Funding*, <http://www.pbs.org/producing/funding/>; Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 'About CPB', <http://www.cpb.org/aboutcpb/> (Accessed 17 October 2012).

<sup>126</sup> Horton, 'Slavery in American History', p. 44; Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture*, pp. 117-120.

<sup>127</sup> PBS, *Wonders of the African World*, <http://www.pbs.org/wonders/> (Accessed 10 May 2011); Henry Louis Gates, *Wonders of the African World* (New York: Knopf, 1999).

<sup>128</sup> James Oliver Horton, *Slavery and the Making of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); PBS, *Slavery and the Making of America* (New York: Ambrose Video Publishing, 2005), <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/> (Accessed 3 May 2011).

<sup>129</sup> PBS, 'K-12 Learning, Introduction', <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/teachers/index.html> (Accessed 3 May 2011).

<sup>130</sup> PBS, 'Funding'.

<sup>131</sup> Facing History and Ourselves, *Eyes on the Prize*, p. 4.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

## Federal Museums and Public Media

The museum and heritage sector in the US, like schools, is less centralised and homogenous than in Britain. The greater role of private finance in US museums contributes to this pluralism but can make museums resistant to historical revision. As Melish explains:

Persuading administrative, curatorial and educational staffs to recast their interpretations to incorporate the lives of slaves and free people is one issue; getting trustees, members, subscribers, and especially donors to buy into new interpretations that not only challenge the celebratory narratives of “their” founders and patriots but also move the objects and documents many of them have donated off center stage is another.<sup>133</sup>

Nevertheless, the US has seen a national trend of increased pressure from the African American community, academics, and professional curatorial staff to confront the silences in popular US historiography in order to shed light on present-day racial inequality.

The National Parks Service (NPS) has provided an important lead in confronting historical bias and amnesia. Funded by the Federal Government, the NPS cares for many of the US’s important historical buildings and Civil War battlefields, and is well positioned to challenge neo-Confederate and Eurocentric historiography.<sup>134</sup> To do this, the NPS is increasingly memorialising sites of historically important racial violence; legal and political decisions; Civil Rights Movement events and Native American history, alongside battlefields.<sup>135</sup> As new parks are created by Congressional

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<sup>133</sup> Joanne Melish, ‘Recovering (from) Slavery: Four Struggles to Tell the Truth’, James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 103.

<sup>134</sup> Horton, ‘Slavery in American History’, pp. 44-45.

<sup>135</sup> Dwight T. Pitcaithley, ‘“A Cosmic Threat”: The National Park Service and the Causes of the American Civil War’, James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), pp. 170-172; Melish, ‘Recovering (from) Slavery’, pp. 103-133. NPS resources include: NPS, *Exploring a Common Past: Researching and Interpreting the Underground Railroad*, [www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/ugrr/exugrr1.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/ugrr/exugrr1.htm); NPS, *Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study*, <http://www.harrietubmanstudy.org/index.htm>; NPS, *Taking the Train To Freedom*, <http://www.nps.gov/undergroundrr/>. For insight into internal NPS debate, see: NPS, *Revision of the National Park Service’s Thematic Framework* (Washington, D.C.: NPS, 1996); Laura Feller and Page Putnam Miller, ‘Public History in the Parks: History and the National Park Service’, *Perspectives: Online*, 38:1 (2000), <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2000/0001/0001pub1.cfm> (All accessed 19 May 2011); NPS, *Advancing the National Park Idea: National Parks Second Century Commission Report* (Washington, D.C.: NPS, 2008).

Resolutions, they constitute symbolic messages from Congress 'to the American public that a useful history must include both painful as well as prideful aspects of the past.'<sup>136</sup>

To the consternation of Confederate apologists, the NPS's revised battle-field visitor information explicitly counters Lost Cause historiography and identifies the Confederacy's desire to protect slavery, not states' rights, as the cause of the Civil War. Neo-Confederates have argued that these revisions insult the Confederate war dead and are the result of political bias. The NPS rejects these suggestions, arguing:

without that larger perspective, the efforts of the armies of the United States and the Confederacy are rendered meaningless. The Civil War had causes and it had consequences, and we will be a better society when we can have a national conversation about the Civil War and its relationship to today without hyperbole and rancor.<sup>137</sup>

In revising the historical narrative it presents, the NPS is seeking to broaden the historical foundations of present-day US identity, recognising that arguments over 'how we view US history' are in reality arguments about how the US views itself and what it aspires to be.<sup>138</sup>

One example of the NPS' revised historical narrative is the Liberty Bell Visitor Center in Philadelphia, following pressure from academics and local historical societies about earlier failures to document the life and role of slaves in the first Presidential White House.<sup>139</sup> Such revision reflects the 2001 NPS Advisory Board's advice that the NPS 'sites "should be not just recreational destinations, but springboards for personal journeys, of intellectual and cultural enrichment," which could be nurtured only by ensuring "that the American story is told faithfully, completely, and accurately."<sup>140</sup> In approaching the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil War the NPS has endeavoured to empower African American historical experiences and present-day interpretations.<sup>141</sup> This reflects wider initiatives to ensure 'that the National Park Service's programs

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<sup>136</sup> Pitcaithley, "A Cosmic Threat", p. 172.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>138</sup> Brophy, *Reparations pro and con*, p.6.

<sup>139</sup> Nash, 'For Whom Will the Liberty Bell Toll?', pp. 75-101.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>141</sup> Hermina Glass-Avery, *Assessing African American Attitudes Towards the Civil War: The War of Jubilee, Tell Our Story and We Will Come. Final Group Report* (Washington, D.C.: NPS, 2011), p. 7.



represent the full diversity of United States heritage through the identification, documentation, and nomination of National Historic Landmarks.’<sup>142</sup>

The establishment of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in 2003, including ‘In late 2004 . . . \$3.9 million appropriation to study, design, and staff the museum . . . as part of the Smithsonian Institution . . . on or near the National Mall in Washington D.C.,’ complements the NPS’s efforts to revise US historiography and memory.<sup>143</sup> For Richard Rabinowitz, a private historian and consultant who was involved in the early developments of the NMAAHC, Cincinnati’s Underground Railroad Freedom Center and New York Historical Society’s slavery galleries, the NMAAHC is a symbolic representation of African Americans ‘finally being accepted as American.’<sup>144</sup> The ongoing development of the NMAAHC exemplifies how telling formerly suppressed history can potentially help to repair present-day relationships damaged by slavery’s legacy of racial inequality and prejudice. Congress’ 2009 Concurrent Resolution ‘Apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African Americans,’ illustrates how the revision of historical memory can help change national attitudes, encouraging further reparative gestures, such as apology.<sup>145</sup>

The NMAAHC will not be the first African American museum in Washington D.C. The African American Civil War Memorial and Museum (AACWMM) already commemorates the contribution made by African Americans during the Civil War, including the ‘209,145 names of the soldiers and officers who served under the Bureau of United States Colored Troops’ and whose names are listed on the wall behind the memorial.<sup>146</sup> Museum curator Dr Hari Jones describes the Memorial and Museum as an act of truth telling. Jones views America as akin to a sick patient in hospital, and

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<sup>142</sup> NPS, Organization of American Historians and National Museum of African American History and Culture, *African American National Historic Landmarks Assessment Study* (Washington, D.C.: NPS, 2008), p. 11; NPS, *Aboard the Underground Railroad*, <http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/> (Accessed 16 May 2011); Brian D. Joyner, *African Reflections on the American Landscape: Identifying and Interpreting Africanisms* (Washington, D.C.: NPS, 2003).

<sup>143</sup> Horton, ‘Slavery in American History’, p. 54.

<sup>144</sup> Interview with Richard Rabinowitz, Founder and President of American History Workshop, 24 August 2010. See also Rabinowitz’s website, *American History Workshop*, <http://www.americanhistoryworkshop.com/> (Accessed 17 October 2012).

<sup>145</sup> S. Con. Res. 26. (111<sup>th</sup>), *A concurrent resolution apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African Americans* (18 June 2009).

<sup>146</sup> African American Civil War Memorial and Museum, ‘Travelling Exhibit’, <http://afroamcivilwar.org/programs-a-resources/traveling-exhibit.html> (Accessed 1 October 2012).

sees the diagnosis as being 'caused by an inability to tell the truth.'<sup>147</sup> A former US Marine, Jones is fiercely patriotic, and views the memorial and museum as a panacea for the 'ignorance and prejudice' that perpetuates racial inequality and undermines America's values. By restoring to its rightful prominence the patriotic sacrifice of African Americans during the Civil War, the memorial and museum corrects a wrongful silence and rebukes the racist attitudes that defended slavery and shaped traditional Eurocentric memory.<sup>148</sup>

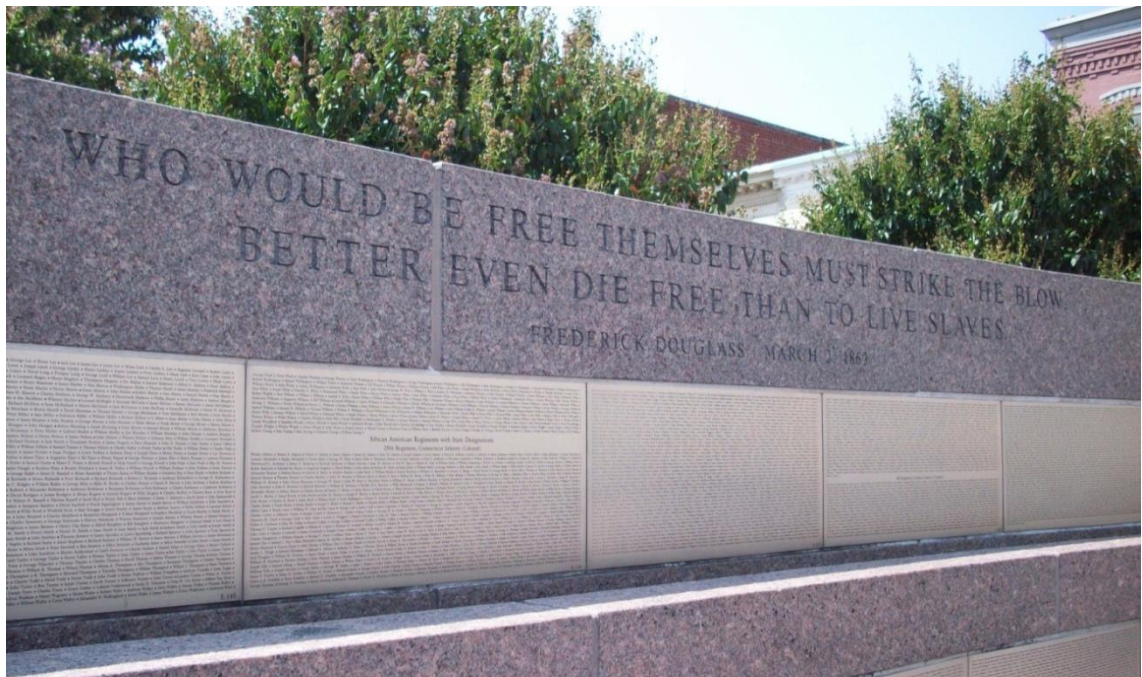
### Centrepiece of the African American Civil War Memorial



<sup>147</sup> Interview with Hari Jones, Assistant Director and Curator of the African American Civil War Memorial Freedom Foundation and Museum, 11 August 2010.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

Section of the African American Civil War Memorial. Inscription reads, “Who would be free themselves must strike the first blow. Better even die free, than to live slaves.” Frederick Douglass, March 2, 1863.’



### **Memory in the North**

For many in the North, slavery and racism are southern histories that do not affect them.<sup>149</sup> This view diminishes the importance of slavery to the US as a whole – much as the euphemism ‘peculiar institution’ was used by the South to de-legitimise northern criticisms of slavery, and by many in the North to justify non-intervention.<sup>150</sup> As discussed, southern states viewed a northern-led democratic abolition as a violation of states’ rights. Similarly, the idea that segregation was peculiarly southern enabled northerners and the Federal Government to turn a blind eye to Jim Crow until this position became untenable, whilst also firing southern resentment towards renewed northern intervention in their social practices. However, slavery was central to the establishment of the colonies that became the US and was practiced by northern

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<sup>149</sup> Thomas Norman DeWolf, *Inheriting the Trade: A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in US History* (Boston, Beacon Press, 2008), p. xii; Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, p. 142.

<sup>150</sup> Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag*, p. 296.

states until after the Revolutionary War.<sup>151</sup> Much of this history is forgotten, but museums, universities, charities and community organisations are helping to research, reveal and promote these formerly forgotten aspects of the history of slavery across the north-eastern US.

New York City typifies the developing awareness and commemoration of once-forgotten slavery in the North and northern economic ties to the southern slave economy. Initiating a renewed interest in New York's links to slavery was the 1991 discovery of the bones of over 400 men, women and children during the construction of a new Federal Government office building in Manhattan. Research revealed that: 'From about the 1690s until 1794, both free and enslaved Africans were buried in a 6.6-acre burial ground in Lower Manhattan, outside the boundaries of the settlement of New Amsterdam, later known as New York.'<sup>152</sup> Although the discovery was initially kept quiet, the information reached a local historian and journalist who ensured it became public.<sup>153</sup> Emotional discussion took place over what should happen to the site and the remains. It was decided that a monument and museum about the history of slavery in New York City and the African Burial Ground should be created. Funding was provided by federal, city and private sources, two thirds of which (\$15 million in 2008 alone) was provided through the NPS.<sup>154</sup>

The historical narrative presented by the African Burial Ground Museum (ABGM) is well researched and nuanced. Slavery's introduction into New York, it makes clear, was central to the business of colony building and, as a video display highlights, was primarily a pragmatic decision to meet labour shortages. However, as the museum

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<sup>151</sup> David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 152.

<sup>152</sup> NPS, *African Burial Ground: National Monument*, <http://www.nps.gov/afbg/index.htm> (Accessed 18 October 2012). See also US General Services Administration, *African Burial Ground Memorial, New York, N.Y.*, <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/ext/html/site/hb/category/25431/actionParameter/exploreByBuilding/buildingId/1084#> (Accessed 18 October 2012).

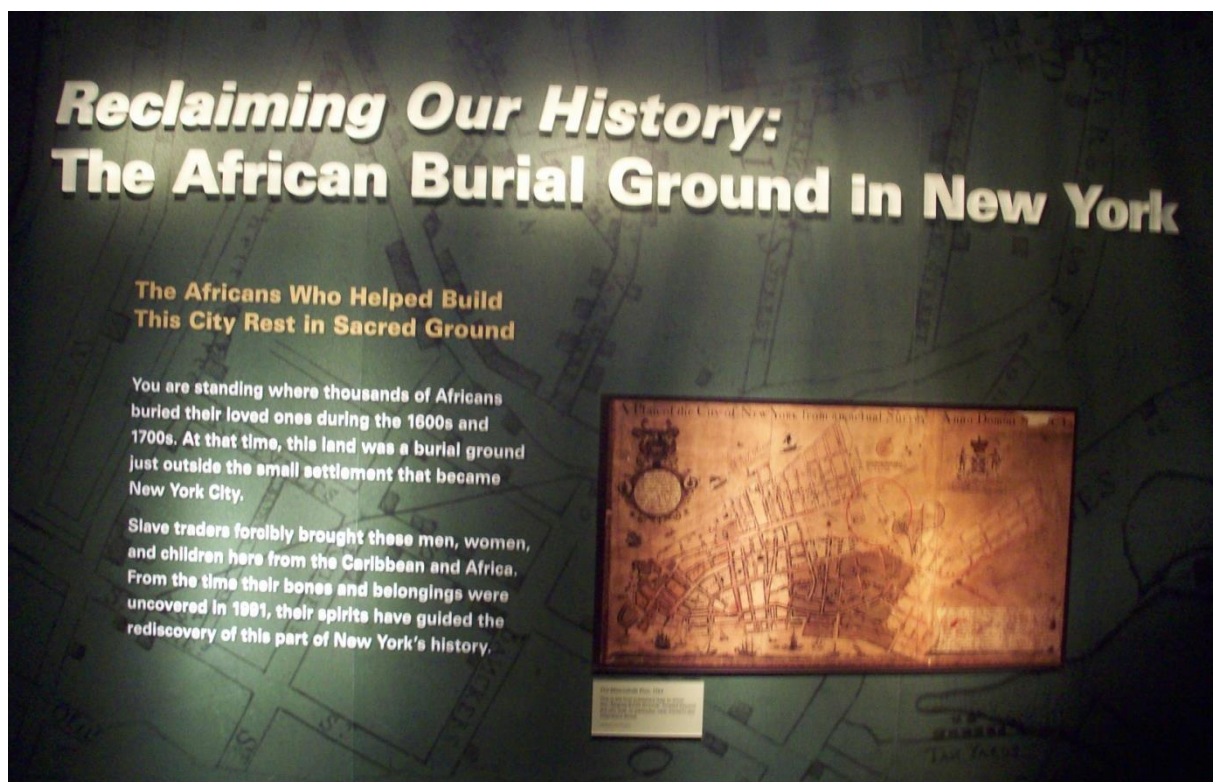
<sup>153</sup> US General Services Administration, *The African Burial Ground Brochure* (Washington, D.C.: US General Services Administration, May 2003); US General Services Administration, *The African Burial Ground Brochure* (Washington, D.C.: US General Services Administration, October 2003), p. 5; Thank you also to Christopher Moore, Curator and Research Coordinator, New York Public Library, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, for details regarding the history the African Burial Ground provided during a walking tour of African American Manhattan.

<sup>154</sup> S. 2948. *To establish the African Burial Ground International Memorial Museum and Educational Center in New York, New York, and for other purposes* (25 January 2010), pp. 10-18.



catalogues, slavery quickly became racially codified with free black people losing rights to inherit land and laws being passed to move the African American population further up Manhattan. The ABGM not only reveals the forgotten role of slavery in New York but explains how racism is a construct of history and not a natural state of affairs – aiding relational repair. The memorial and museum are important gestures of respect to New York's forgotten slaves, and also emphasise the historical basis of African American citizenship and the injustice of continued social, economic and cultural exclusion of African Americans.

A Section from the African Burial Ground Museum, New York



The discovery of the burial ground prompted a hunger amongst New Yorkers to reveal other forgotten aspects of the city's history of slavery. In 2005 the New York Historical Society opened *Slavery in New York* (accompanied by a book of the same title by Ira Berlin), in 2006, *New York Divided – Slavery and the Civil War* and in 2009,

*Lincoln in New York*.<sup>155</sup> These exhibitions highlighted not only how enslaved Africans had built the first settlements in New Amsterdam, but also how antebellum New York's wealth was so tied to southern slavery that the city almost seceded from the Union prior to the outbreak of the Civil War.<sup>156</sup> These exhibitions further reveal the centrality of slavery and racial discrimination to the history of all the US, countering claims to the moral high ground by the North.

For Rabinowitz, New York is built upon immigration and the historical point of entry, Ellis Island, has been both a symbol of hope and opportunity to the world's oppressed, and a reassuring symbol to US citizens of their nation's freedoms and exceptionalism. Rabinowitz argues that the importance of these New York Historical Society exhibitions is that they contribute to the repair of a historic injustice, namely, that while Africans were amongst the very first migrants to America, they have been excluded from the history of the US and from the conceptualisation of US citizen. While Italian, Irish and Jewish migrants may have been discriminated against, they have been accepted within the white framework of US identity despite mostly arriving after African Americans who are yet to be accepted and included.<sup>157</sup> Telling the suppressed history of African Americans in New York is necessary to including African Americans within US identity.

Rabinowitz argues that to overcome the legacy of slavery and race in the US the history of US slavery must be understood within a wider international context. US slavery needs to be contextualised within a history that recognises that 'slavery and freedom aren't binary' but exist at each end of a sliding scale.<sup>158</sup> Rabinowitz advocates such contextualisation not 'to diminish the horror of slavery, but to show that it changed and was varied' and that the legacy of this history is more complicated than

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<sup>155</sup> New York Historical Society, *Slavery in New York*, <http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/> (Accessed 17 July 2011); Ira Berlin and Leslie M. Harris, 'Uncovering, Discovering and Recovering: Digging in New York's Slave Past Beyond the African Burial Ground', Ira Berlin and Leslie Harris (eds.), *Slavery in New York* (New York: New Press, 2005), pp. 3-27.

These three exhibitions are also online, see New York Historical Society, *Online Exhibitions*, [http://www.nyhistory.org/exhibitions/online-exhibitions\\_](http://www.nyhistory.org/exhibitions/online-exhibitions_) (Accessed 17 July 2011).

<sup>156</sup> David Quiggle, 'Southern Slavery in a Free City: Economy, Politics and Culture', Ira Berlin and Leslie Harris (eds.), *Slavery in New York* (New York: New Press, 2005), pp. 263-288.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with Richard Rabinowitz.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

just race relations and includes attitudes to wider labour and equality issues.<sup>159</sup> So far the developments within US slavery historiography and public history remain largely US centred. Unlike Britain, US slavery happened within the geographical boundaries of the current nation, and the battle over the memory of slavery is tied to the wider culture wars and the ongoing battle to define America and who is and can be American.

