

Monument Building, Memory Making
and Remembering Slavery in the
Contemporary Atlantic World

Winston Francis Phulgence

PhD

University of York

Archaeology

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Abstract

This thesis is a comparative study of the creation of monuments and memorials to commemorate the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery in the Circum-Atlantic region. It is based on interviews conducted with people who were directly involved in the processes which created these monuments, to understand their role in the process and to gain insight into the forces and issues which impacted on the process. Since monuments and memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade are in public spaces, archival research was done to ascertain the level of public discourse generated by the memorialisation process and how this discourse impacted the process.

The case studies were chosen to allow for the comparison of the process of memorialisation in different parts of the region which had different historical relationships with the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This allowed for analysis of memorialisation within different political contexts. The first case study was Ghana an African nation with ports from which for enslaved Africans trafficked across the Atlantic. Saint Lucia is an English speaking, Eastern Caribbean island nation which received enslaved Africans during the period of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Saint Lucia has a majority population that is descended from formerly enslaved Africans. The third case study is of the state of Louisiana in the United States of America which received large numbers of enslaved Africans whose descendants are a minority in the population.

The comparison of these case studies illustrates how the memorialisation process is directly impacted by the contemporary socio-political environment and the economics of each state. It also illustrates how the power of various stakeholders involved in the process creates silences and engenders forgetting, as various agenda are pursued.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction

This thesis is an inquiry into the increase in memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery since the 1990s using monuments and memorials in the Atlantic World, the region in which the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery occurred. The author is concerned here with the processes, local, national and transnational, which led to the creation these monuments and how they are used to sustain the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery. By comparing the memorialisation process in three case studies in distinct regions of the trade - Africa, Caribbean and North America - this study will investigate what is remembered and memorialised, what medium is used to for the memorialisation, and why. This study will also investigate who the stakeholders in the process of memorialisation were, along with their role in the process and political context within which these processes occurred.

This first chapter lays out the framework within which the study was developed and presents the methodology and approach used by the author to investigate the increase in memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave trade in the Atlantic World. This chapter also gives an overview of monuments and memorials which have been created in the wider region. While these monuments are not the focus of this study, the brief survey allows the case studies to be contextualised in the broader framework of the Atlantic World.

Over the period of four centuries the Transatlantic Slave Trade moved over 12 million Africans (Eltis and Richardson 2010) to the New World to provide labour on plantations and in mines. One of the results of this forced migration was the African diaspora which today numbers in the tens of millions who reside in Europe and Americas. The legacy of this trade manifests in the history and landscape of almost every nation whose shores are washed by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The trade in enslaved Africans has left an enduring social political and economic legacy which more than 200 years after its abolition still resonates across the Atlantic.

Apart from the demographic impact, the Transatlantic slave trade had an enormous economic impact on the region. The increase in demand for sugar in Europe and the concomitant expansion to meet that demand, propelled Europe out of economic slump by the time the end of the 17th century (Blackburn 2010). The plantations which were at the centre of this rapid expansion were worked by enslaved Africans whose numbers continued to swell by hundreds of thousands well into the 19th century.

Despite that fact that the descendants of these enslaved Africans form substantial populations in nations across the Atlantic, public commemoration and memorialization of this trade is a very recent phenomenon. It is only in the last three decades that memorialization has taken flight (Rice 2011; Araujo 2014). This is significant because for the last two centuries the Transatlantic Slave Trade has not been a prominent part of the historiography of many of the nation states with a legacy of involvement in the trade and public discourse on the issue was all but non-existent (Rice 2004; Oldfield 2007; 2012). In the last thirty years however there has been a rapid increase in what Alan Rice calls “guerrilla memorialisation” (Rice 2012 p.225) across the Atlantic, thrusting the issue of the Slave Trade into public consciousness and discourse on national identities in many American and European nations. Araujo (2014) argued that there has been an increase in the public memory of slavery because of the end of the Cold War. Araujo argues this allowed marginalised groups to assert identities which had previously been silenced (2014 p.3). This enabled people of African descent who lived as minorities with wider societies to insert themselves into their national historical society. According to Balkenhol, the insertion of the memory of slavery and the Transatlantic slave trade was an attempt at emplacement (2011 p.140). He argued that as more diaspora Africans migrated into the former colonial powers, such as the Netherlands, they found that the silencing of slavery in the national historical narratives of these countries meant that they had been excluded from the history of the nation.

Essentially if slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are not part of the national historical narrative then the diaspora created by the trade is denied its place in the historical process which was responsible for building the nation. The drive to insert the memory of slavery and the Transatlantic

Slave Trade into the historical narrative and the landscape through monuments, allowed for the insertion of the African diaspora community into the creation of national identities in former colonial countries.

Any study of memorialization will undoubtedly focus on the descendants and their agency in exploding the silences and collective amnesia (Rice, 2011) that pervaded the historiography of their respective nation states right up to the end of the twentieth century. Since the 1990s the agency of African descendent populations has led to the creation of memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade across Europe and North America. They can be found in Holland, France and the United States in various forms. In the United Kingdom a museum was set in port city of Liverpool which has strong connections to the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The absence of slavery from historical narratives pervades the entire Atlantic World (Thompson 2010; Kardux 2011). In the United Kingdom Tibbles (2008) exposed the fact that even during the bicentenary celebrations of 2007 many people did not make the connection between slavery and the nation. In the preface to his book Thompson highlights the text of a letter he received from a British national who stated that “Knowledge of slavery, for my generation at least confined to the antiquities of the slave trade” (2010 p. xvii).

In the Netherlands the first monument to commemorate the Transatlantic Slave trade was inaugurated in the Oosterpark, Amsterdam in 2002. This was followed by the National Netherlands Slavery Monument in Amsterdam in 2003 (Kardux 2011). This monument and commemoration came after much agitation from the African descendant population in the country, which started in 1996 (Balkenhol 2011). Many in the country were dissatisfied however with the location of the monument and in response put up their own monument (Thompson 2010).

In France, Nantes was one of the largest slave trading ports in France, and in March of 2012 one of the largest memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade was unveiled. This monument is built along the banks of the River Loire and stretches for seven thousand square meters. It is made up of a 400 meter

walk way with 200 plaques, each representing a ship involved in the Transatlantic Slave trade. There is also a ninety meter underground passage representing the holds of a slave trading ship (Valognes 2013 p.165) Among the French monuments is the bust of Toussaint l'Ouverture on his tomb in the city of Bordeaux (Thompson 2010; Valognes 2013)).

In the United States there have been several officially sanctioned monuments to the trade. in 1999 the Middle Passage Monument was dedicated and sunk in the Atlantic Ocean more than two hundred miles off the coast of New York City (Kardux 2011). Since then there has been the monument at the African Burial ground in New York City, which is one of the largest in the country (Thompson 2010). This monument was erected on the site of an eighteenth century "negro burial ground", believed to contain the remains of enslaved Africans (La Roche and Blakey 1997). This monument was erected after much agitation by the African American community after excavation for the construction of a Federal Government building exposed the cemetery.

The monument to Enslaved Africans in Savannah Georgia is another example. This monument was erected by local authorities after much agitation by an activist who was determined to build a monument to memorialise enslaved Africans in the city. The process of creating the monument was a highly contested one which involved those opposed to any monument referencing slavery and others who wanted a monument which looked to the future and not represent the traumatic past (Alderman 2010).

In the United Kingdom the celebration of the bicentenary of the Abolition of the slave trade led to the development of a number of monuments to the Transatlantic slave trade and its victims along with commemorative museums displays (Rice 2011; Small 2011). These events became problematic for activists because their focus was on the abolitionists and the tradition of compassionate humanitarianism, rather than slavery or the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Oldfield 2012 p. 253). The approach to commemoration has started to change and Rice argues that at the local level community groups have grown more sensitive to the implications of the Transatlantic Slave Trade for the wider society and national historical narratives and have practiced what he calls guerrilla memorialisation by

vandalising monuments to men involved in the slave trade and memorialising victims of the trade who had previously forgotten in Bristol and Lancaster respectively (Rice 2012 p.225).

It must be noted however that the current thrust for officially sanctioned memorialization of the Transatlantic Slave Trade is also new in Europe and the United States. In other regions, the memorialization of the Transatlantic Slave Trade started in the 1990s (Singleton 1999). In Ghana and Senegal on the West African coast, land marks which are believed to have involved in the trade have been used as monuments for the trade for decades. Cape Castle and Elmina in Ghana and Goree Island in Senegal are some of the most famous monuments to the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Singleton 1999, Holsey 2008, Akyeampong 2001).

In the Caribbean, monuments to the trade have also existed for decades. In Antigua in 1993 a monument to the leader of an enslaved African rebellion was inaugurated to celebrate the 12th anniversary of independence from Britain (Brown 2002; Thompson 2010). In Barbados in 1985 a similar monument to the leadership of a rebellion by enslaved Africans was set up (Brown 2002; Thompson 2010). Both monuments were tied to national independence from a colonial power. In 1998 a memorial was unveiled to memorialize the victims of the wreck of a slave ship off the coast of Martinique. This monument, while inaugurated to mark the day of emancipation, was clearly more about a connection with Africa than with Emancipation itself as the monument looks out unto the Atlantic towards Africa (Brown 2002; Thompson 2010; Reinhardt 2006).