The rising prominence of African Americans and of slavery in New York's commemorative landscape owes much to the struggle of African Americans to preserve their history and their experiences. This includes the long history of African American freedom festivals, schools, churches and institutions of learning, such as New York's antebellum African Free School and the Schomburg Center.<sup>160</sup> Both of these institutions represent how African Americans have perpetuated their own memory. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, established in the 1950s to preserve African American history, played an important role in developing Pan-Africanism.<sup>161</sup> Now part of the New York Public Library, it provides educational material for schools on historical topics traditionally ignored by white Americans, including the history of slavery, slave trade, abolitionism, the illegal slave trade and African American freedom celebrations, from an African American viewpoint.<sup>162</sup> The Schomburg Center actively seeks to restore to the physical environment signs of African American historical presence, including supporting the recent Harriet Tubman statue unveiled in Harlem and the installation of plaques marking sites of African American historical importance, such as the site of Frederick Douglass' first lodgings in New York after escaping from slavery.

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<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> African Free School, <https://www.nyhistory.org/web/afs/> (Accessed 21 May 2011); Schomburg Center, <http://www.nypl.org/locations/schomburg> (Accessed 21 May 2011).

<sup>161</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 184; Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom*, p. 258.

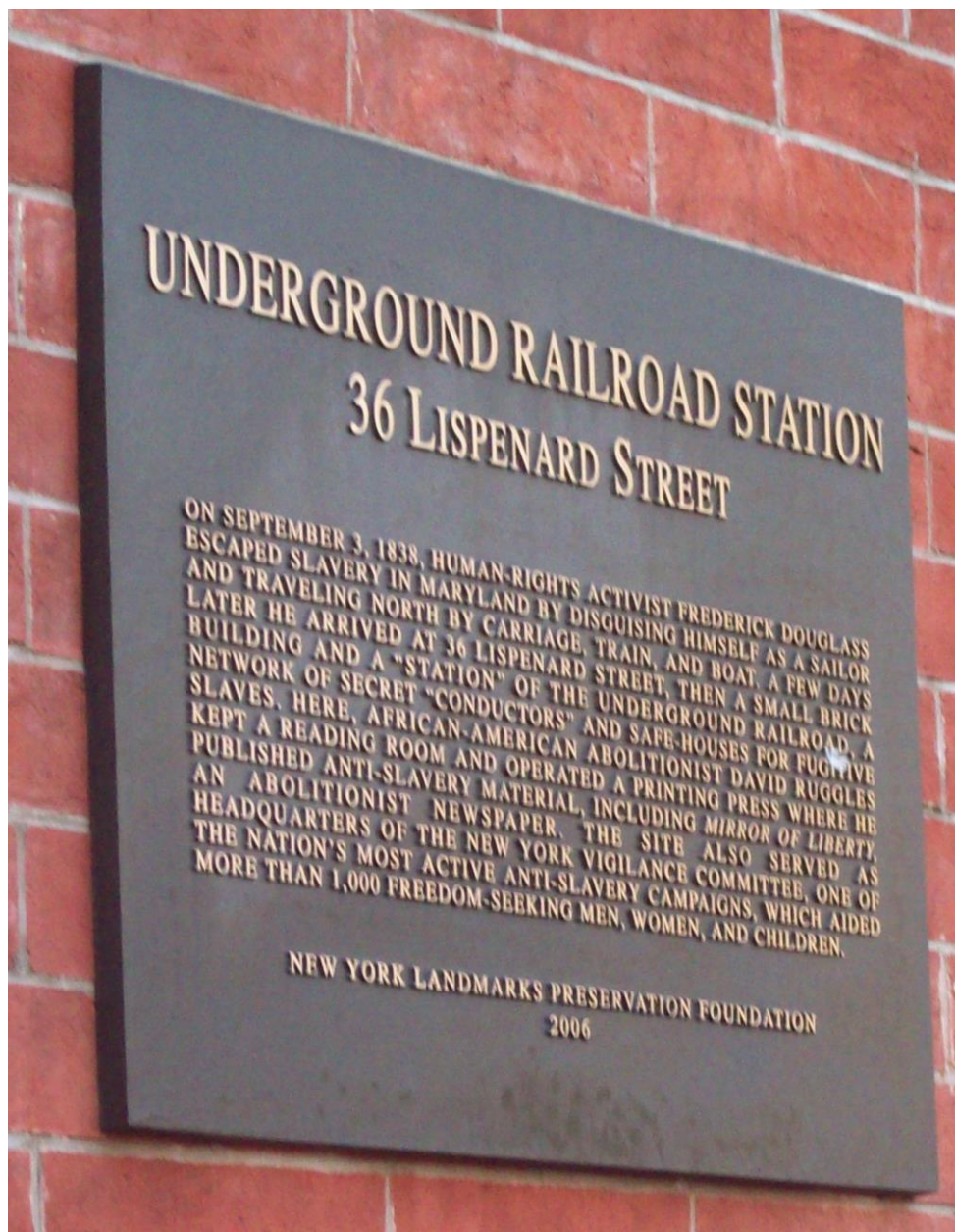
<sup>162</sup> Schomburg Center, *Online Exhibitions*, [http://www.nypl.org/locations/tid/64/online\\_exhibitions](http://www.nypl.org/locations/tid/64/online_exhibitions); Schomburg Center, *The Abolition of the Slave Trade*, <http://abolition.nypl.org/home/>; Schomburg Center, *African American Women Writers*, [http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers\\_aa19/](http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers_aa19/); Schomburg Center, *African American Migrations*, <http://www.inmotionaame.org/migrations/index.cfm> (Accessed 21 May 2011).

Harriet Tubman Statue, Harlem, New York





Plaque marking the site of a safe house on the Underground Railroad and headquarters of the New York Vigilance Committee and antislavery group.



Across the north-eastern US, the forgotten history of slavery is being recovered and African American voices are being empowered. In Boston, the African Meeting House, part of the Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket, and the NPS which runs a guided tour through historic African American Boston, mirror projects in New York.<sup>163</sup> In Connecticut the *Documenting Venture Smith Project* has

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<sup>163</sup> Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket, *Boston Campus*, [http://www.afroammuseum.org/boston\\_campus.htm](http://www.afroammuseum.org/boston_campus.htm); Museum of African American History, Boston

uncovered the forgotten history of slavery in the North by investigating the life of Venture Smith, 1728-1805. Born in West Africa, Smith was enslaved and transported to British North America where he later gained his freedom, purchased the freedom of some of his family members and came to own over 100 acres of land. For Chandler Saint, co-director of the *Documenting Venture Smith Project* and the accompanying educational project *Uncovering Narratives of Slavery*, Venture Smith provides a unique insight into slavery in the US, counteracting traditional historiography that has focused on the Civil War era and the idea of slavery as purely southern.<sup>164</sup>

In Rhode Island, Brown University is leading efforts to reverse the State's amnesia regarding its leading role in the US transatlantic slave trade. The University's 2006 report, *Slavery and Justice* notes: 'Most Americans today think of slavery as a southern institution. New Englanders, in particular, have contrived to erase the institution's presence from their collective memory.'<sup>165</sup> Highlighting how Rhode Island's economy first relied on the slave trade and then on textiles and southern slave produced cotton, the report demonstrates the economic legacy and benefit the State owes to slavery and the enslaved. By highlighting how, for those involved in slave trading, including the Brown family after whom the university is named, 'buying and selling Africans was simply a matter of business,' the report demonstrates how the State's present-day problems with racial discrimination and poor race relations are attitudinal and relational legacies of this history.<sup>166</sup> This point is underlined by the negative response to the report, below:

You disgust me, as you disgust many other Americans. Slavery was wrong, but at that time it was a legal enterprise. It ended, case closed. You cite slavery's effects as being the reason that black people are so far behind, but that just illustrates your ignorance. Black people, here and now, are behind because some can't keep their hands off drugs, or guns, or can't move forward, can't get off welfare, can't do the simple things

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and Nantucket, *Able Smith School*, <http://www.afroammuseum.org/site13.htm>; Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket, *The African Meeting House*, <http://www.afroammuseum.org/site14.htm>; Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket, *Education Programs*, <http://www.afroammuseum.org/education.htm> (Accessed 18 October 2012).

<sup>164</sup> Chandler Saint, 'Documenting Venture Smith Project', Chandler B. Saint (eds.), *The Narrative of an African American: Venture Smith, 1798* (Beecher House Center for the Study of Equal Right and Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation, 2010).

<sup>165</sup> Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, *Slavery and Justice* (Providence, R.I.: Brown University, 2006), p. 8.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

to improve their life. . . . They don't deserve money, they deserve a boot in the backside over and over until they can find their own way.<sup>167</sup>

*Slavery and Justice* outlined a potential path to reconciliation which recommended: 'Acknowledgement,' 'Tell the truth in all its complexity,' 'Memorialization' and for the university to establish a research centre to look into slavery and its legacy, to source its funding donations more ethically in the future, to increase opportunities for 'those disadvantaged by the legacies of slavery and the slave trade' and to educate Rhode Island children about the State's slave history.<sup>168</sup> A memorial was also proposed 'to inform people about this history and to engage the broader public in an ongoing discussion of its meaning. . . . opening up access to reconciliation.'<sup>169</sup> The theme of any memorialisation and educational resources produced 'should be uplifting with an emphasis on the ways in which descendants of the slave trade have continued to build the state and country.'<sup>170</sup> Brown University has subsequently produced teaching resources and provides summer institutes for teachers within the Teaching American History Program.<sup>171</sup>

Across the north-eastern US, there is then a growing trend for cities and institutions to seek to correct historical amnesias regarding the existence and importance of slavery in the North and northern ties to slavery in the South. Central to the growing presence of African American perspective in US historical understanding has been African American led organisations such as Baltimore's National Great Blacks in Wax Museum (NGBWM) and Cincinnati's Underground Railroad Freedom Center (URFC). These institutions perpetuate the African American historical consciousness

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 83-87.

<sup>169</sup> Brown University, *Report of Commission on Memorials* (Providence, R.I.: Brown University, 2009), p.

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<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>171</sup> Brown University, 'The Choices Program: History and Current Issues for the Classroom', <http://www.choices.edu/index.php>. See in particular: 'A Forgotten History of Slavery in New England', [http://www.choices.edu/resources/supplemental\\_slavery.php](http://www.choices.edu/resources/supplemental_slavery.php); plus, for example, online supplementary lesson plan, Maureen DeRoy and Chad Hayes, 'Race and the United States Constitution', [http://www.choices.edu/resources/supplemental\\_tah\\_race3.php](http://www.choices.edu/resources/supplemental_tah_race3.php); and 'District and TAH Workshops', <http://www.choices.edu/pd/tah.php> (Accessed 19 May 2011). See also Brown University, *The Voyage of the Slave Ship Sally*, <http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/sally/story.html> (Accessed 20 October 2012).

that African American freedom festivals and campaigners such as Frederick Douglas and Du Bois sought to sustain.<sup>172</sup>

The NGBWM seeks to perpetuate the tradition in which ‘the older generation had a duty to pass the baton of knowledge of who you are and where you come from to the next generation.’<sup>173</sup> Established by the late Dr Elmer Martin and his wife Dr Joanne Martin, the NGBWM aims to counter negative self-image amongst African Americans by demonstrating that if African Americans can overcome slavery then they can overcome anything, including urban decay, poverty and the gang and drug culture of inner city ghettos.<sup>174</sup> Furthermore, as Dr Martin explained, she and her husband experienced the Civil Rights Movement and the museum constitutes an extension of their desire to ‘make [their] country live up to its rhetoric on democracy.’<sup>175</sup> Accordingly there is great anger within the museum’s waxwork displays, a reaction to past and contemporary injustices inflicted upon African Americans. The museum does not aim to stoke needless anger, rather an indignity on the part of both white and black visitors by revealing history that was previously suppressed and forgotten.

The NGBWM supports local charitable efforts ‘to improve the social and economic status of African Americans.’<sup>176</sup> Therefore, whilst the museum is interested in the international context of the history and legacy of slavery and racism, its main focus is making an impact in Baltimore. It hopes to further realise its message of empowerment through the creation of a community centre to assist in the education and training of local people and the redevelopment of the neighbourhood it inhabits.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, pp. 93-119; Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom*, pp. 147-174.

<sup>173</sup> Interview with Joanne Martin, President of the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum and Diane Swann-Wright, museum consultant, 12 August 2010.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*; The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, *Explore Our Past, Plan Our Future*, [http://www.greatblacksinwax.org/expansion\\_plans.htm](http://www.greatblacksinwax.org/expansion_plans.htm) (Accessed 18 October 2012).

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*; The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, *Explore Our Past, Plan Our Future: Where We Plan To Be*, [http://www.greatblacksinwax.org/expansion\\_plans.htm](http://www.greatblacksinwax.org/expansion_plans.htm) (Accessed 18 October 2012).



A waxwork depiction of a slave ship interior, The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Baltimore.



Waxwork installation, Boulevard of Broken Dreams. Above this installation it reads 'Now we lynch Ourselves,' a reference to the high levels of violence and drug abuse within ghettoised black communities.



Cincinnati's URFC reflects how the emergence of a wealthy black middle class is helping to promote African American historical perspectives outside the African American community. The URFC opened in 2004, as part of efforts to regenerate the city following decades of industrial decline and race riots in 2001. Funding was provided by federal and city sources as well as many private corporations and wealthy individuals.<sup>178</sup> The museum's opening constituted both an effort to regenerate the city economically, and to use the history of the Underground Railroad to generate positive images of African Americans and of inter-racial cooperation.<sup>179</sup>

A central theme of the URFC is challenging the traditional belief that the Underground Railroad was a white and often Quaker-led initiative. The URFC emphasises how more free and enslaved African Americans were involved in instigating and coordinating the Underground Railroad than whites, but that cooperation between both races was ultimately beneficial. This perspective is encapsulated by a short film narrated by Oprah Winfrey which 'dramatizes an escape to freedom across the Ohio river at Ripley, Ohio' in which fleeing slaves were aided by both a free African American and a white abolitionist family.<sup>180</sup> The story's message, that by working together great odds can be overcome by society, encapsulates the URFC's mission to 'tell the real story and instil pride in both races.'<sup>181</sup>

The Center also seeks to use history to inspire African American students who often find the history of slavery shameful. Educators (on both sides of the Atlantic) often note students saying that if they were enslaved they would have fought and resisted and run away. The museum and its educational resources, therefore,

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<sup>178</sup> Zane L. Miller, *Visions of Place: The City, Neighborhoods, Suburbs and Cincinnati's Clifton, 1850-2000* (Cincinnati, OH.: Ohio State University, 2001); Dan Horn, Kristina Goetz, and Ward Bushee's articles for 'Cincinnati: 2001 Year of Unrest', *The Cincinnati Enquirer* (Sunday 30 December 2001), <http://www.enquirer.com/unrest2001/index.html> (Accessed 20 October 2012); The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America. Teachers Guide* (Cincinnati, OH.: The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, 2010), pp. 9-13.

<sup>179</sup> Interview with museum curatorial and educational teams: Dina A. Bailey, Associate Curator; Katie Johnson, Public Programs Manager; Richard Cooper, Interpretative Services Manager, Education Department; Charles C. Davies, Jr., Youth Development Manager; Christopher Miller, Historical Interpreter, 10 August 2010.

<sup>180</sup> The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, *Visitor Guide* (Cincinnati, OH.: Underground Railroad Freedom Center, 2010), p. 3.

<sup>181</sup> Interview with Dina A. Bailey, Katie Johnson, Richard Cooper, Charles C. Davies, Jr., Christopher Miller.

emphasise the difficulties involved in running away, including leaving family and friends, and the risks of capture and punishment, to help students and teachers empathise with those who grappled with such decisions.<sup>182</sup> After visiting the museum 'African American students should understand their ancestors' struggle and how that makes them strong people.'<sup>183</sup>

The URFC seeks to deliver 'healing' by 'educating people [about America's past of slavery and racial segregation and encouraging them] to continue to break barriers.'<sup>184</sup> Established prior to the apology by Congress, the URFC challenges 'how a lot of things [legacies of slavery: racism and white privilege] still get brushed under the table because people don't want to tackle any of it.' The URFC presents difficult parts of US history, including 'how racism developed with slavery but did not end with it,' and argues that black and white can, together and only together, overcome the legacies of this history.<sup>185</sup>

Across the cities and regions of the North, formerly suppressed regionally specific aspects of the US's history of slavery are being confronted. This historical revision is defined by two elements identified as reparative by the Intergenerational Model in Chapter One. Firstly, formerly suppressed aspects of northern US history are being revealed and incorporated in historical consciousness, including northern slavery and northern ties to slavery in the South, the important contribution of African Americans to the Union war effort and African American organisation of the Underground Railroad. Secondly, African Americans are playing a central role in this process of reshaping northern US memory. Such processes could contribute to repairing the attitudinal and relational legacies of slavery in the North, by enabling white Americans to understand the historical causes of present-day racial inequality

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<sup>182</sup> The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, *Teacher Lesson Plans, K-3*, <http://www.freedomcenter.org/expand-your-knowledge/educator-resources/downloads/Teacher%20Resource%20K-3.pdf>; 4-8, <http://www.freedomcenter.org/expand-your-knowledge/educator-resources/downloads/Teacher%20Resource%204-8.pdf>; 9-12, <http://www.freedomcenter.org/expand-your-knowledge/educator-resources/downloads/Teacher%20Resource%209-12.pdf> (Accessed 20 October 2012).

<sup>183</sup> Interview with Dina A. Bailey, Katie Johnson, Richard Cooper, Charles C. Davies, Jr., Christopher Miller.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

and empathise with African American frustrations at inequality and the exclusion of their perspectives from the nation's and the North's historical memory.

Page 8 of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, *Teacher Resource K-3*.

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## The Underground Railroad

Over the last several days, you have learned about the hardships faced by enslaved people as they tried to escape on the Underground Railroad. Think about how hard it was for them on their journey. They risked their lives when they ran to freedom.

Answer the following question

If you were enslaved during the 1800's in America, would you have run away or stayed with your master? Give three reasons for your decision.

(Write your answer in paragraphs, one paragraph for each reason. You will have to describe each reason with more than one sentence.)





## **Memory in the South**

Virginia offers insights into the history and place of slavery and race in the development of the US nation. Virginia is home to the first successful English settlement on the North American mainland at James Fort in 1607.<sup>186</sup> In 1619 the first enslaved Africans were brought to Jamestown, marking the start of institutionalised racism and white supremacy in North America. Virginia was also the location for much of the Revolutionary War and Civil War. Developments in how Virginia approaches its history, therefore, offer insights into wider national memory.

In 1775 Patrick Henry delivered his famous 'Liberty or Death' speech at St John's Episcopal Church, Richmond, but it is the Reconstruction era monuments to the Confederacy that dominates the city's commemorative landscape. Near St John's Episcopal Church is a statue to the Confederate troops overlooking the bend in the river from which Richmond gained its name, due to its resemblance to the bend in the Thames at Richmond. This statue and its location illustrate how the Confederate Lost Cause narrative of states' rights was tied by Confederates to the Revolutionary War and the nation's founding and core values. Across the city are the Museum of the Confederacy (MoC), the Virginia Historical Society (VHS), and Monument Avenue (a Reconstruction era avenue lined with statues of Confederate Generals), all established to propagate the Lost Cause narrative. However, Civil Rights policies and white flight altered Richmond's demographics and political attitudes, and the City is now keen to break with its Confederate image. Many local African Americans reject the City's monuments to supposed Confederate nobility and triumphant victimhood and instead wish to celebrate African American resistance to slavery and role in the defeat of the Confederacy and subsequent economic development.<sup>187</sup>

Across the South sympathy for the Confederacy and antebellum South is still strong. Many of the rural Plantation House Museums still serve to:

articulate and reaffirm the racialized mythic life of the dominant white public in the United States: ideologies, images and allocations of resources that construct African Americans and their experiences as inferior, white Americans and their experiences as

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<sup>186</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, p. 18.

<sup>187</sup> Marie Tyler-McGraw, 'Southern Comfort Levels: Race, Heritage Tourism, and the Civil War in Richmond', James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), pp. 152-153.

superior and more worthy of consideration and focus. They also serve very centrally to reinforce gendered social and power relations.<sup>188</sup>

This Chapter focuses primarily upon institutions that are seeking to challenge traditional narrative biases and silences in order to explore the reparative potential of such activities.

Richmond 's revision of neo-Confederate historiography reflects the increased power of African Americans within Richmond and the business community's desire to rehabilitate the city's image in order to attract businesses and the growing black middle class and liberal tourists. The installation of a statue of tennis hero and African American son of Richmond, Arthur Ashe, on Monument Avenue in 1995 and of a statue of Lincoln at Richmond's Tredegar Iron Works and Civil War Museum in 2002, show the city's attempts to rehabilitate its image and to promote race equality and reconciliation.<sup>189</sup> The Lincoln statue was donated by Robert Kline, who had previously raised funds for the MoC and who 'saw the statue as part of reconciliation and understanding.'<sup>190</sup> Confederate apologists have opposed such developments, in particular the NPS's explicit rejection of the Lost Cause narrative at the Tredegar Iron Works; cynically 'the Sons of Confederate Veterans adopted the language of multiculturalism for their own ends and insisted that Confederate heritage was one more heritage within an overall diversity.'<sup>191</sup> Nevertheless, these developments, which also include the Riverside Walk chronicling African American history in Richmond and excavation of historic slave sites such as Lumpkin's Jail, have proved popular with the people and businesses of Richmond.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Jennifer L. Eichstedt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2002), p. 12.

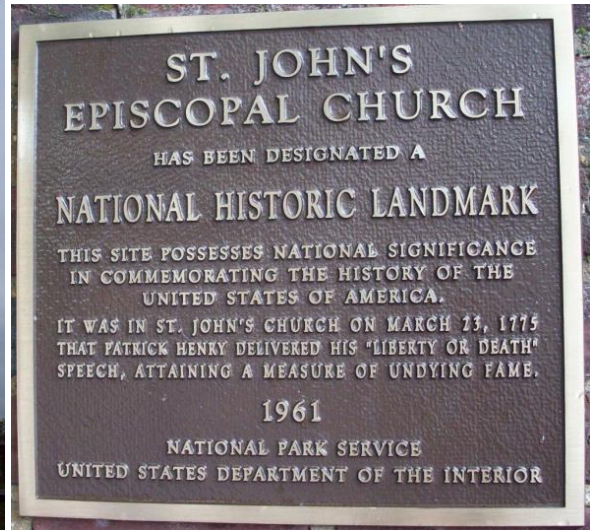
<sup>189</sup> Tyler-McGraw, 'Southern Comfort Levels', 158-159.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 162-165.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

St. John's Episcopal Church and Commemorative Plaque



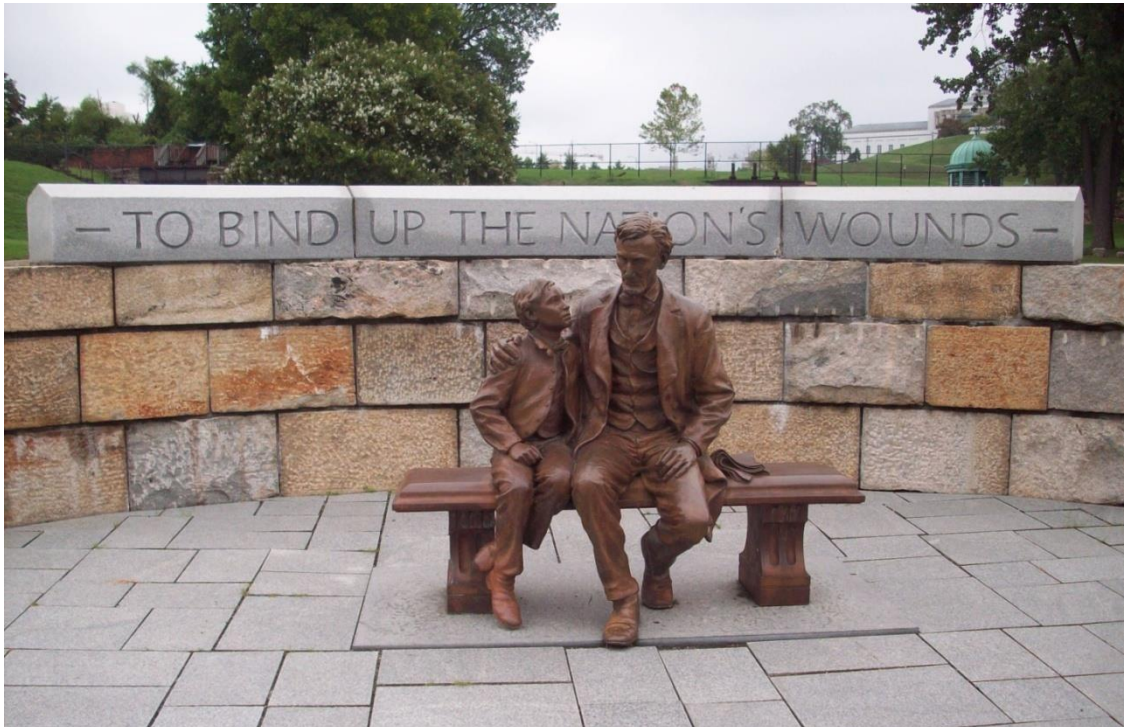
The Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument



Installation about Henry Box Brown from Richmond's African American Waterfront, part of the city's Riverside Walk<sup>193</sup>



Statue of Lincoln at the Tredegar Iron Works



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<sup>193</sup> Richmond City Council Slave Trail Commission, <http://www.richmondgov.com/CommissionSlaveTrail/index.aspx>; Richmond City Council Slave Trail Commission blog, <http://richmondvaslavetrail.blogspot.co.uk/> (Accessed 20 October 2012).



## Site of Lumpkin's Jail



## Details from Richmond's Triangular Slave Trade Reconciliation Statue



The revision of neo-Confederate historiography is also occurring at former bastions of the Lost Cause, including the MoC, established in 1896 by the Confederate Literary Memorial Society and the VHS, established in 1831 and headquartered in Battle Abbey, Richmond. Battle Abbey's construction started in 1913 and was built by the 'Confederate Memorial Association as a shrine to the Confederate dead and as a repository for the records of the Lost Cause.'<sup>194</sup> As the MoC's current curator John Coski notes: 'The Confederacy have always passed down their history. Lee charged the sons of the Confederacy to vindicate the cause.'<sup>195</sup> Neo-Confederate adherence to the Lost Cause is 'religious in nature;' the UDC catechism includes committing to support the 'Memory of Truth.'<sup>196</sup> Nevertheless, since the 1970s both institutions have sought to move away from the Lost Cause and present what Coski calls 'history as history' or, in other words, 'evidence based' history.<sup>197</sup> In the 1990s both institutions received 'public humanities grants for exhibits that employed national scholars and designers and engaged aspects of southern and Virginia history previously unaddressed.'<sup>198</sup> Consequently the historical narrative presented by both institutions increasingly reflects the national (northern) historical consensus, as it seeks to present the latest academic research and opinion to visitors.<sup>199</sup>

The 1991 exhibition *Before Freedom Came: African-American Life in the Antebellum South* represents a tipping point in the MoC's efforts to reposition itself as a professional institution rather than a bastion of neo-Confederate propaganda.<sup>200</sup> MoC staff remain proud of *Before Freedom Came* and the manner in which it depicted the realities of slavery (its dependence on violence and racism), slavery's variety (how slaves worked in urban and industrial environments as well as cotton plantations), and

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<sup>194</sup> Virginia Historical Society, 'About the VHS', <http://www.vahistorical.org/about/main.htm> (Accessed 22 October 2012).

<sup>195</sup> John Coski, Interview with Waite Rawls, President and CEO, Museum of the Confederacy, John Coski, Historian and Vice President of Research and Publications, Museum of the Confederacy and Kelly Hancock, Manager of Education and Programs, Museum of the Confederacy, 18 August 2010.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> Tyler-McGraw, 'Southern Comfort Levels', p. 158.

<sup>199</sup> Interview with Bill Obrochta, Director of Education, Virginia Historical Society, 17 August 2010.

<sup>200</sup> D.C. Campbell and Kym S. Rice (eds.), *Before Freedom Came: African American Life in the Antebellum South* (Charlottesville, VA.: The Museum of the Confederacy and the University Press of Virginia, 1991 (Fourth Printing of First Edition 2006)); Museum of the Confederacy, 'The Extended History', <http://www.moc.org/about-us/extended-history?page=3> and <http://www.moc.org/about-us/extended-history?page=4> (Accessed 22 October 2012).

the constant resistance of enslaved African Americans.<sup>201</sup> Partly funded by the NEH and later developed into a travelling exhibition by the Smithsonian Institute, *Before Freedom Came* has academic integrity and reveals nationally important forgotten elements of US slavery.<sup>202</sup>

The MoC, however, has not shaken off its reputation as a Neo-Confederate institution. In 2007 it considered relocating and removing the word Confederacy from its title. The SCV complained, arguing: “Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy. That’s the place the Museum of the Confederacy should be,” adding that the proposed name change would “dilute the integrity of the museum.”<sup>203</sup> Meanwhile, one Lexington Councillor opposed the museum’s relocation, stating: “the Confederate flag symbolizes slavery, oppression and denying people their rights.”<sup>204</sup> To Waite Rawls, the museum’s director, this controversy highlighted the

“gap between the public’s perception of who we [the MoC] are and the role we play, and the reality of who we are and the role we play,” . . . “The repositioning we have done over the past 30 years is to be more of a modern education institution and less of a memorial . . . to the Confederacy.”<sup>205</sup>

Despite the revisions that the MoC has made, the museum and its supporters still highlight traditional Confederate historical material – for instance, the museum’s online videos focus on subjects such as the ‘Rebel Yell’ and the swords and horses of Confederate heroes.<sup>206</sup> Comments under these videos on YouTube demonstrate the emotion and sympathy that still exist for the Confederacy and its racial ideology. The MoC’s ‘Educational Programs’, however, seek to use such topics to enter into

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<sup>201</sup> Interview with Waite Rawls, John Coski, Kelly Hancock.

<sup>202</sup> Campbell and Rice (eds.), *Before Freedom Came*, p. iv.

<sup>203</sup> Janet Caggiano, ‘Civil War museum to change name?’, *Time-Dispatch* (Tuesday 22 February 2007), <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/3282596/Civil-War-museum-to-change-name-Center-may-drop-the#> (Accessed 26 July 2010).

<sup>204</sup> Mimi Elrod, in Caggiano, ‘Civil War museum to change name?’.

<sup>205</sup> Waite Rawls, in Caggiano, ‘Civil War museum to change name?’.

<sup>206</sup> Museum of the Confederacy, ‘Reuniting with the Sword: Eckhard von Borcke Visits the Museum of the Confederacy’, *YouTube* (30 June 2009), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGsz8OehkLk>; ‘The Rebel Yell Lives: Part I - Rediscovering History’, *YouTube* (23 February 2010), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfHylwq9Ow&feature=relmfu>; ‘The Rebel Yell Lives: Part II - Reenactors Charge Forward’, *YouTube* (22 February 2010), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buZ1M3iN-UE>. See also the museums video page at <http://www.moc.org/wilkinson-video-showcase/view-all> (All accessed 22 October 2012); Malinda W. Collier and John Coski, ‘The Museum of the Confederacy’s Robert E. Lee Collections’, *The Museum of the Confederacy Journal*, 76 (1999).

discussion on how slavery and the Civil War have shaped modern Richmond and the US, including the legacy of racial prejudice, and to interrogate and destabilise Lost Cause historiography.<sup>207</sup>

Museum staff are aware of the fine line they must tread between catering for visitors only interested in Confederate leaders, soldiers, their equipment and battles, and in trying to challenge inherited historical falsehoods and prejudices.<sup>208</sup> The MoC is 'not militant' but aims to be both 'overt and objective' in its discussion of slavery and does not 'fulfil people's desires' for a romanticised celebration of the Confederacy. Coski describes the museum's role as inviting those sympathetic to the Confederacy to come in by saying "Come learn about what your Grandpappy experienced," and when they are in and learning you can say, "but it's not all about your Grandpappy – this [the role of slavery in shaping present-day racism and racial inequality in US society] is what is really important."<sup>209</sup> In this way the museum views its work as enabling reconciliation of the South to its past and between the South's communities in the present.<sup>210</sup>

The VHS similarly encourages visitors to question traditional Lost Cause perspectives. The *John Brown* exhibition asked visitors to consider whether Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry was the act of a madman or of a freedom fighter. Such revisions have faced criticism from traditionalists; as Bill Obrochta, Director of Education at the VHS notes, while for many 'revisionism is a dirty word; history is a constant process of revision.'<sup>211</sup> The VHS, therefore, displays a 'whipping post' from a slave jail in Portsmouth, Virginia to show 'how slavery really was,' and explain that the jail was used not because the slaves had committed a crime but because they were being transported.<sup>212</sup> The VHS, like the MoC's *Before Freedom Came* exhibition also details the long, varied and sustained role slavery played in the US over 250 years. As

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<sup>207</sup> Museum of the Confederacy, 'The Museum of the Confederacy's Educational Programs for School Groups, MoC1896', *YouTube*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgHplTCCAY0> (Accessed 10 June 2010 and no longer available); Museum of the Confederacy, Educational Options for School Groups at The Museum of the Confederacy – Richmond, *YouTube* (24 January 2012), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rd-FyBYtT2o> (Accessed 22 October 2012).

<sup>208</sup> Kelly Hancock, Interview with Waite Rawls, John Coski, and Kelly Hancock.

<sup>209</sup> John Coski, Interview with Waite Rawls, John Coski, and Kelly Hancock.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> Interview with Bill Obrochta, Director of Education, Virginia Historical Society, 17 August 2010.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*



Obrochta explains: 'When Americans think of slavery they think of the last twenty years and of large plantations, but slavery was a constantly changing and flexible institution.'<sup>213</sup> The first slaves existed in a society where slavery was not defined by colour, but where there was a complex sliding scale of free and unfree that included indentured Europeans and indentured, enslaved and free Africans. Slavery in Virginia and especially in Richmond at the end of slavery was largely urban and industrial – yet this is rarely known. For Obrochta, this nuance and complexity must be revealed to the public by historians as it helps to explain how society developed values of racial hierarchy and white supremacy.

Obrochta does not necessarily view the Society's revisionist work as reparation. He sees a museum as too large and impersonal for reconciliatory dialogue that is better suited to small groups where there is greater trust between participants, 'such as churches.'<sup>214</sup> Nevertheless, the VHS views its museum as having a societal function and its historical revision as reflective of a wider desire for the history of race and slavery to be better addressed, particularly from an African American viewpoint. In the build up to the Civil War Sesquicentennial there was an understanding that the whitewash of the centennial commemorations must not be repeated and that the anniversary is not just of the Civil War but also of the end of slavery in the US.<sup>215</sup>

Both the Moc and VHS have sought to change how they represent the history of Virginia and of slavery in order to include and cater to African American perspectives and audiences, reflecting the changing demographics of Richmond and the political changes since the Civil Rights Movement. Also reflecting these changes and reinforcing the revision of the MoC and VHS, is the revision of the Virginia Department of Education's Standards of Learning for History.<sup>216</sup> Frequent revisions to Virginia's Standards have seen them increasingly converge with the National Standards proposed by the NCHS. In 2005 the Standards outlined three main reasons for the Civil War, of which slavery was one. In 2008 (becoming effective in 2010) the revised Standards state that slavery was the foremost reason for the outbreak of the Civil

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<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>216</sup> Interview with Kelly Hancock; Interview with Bill Obrochta; VHS, 'HistoryConnects', [http://www.vahistorical.org/education/education\\_historyconnects.htm](http://www.vahistorical.org/education/education_historyconnects.htm) (Accessed 22 October 2012).

War.<sup>217</sup> However, problems still exist, for example the comparison of the emancipation of slaves to children under 18 being told that they are 'now free of their parents,' could reinforce neo-Confederate ideas of paternalistic slavery and of Africans as being inferior to whites.<sup>218</sup> However, as the 2010 VHS's exhibition and 2010 Teacher Institute, *The Story of Virginia: An American Experience* demonstrate, these revisions enable the history and identity presented in Virginia's schools and museums to become less 'southern' and more 'national.'<sup>219</sup> The revision by traditional bastions of the Lost Cause is testimony to both the changes in southern attitudes towards history and race and how museums are seeking to further societal change by broadening historical memory and challenging traditional ignorance and prejudice.

This trend is replicated in more rural Virginia, notably at Colonial Williamsburg, one of the US's premier historical tourist attractions and part of Virginia's historic triangle which also includes Jamestown and Yorktown, and at Monticello, the home of President Thomas Jefferson. The challenges these institutions face in dealing with this history and presenting previously suppressed elements of it, offer an insight into the wider challenges the US faces in confronting its history of slavery and the legacies this history has in present-day race relations.

Colonial Williamsburg is a large living museum complex that recreates colonial-era Virginia with restored buildings and costumed character actors who interact with visitors. Slavery was first introduced into Colonial Williamsburg historical representations in 1979 and since then the institution has grappled with how best to represent slavery, controversially re-enacting a slave auction in 1994.<sup>220</sup> Despite the controversy, and re-enactments being painful for many actors and viewers, Colonial Williamsburg's efforts to document the history of slavery have been generally well

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<sup>217</sup> Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, *History and Social Science Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* (Richmond, Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education, 2008); Virginia Department of Education, 'Standards of Learning (SOL) and Testing: History and Social Science', [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/history\\_socialscience/index.shtml#sol](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/history_socialscience/index.shtml#sol).

<sup>218</sup> Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, *History and Social Science Standards of Learning: Enhanced Scope and Sequence. United States History: 1865 to the Present* (Richmond: Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education, 2010), p. 18.

<sup>219</sup> Interview with Bill Obrochta; VHS, *The Story of Virginia: An American Experience*, <http://www.vahistorical.org/storyofvirginia.htm>; VHS, 'Teachers Institute', [http://www.vahistorical.org/education/teachersinstitute\\_sov.htm](http://www.vahistorical.org/education/teachersinstitute_sov.htm) (Accessed 22 October 2012).

<sup>220</sup> Horton, 'Slavery in American History', pp. 49-50.

received and 'In the last decade [Colonial Williamsburg] has become a model for other sites in the region.'<sup>221</sup>

As a not-for-profit, private operation, Colonial Williamsburg has to appeal to the American mainstream, and consequently much of what is offered is fairly low-key (for instance, the 'Hands-On Resources' provide the contents of a 'Lady's Pocket,' an 'American Indian Bandoller Bag,' a 'Slave's Bag' and a 'Revolutionary era Soldier's Haversack'), and it is easy to avoid slavery within the village if desired.<sup>222</sup> However, Colonial Williamsburg is also motivated by its founding motto: 'The Future May Learn from the Past.'<sup>223</sup> Colonial Williamsburg seeks to educate the public about American history including the central role of enslaved and free African Americans and of race in US history.<sup>224</sup> Bill White, head of educational programmes, argues that the role of American schools and educators is 'to produce better citizens.'<sup>225</sup> White Americans may feel representing slavery 'shames the nation,' and African Americans often desire not to remember slavery because it is painful, and also fear that discussing slavery re-enforces ideas of black inferiority. But White argues this history needs to be confronted and its impact on the contemporary world recognised. Children, White argues, need to learn that in the past the US has been criticised by some of its citizens and that the US has changed because of these criticisms, because this encourages America's school children to challenge injustices and encourage progressive change.<sup>226</sup>

For Bill White, history cannot be repaired, nor can the historiography, because it is constantly changing due to new evidence, and because as society changes it constantly asks different questions of history. To try and repair history is, therefore, to see history as 'static.'<sup>227</sup> However, education that gives the history of race and slavery its proper share of the historical curriculum constitutes an element of repair within this

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<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>222</sup> Colonial Williamsburg, *Teaching Resources, 2012-2013* (Williamsburg, VA.: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation), p. 6. See also 'Teaching Resources catalog', [http://www.history.org/history/teaching/objects\\_sale.cfm](http://www.history.org/history/teaching/objects_sale.cfm) (Accessed 23 October 2012).

<sup>223</sup> This Motto is inscribed on the walls of the Visitor Center at the entrance to Colonial Williamsburg and also on Colonial Williamsburg's logo, see its website: Colonial Williamsburg, 'Homepage', <http://www.history.org/> (Accessed 23 October 2012).

<sup>224</sup> Colonial Williamsburg, *Teaching Resources, 2012-2013*.

<sup>225</sup> Interview with Bill White, Head of Colonial Williamsburg's educational outreach programmes, 16 August 2010.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

thesis' Intergenerational Model. This is part of what Colonial Williamsburg seeks to do, using online resources, a television studio to broadcast educational dramas to schools around the world, and by providing teachers institutes during the summer in conjunction with the NEH.

Monticello has also struggled with how to incorporate slavery into the history that it presents to visitors. Jefferson is revered as one of the Founding Fathers of the US and lionised as an epitome of the nation's values of freedom and liberty. That Jefferson was also a slave owner, racist and fathered at least one child with his slave Sally Hemings, is still difficult for many Americans to accept.<sup>228</sup> Nevertheless, Monticello does now incorporate this history due to the pressure from African Americans and academics.

That Jefferson owned slaves is no longer ignored by the tour guides at Monticello, but visitors can easily avoid this history if they choose to.<sup>229</sup> For instance, tour guides mention that Jefferson returned from Paris with many expensive cultural and educational items, reminding visitors of what a learned man he was. However, it is rarely mentioned that Jefferson had to sell several slaves in order to pay off debts incurred in Paris.<sup>230</sup> Moreover, whilst the slave quarters and crops are restored, Sally Hemings' bedroom is now a women's toilet.<sup>231</sup> Part of the coyness of Monticello's approach to Jefferson's ownership of slaves and relationship with Hemings is the desire of most visitors not to be confronted with these aspects of Jefferson's life. Surveys conducted in 1999 found that visitors to Monticello viewed Jefferson's relationship with Hemings more favourably than they did President Bill Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinski.<sup>232</sup> The idea that Jefferson behaved deplorably and exploited Hemings cannot be squared with the Jefferson Americans are taught to revere, consequently they choose to believe that it was a romantic love story. Such thinking belittles slavery and its associated crimes. Perhaps it is not until such thinking ends that the black descendants of Jefferson will be entitled to be buried in the Jefferson

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<sup>228</sup> Interview with Leni A. Sorenson, African American Research Historian, Monticello, 16 August 2010.

<sup>229</sup> Lois E. Horton, 'Avoiding History: Thomas Jefferson, Sally Hemings, and the Uncomfortable Public Conversation on Slavery', James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006), pp. 135-149.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>231</sup> Thank you to Marcus Wood for this information.