There has been a rapid rise in the memorialization of the Transatlantic Slave trade in the last few decades. The examples mentioned above are only a few and it appears that the number of memorials continue to increase. Scholars from fields as diverse as human and social geography to literature and anthropology have studied this area of memorialization. Most of these however are case studies which follow the actual creation of monuments and memorials. They are also interested in why there has been such a rapid increase in the number of memorials and a willingness to memorialize the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Scholars include Laurence Brown who surveyed memorials in the Eastern Caribbean (Brown, 2002). Johana Kardux focused on the National Netherlands Slavery Monument in Amsterdam along with the setting up of the National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and Its

Legacy (NiNsee) nearby (Kardux 2011). Markus Balkenhol also looked at the process of memorialization in the Netherlands and why this process came about (Balkenhol, 2011). In the United Kingdom Alan Rice has undertaken much investigation into memorialization in Lancaster (Rice 2004; 2007). Since the celebration of the Bi-centenary of Abolition interest in slavery and its memorialization has exploded in the United Kingdom and much of the Circum-Atlantic.

Sites of memory for the Transatlantic slave trade and slavery have taken many different forms. They range from museums such as the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool in the United Kingdom (Tibbles 2008; MacDonald 2009), to statues built in the post-independence period in the Caribbean (Brown 2002; Dacres 2004; Lambert 2007; Paul 2009; Araujo 2014), European slave trading forts and castles in West Africa (Bruner 1996; Singleton 1999; Teye 2004; Schramm 2004; Richards 2005; Holsey 2008), even former plantations (Araujo 2014; Alderman and Modlin 2008). The case studies used for this thesis represent the diversity of the sites of memory which have been created to commemorate the Transatlantic slave trade and slavery. The case studies were chosen to represent specific regions which had been impacted by the Transatlantic slave trade.

Silences vs Emplacement

The issue of memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade or the lack of it seems to have crystallized for many scholars in the work of Nobel Laureate African American writer Toni Morrison when in 1989 she lamented that she had no “bench by the side of the road” from which to contemplate and reflect on the horrors of slavery and its legacy. They argue that she was calling out for the monuments to that era of history (Morrison 1989).***reference

Since then scholars have been able to trace the developments which have led to the creation of many “benches on the side of the road”. One such example is the work of Derek H. Alderman who looked at the process of memorialisation of slavery in Savannah, Georgia in the United States (Alderman 2010). He follows what he calls the demands of African Americans in the southern United States for the creation of sites of “counter-memory” which will negate the lack of recognition of the contribution of

the enslaved to the prosperity of the country. Alderman focuses on the very contentious process of memorialisation as he follows the work of an activist who is determined to end the silences on slavery which pervade the memorial landscape of Savannah. What becomes obvious is the contentious nature of memorialisation. Even among African Americans there was strong disagreement on what should be memorialised in public.

Issues of shame and memory were also central in the debates. What Alderman makes clear however is that this process was as much about the place of African Americans in the present day society as it was about the past. They were concerned about what should be memorialized and how it should be displayed. The biggest fights took place over whether the horrors of slavery should be the focus as opposed to the progress that has been made by African Americans.

While the contentious nature on memorialisation was highlighted Alderman only gives cursory attention to power politics in the process. The focus was on the disagreement between African Americans and little attention was paid to the power which had created the silence in the first place. He looks at the role played by the African American mayor and his opinions on the process but this mayor is an elected official within the political power structure of which he might very well be influenced by the status quo.

Johanna Kardux studied the memorialisation process of the Middle Passage memorial created by an African American artist and the Dutch Slavery monument in Amsterdam (Kardux 2011). The process of the Middle Passage monument started with an email campaign and eventually monetary donations which led to the creation of the monument. What is interesting is that this monument which was supposed to be one of many to be set up across the Circum Atlantic was successfully built with much official support and approval. None of the others came to fruition and Kardux suggests that this ultimately had to do with the place where the monument would be placed. Since it was a monument to the suffering of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic it was sunk to the bottom of the Atlantic off the coast of New York.

Kardux (2011) also looked at the process of memorialisation in the Netherlands. She traces the memorialization process from its inception and again the contentious nature of memorialisation

became evident. Kardux highlights the role of the government and the rise of the memorial as a national issue with much public debate. The research also explores the difference of opinion among the African descendent population on the memorial. As with the memorialization in Savannah, Georgia (Alderman 2010), were calls to 'leave the past behind' among these people.

In a paper which also looks at memorialisation process of the National Slavery Monument in the Netherlands, Balkenhol (2011) looks at the role played by the African descendent community. For Balkenhol the process of memorialisation is as much about the present as it is about the past. While there was widespread silencing of the issue of slavery in the national discourse the memorialization process enabled the African descendent community to insert themselves into the historiography of the nation and allow for the creation of an identity. A process he terms "emplacement" (Balkenhol 2011 p.137).

In France the monument to the Transatlantic Slave Trade which was built in Nantes and unveiled in 2012 was a result of much agitation by the African descended population in the city. The monument was unveiled twelve years after it was commissioned as because various parties within the city opposed the creation of a monument to the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Valonges 2013). One new paper headline expressed opposition to the monument because there are no slaves in Nantes (Valognes 2013 p.166)

In the United Kingdom memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade had been restricted to the work of the Abolitionists in ending the trade. In fact, the idea of a museum to slavery was still deemed unacceptable to the British public as late as 1988 (Bernier 2008). During this time, most museums had little to nothing on Slavery or the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Small 2011). Preparations for the celebrations of the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave by Britain, stirred much controversy as some activists raised questions about Britain's role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade injecting it into the public discourse (Rice 2011). Most major museums had displays on slavery and issues dealing with it. Even then unlike the Netherlands no national monuments have been erected. Instead people of African descent have launched their own attempts at disrupting the 'Abolition

Discourse' (Waterton and Wilson 2009). This discourse is used to highlight the positive aspects of British history.

The grave stone of Sambo and African buried in Lancashire in the eighteenth century (Rice 2004) has become a place for memorialisation. Other acts of 'guerrilla memorialisation' continue across Britain as activists push for a history which includes the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave trade and its impact.

In West Africa much has been written on the slave forts and castles of Ghana. Two of these are the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina. These relics of the Transatlantic Slave trade were declared national monuments in 1972 by the government of Ghana (Kankpeyeng 2009) In 1979 they were inscribed as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO (Bruner 1996). These as a result have significance beyond the local landscape. The literature on these monuments focuses on their value as heritage tourism sites and their value to the African diaspora in the United States. Holsey (2008) however has studied them as sites of memory and contestation. The author exposes the fact these forts while memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade have very different meanings to Ghanaians and the African American tourists who make pilgrimages to the sites. These forts are sites of silence on slavery because Ghanaians themselves were enslaved as well as enslavers (Holsey 2008).

The forts were used for slave trading but they have served other purposes over the centuries of their existence. This has also created friction between those who see the forts as "sacred ground" and others who want to use them to tell their own stories (Singleton 1999). Their use as heritage tourism sites further complicates the issues.

In the Caribbean memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade is no more widespread than in Europe or North America. The volume of research on this subject however is significantly less. Monuments to commemorate the trade can be found on the islands of Martinique, Barbados and Antigua. Brown (2002) in a broad survey looked at the monuments and the processes which led to their creation. He suggests that in Antigua and Barbados where monuments were built to honour leaders of failed rebellions by enslaved Africans were linked to national independence. Brown states

that these rebellions are framed as the first strike against colonialism in a process which ultimately ends in independence and the creation of a nation state.

Thompson (2010) undertook an extensive survey of monuments to commemorate the Transatlantic Slave Trade. He devoted an entire chapter to these monuments. What makes this significant is the fact that he covers the entire Atlantic World. He looks at monuments in North America, the Caribbean, Europe and West Africa. There no attempt at analysis or critique of these monuments as the goal is to highlight their existence and the commemoration of the trade

This research is comparative in nature as it will compare the memorialisation process in the different parts of the Atlantic world to determine why specific methods of memorialisation were chosen in specific areas and not others and how they differ across regions. While much of this introduction has focused monuments we must remain conscious of the fact that memorialisation is not exclusive to the traditional monument. It could be a festival, a day, a space (Young 1993) as well as exhibitions. This must be taken into consideration with any investigation into memorialisation.

Case Studies

The monuments which are the subject of this study represent the key regions of the Atlantic World which were formerly involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The monuments are in Anglophone countries which are thus connected linguistically and historically with Britain. Ghana, the first case study, is a former British colony in West Africa known as the Gold Coast and the forts and castles which dot its coast were the point of departure for the Transatlantic Slave Trade for centuries. Ghana's forts and castles were listed as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in 1979 because of their connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade (UNESCO 1979).

Ghana was also chosen as a site for research because the country had for decades developed strong ties with the African diaspora in North America and the Caribbean. Successive governments in Ghana have marketed the country as a homeland for Diaspora Africans effectively exploiting the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Holsey 2008; Pierre 2009; Bruner 1996). As a site of origin for the

diaspora its memorialization at the very sites and the connection to the diaspora makes Ghana's memorialization process very important to any attempt to interrogate the process ideal.

The second site is the island nation and former British colony of Saint Lucia, located in the Eastern Caribbean. The research focused on the process which led to the creation of the first monument which formally memorialized slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on the island. The author believed that research into how this country, with a majority of its population descendent from enslaved Africans chose to remember slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade would allow for a more nuanced insight into the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Unlike the examples of memorialisation surveyed above, Saint Lucia is a nation with a population largely descended from enslaved Africans from Britain is a nation governed by representative of the majority population.