<sup>232</sup> Horton, 'Avoiding History', p. 147.

family graveyard at Monticello. Maybe at that point, the slaves' graveyard will also be respectfully marked instead of being an easily overlooked piece of unkempt land in the car park. Such developments could offer a symbolic statement that African Americans are finally accepted as equal citizens in Monticello, in Virginia and in the US.

## **Conclusion**

The US is scarred by its past. The nation was built upon slavery and white-supremacy. A Civil War was fought over the place of slavery within the nation and although slavery was abolished, the ideology of white supremacy shaped the peace that followed. As noted at the start of this Chapter, 'unfinished questions of healing and justice, of causes and consequences, of racial disharmony still bedevil our society and our history.'<sup>233</sup> This Chapter has explored whether in the US, as in Britain, schools and museums can facilitate processes of relational repair by incorporating previously excluded historical events and perspectives and has revealed that they potentially can.

Forgotten and suppressed elements of US history and formerly excluded perspectives and interpretations of slavery's legacy are being promoted and white supremacist and neo-Confederate historiography has been denounced as biased, deceptive and, at best, consisting of half-truths. These developments have been spearheaded by a range of bodies including the NPS and NEH; universities and academics; museums; and educational charities. These bodies and the individuals who work in them are motivated by the belief that the teaching of inaccurate history to children does an injustice to these children. Lowen, in *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, encapsulates the arguments of many when he criticises the promotion of traditional historical myths and hero-worship as not only bad, boring history but as dangerous. Teaching children that the US has always been good and acted morally, Lowen argues, leaves children unable to understand the causes of contemporary inequality in the US, including class and gender inequality as well as race based inequality, leaving them

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<sup>233</sup> Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield*, p. 280.

unprepared to tackle these and other problems and leaving the US as less than the equal, meritocracy it claims to be.<sup>234</sup>

The museological, commemorative and educational developments discussed in this Chapter emphasise the important contribution that broadening the history presented by schools and museums could make to repairing societal relationships. The evidence provided supports the wider arguments advanced by this thesis with regard to the need for historical awareness of the foundations of contemporary inequality in order for these inequalities to be recognised and addressed. The relational and attitudinal legacies of slavery, as discussed, manifest themselves in de facto segregation and African Americans experiencing higher levels of unemployment, incarceration, poverty and premature death. Broadening US historical understanding could perhaps also contribute to changing attitudes to those who suffer due to the US's extreme racial and class inequality and offer a contribution to reformers seeking to design policy to tackle these present-day socioeconomic manifestations of slavery's legacy.

As in Britain, the revisions to US historical narrative discussed in this Chapter, have not offered a wider context to the history and legacy of US and transatlantic slavery. Indeed, in the US many museums provide little background to the wider transatlantic slave systems of which the US was part. In both nations legacies of slavery are tied to wider socioeconomic inequalities and therefore a wider historical contextualisation would be beneficial. In the US, tying its history of slavery to wider global histories of slavery and legacies of inequality would also help to counter continuing ideas of US Exceptionalism and underline how the US needs to work with other nations to deliver global justice.

This Chapter has also discussed the pluralism of historical memory in the US in contrast to Britain. This pluralism arguably exacerbates the US's inward looking historical memory, as it heightens the impact of identity politics upon historical memory. The parochial nature of US memory hinders the ability of US citizens to fully understand their history of slavery because it denies them international perspective. To foster international relational repair it is imperative that nations place their specific

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<sup>234</sup> Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*.

histories of slavery and their specific present-day legacies of slavery within an international context. The following Chapter explores how this could happen.

Nevertheless, there is much to learn from how the US's pluralism is both beneficial and harmful to historical truth telling. Bastions to traditional memory more easily survive, but the federal structure of the US and the role of private finance in museums, education and in providing teacher institutes, creates an environment where formerly suppressed controversial histories can be publicised without government support. Therefore, whilst US Federal Government leadership in revising and broadening the nation's memory has been beneficial, and future leadership could further the impact of projects similar to those discussed in the Chapter, the confrontation of traditional historiographical biases does not depend upon this.

In summary, it is clear that a process of confronting excluded historical episodes and perspectives is occurring in the US, but it is equally clear that there needs to be more effort to confront traditional historical prejudices and the mythology of neo-Confederates. Relational repair does not depend upon the creation of single, identical 'collective memory.' However, it does require the holders of differing memory to be able to discuss and tolerate each other's perspectives with mutual respect and empathy. Arguably, the US is still a long way off from such a position.

## **Chapter Five – Transnational Reparatory Potential of Education and Commemoration**

In 2000 the UN unveiled its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which aimed, among other things, to eradicate extreme poverty (those living on less than a dollar a day); provide primary education to all; end gender inequality in primary education; stop the spread of HIV/Aids; and eliminate extreme hunger by 2015. The 2011 biennial progress assessment found that many targets would be missed and where progress had been made, this was in jeopardy due to funding shortfalls exacerbated by the global financial crisis.<sup>1</sup> In North America and Europe, the global financial crisis and recession has seen rising unemployment, tax hikes and benefit cuts hit the poor hardest, while the richest have continued to increase their share of wealth.<sup>2</sup>

The UN MDGs testify to how the world remains divided between rich and poor, often along the old divides of European coloniser and African colonised. China, India and some other Asian, Central American, South American and African countries have experienced significant economic growth despite the global downturn. However, these regions still account for the vast majority of the world's poorest who were the target of the MDGs. This picture is further complicated when one considers that many of the most luxurious houses and apartments in locations such as Paris and London are owned by individuals from Africa, Asia and the Middle East (former colonial territories), whilst millions in the richest nations struggle to survive on benefits or on wages below minimum living standards.<sup>3</sup> This is not to equate first world poverty with

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<sup>1</sup> Further details are available at UN, *United Nations Millennium Development Goals*, [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals) (Accessed 12 November 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Helena Smith, 'Greek poverty so bad families can longer afford to bury their dead', *The Guardian* (19 October 2012), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/18/greece-protests-general-strike-austerity>; Chloe Hadjimatheou, 'Greece's pensioners face looming poverty', *BBC News* (22 August 2012), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19298681>; Sam Jones and Shiv Malik, 'Cutting Housing benefit for under 25's is 'Unworkable and Irresponsible'', *The Guardian* (12 November 2012), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/nov/12/housing-benefit-cut-under-25s> (Accessed 12 November 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Maïa de la Baume, 'A French Shift on Africa Strips a Dictator's Son of His Treasures', *The New York Times* (23 August 2012), [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/24/world/europe/for-obiangs-son-high-life-in-paris-is-over.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/24/world/europe/for-obiangs-son-high-life-in-paris-is-over.html?_r=0) (Accessed 12 November 2012); Hannah Aldridge, Peter Henway, Tom



that in the third world; rather, it is to point out that present-day global injustice is, like the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery and colonialism, more complex than is portrayed by reparations advocates, and that international relations that cause inequality mirror national ones. International inequalities cannot be addressed while national inequalities remain unaddressed.<sup>4</sup> However, awareness of international inequality can also contribute to discussions of nationally specific issues of inequality.

In 2001, as discussed in earlier Chapters, the African Union (AU) with the support of NGOs such as the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America, demanded from Western nations reparations for the underdevelopment of Africa through the slave trade, colonialism and the post-colonial economic world order. This claim represented a culmination of the work of the AU's Group of Eminent Persons (GEP), which had announced in a 1999 'Truth Commission for Africa,' 'that "the root causes of Africa's problems today are the enslavement and colonization of African people over a 400-year period", and that Africans were owed US\$777 trillion in compensation (plus annual interest) and that, presumably there was no African debt to outsiders.'<sup>5</sup> The claim was rejected. As Rhoda Howard-Hassmann notes, Western nations pointed to the continued existence of slavery within Africa and suggested that the reparations claim was an attempt by African nations to divert attention from their own human rights and economic policy failings, and to redistribute global wealth illegitimately.<sup>6</sup> This historical interpretation may be an attempt to expunge any guilt felt by today's westerners about their nations' past actions and, therefore, any compunction to pay reparations. Similarly, the historical interpretation by reparations claimants seeks to exonerate their nation's / Africa's past actions by defining them as inconsequential or benign and the European as all-important and harmful.

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MacInnes and Anushree Parekh, *Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2012* (York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Oxfam, 'The cost of inequality: how wealth and income extremes hurt us all', Oxfam Media Briefing (18 January 2013), <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/cost-of-inequality-oxfam-mb180113.pdf>; Jordan, Chris, 'Western tax avoidance hinders African development', *The Guardian* (11 February 2013), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/feb/11/western-tax-avoidance-restricting-african-development> (Accessed 2 March 2013); Trades Union Congress, *The Corporate Tax Gap* (London: TUC, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, 'Reparations to Africa and the Group of Eminent Persons', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 173-174 (2004), p. 86.

<sup>6</sup> Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (with Anthony Lombardo), *Reparations to Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 37.

This dispute over reparations for Africa reveals how differences in historical memory cause a divergence in how western and African nations evaluate the quality of their relationships and global positions. The Western attitude to colonialism mirrors the attitudes amongst white people in the United States (US), that slavery was not so bad and planters were benevolent and paternal. Many in the West believe that the Europeans were generally benevolent colonial rulers who aimed to improve the African nations they occupied and are unaware of the horrors of colonialism. They need to learn the history of the slave trade; the Herero genocide (an antecedent to the Holocaust); the rape of the Congo; the widespread use of forced labour; and the institution of white supremacist policies of segregation.<sup>7</sup> African nations know this history and are still insulted by memories of the racist ideology that justified it and the failure of Europeans to denounce their past attitudes and actions.

However, African nations tend to focus on the ills of the coloniser and not on the collaboration that often enabled colonisation to occur. Throughout Africa and Asia colonialism depended upon the support of indigenous officials and traditional rulers. Europeans did have industrial, economic and military advantages over Asian and African peoples, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, this was never enough to impose rule and occupation across vast and dispersed swathes of empire. Imperial rule relied upon the employment of indigenous troops and police and mutually beneficial alliances and treaties with local elites, who controlled the population and imposed the designs of the imperial power in return for retaining their local influence, power and prestige.<sup>8</sup> Once this support became widely challenged, largely due to the development of an educated middle class and with it an

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<sup>7</sup> J.M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (London: The Guilford Press, 1993), p. 16; Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, pp. 88-98; Francois Haas, 'German science and black racism – roots of the Nazi Holocaust', *The FASEB Journal*, 22:2 (2008), pp. 332-337; Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (London Pan Books, 2006); Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 12, 30, 293-294; P.L. Pham, *Ending 'East of Suez': The British Decision to Withdraw from Malaysia and Singapore, 1964-1968* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 4; Colin Newbury, *Patrons, Clients and Empire: Chieftaincy and Overrule in Asia, Africa and the Pacific* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 101-124.

ideology of nationalism, the security of the European empires declined.<sup>9</sup> Whilst Europeans could militarily impose imperial rule in one area, it was very difficult to do so simultaneously in multiple areas over disparate empires, especially once domestic support and the economic benefits of empire had decreased.<sup>10</sup>

In remembering the shared histories of transatlantic slavery and colonialism, Western and African nations focus upon those aspects of this history which reflect best upon their behaviour. Arguably, both sides suffer from cognitive dissonance; believing themselves and their nation to be good, they cannot accept that their side may have acted wrongly. As discussed in previous Chapters, the British have traditionally remembered abolitionism and the idea of their being an international force for good by suppressing the slaving practices of others. Memory in the US has limited slavery to the South, enabling the North to forget its involvement. The influence of US Exceptionalism has contributed to US memory of slavery being inward looking and detached from the wider international history of slavery. Both Britain and the US are starting to confront forgotten aspects of the history of slavery and how it has shaped their nations and the perspectives of black people are increasingly being included in British and US historical memory. Internationally there needs to be a similar process. The perspectives of African nations about the history of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism and their legacies need to be incorporated in an expanded and inclusive international memory that includes more of the nuances, complexities and contexts of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery.

To consider how museums and schools could contribute to such a process on an international scale, this Chapter first considers how the principles of restorative transitional justice can be applied to multiple nations by using the concepts of acknowledgment, victim empowerment and truth telling explored in previous Chapters. The Chapter then explores the role of UNESCO in empowering African perspectives in order to decolonize their history. This section focuses on the UNESCO *General History of Africa*, but is also pertinent to Caribbean nations who have looked to UNESCO to help them decolonise and take ownership of their history as they

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<sup>9</sup> R.F. Holland, *European Decolonization, 1918-1981* (London: MacMillan Press, 1985), pp. 5-11, 130-135; Jost Dülffer and Marc Frey (eds.), *Elites and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Darwin, *The Empire Project*, pp. 17-33.

increase their independence and develop their own identity.<sup>11</sup> Such processes have the potential to shape international debates about history, international memory and relations.

Developing this thought, the Chapter then moves onto its main topic, international collaboration, specifically the UNESCO Slave Route Project. The Slave Route Project provides an insight into the benefits that international collaborations can provide in sharing historical information and opinions in order to create a collective international historical narrative and memory. Central to the Slave Route Project is an International Scientific Committee that directs future research priorities whilst also lending support and profile to nationally specific projects that uncover formerly suppressed or forgotten aspects of national history. The Slave Route Project, therefore, highlights the benefit of multiple perspectives, although this can also lead to the production of generalised historical narrative. Nevertheless, this Chapter argues such collaboration offers a route towards establishing a reparative international historical narrative of slavery, colonialism and international racial relations.

The Chapter then considers examples of smaller international collaborative projects. In particular the Chapter explores how twinning projects between schools and museums can create new relationships in which historical perspectives can be shared, national narratives broadened, and empathy for other national historical perspectives increased. This will bring the Chapter to its conclusion and an evaluation of the contribution that international processes of historical revision and memory creation could have on repairing the damaged relationships between the West and Africa.

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<sup>11</sup> UNESCO, 'Regional Conference on "Renovating History Teaching in Africa": the Pedagogical Use of the *General History of Africa*, 10-16 June 2010, Tripoli, Libya, General Report', [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/General\\_History\\_of\\_Africa/GHA\\_GENERAL%20REPORT%20TRIPOLI%202010.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/General_History_of_Africa/GHA_GENERAL%20REPORT%20TRIPOLI%202010.pdf) (Accessed 13 January 2012), p. 6; Interview with Hilary Beckles, Principal of the University of West Indies, Cave Hill, 5 November 2011; UNESCO, *General History of the Caribbean, Volumes 1-6*, [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=35271&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35271&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) (Accessed 17 December 2012); UNESCO has also launched projects on the other regions, including *History of Humanity*, *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, *General History of Latin America*, *The Different Aspects of Islamic Culture*, and *General History of the Caribbean*, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dialogue/general-and-regional-histories/> (Accessed 18 January 2012).

## **The Potential Contribution of Commemoration and Education to International Relational Repair**

An international process of historical truth telling regarding the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery requires three key elements. First, the West needs to acknowledge its responsibility for harming Africa and for benefitting from transatlantic slavery and colonialism.<sup>12</sup> Second, the formerly suppressed perspective of Africa and the African diaspora must be empowered.<sup>13</sup> Third, a holistic and contextualised history must be presented that includes African participation in transatlantic and other slave systems and its shared responsibility for the harmful legacies of slavery. International collaborative projects are suited to the development of a process of historical truth telling leading to relational repair because they are predicated upon the assumption of mutual benefit derived from a shared investigation of suppressed history and sharing different historical perspectives. By incorporating the multiple national historical perspectives, a more nuanced, albeit often more generalised, historical metanarrative can be developed. International projects also benefit national projects investigating suppressed and contested aspects of the history of transatlantic slavery by providing international contextualisation that counters inward-looking memory. This improved metanarrative also provides the basis for repairing the relationship between Africa and the West by potentially creating a mutually accepted, historical narrative and understanding of transatlantic slavery, around which different perspectives become less contentious and more easily empathised with.

European nations have a duty to recognise how transatlantic slavery aided their economic and identity development.<sup>14</sup> In particular, the role of abolition in the development of Europe's belief in its own moral and cultural superiority and its duty to civilise through colonialism must be confronted.<sup>15</sup> Such Eurocentric ideology has been widely discredited, but Europe has a duty explicitly to denounce such ideology rather

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<sup>12</sup> Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 81.

<sup>13</sup> Janna Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past: Reparation and Historical Justice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), pp. 116-117; Linda Radzik, *Making Amends: Atonement in Morality, Law and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 192.

<sup>14</sup> Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past*, p. 27; Radzik, *Making Amends*, p. 185.

<sup>15</sup> Joel Quirk and David Richardson, 'Anti-slavery, European Identity and International Society: A Macro-historical Perspective', *Journal of Modern European History*, 7:1 (2009), pp. 68-92; Srividhya Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 171-210.

than defend colonialism.<sup>16</sup> This is already happening, to a small extent. This thesis has explored developments in Britain, which are symptomatic of a wider pan-European historical revision which has also been influenced by decolonisation, postcolonial theory and changing demographics. Monuments commemorating the slave trade have opened in both France and the Netherlands, which have also seen increased academic, museological and pedagogical interest in the history of slavery and the legacy of racism.<sup>17</sup> The Slave Trade, Slavery Abolitions and their Legacies in European Histories and Identities Project (EURESCL Project) has researched the European history and legacy of slavery and the role of slavery in forming European identity.<sup>18</sup> South American nations are also increasingly confronting the historical importance and contemporary relevance of transatlantic slavery to their nations and society.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*; Radzik, *Making Amends*, pp. 175-198.

<sup>17</sup> NiNsee Slavery Monument Website, <http://www.ninsee.nl/National-Slavery-Monument>; NiNsee Institute, <http://www.ninsee.nl/>; Baratunde Thompson, 'Dutch Slave Monument: Behind the History', *Youtube* (Pioneers Project, 5 April 2009), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvPB62qvS00> (Accessed 13 December 2011); Catherine A. Reinhardt, *Claims to Memory: Beyond Slavery and Emancipation in the French Caribbean* (Oxford: Bergham Books, 2006); Ariela J. Gross, 'All Born to Freedom? Comparing the Law and Politics of Race and the Memory of Slavery in the US and France Today,' *University of Southern California Legal Studies Working Paper Series*, 82 (2011); Marie-Albane Suremain, 'Teaching the History of Africa and Slavery in France: Breaking the Silence and New Ambiguities', Paul E. Lovejoy and Benjamin P. Bowser (eds.), *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning* (Trenton N.J.: Africa World Press, 2012), pp. 141-156; Youenn Cochenec, 'A presentation on educational materials', at *Slavery Memory and Citizenship*, a Summer Institute at the Harriett Tubman Institute, York University, Toronto, August 2011. Thank you to Youenn Cochenec, an educator at the Château des Duc de Bretagne (Castle Museum), Nantes, for his informal discussion about the memory and teaching of slavery in France and the wider EURESCL Project. See also: *Shackles of Memory*, <http://anneauxdelamemoire.org/> and their Wikipedia page [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les\\_Anneaux\\_de\\_la\\_M%C3%A9moire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Anneaux_de_la_M%C3%A9moire) (Accessed 02/02/2012).

<sup>18</sup> EURESCL Homepage, [http://www.eurescl.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1&lang=en](http://www.eurescl.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1&lang=en). For more information on EURESCL please see the projects 'Presentation' page, [http://www.eurescl.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=10&Itemid=8&lang=en](http://www.eurescl.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=10&Itemid=8&lang=en); EURESCL, *Slave Trade, Slavery, Abolitions and their Legacies in European Histories and Identities*, <http://www.eurescl.eu/images/publications/flyer-en.pdf>; EURESCL Education resources, <http://www.eurescl.eu/pe0984/web/> (Accessed 11 January 2012); Douglas Hamilton, Kate Hodgson and Joel Quirks (eds.), *Slavery, Memory and Identity: National Representations and Global Legacies* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012). This book resulted from a EURESCL Project conference in Capenhagen in September 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Lovejoy and Bowser (eds.), *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery*. This book resulted from the 'The Tubman Institute, [who] in partnership with UNESCO, hosted a workshop on the Teaching of African History, November 5-7, 2010. The Workshop was sponsored by the UNESCO "Slave Route" Project, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, Programa del Olvido a la Memoria, UNESCO Universidad de Costa Rica, The Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on the Global Migrations of African Peoples, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Canada Research Chair in

Unfortunately, this thesis is unable to investigate these developments more fully, but it is worth noting the wider international trend of historical revision.

### Decolonising African History: The UNESCO General History of Africa

Truth telling processes require both those who have benefitted to confront their past actions and complicity, and those who have been harmed to have their experiences and perspective on transatlantic slavery and colonialism recognised and acknowledged as valid. Whilst this thesis argues that the historical reality is far more complex and nuanced than reparations advocates often maintain, it also recognises that there is a legacy of transatlantic slavery in need of repair. First, transatlantic slavery was instrumental in the development of European racism and identity construction which in turn greatly influenced the nature of African-European relationships in the colonial and postcolonial era. Thus, the founding of European-African relations, whilst more complex than often recognised, was unequal and the result is unjust, damaged relationships that require repair. Second, repairing damaged relationships depends upon African historical opinion and memory being recognised as equal within international historiography.

Empowering African historical perspectives is essential to repair the international relationships damaged by the history of transatlantic slavery and colonialism, and to empower African self-esteem. As discussed in Chapter One, truth telling provides 'acknowledgment' and is a form of "'justice as recognition.'"<sup>20</sup> Whilst victims of transatlantic slavery cannot speak, as those who have survived recent conflicts can, it is possible to empower the perspectives of those who in the past

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African Diaspora History,' p. 11. See in particular: Monica Lima, 'The Sound of Drums: Teaching and Learning African History and the History of Africans in Brazil', pp. 13-27; Jaime Arocha, 'The Observatory of Afrocolombian, Black, Maroon, and Islander Peoples' Resistance and Memory', pp. 29-45; Darío A. Euraque and Yesenia Martí, 'Africa and the African Diaspora in the Primary and Secondary Curriculums of Contemporary Central America', pp. 47-61; Maria Elisa Velazquez and Christina Verónica Masferrer León, 'Problems and Challenges in Teaching the History of African Cultures, the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: Experiences in Mexico', pp. 69-83. See also Ana Lucia Araujo, 'Public Memory of Slavery in Brazil', Hamilton, Hodgson and Quirk (eds.), *Slavery, Memory and Identity*, pp. 115-130.

<sup>20</sup> Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Paloma Aguilar, and Carmen González-Enríquez, 'Introduction', Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Carmen González-Enríquez and Paloma Aguilar (eds.), *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 25.

would have been victimised, and to promote traditional sources of historical memory, such as oral history, previously discredited and overlooked by Eurocentric historians. Such acts within commemorative and educational projects could provide ‘the opportunity after the fact to stand with the victims of injustice.’<sup>21</sup> Broadening the focus and perspectives of international transatlantic slavery historiography beyond its past Eurocentric narrowness, could contribute to the reshaping of international identities and relationships built upon historical memory.<sup>22</sup>

Reclaiming/decolonising history is important because transatlantic slavery equated to a form of ‘cultural cleansing.’<sup>23</sup> Whilst David Brion Davis has explored how African cultural traits were maintained in the Americas, it is nevertheless the case that African identity was ‘a new diasporic identity that was founded on emerging European perceptions that residents of Africa shared a “racial” essence.’<sup>24</sup> As Ira Berlin notes, ‘Africans were thus a product of the New World, not the Old.’<sup>25</sup> In the post-slavery societies of the Americas and in the colonial societies of Africa and the Caribbean, the process of cultural imposition by Europeans continued.

In European colonies, European institutions and practices were evermore pressed upon colonised peoples as the colonial education system sought to create a class to serve white elites.<sup>26</sup> In the nineteenth century European identity developed through the association of abolitionism with colonialism, Europeans portraying themselves as rescuing Africans from both the slave raiding ‘Mohammadean’ and their own ignorance and barbarism.<sup>27</sup> Education provided a means by which Europeans

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<sup>21</sup> Margaret Urban Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Moral Relations after Wrongdoing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 107.

<sup>22</sup> Teitel, *Transitional Justice*, p. 70.

<sup>23</sup> Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking, 2010), p. 46.

<sup>24</sup> David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 101-102; James Sidbury, *Becoming African in the Americas: Race and Nation in the Early Black Atlantic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 6-7.

<sup>25</sup> Berlin, *The Making of African America*, p. 50.

<sup>26</sup> Yvonne Shorter Brown, *Dead Woman Pickney: A Memoir of Childhood in Jamaica* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2010), p. 94; Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogel-L’Ouverture Publications, 1973), pp. 99, 130-139.

<sup>27</sup> Etienne Felix Berlioux, *The Slave Trade In Africa in 1872: Principally carried on for the Supply of Turkey, Egypt, Persia and Zanzibar* (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, (first edition 1872) 1971); Suzanne Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Problem* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2003), pp. 14-28.



could transpose their values onto colonial subjects in order to engender respect for colonisers amongst the colonised. C.L.R. James notes of his education in Trinidad:

I studied Latin with Virgil, Caesar and Horace, and wrote Latin verses. I studied Greek with Euripides and Thucydides. I did elementary and applied mathematics, French and French literature, English and English literature, English history, ancient and modern European history. . . . As schools go, it was a very good school, though it would have been more suitable to Portsmouth than to Port of Spain.<sup>28</sup>

James' was a British education and, as he recognises in his autobiography, he was 'British.'<sup>29</sup> All European empires taught their colonial subjects to revere the 'mother country' and to think of themselves as belonging to it and finding their identity within it.<sup>30</sup> Local and traditional forms of knowledge and experience were disparaged, and it was taught that 'Africa has no history.'<sup>31</sup> Many African Americans, African British, descendants of African slaves in South America and black subjects of colonies in Africa and the Caribbean, grew up feeling that they did not know their own history or who they were.<sup>32</sup> The desire to discover 'their' history and have their 'truth' told motivated individuals across the African diaspora and Africa, and was a fundamental element within the development of Pan-Africanism.<sup>33</sup> Many historians and other academics thus played a significant role in the independence and nationalist movements that fought for decolonisation, including the likes of James, Eric Williams and Franz Fanon.<sup>34</sup> UNESCO has sought to help independent nations redefine themselves by using history in a similar vein.

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<sup>28</sup> C.L.R. James, *Beyond a Boundary* (London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2005), p. 37.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Howard Johnson, 'The Black Experience in the British Caribbean in the Twentieth Century', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 319-321.

<sup>31</sup> Brown, *Dead Woman Pickney*, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Angelina Osborne, former freelance consultant with Anti-Slavery International and PhD student at WISE, 10 October 2011; Ruth Fisher, Interview with Ruth Fisher, Understanding Slavery Initiative Project Manager and Anna Salaman, Head of Formal Learning, National Maritime Museum, 17 May 2010; Interview with Arthur Torrington, Project Director of the Windrush Foundation and co-founder and secretary of the Equiano Society, 9 June 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Jason C. Parker, *Brothers Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jason C. Parker, "'Made-in-America Revolutions'? The 'Black University' and the American Role in the Decolonization of the Black Atlantic', *The Journal of American History*, 96:3 (2009), pp. 727-750.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Hilary Beckles; Kwame Anthony Appiah, 'Language, Race and the Legacies of the British Empire', Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds.), *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 387-407.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) was established following the Second World War; that 'great and terrible war . . . made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races.'<sup>35</sup> Recognising that cultural ignorance, racism and prejudice have been at the root of most wars and global inequalities, UNESCO seeks to promote world peace through cultural understanding between peoples and nations. UNESCO's constitution argues that lasting world peace will not be built upon 'the political and economic arrangements of governments,' but 'upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.'<sup>36</sup> Such solidarity is only achievable through universal access to education, mutual respect for the cultural practices of others and the 'unrestricted pursuit of objective truth.'<sup>37</sup>

As a promoter of education and human rights, and protector of cultural diversity, UNESCO was ideologically positioned against the colonialism and Eurocentrism of the immediate post-WWII world. Newly independent nations, therefore, approached UNESCO to help protect and promote their history and their understanding of it. UNESCO's multi-volume *General History of Africa* commenced:

In response to a request made in 1964 by newly independent African States that wished to improve knowledge of their past, UNESCO completed in 1999, the publication of the *General History of Africa* with the view of helping Africa to recover ownership of its history while contributing to a better understanding of the continent's contribution to the progress of humanity.<sup>38</sup>

The *General History of Africa* aimed to counter Eurocentric historical narratives of Africa and empower African historical understanding. The head of the International Scientific Committee for the drafting of the General History of Africa, Professor Bethwell Allan Ogot noted in 1979:

At a time when peoples of Africa are striving towards unity and greater cooperation in shaping their individual destinies, a proper understanding of Africa's past, with awareness of common ties among Africans and between Africa and other continents,

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<sup>35</sup> UNESCO, 'Constitution', *Basic Texts: 2004 edition* (Paris: UNESCO, 2004), p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>38</sup> Mamadou Ndoeye, *Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa: Conceptual Framework* (UNESCO), [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/General\\_History\\_of\\_Africa/Conceptual%20Framework%20for%20the%20PU-GHA%20\(Full\)%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/General_History_of_Africa/Conceptual%20Framework%20for%20the%20PU-GHA%20(Full)%20(2).pdf) (Accessed 1 August 2011), p. 3.

should not only be a major contribution towards mutual understanding among the people of the earth, but also a source of knowledge of a cultural heritage that belongs to all mankind.<sup>39</sup>

The *General History of Africa* was not explicitly designed as an instrument of restorative repair; nevertheless, restorative outcomes can be identified. UNESCO Director Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow's preface explained the emotional, psychological and relational significance of countering Eurocentric historiography:

From the time when the notions of 'white' and 'black' were used as generic labels by the colonialists, who were regarded as superior, the colonized Africans had to struggle against both economic and psychological enslavement. . . . This has changed significantly since the end of the Second World War and in particular since the African countries became independent and began to take an active part in the life of the international community and in the mutual exchanges that are its *raison d'être*. . . . I am convinced that the efforts of the peoples of Africa to conquer or strengthen their independence, secure their development and assert their cultural characteristics, must be rooted in historical awareness renewed, keenly felt and taken up by each succeeding generation.<sup>40</sup>

The *General History of Africa* has not had the desired impact, as relatively few schools or education departments in Africa use it.<sup>41</sup> Yet the desire for Africa's history curriculum to be 'decolonized' remains.<sup>42</sup> The AU has prioritised the teaching of African history through its Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015), which calls for greater use of traditional African knowledge systems.<sup>43</sup> UNESCO's *Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa* constitutes a response to calls to help African teachers 'decolonize' their pedagogy.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Bethwell Allan Ogot, 'Description of the Project', J. Ki-Zerbo (ed.), *General History of Africa, Volume 1: Methodology and African Prehistory* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), p. xxv.

<sup>40</sup> Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow (Director-General of UNESCO), 'Preface', *General History of Africa, Volume 1: Methodology and African Prehistory* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), pp. xx-xxi.

<sup>41</sup> Zakari Dramani-Issifou, 'Report on the Current State of History Teaching in Africa', *Pedagogical use of the General History of Africa* (UNESCO, 2010), pp. 10-11.

<sup>42</sup> UNESCO, 'Regional Conference on "Renovating History Teaching in Africa"', p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Olusanya E. Olubausoye, *The Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa: Final Report. A Consultancy Report Submitted to the Directorate of Human Resources, Science and Technology of the African Union Commission* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: African Union, August 2008); African Union, *Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015): Draft Plan of Action* (June 2006), [http://adea-comed.org/IMG/pdf/SECOND\\_DECADE\\_OF\\_EDUCATION\\_FOR.pdf](http://adea-comed.org/IMG/pdf/SECOND_DECADE_OF_EDUCATION_FOR.pdf) (Accessed 12 January 2012).

<sup>44</sup> UNESCO, *Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa Website*, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dialogue/general-and-regional-histories/general-history-of-africa/pedagogical-use-of-the-general-history-of-africa/#c224451> (Accessed 12 January 2012).

The *Pedagogical* project called for modern teaching methods involving active learning, the production of new teaching resources, preferably using African publishers, and the provision of improved initial and continuing teacher training.<sup>45</sup> The project also encourages the use of local African sources, including oral histories, as well as providing a shared curriculum relevant to the entire continent – which would require a serious commitment from all African nations’ education departments and politicians.<sup>46</sup> Ideologically the project is a descendant of Pan-Africanism and has as an ultimate goal, ‘the establishment of the United States of Africa on a federal or confederal basis.’<sup>47</sup> This outcome would, it is assumed, foster greater peace and prosperity for the continent and enable its global position to improve – not an unreasonable assumption given the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union in 2012.<sup>48</sup> The role of education is identified by the *Pedagogical* project as being to create ‘citizens who are aware of their role as stakeholders and their status as beneficiaries of integration’ and ‘young people who are inspired to act as standard-bearers for the ideals of a renewed Pan-Africanism.’<sup>49</sup> However, as discussed, the concept of African identity is a relatively recent development shaped partly in the Americas, and by the politics of anti-imperialism and race pride. It is important to remember this political influence upon the history presented by the *General History*.

The *General History*’s philosophical outlook is encapsulated by the concept of *Sankofa*.

*Sankofa* is derived from the Akan people of West Africa. The term *Sankofa* comes from the words “san” (return), “ko” (go), and “fa” (look, seeks, and take). *Sankofa* teaches us that we must go back to our roots in order to move forward. That is, we should reach back and gather the best of what our past has to teach us, so that we can achieve our full potential as we move forward.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ndoye, *Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa: Conceptual Framework*.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

<sup>48</sup> BBC, ‘Nobel Peace Prize awarded to European Union’, *BBC News* (12 October 2012), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19921072> (Accessed 14 November 2012).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

<sup>50</sup> UNESCO and AU, *The Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa Brochure*, (UNESCO and AU, 2010), p. 2.

*Sankofa* involves the decolonisation of African historical narrative and the use of history to explain Africa's contemporary problems and weak global position and to celebrate African potential. The *Sankofa* narrative is similar to Walter Rodney's underdevelopment thesis and the AU's reparation claim, locating all of Africa's contemporary problems in European actions:

the slave trade, that "endlessly bleeding wound," which was responsible for one of the cruellest mass deportations in the history of mankind, which sapped the African continent of its life-blood while contributing significantly to the economic and commercial expansion of Europe; colonization, with all the effects it had on population, economics, psychology and culture; relations between Africa south of the Sahara and the Arab world; and, finally, the process of decolonization and nation-building which mobilized the intelligence and passion of people still alive and still acting today.<sup>51</sup>

In order to further indict European action and reveal past African greatness and future potential, Africa's past civilisations and their influences are highlighted, for example: 'The most ancient civilizations, including Ancient Egypt, found their origins and inspiration in African peoples themselves and were the fruit of the evolution of these peoples in the face of challenges to their existence.'<sup>52</sup> The interactions between past African societies are also presented as beneficial whilst interaction with Europeans is presented as damaging, for example: 'The Sahara has never been a barrier, but a space of contact and exchange between different people of the African continent' and 'The slave trade, slavery and colonization had a considerable impact on the fragmentation of the continent.'<sup>53</sup> The impact of the Trans-Saharan slave trade is thus downplayed and the impact of transatlantic slavery is heightened.

The *General History* does discuss at some length the prevalence of slavery within Africa prior to European arrival, and also the trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean slave trades. Malowist remarks of the transatlantic slave trade in volume five that: 'It also became clear later that the kings of Asante and Dahomey, and no doubt certain other African rulers, were also definitely opposed to the abolition of the slave trade.'<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> M'Bow, 'Preface', p. xix.

<sup>52</sup> UNESCO and AU, *The Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa Brochure*, p. 6

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6; Ndoye, *Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa: Conceptual Framework*, p. 10.

<sup>54</sup> M. Malowist, 'The struggle for international trade and its implications for Africa', B.A. Ogot (ed.), *General History of Africa, Volume Five: Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Paris: UNESCO, 1992), p. 20.

However, the *General History* excuses both African and Islamic institutions of slavery and slave trade, especially African which, it argues 'differed from that of the Europeans' and was benign because it held the opportunity of enfranchisement.<sup>55</sup> Both the *General History* and *Pedagogical Guide* are distinctly political and present a simplistic historical account which reflects the political expediency of the AU's claim for reparations for slavery and colonialism.

The AU argues that the reparations claim focuses purely on transatlantic slavery because it is pragmatic to focus on a limited history that is clear in its impact and can be evaluated for a reparations claim.<sup>56</sup> Whilst this may be so, it is also a politically conscious decision. The historical narrative of the reparations claim is one that all Africa can unite behind for it exonerates Africa by indicting Europe for Africa's problems. The narrative both counters European colonialist opinions that Africans (black and Arab) could not govern themselves, whilst being politically expedient. All African nations experienced European colonialism and share a resulting antipathy towards Europe which the reparations claim exploits. Seeking to investigate the impact of trans-Saharan slave trade or of domestic slavery would either lead to reparations claims from one member of the AU to another, or for nations to look internally and attempt financial redistribution at home; political elites have no stomach for this in Africa (just as those in Britain and the US avoid similar questions). In this light, the claim by Western nations in 2001 that calls for reparations for slavery and colonialism

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6; D.T. Niane (ed.), *General History of Africa, Volume Four: Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century* (Paris: UNESCO, 1984). This volume argues that indigenous forms of 'slavery' should really be called serfdom rather than slavery and that Islamic and Arab expansion into Africa often involved enslavement but that so too did the European (mainly Portuguese at this time); J.E. Inikori, 'Africa in world history: the export slave trade from Africa and the emergence of the Atlantic economic order', B.A. Ogot (ed.), *General History of Africa, Volume Five: Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Paris: UNESCO, 1992), pp. 72-112, argues that transatlantic slavery helped to develop the European economies of the Atlantic and to under-develop and depopulate Africa; J. Vansina, 'The Kongo kingdom and its neighbours', B.A. Ogot (ed.), *General History of Africa, Volume Five: Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Paris: UNESCO, 1992), p. 572, argues village slaves were likely to remain village slaves but how slaves in a noble house 'and the children of female slaves and noble fathers were equal or almost equal in rank to their father.'

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Blaise Tchikaya, African Union Rapporteur for legal financial reparations to Africa for the transatlantic slave trade.

were utilised to undermine legitimate criticisms of human rights violations and ignored self-inflicted harm by poor and corrupt governance, has some legitimacy.<sup>57</sup>

The politicisation of the *General History* and *Pedagogical Guide* is potentially counterproductive, as it could provide grounds for renewed tensions and prejudice between European and African nations. However, the *General History* does constitute the empowerment of previously suppressed voices and a historical narrative that challenges traditional Eurocentric biases. The *General History*, therefore, offers a position from which African nations can enter into a process of dialogue with Western nations to develop a mutually acceptable and potentially reparative narrative regarding the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Such a process could depend upon each side being flexible and able to amend their claims regarding history when faced with new evidence and perspectives. Such a conception of repair underlines the potential contribution international collaboration in investigating history and in creating educational and commemorative resources could make to repairing the international attitudinal and relational legacies of transatlantic slavery.

### **The UNESCO Slave Route Project**

The UNESCO Slave Route Project furthers the *General History of Africa's* desire to decolonise the history of Africa. Although the Slave Route Project does not focus purely on transatlantic slavery, it does seek to create a situation whereby African academics and opinions upon the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery shape international historiography and memory in contrast to past Eurocentric historiographical dominance. To do this, it brings together academics from around the world to research the history of transatlantic and other slaveries and creates educational resources that raise the profile of historical slavery.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Howard-Hassmann, *Reparations to Africa*, p. 37.

<sup>58</sup> For details on the members of the scientific committee and reports of its meetings see, UNESCO, *Slave Route Project Scientific Committee Restructured*, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dialogue/the-slave-route/spotlight/the-international-scientific-committee-restructured/>. The committee is renewed every two years, for the current committee membership see: UNESCO, 'The International Scientific Committee (ISC) of the UNESCO Slave Route Project (2011-2013)',

The Slave Route Project commenced in 1994 and has five specific areas of interest: '1. Documentary sources, archives and data banks. 2. Research. 3. Education and publications. 4. Physical heritage, museums and cultural tourism. 5. Artistic activities and information.'<sup>59</sup> The Project links smaller research projects that investigate the impact of slavery within a specific nation, stimulating international dialogue and providing international perspectives to national programmes. As part of the effort to further disseminate and promote the work of the Slave Route, UNESCO established national sub-committees to conduct local projects and to publicise international findings. Developments associated with the Project have included the designation of 23 August as International Slavery Remembrance Day and a planned memorial to victims of slavery at the UN's New York headquarters.<sup>60</sup> By linking smaller national projects and facilitating international dialogue the Project has given the history and legacy of slavery, particularly transatlantic slavery, a bigger international profile, adding both credibility and impact to UNESCO's work and that of its partners.<sup>61</sup> In so doing the Project has helped to influence the international debate about slavery and increase global recognition of the importance of confronting the history and the legacy of slavery.

The Project reflects UNESCO's duty to promote education, respect for human rights and cultural understanding and respect for future peace, by coordinating international collaboration in research and education on slavery.<sup>62</sup> The educational focus of the Project is not limited to schools but seeks to utilise tourism to educate adults whilst also funding the preservation of historic sites associated with slavery. The

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<http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Publications/the%20International%20Scientific%20Committee%202011-2013.pdf> (Accessed 12 January 2012).

<sup>59</sup> UNESCO, *First Session of the International Scientific Committee for the 'Slave Route' project* (Ouidah, Benin, 6-8 September 1994), pp. 1-2.

<sup>60</sup> UNESCO, 'Call for participation – International Competition for a Permanent Memorial to Honour the Victims of Slavery' (UNESCO, 11 January 2012), [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dynamic-content-single-view/news/call\\_for\\_participation\\_international\\_competition\\_for\\_a\\_permanent\\_memorial\\_to\\_the\\_honour\\_victims\\_of\\_slavery/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dynamic-content-single-view/news/call_for_participation_international_competition_for_a_permanent_memorial_to_the_honour_victims_of_slavery/). See associated documents available at this page including, 'Message from Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, on the occasion of International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (23 August 2011), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002110/211095e.pdf> (Accessed 13 January 2012).

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Maria Elisa Velazquez, President of the Slave Route Project International Scientific Committee 2011-2013 and Professor at the National School of Anthropology and History, Mexico.

<sup>62</sup> UNESCO, *Basic Texts* (Paris: UNESCO, 2004), p. 8.



Project further undermines traditional Eurocentric biases in historical memory by promoting traditional oral materials, archaeological and historical research regarding the history of slavery and slave trades.<sup>63</sup> The Project provides a case study to examine the potential contribution that international collaboration in educational and commemorative projects could make to repairing the legacy of transatlantic slavery.