The creation of monuments in the Anglophone Caribbean, unlike the Ghanaian example, has been through statues which memorialise enslaved Africans who fought for their freedom during the time of enslavement (Lambert 2007; Brown 2002; Dacres 2004). In many countries such as Barbados with the Bussa statue and Guyana with the Cuffy statue, the monuments were not initiated as representations of any specific character in the history of these nations (Lambert 2007; Thompson 2006). In both cases the monuments were supposed to be monuments to emancipation generally. However they came to embody specific historical figures because of the work of activists, politicians and academics (Brown 2002 p. 110). In the case of Bussa in Barbados the process of making the Emancipation Monument into Bussa was marked by heated exchanges between Beckles a prominent Barbadian historian and Handler an American, two academics over the identity of Bussa and his role in the slave rebellion of 1816 (Lambert 2007 p. 352). While the statue in the Saint Lucia case study has not been associated with any specific historical figure, it does however memorialise the act of resistance to enslavement by a group of formerly enslaved Africans who fought against British invasion of the island in 1796 in order to maintain their freedom.

The third case study is a former sugar plantation in the southern state of Louisiana in the United States. It was chosen because the plantation was developed as a museum which focused solely on slavery in Louisiana. This was unique because plantation museums in the south of the United States

had been criticised for ignoring and marginalising the memory of slavery in their displays and narratives which they presented. This plantation which was a private venture brought slavery and its legacies to the fore, effectively producing a counter narrative to traditional representations within the plantation museums of Louisiana. The significance of this plantation became even more poignant because it opened in December 2014 when public discourse on slavery and its legacies dominated the news in the United States after a number of young black men from disadvantaged communities were killed by police in cities round the country (Pearce 2014).

Methodology

The field work for this project was carried out over a two year period at the three sites which are the case studies in this thesis. The first case study is Saint Lucia, and research at this site started in the summer of 2013. The project to create a monument to memorialise the resistance of formerly enslaved persons to a British invasion of Saint Lucia in 1796 which would have led to their re-enslavement. The process to create this monument started in 1996, two centuries after the battles were fought on the island. The research focused on interviews with people involved in the memorialisation process. The people interviewed for this thesis were all involved in the memorialisation process which culminated in the creation of the monument. In order to create the monument the Saint Lucia National Trust, the entity charged with protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the country, created committees which had responsibilities for various aspects of the process of memorialisation. six people were interviewed. Two were members of committees set up to guide the memorialisation process; one was a member of the administration of the National Trust who eventually rose to the level of Project Officer to the Executive Director during the time the memorialisation process, which led to the creation of the monument. Another person interviewed, was a member of staff of the Cultural Development Foundation (CDF). This statutory body was responsible for organising and staging national festivals and cultural activities. By the end of the memorialisation process, the CDF was responsible for ceremonies which commemorated Emancipation through a national government sanction and funded ceremony on or near the historic date of 1st August. The final person interviewed for the Saint Lucia case study was a former member of the National Council for Rastafari in Saint Lucia, an Afro-

Caribbean religious group which was the only entity publicly commemorating Emancipation until the National Trust and eventually the CDF became involved. This person had been on the executive of the council when the state sanctioned organisations became involved in the commemoration in 1996.

In addition to these interviews, archival research was carried out at the Saint Lucia National Archives where newspapers from 1996 to 2000 were searched for details about the process to create the monument and to examine if this created a national discourse of the slave trade. The three major newspapers, the Voice of Saint Lucia, The Star and The Mirror are published on a weekly basis. The author also got access to the archives of the Saint Lucia National Trust which allowed for detailed analysis of the memorialisation process within the Trust and the many phases involved.

Fieldwork for the Ghana case study was carried out in the spring of 2014. Research for this case study involved interviews with people who had been involved in the memorialisation process which imbued the Elmina and Cape Coast castles with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the 1990s. Five people were interviewed: four still worked for the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB); one person worked directly on the memorialisation projects around the forts and castles in Ghana's Central Region, and two had been trained as part of the project which developed the Cape Coast and Elmina castles as heritage attractions during the 1990s. These interviews gave insights into the memorialisation process as those people were involved at different levels of the GMMB at the time.

Along with the interviews considerable time was spent at the Public Records and Archives Administration Department of Ghana where the focus was on the newspapers contemporary with the memorialisation process. The Ghana Times and the state owned Daily Graphic were the two largest newspapers during that period and the Daily Graphic in particular covered the memorialisation process extensively, leaving a very detailed record of the government's role in the process.

Fieldwork for the Louisiana case study was undertaken during the spring of 2015. The Louisiana case study was the Whitney Plantation which had opened as a slavery museum as recently as December 2014. The museum opened but work was still ongoing during the time the fieldwork was being conducted. This case study was unique because it was a private venture and was very new unlike the

previous cases studies which were state initiated and funded processes. In this case study the researcher had access to the owner of the plantation and the driving force behind the overall project. He personally directed and controlled every aspect of the creation of the museum and the memorials attached to it.

The other person interviewed was the research director of the museum who was responsible for the academic work which provided the academic rigour on which the museum was based. This individual is a Senegalese historian whose work focused on the historic cultural connections between Louisiana and Senegal. He was also responsible for training the tour guides who worked on the plantation and the researcher was given access to the training manual which was being used on the plantation.

According to Till (1999) spaces such as monuments, memorials and museums which are the types of spaces which are the focus of this thesis are ancient castles, a statue and a plantation museum are apt spaces for the interrogation of the memorialisation process. Till argued that monuments, memorials and museums are “backdrops framing myths of national identity” (1999 p. 254). In these spaces the cultural practices and rituals which are important to sustaining national identities and as such are sites where the struggles for making meaning are a reflection of large social disputes which impact on identities and their creation.

The investigation into the creation of these monuments focused on the development of these monuments and the ensuing commemoration which was based on them. This allow the researcher to to interrogate the memorialisation process and how these spaces and artefacts became monuments.

According to Lambert the history and memory of the Caribbean is full of gaps and disruptions and the creation of monuments and heroes is an attempt to fill these gaps with replacements (2007 p. 245).

The monuments around the Caribbean which are in the form of male “freedom fighters” are surrogates in the national historical narratives.

Plantation museums in the American south have been accused of marginalising the history of slavery and the enslaved on the plantation even when the enslaved were eventually included in the wider narrative at those sites (Buzinde and Osagie, 2011). This was highlighted in the work of Eichstedt and Small (2002) in which analysis of plantations in Virginia, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina,

Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee showed that the narratives created around those sites still perpetuated racialized ideology which marginalised slave histories (2002 p. 3).

The role of stakeholder is also the subject of this study as the memorialisation process is complex and highly contested as different stakeholders vie to control the narrative. Two of the sites which are the subject of this thesis were developed by states or state sanctioned institutions. The third one was a private development but the goal was also to influence the wider historical narrative. Any investigation into memorialisation must be framed by the theoretical issues of memory, history, identity and heritage creation.

Much of the research material which exists has focused on memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the United States and Europe. Most of these studies investigate the memorialisation process as part of a wider process of identity creation and national “emplacement” for African descendent communities within nation states where they have been in large part disadvantaged minorities. There is an assumption that the “Black Experience” is the same that as a result the memorialisation processes is very similar. The same assumptions cannot be made about the process in nation states where Africans and African descendent people are in the majority since the political landscape is very different

Since memorialisation deals with places and these have an important role to play in the production of the national historical narrative all too often the authorized discourse is more often than not the domain of the powerful. For Trouillot (1995) this might not always be expressed in a political process but might be enshrined in structures within which this discourse is manifested. Smith (2006) refers to this as the Authorized Heritage Discourse. In this situation the process is dominated by the experts and those deemed to understand the process this effectively silencing any alternative voices. This one must take into account the power differential between stake holders involved in the process.

In this project the process of memorialization and heritization of the Transatlantic Slave Trade will be analysed using critical discourse analysis. We have already established that for much of the Atlantic

world the need to create a cohesive nation state with a dominant historical narrative, what Anderson (1991) refers to as “imagined communities”, does not allow the subaltern a voice. This means the historical narrative by its pervasive nature effectively curates any expression which is not authorized. The increase of memorials with reference to the slave trade which can be seen as giving voice to the subaltern especially within the European and North American context will be studied with this framework.

This is highlighted by Reinhardt(2006) when she compares the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of slavery in France and her overseas departments. For the author the official commemorations highlight the abolition as the triumph of Enlighten thought and progress in France. These celebrations were self- congratulatory but more importantly designed to fit into the national historical narrative from which slavery had been erased. The memory of the event of abolition was what was important in a place where sites of memory of slavery did not exist.

In contrast this event was a non-issue for the people of African descent. Sites of memory of slavery were ubiquitous in the overseas territories and despite the erasure of slavery from the overarching historical narrative memories of slavery remained. In the territories the subaltern voice was inserted into the wider narrative. The people of African descent did not commemorate the event of the abolition of slavery but celebrated the “anti-slavery” (Reinhardt 2006 p.7) and effectively raising the profile of the enslaved people who had fought for freedom over the benevolence of French civilization. This approach to commemoration of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery is similar to the that in the Anglophone Caribbean (Brown 2002).

Conclusion

Young (1993) looked at the creation of Holocaust memorials in Germany, Poland, Israel and the United States of America. In the process Young interrogated the process of memorial creation within diverse nations and also differing political landscapes. Within this context Young showed that memory which is put up for public consumption through the creation of monuments is constructed memory (1993 p.15) Monuments and the memories they embody depend on “ the conflation of private and

public memory”, which lead to reflecting on the past but in the “present historical moment” (1993 p.15). This thesis will rely on Youngs approach to comparing the creation of monuments and memorials within the context of the various political spaces within which they were created and needs of the societies which created them. Like the events which are now referred to as the Holocaust the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery were traumatic events which have left enduring legacies on the societies which were involved.