To help meet its goal of preserving historic slave sites and educating the global public about historical slavery and its legacy, the Slave Route Project has collaborated with the UNESCO World Tourism Organization 'to identify, restore and promote sites, buildings and places of memory linked to the slave trade and located along slave routes.'<sup>64</sup> The project, entitled *Cultural Tourism – Tourism of Memory*, utilises tourism as a means to both educate and finance the preservation of slavery and slave trade associated sites. The *Tourism of Memory* project was launched in 1995 in Ghana, 1999 in the Caribbean, and later in the Indian Ocean; a pattern that reflects the general prioritisation of transatlantic slavery within the Slave Route Project. The utility of tourism is reflected in 'The theme of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Caribbean Workshop on the UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme of the Slave Route Project was "Claiming Our Future In The Past".'<sup>65</sup> The preservation of slave sites and their promotion for tourism reflects how Caribbean nations are 'eliminat[ing] the silence and invisibility that surround slavery and the slave trade' and presenting this history on their own terms.<sup>66</sup> Further, the potential financial boon of tourists visiting preserved historic sites offers the Caribbean a future income. The emphasis placed by this project on cultural legacies of transatlantic slavery also encourages a greater respect for and promotion of African influenced cultural practices.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Alaba Simpson (ed.), *Oral tradition relating to slavery and slave trade in Nigeria, Ghana and Benin* (Paris: UNESCO, 2004).

<sup>64</sup> UNESCO, *Cultural Tourism – Tourism of Memory*, [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=27534&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=27534&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) (Accessed 12 January 2012).

<sup>65</sup> UNESCO, *Report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Caribbean Workshop on the UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme of the Slave Route Project* (Paris: UNESCO, 2000), p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Rex Nettleford, 'Heritage Tourism: A Vehicle to the Understanding of a People', UNESCO, *Report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Caribbean Workshop on the UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme of the Slave Route Project*, p. 11.

<sup>67</sup> UNESCO, *Slave Route Project Newsletter No. 4* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), p. 3.

In Ghana, heritage tourism and the attraction of African American tourist dollars are significant elements of governmental economic policy.<sup>68</sup> The 'preservation, restoration and promotion of numerous slave relics in Ghana [provided] a very important element of the country's 15 Year National Tourism Development Plan (1996-2010).'<sup>69</sup> The European coastal forts, especially Elmina and Cape Coast, are major tourist attractions, designated as UNESCO world heritage sites. Elmina and Cape Coast castles were developed into museums in the mid-1990s with money from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institute, further raising their profile and prestige in the US. This project illustrates how international collaboration on historical research and the development of educational and commemorative resources can help develop international professional and institutional relationships which encourage the internationalisation of historical memory.<sup>70</sup>

Ghana has sought to portray itself as being at the centre of the slave trade, and to promote the sense of shared brotherhood and victimhood with African Americans to 'Ensure that Ghana becomes known as the "homeland" for Africans in the Diaspora.'<sup>71</sup> This reflects Ghana's desire to attract African American tourist dollars by building on traditional Pan-African sentiment and links.<sup>72</sup> Ghana was a leading African nation in the launch of the Slave Route Project and advocates a historical interpretation influenced by Rodney's underdevelopment thesis. At the '2<sup>nd</sup> Caribbean Workshop on the UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme of the Slave Route Project, August 2-4, 2010,' the Ghanaian Tourism Minister, Michael Gizo 'reminded

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<sup>68</sup> Benjamin W. Kankpeyeng, 'The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana: Landmarks, Legacies and Connections', *Slavery and Abolition*, 30:2 (2009), pp. 209-210.

<sup>69</sup> Michael Gizo, 'The Policy of Ghana towards Restoration and Promotion of the Physical Heritage of the Slave Trade – the linkage between the Caribbean and Ghana Experience', UNESCO, *Report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Caribbean Workshop on the UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme of the Slave Route Project*, p. 37.

<sup>70</sup> Vera Hyatt, 'The Cape Coast Castle Museum Development Project', UNESCO, *Report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Caribbean Workshop on the UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme of the Slave Route Project*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>71</sup> Republic of Ghana, *Seventh Draft, National Tourism Policy: Government of Ghana, Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations* (Ghana: Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations, 2006), p. 27.

<sup>72</sup> Attracting tourism is vital to African economies. In 2009 it was reported that Marlon Jackson was to invest in a slave memorial/museum to Michael Jackson at the former slave port of Badagry, Nigeria. Andrew Walker, 'Jackson star in resort row', *BBC News* (16 February 2009), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7858010.stm> (Accessed 18/01/2012).

participants that Ghana was centre stage for the “entire saga” of the slave trade . . . “the worst atrocity in human history.”” Gizo went on to ‘appeal to all nations that took part in the slave trade to contribute generously to the process of recovery and restoration of relics of the slave trade before they disappear. He said that it was necessary for the restoration of the human spirit and the sake of world peace.’<sup>73</sup> Further promoting the sense of oneness between Ghanaians and African Americans and others in the African diaspora, ‘Ghana, in February 2000, promulgated an Act which provides for the “Right to Abode” to “formalize the homecoming.”’<sup>74</sup> This idea of ‘homecoming’ reflects the inherent importance of the continent of Africa to Pan-African identity and echoes the decision of Du Bois to take Ghanaian citizenship in 1963.<sup>75</sup>

The historical narrative presented by the Ghanaian government, represented by Gizo’s comments above, is strikingly similar to the arguments of the AU GEP and Rodney’s underdevelopment thesis. But the reality of the history of slavery in Ghana is much more complex and nuanced than this. Chapter Two noted how the first slaves traded by Europeans on the West African coast were exchanged for gold in what is now Ghana and that some prominent West African families’ wealth and position can be traced back to the transatlantic slave trade.<sup>76</sup> In 2007 at an international conference remembering slavery in Ghana, a northern Ghanaian Chief called for reparations from southern Ghana.<sup>77</sup> The coastal south, he argued, had raided the north for slaves and the north remained poorer to this day as a result of the consequent underdevelopment. The wider history of Ghanaian slavery and the role of Ghanaians in trading slaves to Europeans remains largely ignored in Ghana.<sup>78</sup> It is clear that whilst

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<sup>73</sup> Gizo, ‘The policy of Ghana towards Restoration and Promotion of the Physical Heritage of the Slave Trade’, pp. 37-38.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>75</sup> Manning Marable, *W.E.B. Du Bois: Black Radical Democrat* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986), p. 213.

<sup>76</sup> Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving ‘Port’, 1727-1892* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004), p. 279.

<sup>77</sup> Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, *The bloody Writing is forever Torn* (Williamsburg, VA.: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2009). A DVD produced using material recorded from the conference “‘The bloody Writing is forever torn’: Domestic and International Consequences of the First Governmental Efforts to Abolish the Atlantic Slave Trade’, convened by OIEAHC in Accra and Elmina, Ghana, August 8-12, 2007.

<sup>78</sup> Ella Keren, ‘The Transatlantic Slave Trade in Ghanaian Academic Historiography: History, Memory and Power’, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 66:4 (2009), pp. 976-1000.

the Slave Route Project has promoted African perspectives about the general nature and impact of transatlantic slavery, it has not yet facilitated a holistic history of slavery that confronts suppressed aspects of African involvements in transatlantic and African slavery and the legacies of these histories in Africa. In Ghana ‘Little scholarly attention has been given to this internal diaspora’ and Ghanaian involvement in slavery, and ‘To make matters worse, the external diaspora has also been conceptualised rather narrowly, ignoring the enslaved blacks of the Arab world.’<sup>79</sup>

The Slave Route Project is not limited to Africa. For example, Mexico has been involved in the Slave Route Project since it was established in 1994. Prior to 1994, Mexico refused to admit that it had been part of the transatlantic slave system.<sup>80</sup> The Project provided profile and political weight to academics in Mexico campaigning for the Government to recognise evidence that demonstrates the presence of African slaves in Mexico’s past and of their descendants in present-day Mexico. As Maria Elisa Velazquez, President of the International Slave Route Committee, 2011-2013, and Professor at the National School of Anthropology and History, Mexico, explains: ‘Mexico has a problem with racism but doesn’t know why.’ Exploring the history of slavery within Mexico enables the attitudes of racism to be deconstructed and tackled. The revelation of this history to all Mexicans, of European, African and indigenous heritage, is a ‘right,’ argues Velazquez, adding, ‘if you don’t know your history, you don’t know why you/we are the way we are.’ The history of slavery in Mexico is now being increasingly recognised. The challenge is to make sure that this history is not just recognised as African Mexican history but as ‘part of all Mexicans’ history.’<sup>81</sup>

While in Africa the historical narrative presented by the Slave Route Project may be simplistic and narrowly focused, in the wider Atlantic world the Project has helped promote the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. By establishing partnerships with other organisations commemorating transatlantic slavery – such as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Traces of the Trade, the Merseyside Maritime Museum / International Slavery Museum (ISM), Anti-Slavery International (ASI), Shackles of Memory, and EURESCL – the Slave Route Project can be

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<sup>79</sup> Kankpeyeng, ‘The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana: Landmarks, Legacies and Connections’, pp. 209-210.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Maria Elisa Velazquez.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*; Velazquez and León, ‘Problems and Challenges in Teaching the history of African Cultures, the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: Experiences in Mexico’.

identified as a vehicle that promotes formerly forgotten and suppressed historical events and perspectives, challenging traditional Eurocentric historiography and memory.

In 2004 the UNESCO Slave Route Project reflected on the accomplishments of its first ten years and the work still to do. 2004 was a poignant year as it was also the Bicentenary of Haitian Independence. This anniversary illustrated that much still needed to be done to overcome the global legacies of transatlantic slavery and the attitudes of racism it helped developed. The potential reparative impact of broadening historical memory to include previously excluded historical events and perspectives was explicitly recognised by UNESCO. Koichiro Matsuura, Managing Director-General of UNESCO, noted:

By institutionalizing memory, resisting the onset of oblivion, recalling memory of a tragedy that for long years remained hidden or unrecognized, and by assigning it its proper place in the human conscience, we respond to our duty to remember. To that end, we must promote the history of the slave trade and slavery, and make it known to the general public; we must devote ourselves to rigorous scientific research that highlights the whole historical truth about the tragedy in a constructive perspective. As a matter of urgency this major episode in the history of humanity, whose consequences are permanently imprinted in the world's geography and economy, should take its full place in the school textbooks and curricula of every country in the world.

...

Through this restitution of history it should be possible to establish an appropriate framework for the promotion of a fair dialogue between peoples with due regard for the universality of human rights and to confirm our commitment to combat all contemporary forms of slavery and racism, as we are invited to do by the final Declaration adopted by the Durban Conference. Understanding and analysing in depth this historical experience will surely enable us to understand more fully the discrimination that is manifest in today's world, and to commit ourselves with reinforced conviction to the fundamental values of human dignity, with a view to building a worthy and lasting future.<sup>82</sup>

However, the underdevelopment thesis and reparations advocacy has had an important role in shaping UNESCO's historical understanding. This historical

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<sup>82</sup> Koichiro Matsuura, 'Message from the Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and Its Abolition', Katerina Stenou (eds.), *Struggles against slavery: International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition* (UNESCO, 2004), p. 42.

perspective is replicated in the Slave Route Project's primary educational resource, *Breaking the Silence*, the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project (TST Project), established in 1998. The Slave Route Project is wider than transatlantic slavery and, although the ASPnet TST project is limited to transatlantic slavery, it offers an insight into the predominant historical perspectives of the Slave Route Project.<sup>83</sup> *Breaking the Silence* seeks to promote dialogue about the history of transatlantic slavery in order to tackle the divisions it caused, as well as colonialism.<sup>84</sup> It disseminates the research of the Scientific Committee to the future citizens of the world, partly through the *Breaking the Silence* website.<sup>85</sup> The Project can be seen as enabling restorative dialogue by opening up the topic to scrutiny and debate by academics and school children from across the Atlantic world.

A critical tool in stimulating dialogue and enabling education is the provision of globally accessible resources, provided through the *Breaking the Silence* website developed by ASI.<sup>86</sup> The website has eight modular sections which develop historical themes outlined by the ASPnet TST Project's Program of Study. The themes 'cover the period in African history before the TST to the rise of post-slavery African diaspora communities throughout the Atlantic World' and while 'organised in a fashion that suggests some degree of chronology, no rigidity is necessary for effective delivery.'<sup>87</sup> In keeping with wider UNESCO aims, *Breaking the Silence* counters traditional Eurocentric historiography and emphasises Haitian revolutionaries and slave narratives alongside British, French and American abolitionists. The silence over modern slavery is also broken and students are encouraged to be inspired by past anti-slavery campaigners to make the world a better place (not unlike the global citizenship concept developed by

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<sup>83</sup> Ulrike Storost et al, *Teaching the Transatlantic Slave Trade: Achievements, Challenges and Perspectives. Final Report of the interregional online consultation of the UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet) 30 November to 16 December 2010* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), p. 5.

<sup>84</sup> Hilary Beckles, *Slave Voyages: The Transatlantic Slave Trade in Enslaved African* (Paris: UNESCO, 2002), pp. 10-11.

<sup>85</sup> Anti-Slavery International and UNESCO, *Breaking the Silence*, <http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/> (Accessed 17 December 2012).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*; Storost et al, *Teaching the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, p. 12. See also UNESCO, *Breaking the Silence: The Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project* (Paris: UNESCO, 2004), p. 12.

<sup>87</sup> Hilary Beckles, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade Project (TST): A Programme of Study* (UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001876/187640eo.pdf> (13 September 2011), p. 3.

British educational resources discussed in Chapter Three). It is unfortunate, however, that once again the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery is taken out of the wider history of slavery and inequality.

*Slave Voyages* is an 'Education resource for teachers prepared with the financial assistance of NORAD (Norway), for "Breaking the Silence."'”<sup>88</sup> Written by Slave Route Project Scientific Committee member and Principal of the University of West Indies, Cave Hill, Sir Hilary Beckles, *Slave Voyages* provides a succinct yet detailed introduction to the history of Africa prior to the start of trade with the Europeans; the trade in slaves between Europeans and Africans on the West coast of Africa; the development of slavery in the new world and how slavery fostered the development of racism; and the legacies of transatlantic slavery and racism on both sides of the Atlantic. The narrative *Voyages* presents echoes the underdevelopment thesis. How Africans were 'othered' and dehumanised by Europeans is emphasised, but the complexities of African involvement with slavery is not. Beckles writes:

In the Americas, a long-standing concern of the descendants of both the enslaved Africans and of the slave owners has been to come to terms both with the racial nature of the slave system and with the persistence of the institutional racism that emerged from it. More recently, there has been a growing interest in the nature of the participation of the African trading elites in supplying the slaves. These are legitimate interests and concerns, and they are central to understanding the forces that have made up the modern world.

This book's focus, however, is on the slave trade itself, the beginnings of which are usually dated to 1502, when the first references to enslaved Africans appeared in Spanish colonial documents, and which ended in the 1860s. Though there is no attempt here to present a meaningful assessment of the trade in enslaved Africans that took place across the Sahara or in the Indian Ocean, the rise of the trade, should, however, be understood in the context of the westward movement of slave trading in Africa first competing with, and then replacing, the older, eastern slave trade. According to the historian Patrick Manning, while some six million slaves were sent eastward from West Africa between 1500 and 1900, an estimated 10 million were shipped westwards to the Americas.<sup>89</sup>

One of the reasons for the decision to focus on transatlantic slavery is the belief that the racial and perpetual, intergenerational nature of slavery in the new world constitutes a 'significant departure from traditions of local and trans-Saharan slave

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<sup>88</sup> Beckles, *Slave Voyages*, p. 1.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

trading.<sup>90</sup> Whilst arguing that context is important to fully understanding this history and its legacy, the history developed by UNESCO largely fails to develop these areas, much as national projects in 2007 in England, and projects in the US, fail to add the context of other slaveries and systems of exploitation.

In *Slave Voyages* there is a level of context provided by contrasting the development of colonial communities and legal systems with the development of enlightenment thought, while showing how the legal system of the colonies was still based on metropolitan legal concepts, especially property.<sup>91</sup> The use of state-sanctioned violence to intimidate the black community, both slave and free, is heavily emphasised. For example, Beckles writes that in the English colonies 'Slaves found guilty of serious offences, or even suspected of such offences, were put to death, with public torture being used to deter potential offenders. In addition, English-owned slaves could be gibbeted, castrated, branded with hot irons, dismembered, or locked in dungeons for unlimited periods as punishments for insubordination.'<sup>92</sup> However, the use of state violence in England and Europe is not discussed.<sup>93</sup> State violence was used to maintain social and political hierarchies across Europe and Africa and slavery or forms of unfreedom were commonly a part of these systems. That state violence as a tool of protection for privilege should transpose from the old European world to the new colonies is not surprising, especially as the wealth in these colonies depended on the forced labour of people who were imported and easily identified as different due to skin colour. Appreciation of the wider complexity of this history, both its causes and legacy, does not diminish the legacy of racism. Instead it places that legacy in a wider catalogue of humanity's ability to denigrate and exploit those less fortunate, and to justify inequality and injustice as natural. This centres the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery within a wider criticism of humanity and should provoke all nations to examine their present-day socioeconomic relationships and their relationships with other nations, to ask if they are just and take remedial action if they are not.

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-69.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>93</sup> David Garland, *The Peculiar Institution: America's Death Penalty in the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press of University of Harvard Press, 2010), pp. 24-25 and Chapter Two, 'The American Way of Death', pp. 39-69.



These criticisms are not new, but this thesis is the first to develop the analysis of their implications. Individuals within UNESCO have called for greater contextualisation of the history of slavery. In 2006, at the First Meeting of the Renewed Scientific Committee of the Slave Route Project, it was argued that the Project needed to 'Produce a strategic plan of action for the Indian Ocean as well as for the Arab and Muslim world' and that that project should expand into the 'Arab-Muslim World, Asia and the Andes.'<sup>94</sup> In 2010 the Slave Route Project launched an educational documentary, *Slave Routes: A Global Vision* (the DVD includes a bibliography of texts to use in researching or teaching slavery; a knowledge assessment fact sheet; a quiz; and an introduction booklet giving information about the topics covered in the documentary film), which demonstrates how the Slave Route Project is beginning to provide a greater contextualisation, nuance and geographical vision to its representation of the history and legacy of slavery.<sup>95</sup>

The guide accompanying the *Global Visions* DVD notes how the DVD 'provides an opportunity to place the black slave trade and slavery in a broader context and to shed some light on the various questions that can be raised.'<sup>96</sup> There is also an explicit recognition that transatlantic slavery cannot be understood without the historical context of other slaveries: 'Transatlantic slavery and its particular brutalities and its racialized social relationships was a variant on a more general dichotomy of how people have traded each other, as belonging to a community, however defined, or not.'<sup>97</sup> The impact of transatlantic slavery on both Europe and Africa is more nuanced in the guide than previous examples of UNESCO documents. The guide recognises that some African people acquired extreme wealth and power from trading slaves with Europeans, and that transatlantic slavery was not the only cause of industrialisation in Europe. It takes a moderate and nuanced stance recognising the mutual aspect of trade and responsibility while concluding that 'When the 'gains' for the 'West' are set alongside the 'losses' for Africa, the Atlantic slave trade was thus a central element in

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<sup>94</sup> Aisha Bilkhair Khalifa and Jocelyn Chan-Mow, 'First Meeting of the Renewed International Scientific Committee of the Slave Route Project', *UNESCO, Paris, 22-24 February 2006: Final Report* (UNESCO), pp. 5, 8, 10-11.

<sup>95</sup> UNESCO, *Slave Routes: A Global Vision DVD* (Paris: UNESCO, 2010).

<sup>96</sup> UNESCO, *Slave Routes: A Global Vision* (Paris: UNESCO, 2010), p. iv.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

shaping globalization and defining the modern world.’<sup>98</sup> It is perhaps a sign that those who work on the Slave Route Project are becoming less polarised in their historical interpretation; an illustration of how establishing dialogue and relationships can help broaden all people’s historical understanding, leading towards a holistic, international, historical narrative of transatlantic slavery. This sign is also perhaps becoming a trend; indeed, broadening the horizon of the Project was a keen objective of the former Slave Route Director, Ali Moussa Iye. In 2012 UNESCO held a conference on Islamic slavery in Africa and the Indian Ocean, which built upon an earlier 2007 symposium held in Morocco.<sup>99</sup>

Despite the Slave Route Project’s often overly simplistic interpretation of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, a reflection of the influence of the AU and its politically motivated adherence to Rodney’s underdevelopment thesis, it does have reparative potential. It seeks to overthrow the biased historical falsehoods and silences of Eurocentric historiography; empowers formerly suppressed experiences and perspectives; and recognises that only by a process of dialogue can those divided by history reappraise each other and build new just relationships with each other. Therefore, while the history presented by UNESCO may have been troubled by biases inverse to the Eurocentric history it seeks to overturn, the Slave Route Project illustrates the potential international collaboration could make to the creation of new collective, international historical narrative upon which relational repair could be developed.

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>99</sup> See also the programme for ‘The Cultural Interactions Resulting from the Slave Trade and Slavery in the Arab-Islamic World, Rabat and Marrakech, Morocco, 17 – 19 May 2007’ (UNESCO, 2007), <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/dialogue/pdf/Programme%20International.pdf>. For details about the 2012 conference see: ‘Meeting of the International Scientific Committee of the Slave Route Project and International Conference on: “Slave Trade and Slavery in the Arab Islamic World: Untold Tragedy and Shared Heritage”’ (UNESCO, 2012), [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/programme-meetings/?tx\\_browser\\_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=6130&cHash=d50a7ada71](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/programme-meetings/?tx_browser_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=6130&cHash=d50a7ada71); ‘International Conference on “Slave Trade and Slavery in the Arab Islamic World: Untold Tragedy and Shared Heritage”’, (The Harriet Tubman Institute, 2012), [http://harriet.tubman1.yorku.ca/events/international\\_conference\\_on\\_slave\\_trade\\_and\\_slavery\\_in\\_the\\_arab\\_islamic\\_world\\_untold\\_tragedy\\_](http://harriet.tubman1.yorku.ca/events/international_conference_on_slave_trade_and_slavery_in_the_arab_islamic_world_untold_tragedy_); Myrium Cottias, ‘Conference Announcement’, *H-Net* (2012), <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=H-Slavery&month=1203&week=a&msg=ap2h15E9m0QOKFSwVf1/OQ> (Accessed 15 November 2012).

### **Building Future Relationships: International Twinning Projects**

Collaborative educational and commemorative projects enable a process of relational repair to occur by establishing the parameters of dialogue between those who contest the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Examples explored above have focused on the research and presentation of history in collaborative projects and how this enables a process of relationship development and the empowerment of formerly suppressed perspectives. Educational projects offer the possibility of repairing relationships by teaching revised historical interpretation, thereby altering the national identity formation of participating school children, and thus potentially the basis of how a country acts towards others in the future. For this reason, UNESCO and other organisations seek to establish international school twinning projects. School twinning can, at the very least, increase student awareness about the lives and cultures of students in other nations – hopefully reducing stereotypes and increasing tolerance. Potentially twinning projects can create strong and equitable relationships which can enable twinned classes to develop projects that explore contested and divisive history, such as transatlantic slavery. By approaching this history together, opposing viewpoints can be expressed and there is the potential to create on a small scale a shared and healing history.

The ASPnet TST Project facilitates the twinning of schools in different countries in order to enable intercultural dialogue, the creation of shared curricular resources and the establishment of relationships between students and teachers.<sup>100</sup> Annually the UN's New York headquarters plays host to a student videoconference marking the International Day to Commemorate the Slave Trade.<sup>101</sup> The 2010 conference brought together in person, and by video conferencing, children from across the Atlantic world to discuss what they had been learning about the history of transatlantic slavery and how their countries are linked by this history.<sup>102</sup> This project was potentially reparative, for it established relationships between students, enabled the sharing of

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<sup>100</sup> Storost et al, *Teaching the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>101</sup> UN, *Press Release, Note No. 6382* (13 March 2013),

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/note6382.doc.htm> (Accessed 28 June 2013).

<sup>102</sup> UN Cyberschoolbus, 'Participate in a Live Video Conference on the Transatlantic Slave Trade', <http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/slavetrade/vconference/overview10.asp> (Accessed 18 January 2012).

differing perspectives and a greater understanding of the complexity of transatlantic slavery's history and legacy.

UNESCO encourages international student projects and school twinning to counter the legacies of transatlantic slavery and colonialism. The All Equal in Diversity campaign was launched as part of Breaking the Silence in 2005 because 'The struggle against slavery is far from over.'

"Breaking the Silence", the Transatlantic Slave Trade (TST) Education Project, carried out since 1998 by the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), provides the answer. Some 100 schools in Africa, the Americas/Caribbean and Europe participate in the TST Education project. Their opinions and commitment have formed the basis of the "All Equal in Diversity" International Campaign. By deepening their understanding of the past, these schools work towards a better understanding of the present so as to build a brighter future based on mutual respect and unity in diversity, thus contributing substantially to the quality of education in the twenty-first century.<sup>103</sup>

An associated project of UNESCO's Slave Route Project, the ISM has also sought to link international schools together through transatlantic slavery educational activities. Developed with PLAN UK, the ISM's project Make the Link, Break the Chain was a central part of the museum's 2007 Bicentenary commemorations.<sup>104</sup> Make the Link, Break the Chain utilised British embassies to facilitate web-chats and involved 240 children from eight schools from England (Liverpool region), Haiti, Brazil, Senegal and Sierra Leone. The participating schools all used the same lesson plans and discussed the same three questions: 'What is Slavery? What does it mean to be free? How can we safeguard liberty?'<sup>105</sup> The children then designed webpages reflecting upon these questions and describing their lives, hobbies and where they lived. The children were

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<sup>103</sup> UNESCO ASPnet, 'Breaking the Silence': The Transatlantic Slave Trade (TST) Education Project, *All Equal In Diversity: International Campaign Mobilising schools against racism, discrimination and exclusion* (Paris: UNESCO), p. 2, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001401/140155e.pdf> (Accessed 12 January 2012).

<sup>104</sup> Plan Ed, <http://www.plan-uk.org>; National Museums Liverpool, *Make the Link, Break the Chain*, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/projects/makethelinkbreakthechain/index.aspx> (Accessed 26 October 2011).

<sup>105</sup> Plan Ed and National Museums Liverpool, *Make the Link: Break the Chain* (PowerPoint presentation provided by Paul Khan). See also the National Museums Liverpool, *Make the Link, Break the Chain*, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/projects/makethelinkbreakthechain/index.aspx>; David Fleming, 'Transatlantic slave trade – exploring the legacy', Presentation at National Museums Liverpool during the AFRICOM conference, 5 October 2006, *National Museums Liverpool*, <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/resources/africom.aspx> (Accessed 13 January 2012).

introduced to how different nations reflect upon transatlantic slavery and how humanity and childhood transcend nationality and living conditions. Traditional stereotypes held about other nationalities and traditional historiographies were thereby challenged and new relationships were enabled.<sup>106</sup>

Creating a shared history is important, but a shared history does not require a homogenous memory or exclude nationally specific legacies of slavery or the celebration of specific African cultural influences. Accordingly, Brazilian children learned about the slave origins of Capoeira and the hip hop origins of graffiti.<sup>107</sup> Cultural expression was also channelled to express the emotional and political reactions of the student participants and: 'In Haiti, the story of a child enslaved by her aunt provided the inspiration for a sculpture in metal, showing the child being beaten by her owner.'<sup>108</sup> In Sierra Leone pupils composed antislavery songs and recorded a video documentary. In Senegal pupils re-enacted a contemporary story about a slave, featuring a child working as a housemaid (later developed into a short film).<sup>109</sup> In conjunction with Clapperboard UK, English students produced four films about the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, demonstrating that young people not only developed international relationships but were empowered to believe that 'young people can make politicians understand what they think of the history and make a difference in the future.'<sup>110</sup>

Make the Link, Break the Chain strove to enable 'young people to gain an understanding of transatlantic slavery history and its legacies and of the benefit of the black diaspora to the world.'<sup>111</sup> Countering traditional Eurocentric historiography, the

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Paul Khan, Deputy Director of Education, Communities and Visitors at National Museums Liverpool, 22 February 2011. See also *Make the Link Break the Chain* (PowerPoint presentation).

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*; National Museums Liverpool, 'Make the Link, Break the Chain, Student Videos', <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/projects/makethelinkbreakthechain/videos.aspx> (Accessed 13 January 2012).

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Paul Khan; Children involved in the project were also able to interview politicians and footballers including the then British Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, and then West Ham player Nigel Reo-Coker. Videos available via PLAN Ed, [http://www.plan-edresources.org/resource\\_center/result/age\\_range\\_id/1/region\\_id/1/country\\_id/1/issue\\_id/42/project\\_id/1/page\\_action/search/media\\_type\\_id/5](http://www.plan-edresources.org/resource_center/result/age_range_id/1/region_id/1/country_id/1/issue_id/42/project_id/1/page_action/search/media_type_id/5) (Accessed 13 January 2012).

<sup>111</sup> Interview with Paul Khan.

project encouraged equality and a shared sense of global citizenship to inspire school children with the actions of those who resisted and fought against slavery. The motto, 'Think Global, Act Local' reinforced this message with relation to the legacies of transatlantic slavery, including racism, global injustice and 'contemporary issues of modern slavery.'<sup>112</sup>

The ASPnet organised student conferences and 'Make the Link Break the Chain,' both contributed to a process of restorative repair as 'intercultural experiences [that] could help students build important knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for global citizenship in the 21st century. Students practised the ideals of learning to live together through self-reflection and used active dialogue to understand the other.'<sup>113</sup> Such projects also help create dialogue and relationships between teachers. This is important, as teachers direct the learning of their students and influence their schools' wider teaching of history. The ASPnet organises teacher training workshops, an example being that held in Accra in August 2011 to celebrate both Slavery Remembrance Day on 23 August and UNESCO's '2011 International Year for People of African Descent.'<sup>114</sup> This conference brought together teachers from around the Atlantic 'triangle.' The event enabled school twinning projects to be developed and the teachers to gain insight into the mutual challenges and sensitivities of teaching this history in different countries. The positive impact that such conferences can make to international relationships is recognised by UNESCO ASPnet, with the intended outcome of such conferences, and twinning projects that develop from them, understood to include 'positive attitudes through intercultural dialogue promoting understanding and a commitment to work towards a future free from racism, discrimination, and intolerance.'<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> Storost et al, *Teaching Transatlantic Slave Trade*, p. 20.

<sup>114</sup> UNESCO, '23 August: Teachers from three regions learn lessons about the slave trade', [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/resources/online-materials/single-view/news/23\\_august\\_teachers\\_from\\_three\\_regions\\_learn\\_lessons\\_about\\_the\\_slave\\_trade/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/resources/online-materials/single-view/news/23_august_teachers_from_three_regions_learn_lessons_about_the_slave_trade/); ASPnet 'Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project – Teacher Professional Development Workshop', [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/all-events/?tx\\_browser\\_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=4342&cHash=813942849e](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/all-events/?tx_browser_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=4342&cHash=813942849e) (Accessed 13 January 2012).

<sup>115</sup> UNESCO, 'ASPnet: Objectives', <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/networks/global-networks/aspnet/flagship-projects/transatlantic-slave-trade/objectives-activities/>. School twinning is popular as it is seen by schools as a way to improve curricula offerings and by governments as a form of

UNESCO is not alone in organising such conferences. In 2009, 2010 and 2011, Yale University's Gilder Lehrman Center organised international teacher training institutes focusing on the history of transatlantic slavery. The first was held in Ghana, the second at Yale and the third at York University in England. Entitled *Middle Passages: A Shared History of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, the institutes brought together teachers from Ghana, the US and England (for the first and third summer institute), to study with leading academics in the field of transatlantic slavery from these countries, including Professors Yaw Bredwa-Mensah, Stephanie Smallwood, and James Walvin.<sup>116</sup> The institute involved a week of classes by these leading academics into the historical evidence regarding transatlantic slavery and its role in the development of the Atlantic World.

In his welcome to the 2010 institute, David Blight, head of the Gilder Lehrman Center, spoke about the motivation behind these institutes and the importance of the international nature of participating teachers. The history of transatlantic slavery, Blight argued, ties together four continents, and has shaped the world and how it interacts. The institutes thus brought leading historians, archaeologists and anthropologists together with teachers to share research and to inspire and help teachers prepare to teach this history. The benefit is mutual, as James Walvin explained: the teachers help the academics learn about what issues of this history are difficult, challenging and important to their students and the contemporary world.

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soft power diplomacy. For details on other school linking bodies see: BBC, 'World Class', [www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/); British Council, 'Connecting Classrooms', [www.britishcouncil.org/learning-connecting-classrooms.htm](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-connecting-classrooms.htm); DfID, 'Global Schools', <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/get-involved/in-your-school/global-school-partnerships/>; Starfish Malawi, 'School Linking', <http://www.starfishmalawi.com/schools-linking/2010/11/16/schools-linking.html>; Link Ethiopia, 'School Links', <http://www.linkethiopia.org/school-links/>; British Council, 'Cormenius Programme', [www.britishcouncil.org/Comenius](http://www.britishcouncil.org/Comenius) (Accessed 13 January 2012).

<sup>116</sup> The first institute was organised in conjunction with the ISM. Gilder Lehrman and the ISM parted company following the 2009 institute with ISM wanting to focus more on legacy issues than historical evidence and contested historical interpretation. This is not to say that Gilder Lehrman did not address legacy issues and debates about reparations; this was dealt with at the institute and teachers were asked to think about such issues and ask questions regarding these elements of the history; however, Gilder Lehrman were more interested history content and academic approaches to teaching. For more information on the 2009, 2010 and 2011 institutes see: The Gilder Lehrman Center, 'Middle Passages: A Shared History of the Atlantic Slave Trade', <http://www.yale.edu/glc/mpi/index.htm>; 'Middle Passages: Transatlantic Slave Trade', *Yale MacMillan Center Newsletter*, <http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/newsletter/middlepassages.html> (Accessed 13 January 2012).

Together, lesson plan ideas, teaching techniques and educational resources can then be developed.<sup>117</sup>

Growing relationships between individual teachers led to the development of successful class-twinning exercises. The teachers who had developed these projects felt that to jump straight into discussions about transatlantic slavery and its legacies was inappropriate. Relationships between students were, therefore, first developed through sharing information about daily experiences, including photos and diaries which enabled stereotypes held about each other's nation to be undermined and trust and respect to be developed. Upon this basis of trusting relationships, future projects and discussions are able to tackle more sensitive topics such as transatlantic slavery. In all aspects of this project, historical understanding through broadening horizons and creating international relationships and dialogue can be seen as a reparatory endeavour by enabling this history and its contemporary impact to be confronted, understood and challenged in the future.

These same principles apply to other institutions, such as museums or, indeed, nations as a whole. The establishment of relationships and the countering of stereotypes are intrinsically reparative. Both enable the legacy of transatlantic slavery to be discussed with an openness, objectivity and honesty otherwise impossible. As collectives that harbour guilty individuals (albeit historically), it is important that European and American nations that have benefitted psychologically and materially from racism, colonialism and slavery, make overt steps to re-establish the foundations of equitable relations between themselves and nations they have wronged. In 2007, the Museum in Docklands (MiD), as part of its efforts to commemorate the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade, hoped to gain funding to develop partnerships with museums in the Caribbean and Africa to do this. The 'African, Caribbean Partnership Network [was to be] a trans-national skills-exchange project for the management of the memory of the transatlantic slave trade, enslavement and their legacies.'<sup>118</sup> The network, it was hoped, would ensure a lasting 'Legacy' to the museum's new permanent gallery *London Sugar and Slavery*, which had

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<sup>117</sup> James Walvin, Introductory thought on the first evening of the 2010 Middle Passages institute.

<sup>118</sup> Clara Arokiasamy Associates, *The African, Caribbean Partnership Network: A 2007 legacy initiative from the Museum in Docklands* (London: Clara Arokiasamy Associates and the Museum in Docklands, 2008), p. 1.



sought to revise Eurocentric historiography and tell formerly suppressed historical truths.<sup>119</sup>

Reparation was an explicit motivation behind the museum's desire to establish this network.<sup>120</sup> Building on words about the history and legacy of slavery, racism and colonial attitudes, it was felt that the museum could act in a manner that sought to address some of these present-day inequalities. Knowledge transfer through the creation of equal working relationships with partner organisations in Africa and the Caribbean appeared a feasible and logical way to listen and learn about how this history is understood in these parts of the world and to convey this to the museum's visitors.<sup>121</sup> Planning emphasised equality in terms of the relationship and the mutual benefits provided by the partnership, in contrast to many previous partnerships between institutions in rich and poor nations.<sup>122</sup>

Funding constraints prevented this intended network coming to fruition. Nevertheless, the ideology that motivated this project is increasingly found within the global museum community. In 2010, National Museums Liverpool launched the Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM).<sup>123</sup> FIHRM has created a forum for networking and sharing ideas about the societal role of museums for those who reject the traditional conceptualisation of museums as apolitical and dispassionate institutions that merely display objects and present facts. Recognising that this traditional understanding has often excused politically conservative and Eurocentric approaches to historical interpretation and the displaying of artefacts, FIHRM instead advocates that museums unashamedly promote human rights through their activities. The 2010 conference included museums that tackle the Holocaust, apartheid, human rights violations by Latin American dictatorships, and museums created for indigenous peoples in North America. All institutions seek to promote previously suppressed historical events and/or the perspectives of marginalised

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with David Spence, Director of Museum in Docklands, 19 May 2010.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Clara Arokiasamy Associates, *The African, Caribbean Partnership Network*, p. 6; Interview with David Spence.

<sup>123</sup> FIHRM, [www.fihrm.org](http://www.fihrm.org) (Accessed 13 January 2012).

communities in order contribute to processes of repair for the continuing relational and societal harm these historical injustices' legacies cause.

## **Conclusion**

This Chapter has illustrated that one of the foremost legacies of transatlantic slavery is relational and attitudinal, and that this legacy is self-perpetuating due to competing selective historical memories which engender mutual ignorance, mistrust and prejudice between the West and Africa. This is particularly the case with Eurocentric historical memory which blinds the West to the wider global socioeconomic legacies of slavery and insults Africans by denying African historical achievements. Eurocentric memory is therefore an obstacle to overcoming the wider socioeconomic legacy of transatlantic slavery, but so too are historical narratives that oversimplify the history and minimise African participation in transatlantic and other slave systems, and which excuse this behaviour and deny its harmful legacy. This Chapter has argued that, by providing information that challenges traditional nationalistic historiographies and by facilitating international dialogue, traditional stereotypes and misinformation that underpin prejudice can be redressed. Educational and commemorative activities, especially those that utilise or facilitate international collaboration, can contribute to a dialogue-based process of repair for the relationships damaged by the legacy of transatlantic slavery.

The international collaborative projects explored in this Chapter, the UNESCO *General History of Africa* and Slave Route Project have, like the museum and educational projects in the US and Britain explored in Chapters Three and Four, sought to empower previously suppressed perspectives, including African oral history. Such empowerment is essential to repairing damaged relationships. However, as with British and US developments, these international collaborative projects have tended to prioritise transatlantic slavery over histories of other slaveries and have often uncritically presented underdevelopment theory and Pan-African inspired historiography in place of Eurocentric history, instead of seeking to create a new collective and holistic reparative narrative through dialogue.

The AU's claim for reparations to Africa, denies African involvement in the transatlantic slave trade; claims European practices of slavery were much different and harsher than African practices; and that the impact of European actions through transatlantic slavery have, therefore, been much more detrimental to Africa's development than African practices of slavery. But this is not the case. As Paul Lovejoy noted in response to a presentation of the AU's reparation case by AU Rapporteur, Blaise Tchikaya; 'As historians we want to know the truth and the truth is that the leaders, the kings of Bonny and Calabar, did know what was going on in the West Indies. Their sons were educated in England, they travelled on English ships. They knew what was going on.'<sup>124</sup> Efforts to confront this history need to recognise this. African and European elites were both enriched by the transatlantic slave trade and their ability to profit in this way was due to wider social hierarchies and power dynamics in African and European society. In both Africa and Europe, people have found ways to justify the exploitation and suffering of others for their direct or indirect benefit, and this is a theme of transatlantic slavery that deserves to be explored. Many projects fail to do so and important wider aspects of power dynamics within society are consequently overlooked. Racism is taken out of this context and the explicit understanding that race is a construct and not a reality is diluted. The eventual result is that efforts to make repair can be overly racialised, reinforcing the very racial binaries within modern relationships that are the most significant legacy of transatlantic slavery and the most important target of repair.

This Chapter has explored the potential contribution education and commemorative projects could make to the repair of the international legacies of transatlantic slavery. It has argued that through international collaboration on education and commemorative projects, forgotten and suppressed events can be promoted and, by discussion of competing historical perspectives, a potentially reparative international narrative could be produced. A wider contextualisation of both the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery is necessary to realise the full potential contribution of education and commemoration to relational repair.

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<sup>124</sup> Paul Lovejoy, contribution to a discussion following Blaise Tchikaya's presentation 'Eléments de l'Etude de la Commission de l'Union africaine sur le droit international sur la question de la réparation de l'esclavage transatlantique du point de vue du droit international', at Slavery Memory and Citizenship, a Summer Institute at the Harriett Tubman Institute, York University, Toronto, 20-27 August 2011.

Important steps have been taken since the Slave Route Project was established in 1994, but more history still needs to be revealed and confronted, especially that which is difficult for Africa to admit. A process of historical confrontation has started, but more is needed to create a historical narrative that can truly contribute to the repair of the relationships between Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and the Americas.

## Conclusion

Claims for reparations for slavery have risen to prominence in recent decades, particularly since the 2000 release of Randall Robinson's book *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*, and the 2001 call for reparations to Africa at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism and Xenophobia.<sup>1</sup> Calls for reparations to those harmed by the legacy of transatlantic slavery have tended to focus on legal concepts as the basis of claims for compensation. This thesis has sought to contribute to this debate by investigating why claims for reparations exist, the type of repair offered by different forms of reparations, and by considering if there are alternative ways to envision and advance repair for the legacies of transatlantic slavery.