Chapter Two

Literature Review: Memory, Identity and Heritage in the Atlantic World

In the last three decades there has been a rapid increase in the memorialisation of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This increase has occurred across the Caribbean with monuments in Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica and Guyana (Brown, 2002; Thompson, 2010). In Europe, monuments have been built in France and the Netherlands (Bonder 2009; Camus 2006; Alan Rice, 2011), and in the United States monuments have been built in New York and other cities (Alderman, 2010; Kardux, 2011a, 2011b). In West Africa, many of the old slaving sites of Ghana, Senegal and Benin are now memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Richards 2005; Singleton 1999). This memorialisation has become enshrined in the landscape, with the construction of memorials and the renovation of sites of memory. Other memorials take the form of museums which focus on the trade and its legacies (Smith, Cubitt, Fouseki, and Wilson, 2011). These museums, monuments and memorials are all manifestations of how the various societies choose to remember the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Some monuments have been built from scratch, while in other places the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery has been imbued into other existing buildings. This chapter will lay out the theoretical framework which will be used in the critical analysis and comparison of the processes involved in creating these memorials, and their use in the various societies to remember various aspects of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies. First the literature on concept of social memory and its uses will be explored in order to highlight role of memory in the memorialisation process. Secondly the concept of identity and the relationship with memory will be explored because much of the memorialisation is memory work related to the needs of the present and the creation of narratives. Thirdly literature on the development of use of heritage will be explored. The final section will explore will explore memorialisation within the regions from which the case studies are drawn in order to provide the context within which the memorialisation processes which are the focus of this thesis.

Memory and Remembering

Discourse on memory and its importance has a long history in Western philosophy. Lang (1980), in an analysis of Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, presented it as a response to Plato's thoughts on memory. These early debates focused on memory, its definition and the act of remembering (Lang 1980 p.384). According to Paul Connerton memory remained central to western philosophical thought. It is apparent in the work of Bergson, and the psycho-analysis of Freud, and was psychologised from the early twentieth century (2009 p. 1)

By the mid-twentieth century, the work of Maurice Halbwachs was concerned with collective memory and how societies remember. Before his contribution to the field of memory the epistemology was largely dominated by psychology (Olick 2011 p. 18). Research was concerned with how the human brain stored and processed memories. Halbwachs (1950) sought a paradigm shift in the field of memory studies, and presented a new theory explaining how societies remember. He placed memory within the society, and argued that the wider society is the source of the memories of its individual members. He framed remembering as a social activity, in which members of the society or group remember together and rely on each other for their memories. According to Halbwachs “it is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize and localize their memories”(1992 p.38). The memories of individuals come to the aid of others in the society. He argued that, when they are forced to remember, it is in response to inquiry from another member of the society or group. This approach to memory removes its study from the ambit of psychologists interested in the location of stored memories in the brain of the individual and the processes involved in remembering. Halbwachs concludes that memory is collective, and that remembering is a social activity in which the members of the society participate.

Halbwachs frames remembering as an active process on the part of the individual within a group or society. Remembering is the act of reconstruction of the past based on the framework and infrastructure provided by that society. This suggests that memory without the reference points provided by the society or group has very little if any meaning for the individual. For Halbwachs this framework is the instrument which enables the reconstruction of the past according to the needs of the present. Thus social memory aids in the reconstruction of the past in accordance with the “predominant thoughts” of the present. (1992 p.40)

It must be noted however that, despite laying the framework and infrastructure within which societies remember, Halbwachs pays very little attention to how memory is sustained and passed between generations in societies. According to Paul Connerton, “to study the social formation of memory is to study those acts of transfer that make remembering in common possible.” (1989 p. 30). For him much of Halbwachs approach to collective memory is, in fact, communication, where events from the past are recollected in the present. Connerton argues that this is a fundamental weakness in Halbwachs’ theory of collective memory. For him commemorative ceremonies and social practices are how collective memory is sustained beyond the life of groups (189 p.31).

Halbwachs argues that the past is remembered to serve the needs of the present. He compares memory to building blocks which are constantly reused, and opens the possibility that memory is never constant, and can be reconstructed and put to different uses at different times. What is important is that the memory can be projected deep into the past, not the use it is put to in the present. Such an approach to memory leaves much room for ‘forgetting’, as memories which the society deems to be of little use would fade. For Halbwachs the process of forgetting suggests that it is organic. He states that

“our impressions yield to the forms that social life imposes on them only at the price of losing a part of their substance” (1950, 49). For him, the processes of life and ageing impact what is remembered and how it is remembered. Halbwachs, however, does not deal directly with the issue of who would be responsible for determining what is remembered and what should be forgotten.

Halbwachs states that the memory is determined by the needs of the present, but he does not explore the issue of who determines the needs of the present. This issue has to be explored because traumatic memories very often are not in the interest of some groups in the society, and what is often remembered or forgotten is determined by the amount of power various groups wield in the present.

Bloch (2011) in his review of Halbwachs’ writings explores the author’s lack of attention to issues of memory appropriation. Bloch argues that there are many examples of groups within societies which appropriate rituals and traditions which predate their existence. One example used to illustrate this point is the Christian appropriation of Holy Communion which Bloch claims was a ritual which was an older tradition in the Mediterranean. Halbwachs does not address the processes involved in memory creation, and thus his approach to collective memory cannot address the issue of how groups, and even societies, create and appropriate memories for their own ends.

Halbwachs is also interested in the role of space in collective memory, and argues that space is foundational in helping members of groups to remember. While he makes reference to the mental space of groups in which their memories exist, he stresses that the physical space is very important (Halbwachs, 1992). He argues that the members always refer back to their physical space, because these spaces provide stability which societies need. They provide a sense of permanence, within which very little changes. These spaces allow for the existence of a collective memory, by providing members with physical references within which to perceive the past in the present (1992 p.40)

While in agreement with Halbwachs that the memory of the individual is dependent on that of his group, and that knowledge and images of the past serve the needs of the present, Connerton (1989) differs on how groups convey and sustain memory. He argues that this is not adequately dealt with by Halbwachs. Connerton states that much of what Halbwachs refers to as social memory is actually, communication among members of groups (1989 p. 30). This communication facilitates the transfer of memories in groups. The memories last longer than the life span of the groups’ individual members. Connerton suggests that Halbwachs did not acknowledge that performance was the basis of this process.

Connerton (1989) goes on to explore in more detail how societies pass on their collective memory, and how this memory is sustained. He makes provision for large and small groups in an approach which allows for the study of the use of memory, and the process of memorialisation, which involves large groups such as nation states, and smaller entities which are essentially minorities within states.

Connerton's work presents an alternative approach to how societies remember. He argues that historical reconstruction, which depends only on the use of documentary evidence, is not an adequate tool in the study of how societies remember. He argues that social memory must be used along with historical reconstruction to enhance the understanding of how societies remember. Connerton's main argument is that the focus on what he referred to as historical memory based on interrogation of a society's historical records does not give an accurate picture of how societies remember. He argues instead that images of the past and knowledge of the past are transmitted and perpetuated by ritual performance (1989 p.9). For Connerton these performances can be found in commemorative ceremonies which are habitual and involve the body, and it is the study of these ritual performances that will give insight into how memories are perpetuated. He states that "to study the social formation of memory is to study those acts of transfer that make remembering in common possible" (1989 p. 32).

This approach to memory and remembering takes the focus off the individual and places it on the group or society as a whole. As each commemorative act is performed, not only do the participants and the members of the society pass on the memory, but they also ensure that it is sustained. These commemorative acts can be used to help in remembering, but also to help in forgetting. A ceremony, according to Connerton, could be used to commemorate and thus remember and sustain one memory, in order to engender forgetting another (Connerton 1989). This happens when there is an attempt to break with an older order, and to institute a new. This new memory, however, has to de-legitimise the old, in order to give the illusion of continuity which society requires.

The new beginnings require recollection, because the experiences of the present are always based on a prior context without which, the present cannot be understood. With old loyalties already in existence the role of the new ceremony is to bestow legitimacy on the new order. Temporal organisation requires that things be placed in context, and these expectations are the basis of recollection. When applied to the study of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its memorialisation, the historical narrative built around the sites of memory such as plantations and museums, ignores slavery and its legacy which includes the Civil War in the United States (Alderman, 2010; Alderman and Campbell, 2008).

In his study of memory Connerton (1989) also explores the politics of memory by establishing a connection between what is remembered and its influence on the power hierarchy of the society, by arguing that elite groups have access to a memory which legitimizes their position, while non-elites and other groups in the society, whose memory is not part of the wider meta narrative, lack the terms of reference which the elite have when legitimating their origins which come with the accumulation of power. Thus for elite groups in society, access to a legitimising past is paramount. With reference to the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies in nations where the descendants of the enslaved Africans are a minority, this is of paramount importance.