This thesis has argued that the prioritisation of financial reparations has been flawed for two significant reasons. First, advocates of financial reparations have drawn upon the legal concepts of torts and unjust enrichment. This has oversimplified the legacy of transatlantic slavery and frequently narrowed the form of repair to an arbitrary and limited payment of compensation. Furthermore, claims for financial reparations have been motivated by present-day socioeconomic inequality that is identified as a legacy of transatlantic slavery. As a result, the history portrayed by reparations advocates has been oversimplified to fit the case for reparations. By analysing the origins, evolution and legacy of transatlantic slavery within a wider history of slavery, unfree and unequal labour relations and social hierarchy, this thesis has argued that the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery is more complex and nuanced than reparations claims acknowledge. The socioeconomic inequalities which motivate financial reparations claims are evidence of attitudes and relations which perpetuate the social hierarchy of slavery and which must be addressed to achieve a lasting repair.

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred L. Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 19; Randall Robinson, *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* (London: Plume, 2000); Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (with Anthony Lombardo), *Reparations to Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 37, 62-63.

This thesis has drawn upon the theories and practices of restorative justice to develop an Intergenerational Model that sees the revision of history presented by museums and schools as a potential form of historical truth telling that can contribute to attitudinal and relational repair. This form of repair is beneficial because it is less adversarial than calls for financial reparations or apology, and is not hindered by statutes of limitations. Changes in museological and pedagogical approaches to the history of slavery and abolition can also attest to how attitudes and relationships are already changing. By reflecting these changing attitudes and relationships in the history that they present, museums and schools can further encourage these trends and such developments can be understood as potentially reparative even if those involved do not explicitly consider their work as acts of reparation. The thesis argued that by including previously excluded aspects and community perspectives, reparative narratives could result. While such processes have been identified as occurring in Britain, the United States (US) and internationally, their potential is held back by opposition to alternative historical perspectives from traditionalists, and because the revisions underway often replace Eurocentric bias with Pan-African perspectives, rather than creating a multi-perspective historical narrative that contextualises transatlantic slavery within wider histories of slavery, exploitation and injustice. This conclusion shall now summarise how each Chapter has developed the arguments and contributed to the debate about reparations for slavery.

Chapter One, Models of Repair, used the US reparations debate as a case study by which to investigate differing approaches to repairing the legacy of slavery in the US. It argued that the claim for reparations in the US is motivated by two primary reasons: the US's continuing racial inequality and selective historical memory. Many feel that the US as a nation has not faced up to its history of slavery and is yet to recognise the contribution of African American slaves to US economic, political and cultural development. As a result of this selective memory, reparations advocates and historians, such as Randall Robinson, Alfred Brophy, Roy L. Brooks and James Lowen, argue that US identity excludes African Americans as it is based upon a historical memory that celebrates the idea of the US as built by white men.<sup>2</sup> Chapter One argued

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<sup>2</sup> Robinson, *The Debt*, p. 7; Brophy, *Reparations Pro and Con*, p. 12; Roy L. Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for black Reparations* (London: University of California Press, 2004), p. 35;

that the socioeconomic legacies of US slavery are manifestations of the attitudinal and relational harm caused by this selective US memory and racially exclusive national identity. Segregation may have ended, but racism still shapes US identity and historical memory. To overcome the legacy of slavery, the US needs to confront forgotten aspects of its history and include African American perspectives within the national historical memory.

The most common forms of reparations advocated, financial reparations and apology, can help to set the historical record straight and provide important acknowledgement of historical wrongdoing and continuing harm, vindicating the historical experiences and perspectives of African Americans and of reparations advocates. However, without committing to relational and attitudinal repair, it is unlikely that such reparations would lead to racial equality in the US. These forms of repair would therefore be ultimately unsatisfactory. Furthermore, without initiating processes of attitudinal and relational repair based upon a confrontation with suppressed historical events and an incorporation of African American perspectives into national memory, it is unlikely that there would ever be the popular support necessary for legal or legislative reparations and apology to ever occur. This is also the case with international reparations claims.

In order to develop a model of repair that prioritised relational repair, Chapter One drew upon the theories and practices of restorative justice, in particular its use in transitional justice settings, such as South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Chapter drew on Deborah Posel's analysis of the Commission members' identification of four types of truth: 'factual,' 'personal,' 'social' and 'healing,' in order to argue that the correction of past historical ignorance, and the broadening of collective national memory to include previously excluded events and personal and community perspectives, can contribute to the creation of an inclusive national memory and identity.<sup>3</sup> Such processes could contribute to more equal relationships between those who have been divided by past injustices. Indeed, listening to and including previously excluded and denigrated African American

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James W. Lowen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (London: The New Press, 2007), pp. 135-171.

<sup>3</sup> Deborah Posel, 'The TRC Report: What Kind of History? What Kind of Truth?: A Preliminary exploration' (Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand, 1999), pp. 11-15.

experiences and perspectives would demonstrate a respect and belief in equality, whereas continued exclusion, even with an apology and financial compensation, would suggest that the equality of African Americans is not recognised and that a social hierarchy and exclusivity remain.

The principles of restorative justice argue that both victim and offender benefit from relational repair. The victim has their humanity and worth affirmed and is promised non-repetition by the offender's rehabilitation. The offender, through their rehabilitation, regains their moral capital, and through reconciliation is promised not to be the target of revenge. This process constitutes a commitment to shared values and future justice. These concepts apply to relational repair for the legacies of transatlantic slavery and the Intergenerational Model argued that schools and museums could help deliver this repair. These institutions are the keepers of a nation's historical memory.<sup>4</sup> The historical events and interpretations they present shape how the nation perceives its history, itself, the relationship between its members and its relations with other nations. Broadening the events and perspectives portrayed by these institutions can, therefore, have potentially far reaching implications and contribute to a more inclusive national identity and changing understanding of the justice of society and international relations.

Chapter Two broadened the focus of the thesis to consider the international history of transatlantic slavery and calls for reparations to Africa. The Chapter situated the call for reparations to Africa within the intellectual framework of Pan-African and postcolonial historiography, in particular that of the West Indian school of C.L.R. James, Eric Williams and Walter Rodney.<sup>5</sup> They countered Eurocentric interpretative dominance and silences regarding the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. They highlighted the role of slave rebellion and African agency in the development of abolition and emancipation; the importance of the transatlantic slave economy to the development of the West; and the role of transatlantic slavery and colonialism in the

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<sup>4</sup> Susan A. Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', *History and Theory*, 36:4 (1997), p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 2001); Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944); Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogel-L'Ouverture Publications, 1973).



underdevelopment of Africa. Chapter Two argued that the work of Pan-African and postcolonial historians has increased our understanding of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, but that the historical narrative they and reparations advocates present is also incomplete, narrow and selective.

By providing a broader, more contextualised and nuanced overview of the origin, history and legacy of transatlantic slavery, Chapter Two made three important contributions to the development of this thesis. First, it demonstrated that calls for financial reparations are based on an overly simplistic analysis of the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Two, this flaw in the case for reparations reveals a more subtle harm of transatlantic slavery that needs to be addressed in order to tackle the socioeconomic legacies of transatlantic slavery, which exist for more complex reasons than reparations advocates acknowledge. Whilst transatlantic slavery did not originate because of racism, racism was developed to justify slavery in the New World and later, segregation, colonialism and bans on inter-racial marriage. To this day, racism continues to influence the life chances of black people across the globe. This relational and attitudinal harm is evident in the competing Eurocentric and Pan-African historical narratives which both are overly selective and biased in their historical interpretations. Chapter Two's third contribution to the thesis's argument built upon this point. It argued, like Chapter One, that to repair the relational legacy of transatlantic slavery there needs to be a process of confronting historical amnesias and biases, and of building a new collective historical consciousness that is inclusive and tolerant of multiple perspectives. Further, the cautious outline of the origins, history and legacy of transatlantic slavery provided in Chapter Two also offered a potentially mutually acceptable historical narrative upon which more controversial historical interpretations and divisive perspectives could be discussed.

Chapters Three, Four and Five then examined recent developments in how museums and schools present the history of transatlantic slavery in order to ask whether potentially reparative narratives are being told. Chapters Three, Britain and Four, US, tied specific national legacies such as British emphasis on abolitionism and the Civil War's impact on US memory, to wider historical and historiographical trends such as other forms of slavery and labour exploitation, Eurocentric and Pan-African historiography. Chapter Five then considered international dimensions to the

Intergenerational Model. These Chapters have built upon work by academics across the world who have examined the history and memory of slavery and how memory and commemoration has changed or been challenged over recent years.<sup>6</sup>

Instead of asking how these developments differed from previous exhibitions and if they revised traditional Eurocentric narratives, this thesis asked whether particular narratives and initiatives have reparative potential. This is a different question – revising Eurocentric traditional narratives is part of this, but to be reparative something more is needed. Replacing Eurocentric historiographical bias with the Pan-African historiographical biases of reparations advocates is not reparative; it too is overly selective and excludes embarrassing and shameful histories that must also be confronted. For example, the history of other slave systems must be explored and it must be explained how other systems of slavery, especially those in Western Africa, contributed to the development of transatlantic slavery. The nature of social hierarchy and labour exploitation in Europe, particularly during the development of industry, must also be shown to be relevant. Historically and today, socioeconomic hierarchy, inequality and injustice have been shaped by processes of othering, exclusion, class and race which often overlap and intersect. Interpreting transatlantic slavery's legacy in purely racial terms, which reparations advocates largely do, oversimplifies and distorts both the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery and fails to repair the relational and attitudinal legacies of transatlantic slavery as well as its socioeconomic ones.

This argument constitutes a point of departure of this thesis' analysis from that of most academic evaluations of recent commemorative and educational developments. For example, Emma Waterton argues that visitors to British museums during 2007 who commented that transatlantic slavery should not be treated exceptionally, but seen as one of many awful things in the past, when values were

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<sup>6</sup> Marcus Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom: Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation* (Athens, GA.: University of Georgia Press, 2010); John Oldfield, *'Chords of Freedom': Commemoration, Ritual and Transatlantic Slavery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.), *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (eds.), *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American History* (New York: The New Press, 2006); Douglas Hamilton, Kate Hodgson and Joel Quirk (eds.), *Slavery, Memory and Identity: National Representations and Global Legacies* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012); Paul E. Lovejoy and Benjamin P. Bowser (eds.), *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning* (Trenton N.J.: Africa World Press, 2012).

different, were employing ‘distancing mechanisms.’<sup>7</sup> This thesis argued that these views are, to a degree, valid because the causes and legacies of transatlantic slavery are more complex than these exhibitions often presented. Transatlantic slavery and its legacy are linked to wider histories of slavery, social exclusion and hierarchy and labour exploitation. This needs to be acknowledged; failure to do so benefits none of the poor in Africa, Europe or the Americas, as it causes them to misunderstand the historical reasons for their poverty. To tell a holistic and contextualised history is more fully to understand and comprehend the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery. Such holistic understanding is also more inclusive, as it does not dismiss the experiences and historical perspectives of other historically victimised and marginalised groups such as the descendants of the industrial poor or of slaves held in Africa. Rather, a broader, more nuanced and more holistic understanding of the historical causes of present-day inequalities offers a greater potential reparative impact.

This thesis argued that the incorporation of previously excluded historical events and perspectives in a revised and broader historical memory could contribute to relational repair. By examining developments in Britain, the US and internationally, elements of potential best practice can be identified for future work. Like Catherine Hall, John Oldfield, and Nicholas Evans and Suzanne Schwarz, Chapter Three identified how changes to the National Curriculum in Britain constitute a potentially significant development due to the influence this reform could have on future national memory, identity and relationship formation.<sup>8</sup> The US does not have a national curriculum. Individual states determine the standards and content of their schools’ curriculum. Consequently there is greater pluralism to US memory. This is increased by the prominent role of private finance in the US’s educational and heritage sectors, for example, the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Colonial Williamsburg and The National Great

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<sup>7</sup> Emma Waterton, ‘Humiliated Silence: Multiculturalism, Blame and the Trope of “Moving On”’, *Museum and Society*, 8:3 (2010), p. 134.

<sup>8</sup> Catherine Hall, ‘Afterword’, Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (eds.), *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), pp. 192-199; John Oldfield, ‘Repairing Historical Wrongs: Public History and Transatlantic Slavery’, *Social and Legal Studies*, 21:2 (2012), p. 247; Nicholas J. Evans and Suzanne Schwarz, ‘Pedagogical Responses to the Teaching of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its Diasporic Legacies in British Schools’, Benjamin Bowser and Paul Lovejoy (eds.), *Defining New Approaches For Teaching The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 2012), pp. 109-128.

Black In Wax Museum in Baltimore. The US's pluralism is both a blessing and a curse to processes of historical truth telling. It can make for a greater level of dynamism and debate, although private funding can encourage conservative curatorial approaches, as at the Museum of the Confederacy. Private funding enables Eurocentric historiography to be challenged in the absence of a government lead, whilst also preventing a change in government from undoing positive revision of traditional Eurocentric historiography, as is seemingly occurring in Britain. However, this pluralism also prevents the creation of an inclusive national historical memory. For example, in Virginia, if you are opposed to the Virginia Historical Society's revision, plantation house museums will confirm your historical prejudices and world views. The US's pluralism makes it both easier to tell challenging historical truths and to avoid hearing them.

In Britain, the greater role of government in shaping the content of school curriculum and museum curatorial direction by changing funding criteria can advance or undermine historical revision. However, when revision does occur it has a greater potential to reach and challenge those who oppose the revision of traditional historiography. The evolution and influence on museums of the Virginia Department of Education's revised standards of history emphasises this point. In both Britain and the US successful long term and far-reaching intergenerational repair requires cross-party support for confronting previously suppressed aspects of the nation's past and including previously excluded perspectives, which may be critical or challenging, in the nation's memory and self-image. Such a consensus does not yet exist in either nation. Therefore, academics and community groups must continue to challenge traditional historical prejudice and ignorance. This is part of a process of intergenerational repair which is underway in both the US and Britain, although in both nations the process is embryonic and vulnerable to counter-revision. Multiple and competing perspectives are not in themselves problematic, however, in Britain, the US and internationally, the debate about reparations and transatlantic slavery is too polarised. There needs to be an effort from all parties to investigate the past together and create a shared historical memory through which they can empathise with each other's perspectives and discuss their differences. Such dialogue would represent respect and a mutual recognition of equality, and signify that a mature, just and functioning relationship was possible.

International attitudes and relationships are also challenging Eurocentric historiographical orthodoxy. For example, Richmond, Virginia, has sought to change the history that its institutions present in order to appeal to modern national and international attitudes which dislike the traditional views that the city has embodied. More generally, decolonisation and the growing international economic importance of nations such as India, China and South Africa has caused Britain, the US and other European powers to recognise that the history they present in their schools and museums is not just viewed by their own people but overseas too. Both George W. Bush and Bill Clinton visited the Senegalese island of Goree to show that they understand the importance of the history of transatlantic slavery and that it was wrong – even if they did not apologise for it.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, David Cameron’s 2013 visit to India included the site of the 1919 Amritsar massacre where he made a statement of regret, although not an apology for the ‘shameful’ British actions.<sup>10</sup> Internationally, the process of decolonisation has created pressure on international historiography in a manner similar to that of changing demographics following post-war West Indian migration to Britain, and the greater voice of African American historical interpretation following the successes of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

The UNESCO Slave Route Project echoes these pressures and brings African and West Indian perspectives in particular to bear on the reshaping of international memory of transatlantic slavery and the interpretation of its legacy, challenging traditional Eurocentric memory in Britain, the US and elsewhere. The Slave Route Project adds weight to the voice of communities and academics trying to revise Eurocentric historical memories of slavery and abolition, as seen in Chapter Five with regard to Mexico. Processes of international and national intergenerational repair based on confronting historical amnesias and broadening interpretative perspectives are mutually reinforcing, and such processes highlight both how relationships are changing as well as how they could be repaired through activities in schools and museums, as identified by the Intergenerational Model.

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<sup>9</sup> BBC, ‘Goree: The Slave Island’, *BBC News* (8 July 2003), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3054442.stm>; ‘President Bush Speaks at Goree Island in Senegal’, *The White House: President George W. Bush* (8 July 2003), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030708-1.html> (Accessed 1 March 2013).

<sup>10</sup> BBC, ‘David Cameron marks British 1919 Amritsar massacre’, *BBC News* (20 February 2013), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21515360> (Accessed 1 March 2013).

By considering developments in Britain, the US and internationally some features of how best to deliver a potential process of relational repair emerged. Ideally, government would supply funding and leadership, but not dictate the process. International collaboration between nations divided by this history would also minimise the influence of any one government on the historical narrative created. Funding could enable dialogue between academics and community bodies to create a new national/international narrative consensus, which explores both historical and legacy harms and historiography in order to explain why this history is divisive and interpreted differently by different people. Government involvement is central to underscoring the importance of this historical revision and constitutes an important form of acknowledgment. It could also prevent a new narrative being marginalised and dismissed by supporters of traditional historiography. Government support of international processes of historical investigation is, therefore, potentially highly beneficial. It could demonstrate a national commitment to confront and acknowledge past wrongdoing and a willingness to relinquish control of the project and the historical narrative that is revealed by collaborating with others. This could, if done sincerely, demonstrate a belief in equality between different nations divided by the history of transatlantic slavery, colonialism and racism, and therefore contribute to processes of relational repair.

Schools and museums have been identified as potential vehicles for delivering the process in the Intergenerational Model, as they are the institutions which nations most actively use to convey what they think is important about their history and what they want their children and other members of the nation to learn about their past and its role in shaping their present-day society. This thesis has explored educational and museological developments across Britain, the US and internationally and argued that many possess reparative potential. However, this thesis has only been able to explore the development of new exhibitions, educational resources, memorials and international collaborative projects; it has not been able to assess the individual or collective impact of these resources and if they have helped to change attitudes. Further research is necessary to determine whether and how far, such projects do indeed contribute to revised national identities, present-day attitudes and the repair of relationships. Some institutions such as the International Slavery Museum do collate

electronic feedback in order to strengthen the impact they have in challenging traditional ignorance and prejudice. Similarly, the East Riding of Yorkshire School Improvement Agency's *Wilberforce – Slavery and Abolition Project* conducted before and after surveys to monitor the impact of their resources on changing the attitudes of their pupils. Similar projects could be conducted regarding developments in the US and the Slave Route Project. However, it is reasonable to assume that a commitment to a process of confronting suppressed aspects of the history of transatlantic slavery could contribute to such relational repair, although to have lasting benefits, the process would need to be more extensive and intergenerational. Through the theoretical framework of the Intergenerational Model developed in this thesis, it is possible to argue that such developments do have a potential contribution to make to overcoming the legacy of transatlantic slavery. The Intergenerational Model also provides a useful framework for analysing museological and pedagogical developments in nations that this thesis has not been able to explore, or for addressing the present-day legacies of other historical injustices.

Chapters Three, Four and Five investigated developments in educational and commemorative resources in Britain, the US and internationally. In all three Chapters it was noted how new educational and commemorative resources are being developed to aid teachers to present a broader history of transatlantic slavery, its abolition and legacy to school children, in order to confront present-day prejudices that are shaped by narrow and prejudicial historical memory. These developments, it has been argued, have a reparative potential, however, it has also been noted that teachers in Britain, the US and internationally are themselves ill-prepared to teach this revised history, often having not studied this history or having only studied traditional historical narratives. In both Britain and the US the potential benefit of CPD has been highlighted and, in Chapter Five, the development of international collaboration in teacher institutes has been identified as possessing further reparative potential. Both national and international institutes can broaden the historical awareness of participating teachers through interaction with academics and the latest historical research. Interacting with teachers from another nation, particularly one which has an alternative or contrasting historical memory, can enable the sharing of perspectives and the development of school partnerships and class twinning, which can further help

challenge historically rooted prejudices and stereotypes and facilitate the construction of new relationships. Further investment in CPD and national and international teachers' institutes should, therefore, be prioritised if the reparative potential of new museum and educational resources is to be realised. Western governments could fund such international collaborations as symbolic reparative initiatives in a manner outlined in the Museum in Docklands planned African, Caribbean Partnership Network, discussed in Chapter Five.<sup>11</sup>

In summary, this thesis has argued that actions to repair the historical wrongs of transatlantic slavery should prioritise 'healing' at 'individual, collective and structural levels.'<sup>12</sup> The Intergenerational Model argues that repair can be aided by museums and schools including previously excluded events and perspectives to broaden national historical memory and the foundations of national identity. This Model is more nuanced, flexible and future orientated than claims for financial reparations or apology which are based on an over-simplified historical narrative. It offers an alternative way to repair the history and legacy of transatlantic slavery that overcomes the divisiveness and the current impasse in the debate over financial reparations and apology. Furthermore, the Intergenerational Model can be applied to both the national and international legacies of transatlantic slavery.

This thesis has contributed to the reparations debate by arguing that the repair of relationships damaged as a legacy of transatlantic slavery depends on whether nations tell nationalistic and sanitised stories of their past, or seek to tell object, holistic and self-critical histories. If individual nations and the world as a whole truly want peace and equality they must confront shameful histories previously ignored, and address the historically rooted structural inequalities in both national and international social, economic and political relationships. The harms of transatlantic slavery are real. The repair of these harms should be a priority for all who are interested in present-day and future social, economic and political justice and equality.

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<sup>11</sup> Clara Arokiasamy Associates, *The African, Caribbean Partnership Network: A 2007 legacy initiative from the Museum in Docklands* (London: Clara Arokiasamy Associates and the Museum in Docklands, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Manfred Berg and Bernd Schaffer, 'Introduction', Manfred Berg and Bernd Schaffer (eds.), *Historical Justice in International Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 9 and 2.



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