The memorialisation and commemoration of the Transatlantic Slave Trade varies across the Atlantic World. In different countries specific legacies are memorialised and commemorated: in the Anglophone Caribbean for example, the emphasis is on resistance and not on slavery (Brown 2002, Dacres 2004, Paul 2009). Reinhardt (2006) argues that in the Francophone Caribbean and in France memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies tends to focus on the benevolence of the French abolitionists, whilst in Europe the emphasis has been on the abolition process (Brown 2002, Oldfield 2007). Oldfield (2007) argues that, although Britain commemorated abolition, it did so only to the extent that it bolstered the British national historical narrative and allowed for the creation of a “culture of abolitionism” which celebrated the Act of Abolition but ignored the nation’s role in the Slave Trade (Oldfield 2007 p.89).

Across the Caribbean, Emancipation is commemorated on 1st of August every year and the ceremonies are usually held at the monuments that commemorate the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. According to Connerton’s approach, these ceremonies are performances of memory which help sustain the memory of the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In Ghana the introduction of Emancipation celebrations and the PANAFEST festival around the Cape Coast and Elmina castles would certainly qualify as performance of memory (Hartman, 2002; Holsey, 2008)

Connerton’s argument, that the study of collective memory requires focus on the rituals and performance as manifestations of memory, and that they allow for the analysis of the politics of memory, provides a useful framework for the study of memorialisation of the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It facilitates the analysis of the processes used in recollection and forgetting. The emphasis on performance allows this study to include aspects of memorialisation and commemoration in sustaining the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It also allows for the inquiry into the forgetting inherent in the performance of memory. This is a very important aspect of the study of the legacies of traumatic events, such as the Transatlantic Slave Trade, since the performance of rituals relating to that legacy are problematic within the wider historical narratives of the nations within which those memorialising ceremonies are utilised.

Pierre Nora’s (1989) theoretical framework for how sites of memory were created, and why they are important to modern societies can give insight into the rise of memorialisation and monuments to the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Nora suggests that sites of memory exist because modern societies have lost the settings within which memory was an integral part of their members’ existence and everyday experiences. This loss was caused by forces of modernity such as globalisation, democratisation and the rise of the mass media and culture. For Nora, memory in its true form existed before the forces of modernisation began to act on the human condition. As these forces rose, there was a concomitant retreat of memory, as modern societies moved to organise their past using history rather than the memory experienced in traditional societies. In the postcolonial world, forces of progress and revolution, which were often part of the decolonisation process, decoupled those newly

independent nations from their memory, as leaders pushed for modernisation driven by political philosophies of the time, and denied the efficacy of older, established institutions and memories.

Nora's analysis of the factors which led to the development of lieux de mémoire is relevant to this study of memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies. As Thompson (2010) shows in his broad survey of sites of memory, there has been an increase in the level of memorialisation in the last thirty years (Thompson 2010). This increase is not unique to any one region of the Atlantic World, but it is important to ask whether these new memorials are the result of responses to a threat to the memory of the phenomena. It is also important to understand that memorialisation differs in the various parts of the Atlantic World.

Nora argues that memory, as a legacy of what was known intimately, is now replaced by a narrow perspective on current events which dominates the consciousness of people, driven by the mass media. He argues that societies are now driven by change and are thus condemned to forget a past that is organised through sorting and sifting; it is a memory which is present focused; a memory without a past. Since we no longer dwell within our memories in societies where those memories are in constant performance, it has become necessary to create lieux de mémoire to embody them: the lieux de mémoire exist because memory has been swept away by history. So as sites of memory the monuments to the Transatlantic Slave Trade can be interpreted as bulwarks against forgetting.

Nora (1989 p.3) states that memory is always embodied in living societies, is always evolving, is always in the present and is always subject to remembering, forgetting and appropriation. Nora suggests that memory may lie dormant for long periods, but can be reawakened; memory ties us to the eternal present and relies on vague and symbolic details, rooted in specific spaces and images (1989 p.3). The history which replaces it is the reconstruction of what is no longer, and is always problematic and incomplete. It is a representation of the past; an intellectual exercise based on analysis and critical discourse. It relies on change and is always relative. Sites of memory are the sources which facilitate this intellectual exercise and ultimately lead to narratives, interpretation and the creation of meaning (Nora 1989). The monuments in this study - whether created specifically, such as those in the Anglophone Caribbean and the United States, or extant buildings and sites subsequently imbued with meaning, such as the slave forts and castles of West Africa, are used to create narratives which are often problematic and as Nora suggests are often incomplete. The forts and castles of Cape Coast and Elmina in Ghana are good examples of this as the narrative based on them is highly contested and open ended. The narrative varies depending on what group is doing the narrating, on what archive is being used to tell the history.

Sites of memory are vestiges and embodiments of a commemorative consciousness that survives in a history which renounced memory but now cries out for it. The commemorative consciousness which is inherent in memory leads to the rise of sites of memory because of the inadequacies of history (1989

p.6). In the context of the Transatlantic Slave Trade Nora's approach allows for an explanation for the increase in memorialisation. The increase in the number of monuments and memorials compensates for the inadequacies of history at the various sites of memorialisation.

According to Nora sites of memory are archives, marking important dates and events. He states that the retreat of memory among minority groups into jealously protected enclaves is evidence of the need to create sites of memory, because if the memories are not guarded jealously they will be swept away by history. They become the foundation of identity, and it is this threat to the foundation that requires the creation of sites of memory to defend this identity. In nations where the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans form a minority of the population the preservation of the memory of the legacies of slavery becomes extremely important to those communities and their identity. The memory marks their identity and allows emplacement in the wider society and the historical narrative of that society.

This approach would also be relevant in the study of the post-colonial memorialisation in the Anglophone Caribbean. We may argue that these societies are not minority societies, but analysis of the historical narrative suggests that the memory of slavery and its legacies came under threat in the post- emancipation era and up until the post-colonial era when the British "abolitionist narrative" dominated the historical narrative of that region. During the post-emancipation period the historical narrative which developed with reference to slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade came to be dominated by commemoration of the abolitionists. This narrative became that of the colonies in the Caribbean (Oldfield 2007). In the post-colonial period there has been a concerted effort to rewrite this narrative in order to create an identity distinct from a colonial one (Dacres, 2004). Applying Nora's approach to sites of memory would help inform the discourse on this issue.

Memory and Identity

In his study of the relationship between memory and identity Gillis (1994) states that today memory and identity are "free-floating phenomena" which are detached from their original meaning. They are dealt with as if they depend on each other, but this is a new phenomenon because they were originally separate entities. Gillis argues that identity is based on what is remembered and this in turn is defined by the specific identity. Memories and identities however are not static but continually changing as subjective "representations or constructions of reality" (1994 p.3). According to him what is remembered or forgotten are often determined by power relations because they are very selective and serve specific agendas and ideologies. This must be taken into consideration when looking at the memory of slavery and the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

According to Gillis identity implies relationships and, in the case of nation states, national memories are constructed according to national needs based on history. The late modern period, from the French

Revolution to the Second World War, saw the rise of national identities over local ones as nationalism increased across Europe. He argues that as the disruptive forces of globalisation increasingly impacted the legitimacy of the state in the post Second World War period, the need for support for national identities has increased as it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain such identities. This continues today, even in the face of unification movements across the modern world, as local identities are asserted.

Gillis argues that commemoration is important in memory creation; what is remembered is the product of contestation, and commemoration gives the impression of consensus, thus commemoration legitimises memory. Thus memory in the nation state is very often appropriated by the elite, and elite memory dominates time and space, attempting to render popular memory obsolete and encouraging it to be forgotten. Elite memory defines the boundaries and commemoration and is the tool to manage and maintain them. Gillis uses the example of the national holidays in France and the United States. The dates of July 14th and July 4th mark new beginnings in the respective countries. In these instances, representations of the past were crucial in creating national identities. These representations excluded alternatives which contradicted or contested the dominant national narrative, which became the single national narrative. According to Gillis the commemoration of the First World War and the associated memorials serves in this light, as the soldier becomes the expression of national character. The memorialisation is a manifestation of the national memory.

Gillis believes that there was a democratisation of memory in the post-Second World War period, when commemoration began to include women in national memory, but he argues that the era of commemoration came to a close in the 1960s when the responsibility for memory moved to the individual, because individuals were now members of multiple groups, and that this negated the need for an overarching national collective memory.

The rapid global restructuring since the 1960s has led to a proliferation of identities and a disruption of the dominant national narrative. This proliferation of identities and groups with their own memories and history is comparable to Nora's (1989) idea of minority groups maintaining their memories in the face of history's disruption of memory. Gillis argues for the disruption of history and rise of multiple group memories, thus returning to a subjective approach to history, and as a result closing the gap between Nora's memory and history. This return to subjectivity and the proliferation of identities can be seen in the increase in memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies in Western Europe (Cain, 2011; Chivallon, 2001; Kardux, 2011b; Alan Rice, 2011) and in the United States (Alderman, 2010; Kardux, 2011a; Rice and Kardux, 2012), as there has been a push for the insertion of minority memory into the national historical narrative.

Young's (1993) argument for the rise of the counter monument in Holocaust memorialisation is presented as an example of this. According to Gillis the counter monument movement rejects the

notion of sites of memory, and wants to “de-ritualize and dematerialise remembering” (1993 p.17). The traditional idea of a counter movement has been to eschew sites which force viewers to apply their own points of view, and rather to deal with memorials which encourage facing the past to avoid its repetition. Memory and history have been democratised and the traditional national memory narrative has lost its sway on what is to be remembered. Gillis argues that the individual has very little use for the dominant national narrative, but he does not go into detail as to how this change occurred.

Gillis attempts to answer these questions by using the battle between traditionalist history and revisionist history. He contends that this battle is impacting on memory and the national narrative, and their role in creating national identities. For him this process is an attempt to bring the past into the present, and undoes the work of the traditionalists who cut off the past from the present.

Hobsbawm (1983), in his essay on the use of traditions in the creation and maintenance of national identities, focusses on the United Kingdom to highlight the process of creating traditions. He uses the term ‘invented traditions’ to refer to “traditions actually invented, constructed and formally instituted and those emerging in less traceable manner” (1983 p.1). Hobsbawm uses these traditions and their development in the British society to give time depth to the monarchy and what it means to be British. Hobsbawm defines “invented traditions” as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.” (1983 p.1). What is remembered, according to him, does not have to be from antiquity, but it has to be suitable to the needs of the present. He uses, to support the argument, the examples of revolutions, such as the French Revolution, which broke with the past, by showing how the past used is what was thought to be relevant to the revolution’s intended goals, even if that past is an ‘invented’ one.

Hobsbawm (1983 p.3) states that in traditional societies which are pre-industrial, ‘tradition’ is based on the past, “real or invented” and is reinforced through practice and repetition. This maintains stability in spite of the changes taking place in the society. ‘Custom’ on the other hand is what is done in the society. It allows for change and social continuity. It is the precedent for the change or the lack of it in the society. Hobsbawm presents common law as a good example of ‘custom’. While it is the precedent upon which society is governed, few in the society know how long it has been established. The implementation of the law, and the rituals practiced in the administration of it, are the ‘traditions’ (1983 p.3). He is however careful to distinguish between ‘tradition’, which is ideological, and “routine”. He states that routines serve a technical function in industry and bureaucracy in order to establish networks of convention and efficiency. Routines are easily discarded when operations change. They are not ideological and can be changed when the need arises.

Hobsbawm describes the invention of tradition as “a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past” (1983 p.4). According to him this is achieved through

repetition. Hobsbawm admits that very little is known about how this was achieved historically and that more research needs to be done to understand it. However what is known is that the 'invention' of tradition tends to occur when there are convulsions and rapid changes which, like those of the last two centuries, rendered old tradition ineffectual and institutions inefficient and unable to adapt, bringing changes in modern societies through the processes of 'tradition' invention.

While invention suggests the creation of something new, Hobsbawm is cautious not to suggest that this process always leads to new 'traditions' as old ones could be given new meaning or be merged with new ones for entirely different uses. In different conditions old 'traditions' were repurposed especially when longer histories could be established by doing so. This reconstruction of the present based on a past that may have been invented, sheds some light on how memory is put to use in society. What is important is the ease with which these new 'traditions' could be imbued with antiquity. Along with repetition, Hobsbawm explains that elaborate ritual complexes are developed around the 'invented traditions' to achieve this perception of time depth. These rituals are very often built on old symbols and material which are adapted to fit the perceived needs of the society. With many societies having what Hobsbawm calls a "vast storehouse" of such material, the creation of 'tradition' and rituals to suit the needs of the society is not difficult.

Hobsbawm uses the example of the nineteenth century nation states of the French Third Republic and the newly unified Germany. These new states developed symbols, rituals and commemoration to build legitimacy among citizens for whom rapid change had cast doubt on those states (1983 p. 271). National holidays were invented, along with ceremonies performed only on those days. Similar cases were highlighted in the United States where, after the Civil War, the goal was national unity and the assimilation of the large numbers of immigrants arriving in the country. In short, Hobsbawm argues that, during that period of uncertainty, state institutions resorted to the invention of traditions to legitimise the state and ensure the loyalty of citizens. One of the tools which featured in this process was the use of buildings and monuments as expressions of a national character.

This study is concerned with the memorialisation of the traumatic event that was the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies. One of the most studied traumatic events is the systematic extermination of Jews of Europe known as the Holocaust and since the end of the Second World War this event has been memorialised in the public space in a number of nations. Young (1993) explores the memorialisation and creation of monuments to the Holocaust in Europe, Israel and the United States, and examines the use and meaning of these memorials from the view of the people who constructed them, and those who visit them. In doing so Young looks at the role of memory, and how people choose to remember and memorialise the trauma that was the Holocaust.

This examination of the rise of memorials to the Holocaust places emphasis on their context within the nations where they were commissioned, since, although the Holocaust occurred in Europe, survivors

migrated to Israel when it was created as a Jewish nation after World War Two and to the United States. Monuments to the Holocaust were commissioned in these disparate societies. Young argues that the pervading ideology of the society which is commissioning the memorialisation impacts on the process and method. He suggests that the context influences the types of monuments and memorials which are commissioned in these disparate environments. He also shows how the political ethos of the various countries impacts on that process, which is always very heavily contested, and ultimately determines what is to be memorialised and what form the memorialisation should take. Some question the need for memorials, others argue for different forms of memorialisation, while in some nations the memorialisation is perceived as a form of silencing of the wider genocide of other ethnic groups.

To support his argument Young (1993) compares memorialisation of the Holocaust across Europe, the United States and Israel. In Germany, where the legacy of the event still creates much dissonance, memorialisation is still very much contested, and this impacts on the form which memorials take. This is also impacted by how monuments have been used by the state and how members of the society perceive monuments. In Poland, the contestation has to do with the national perception of the role of Poles as equal victims of the atrocities; memorialisation there will be different. In Israel, which identifies itself as a Jewish state, a very different set of issues impact on the memorialisation process, and the notion of a Jewish state, created after the Second World War, is pivotal in this analysis. In a state where Jews are the majority, the political ethos would be conducive to memorialising, and while this process is never without conflict, the forces impacting the process would be less hostile to any memorialising of the Holocaust. While there is much emphasis on the victims and their suffering, the memorialisation of heroes of resistance during the Holocaust is also important.

Very similar issues impact on the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade across the Atlantic world, and it is possible to discern that the memory of slavery is realised in different ways in the various parts of the region. In Europe, the lasting legacy has been one of celebrating the benevolence of abolition (Brown, 2002; Oldfield, 2007; Reinhardt, 2006; Rice and Kardux, 2012). In West Africa much of the memory is of the trauma experienced by the enslaved at the slave trading ports (Bruner 1996; Ebron 1999; Schramm 2005b). In the Caribbean the memory is dominated by resistance to enslavement (Dacres 2004; Scher 2012; Thompson 2006; 2010). Young states that “depending on where and by whom these memorials are constructed, these sites remember the past according to a variety of national myths, ideals and political needs.”(1993 p.1).

With reference to the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Young’s approach is very relevant because it allows for the comparison of the various factors which impact on the memorialisation process in each of those sites. While there has been an increase in memorialisation of the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the memorialisation is taking place within political and social contexts which vary widely and this impacts the agenda of memorialisation. According to Young memorialisation does not take place in a vacuum but is influenced by the environment within

which it occurs (1993 p. 2). What is remembered and memorialised is determined by the needs of the society. In Young's analysis of Holocaust memorialisation, the approach is determined by the society's relation to the event. This can also be seen in the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The case studies in this thesis are within political landscapes which are very diverse and the historical relationship to the Transatlantic Slave Trade is different in each case. In Ghana the castles, which are the sites of memorialisation, were also the sites from which Africans were sold into slavery across the Atlantic Ocean. Saint Lucia was a site of enslavement but politically today it is governed by the descendants of those who had been enslaved. In Louisiana, which was also a site of enslavement of Africans, the descendants are a minority.

Across the Atlantic World similar issues have to be examined in any analysis of the memorialisation process. This study of the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies focusses on case studies the Caribbean, West Africa and North America. Like Young's study of memorialisation of the Holocaust it is a study in the memorialisation of trauma. The issues which Young identifies are all relevant. The memorials take different forms, and the issues which impact the process of their creation are determined by political and social factors. These factors in turn are determined by the role and status of the African descendent populations within those societies, and how the memory of slavery is sustained and used. Issues of the memory and legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade resonate with the minority African descendent population (Balkenhol 2011; Hourcade 2012). In the Caribbean, where former European colonies became nation states in the post Second World War era, governed by the descendants of formerly enslaved persons, memorialisation is mainly in the form of traditional statues commissioned by the state. In those states memorialisation focusses on identity creation and state legitimisation (Brown 2002; Modest 2011). The forces impacting memorialisation are certainly different in West Africa, where the ancient castles, which were sites of slave trading, are now memorials imbued with meaning by pilgrimages made by Diaspora Africans (Macgonagle 2006; Osei-Tutu 2014). The political and social context within which these forts and castles have now become monuments is one where discussion on the issue of slavery is still very much taboo because of stigmatisation of those whose ancestors were slaves, and the memory of slavery can still impact a person's status in the society (Holsey, 2008).

In the United States, a nation state where freedom and equality are enshrined in the constitution, where the descendants of the formerly enslaved live but are of minority status in the general society and still endure discrimination based on that status (Hartman 2008), memorialisation of the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade is certainly impacted differently from in the rest of the Atlantic world. Memorialisation of the trade has taken place within the context of the African descendant population's fight for equality and emplacement in the historical narrative of the nation (Alderman, 2010; Alderman and Campbell 2008; Kardux 2011a).

Monuments Memory and Heritage

This study must interrogate how monuments are used as sites of memory. Trouillot's (1997) examination of the creation and use of the fort Sans Souci and the creation of silences in the meta-historical narrative of Haiti and the Haitian Revolution, provides a framework within which power, manifested in that memorialisation process, impacts memory and forgetting. Trouillot focusses on a very imposing monument to the Haitian Revolution in Haiti called Sans Souci.

This monument is a citadel built by Henri Christophe to defend the revolution, but the name Sans Souci also belonged to an African born general who had been a prominent figure in the early stages of the rebellion. Trouillot explores this in reference to the historical narrative of the Haitian Revolution, which is presented with little discourse on what he calls the "War Within the War" (1997 p.33). The wider war being referred to by the author is the war which led ultimately to the creation of an independent Haiti. The war within this was the battle between various groups of formerly enslaved Africans, who had different agendas and allegiances. He argues that these battles do not fit into the overarching historical narrative of the Haitian Revolution and goes on to show why this silence in the narrative, on this aspect of the history, is no accident (1997 p. 34).

Trouillot's approach shows how the creation of a monument like Sans Souci can suppress aspects of history during the production process, and by extension the historical memory of the society. What become the "facts of history" are not universal, but are subjective. He argues that silences are inherent in history because someone determines what should be recorded and as a result there is never full closure of events, as some details are always left out. These "facts", as he refers to them, are thus never created equal (1997 p. 43). Trouillot starts by presenting the narrative of the battles, and of the eventual death of San Souci.

This death is documented in the archives. It reveals that he died at the hands of his enemy, Henri Christophe, who rises to become the first king of Haiti and a mythological figure in Haitian collective memory. Trouillot argues that Christophe had decided that Sans Souci should be forgotten, because memory of his life and death could potentially be problematic for his, Christophe's, own political ambitions. Christophe proceeded to build the Citadel fort and a palace, and to name the palace Sans Souci. Today, the Citadel and adjoining edifices are part of a UNESCO World Heritage site. By naming the palace Sans Souci, Christophe contrived that the name became associated with it and not the man, effectively silencing the man's role in the historical narrative, despite the fact the he exists in written records. If the monument as a site of memory is an archive as Nora (1989) suggests, Trouillot's work shows that the creation and use of that archive in the production of the historical memory has erased San Souci the man, from collective memory in Haiti.

In the historical narrative of the Haitian Revolution, the insertion of San Souci the man would mean the insertion of what Trouillot refers to as the “War Within the War” into the narrative. This would highlight disunity and battles among the leaders of the revered revolution. There is a silencing and forgetting that allows for the creation and perpetuation of a meta-narrative which perpetuates the idea of a unified revolution for Haitian liberation.

The slave castles at Cape Coast and Elmina in Ghana are sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade and today are UNESCO World Heritage sites in commemoration of that legacy; however these imposing edifices have served as government offices, prisons and in many other capacities since the end of the slave trade. In the Ghanaian historical narrative their role as slave trading sites was minimised (Schramm 2005) and in the collective memory the castles are part of a colonial legacy not a slavery legacy. When the castles were inscribed as World Heritage Sites they were imbued with the memory of slavery, thus exposing the silencing (Akyeampong 2001). This forgetting and silencing is problematic because the castles are part of a larger Transatlantic narrative. The Ghanaian narrative has been challenged by diaspora Africans for whom the sites are imbued with the memory of slavery, and who visit the sites as sacred places (Macgonagle 2006; Schramm 2004).

As sites of memory, monuments are usually built into the landscape and very often become sites of heritage which commemorate events, phenomena and people in the public space. Smith (2006) looks at forces which impact the processes and determine what enters that space. Smith explores the heritisation process and the ideological foundation on which this process is built. She interrogates the role of state and internationally sanctioned institutions in the creation of heritage and how these entities influence the process of heritage creation.

Smith (2006) argues that the way we think about heritage is dominated by the assumption that it is “old, grand, monumental, and aesthetically pleasing sites, buildings, places and artefacts.” She argues that the domination occurs because there is a hegemonic discourse which influences the way heritage is perceived. For Smith this perception promotes Western values as being applicable universally because they have become the standard by which heritage is evaluated, particularly by international bodies such as ICOMOS and UNESCO. On this basis Smith argues that heritage is in fact a cultural practice and not a physical thing. Since these practices are the standard by which heritage is identified and regulated, Smith refers to them as the “authorised heritage discourse” (2006 p.1). According to Smith this is based on the knowledge claims of experts and “institutionalized in cultural agencies and amenity societies.” (2006 p.1).

While this is a limited view of memorialisation, it is the type of memorialisation which is popular with nation states and sanctioned by them. Thus, if this discourse on the process of memorialisation is to be analysed, Smith’s approach, in which she looks at the role of the state in the creation of monuments, would allow for the study of this process. State sanctioned memorialisation is very often dominated by

institutions and experts in relevant fields. Smith's work allows for the exploration of the role of power in the memorialisation process.

Smith analyses the process of heritage creation and explores the way power is manifested in that process with a focus on the role of experts in the field of heritage. Smith refers to the heritage created by professionals in the field as the "authorised heritage" because the heritage created in that process is sanctioned by the state, local and international professional organisations. This heritage, according to Smith, fits into the meta narrative of "Western national and elite class experiences, and reinforces ideas of innate cultural value tied to time depth, monumentality, expert knowledge and aesthetics" (2006 p.289). The authorised heritage discourse dominates because it is perceived to come from those who are experts in the field, creating, by implication, an unauthorised discourse which is not sanctioned by experts and is thus ignored or forgotten.

This is useful in this study because many of the monuments and memorials which come under scrutiny in this study are today heritage sites. The forts and castles of Ghana are prime examples of this. While these castles and forts have been in the landscape for centuries, today the meaning with which they are imbued has largely been dictated by professional organisations like UNESCO, because they have been inscribed as World Heritage Sites.

Smith argues that heritage is a cultural practice and that authorised heritage discourse has become hegemonic because it relies on power and claims of legitimacy through state sanctioned institutions. These institutions are staffed by experts whose work is influenced by class and wider national narratives within which monumentality is privileged (2006 p.11). Much of this has to do with the perpetuation of specific nation identities and issues of nation building. All of these issues impact the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies across the Atlantic world. For example, many of the monuments in the Anglophone Caribbean were constructed during the post-colonial period and many of them are statues of male figures that are put up as national heroes in these very young nations (Dacres 2004; Thompson 2006; Paul 2009, Lambert 2007). The fact that monuments were used for memorialisation may have been directly related to the role of state sanctioned institutions. Young (1993) suggests that monuments commemorate the past according to myths, ideals and political needs tied to the state (1993 p.1)

Smith defines heritage as a social process defined by the "protocols, techniques and procedures" used by heritage professionals such as managers, archaeologists, museum curators and the like (2006 p.3) and argues that this process, when applied to objects, helps create meaning which is geared towards identity creation in the specific nation state. This aspect of Smith's work is in many ways similar to Connerton's approach to memory and remembering, where the emphasis is on performance and process rather than on the objects themselves. Smith does not lose sight of the material objects as they are central to the process; but she emphasises the role of state and international institutions in dictating

those performances. This applies even to the language used by those who are privileged to preside over the heritage. To highlight this issue Smith looks at the role of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), two of the most powerful world heritage organisations, in this process. This approach is apt because some of the sites under study in this project have been designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. In fact the Slave Route project, which was started by UNESCO in 1994, must be scrutinised in any study of the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, because this project initiated a process of memorialisation in some parts of the Atlantic World.

Smith's (2006) analysis however is not unproblematic. While the author emphasises the privileging of the "authorised heritage discourse" over that of the subaltern, the approach creates a binary approach to heritage creation which is not always appropriate, as in the case of the UNESCO Slave Route Project. Schramm (2007) showed how the eventual exhibition which came out of the discourse around the castles was influenced by the actions of Ghanaians and African Americans in spite of the agenda of state officials and international funding organizations. The official memory in this instance would be synonymous with Smith's "authorised heritage discourse". According to Schramm's critique of this discourse in spite of "nationalist ideologies and regimes of power it also tends to proclaim the authenticity of local voices as against the manipulative force of the state and other hegemonic institutions."(2007 p.72) The author argues that there is strategic adaptation of memories on both sides in the process of creating national and transnational narratives. In the Ghanaian context, the claim of sites of slavery by UNESCO for World Heritage status came up against diaspora African claims for sacred sites, and local claims as sites for domestic slavery.

A similar process is documented by Kreamer (2006) in her analysis of the development of a museum on the slave trade at the Cape Coast Castle in Ghana. This process involved multiple institutions such as ICOMOS, USAID, the Smithsonian and the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, whilst alternative voices included Ghanaians and representatives of diaspora Africans. All of these voices played an active role in the creation of the historical narrative which is presented. These cases challenge Smith's analysis of heritage creation, in the case of democracies which allow for multiple voices.

Smith (2006) raises issues about monumentality, as much of the memorialisation which led to the creation of heritage sites is centred in monuments across the Atlantic. These monuments are very often created under the supervision of the state or state sanctioned institutions and as a result are most likely sites created within the confines of the "authorised heritage discourse" because they are often commissioned and funded by the state. The approach however should be more nuanced in order to avoid essentialising the heritage creation process. For some of the monuments, such as those in this study, the public were invited to participate. One should remain cognisant of the fact that in democratic states, public institutions can be held accountable by the public. Also it is important to note

that institutions like UNESCO have over the years modified their definition of heritage to include intangible heritage, and allowed for multi-vocality in the discourse on heritage (De Jong & Rowlands, 2007).

As sites of memory the memorials and monuments which are the subject of this study should be seen as manifestations of the collective memory of the different societies within which they exist. All of these memorials manifest what these societies wish to remember and what is to be forgotten. The memorials also indicate how the collective memory is used to create wider historical narratives in pursuit of specific agendas within each of the nation societies and the study of these memorials also highlights the contested nature of collective memory and how the memories of minority groups, which had been suppressed or ignored by the wider society, are sustained within those social groups which eventually invoke them to insert themselves into the meta narratives on which the wider collective memory is built. Thus the study of the creation and use of collective memory is as much a study of the creation of identity. The focus on the processes of the creation of collective memory and the uses of memory in various parts of the circum-Atlantic will illuminate the process of memorialisation and monument creation in this region.

Slavery Memorialisation in the Caribbean

The memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade has been on the rise in the Caribbean since the 1960s. This started with moves in Jamaica to memorialize Nanny, a leader of the maroons, and later in Guyana with a monument to Cuffy the leader of the 1773 Berbice Rebellion (Araujo 2014, Thompson 2006, 2010). The memorialisation can be directly connected to the independence of many of the colonies once held by the colonial powers of Europe. For this section the focus will be on memorialisation in the Anglophone Caribbean. For many of these islands the change in political status came with the end of Second World War. There was a clear move by the British government to divest itself of the once important plantation colonies (Mawby 2012). By the 1960s the progress to independence of the larger colonies in that region had started. With independence came the imperative of creating national identities and national historical narratives which would differentiate them from the rest of the colonies in the empire.

While some of these monuments have been in existence for decades, interest in them is rather recent. Laurence Brown's (2002) study of monuments in the Eastern Caribbean is one of the earliest investigations into the rise of monuments and their use in the Caribbean. In his paper on the monuments in the region Brown focused on Antigua, Martinique and Barbados. For Brown, these monuments were connected to emancipation, but were also as much about present political issues of nationhood as they were about commemorating the past.

Brown's exploration starts with a statue of Victor Schoelcher, the French abolitionist, and the creation and perpetuation of the "Liberator" myth. Schoelcher led the abolition movement in France and had championed the cause in the French legislature. For Brown this statue in Martinique is part of what has become the "abolitionist narrative" in which the leaders of the metropolitan abolition movement are portrayed as having liberated the grateful slaves. The statue depicts Schoelcher with a child whom he has liberated from slavery. The Liberator monument was erected by colonial officials in the 19th century (2002 p.94). This representation of emancipation casts the enslaved as passive and gives them no agency. This is very similar to the iconography popularised in the Wedgwood Medallion popularised during the debate for abolition of slavery in Britain. According to Brown this was also manifested in early monuments which commemorated abolition in the United States and in Britain.

For Brown, the Schoelcher monument is as much about reinforcing French colonial dominance as it is about the emancipation of enslaved Africans on the island (p.94). Unlike many of the Anglophone Caribbean islands, Martinique is still connected politically to France, with the official status of a department of the republic. Brown presents the monument as an expression of French national identity and the celebration of emancipation given by France which marks the change in political status of from colony to department.

This theme continues as the author focusses on the monument to emancipation on the island nation of Antigua, inaugurated in 1993, marking the celebration of twelve years of political independence from Britain (2002 p.103). The monument memorialises Prince Klass, an African Coramantee slave, and the leader of a slave rebellion in 1736 which had the ultimate goal of taking control of the entire island (Gaspard 1993). The statue depicts Prince Klass blowing a conch shell, which was a clarion call for rebellion on the island. For Brown it is important that the monument was unveiled on the anniversary of nationhood and not of emancipation (2002 p.104). The monument, which was commissioned and sponsored by the government, marks an event which occurred over a century before emancipation and is therefore part of the process of creating a national identity for Antigua by connecting nationhood with a fight for freedom.

Brown applies a similar analysis to the emancipation monument in Barbados which was unveiled in 1985 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of emancipation. Brown traces the evolution of the monument from its initial conception, when it was simply known as "Slave in Revolt (2002 p.107), to the unveiling ceremonies when Pan-Africanists and academics presented the monument as the embodiment of Bussa. Folklorists and academics had insisted that Bussa was African born but questions were raised about an American historian working in Barbados. Lambert (2007) explored the acrimonious public debate on the historical accuracy of Bussa's identity and role in the failed rebellion of 1816.

Brown suggests that in Barbados the battle to identify the monument as a specific individual allowed the state to connect the fight for freedom from slavery with the creation of the independent nation state. The author highlights the work of organisations and individual academics in the struggle to give meaning to freedom through the interpretation of the monument (2002 p.107). The controversy around the identification of the monument played out in the public space between activists groups and historians (Lambert 2007). By connecting the monument to an individual, agency was given to the enslaved Africans in the emancipation process. With this direct connection to a pre-emancipation event and the lead actor in that event, the fight for freedom and the creation of a free nation are connected. Lambert (2007) connects this creation of national heroes to nationalism. These figures from the past became surrogates who connect the modern state to heroic freedom fighters. With the creation of the state having its roots in the fight for freedom, the state is positioned as the legitimate institution to protect this freedom.

In his analysis of the process of memorialisation Brown raises three important issues. The first is the fact that the move to create heroes of slave resistance sanctioned by the state has led to the marginalisation of the role of women in the emancipation process (p.109). A second important issue is the fact that the fight to give agency to the enslaved by raising the enslaved African male to the level of hero as a counter to the Europeanisation of emancipation has perpetuated the notion of “Big man” history (p.109). The final point Brown raises is that rooting freedom in pre-emancipation events ignores the fact that the process of emancipation continued long after legislation was passed, in the struggle for equality. The monuments embody resistance but do not deal with the perpetuation of inequality. For the current study, these are pertinent issues which impact on the Caribbean case study, which focusses on a very similar memorialisation project.

Philip W. Scher, in a paper which explores the disconnect between public interest in the history of slavery and the commemoration of abolition, and the rise of monuments in the Anglophone Caribbean, and its impact on heritage products, pays specific attention to the emancipation monuments in Jamaica and Barbados (Scher 2012). Scher raises the issue of the “authorised discourse” (Smith 2006) and the rationale behind the involvement of the state in historical events and representations. The author states that involvement is predicated on the idea of national branding for differentiation and for the purposes of legitimising the power of the state.

Scher (2012) explores the heritage and historical debate and how it reflects little of the ambivalence which pervades the society. With reference to Barbados and Jamaica, he highlighted the lack of interest in the commemoration of abolition by the general public in these two nations to support his argument. In the case of Jamaica he uses the example of the reluctance and initial refusal of one parish council to participate in the national commemoration activities in 2007. In Barbados he highlighted the lack of public participation in similar ceremonies. The absence of promotion and the celebrations on state owned television, and the apparent lack of preparation by various arms of the state, is also

employed to support the argument. He also uses the lack of interest in the preservation of heritage sites directly connected to slavery to good effect. One obvious example was the demolition of a slave hut in 2008.

Having established the notion of ambivalence with respect to history and things historical Scher turns his attention to the monuments. He alludes to these monuments perpetuating the resistance narrative which for him is the “dominant trope in public sculptural displays in the region” (Scher 2012 p.87). The author also explores the use of the monuments to insert resistance to slavery and colonial exploitation into the historical narrative as done by these two states. Monuments to resistance and emancipation being used as national monuments is problematic. For Scher monuments to nationhood and independence would better serve as national monuments.

With the dominance of the resistance narrative Scher suggests that the Caribbean has difficulty expanding its heritage industry. The author proposes that resistance as heritage is limiting the creation of novel narratives of perseverance under slave conditions (2012 p.88). The tendency for the Caribbean nation states to diminish inherited colonial monuments in importance if they cannot be interpreted to fit the resistance model is presented as a weakness in the development of the heritage product. Scher uses the public debate on the importance of the statue of Lord Nelson versus the emancipation statue of Bussa to support his position. With state support and sponsorship of the Bussa statue as a memorial to a national hero, and the use of the monument to counter the Lord Nelson monument inherited from colonial predecessors, the state was limiting the interpretation of the national heritage (2012 p.88).

There are some significant issues to be raised with reference to Scher’s arguments. The first is the fact the author embraced the commodification of heritage and the inherent dissonance between heritage and history. The author seems to think that the dissonance between the two should not exist because Barbados is attempting to use its heritage for economic benefit. He speaks of the impact of Foucault’s “truth effect” on the historiography of the region, and the constraints that it has on the development of heritage tourism. This exploration of how power affects history, ignores the fact that the tourism industry is largely European and North American owned and that the resistance history of which he speaks is largely absent in the heritage tourism product of the Caribbean. Research on heritage tourism in much of the Anglophone Caribbean shows that slavery is largely absent as a topic (Dann 2001).

In *Monument and Meaning*, Dacres (2004) explores the issues of politics and identity in Jamaica with reference to the public discourse surrounding the unveiling of the most recent public monument to memorialise slavery, *Redemption Song* (Dacres 2004). The author interrogates the role that public monuments play in shaping memory and cultural identity and how these sites of memory are also sites of contestation and varied interpretation. For Dacres multiple interpretations of public monuments are based on the “personal political, social and religious investments” of the viewer of the monument, and

the controversy around Redemption Song reveals the post-colonial investments of the Jamaican society in history, identity and memory (2004 p. 137).

To support the argument the author explores the impact of the change in the politics of the Jamaican society and its impact on art and public monuments produced in the pre and post-independence periods in Jamaica. Dacres also highlights the role of racial identity in this process. The monument which is an oversized statue of a male and a female figure in the nude looking up at the sky embodied that process. Issues of the representation of the “black body” are explored with reference to the evolution of this aspect of Jamaican art. How should the black body be represented? The issue of the sexualised black body was also raised because of the nudity of the figures in the monument and its interpretation by a conservative religious society (204 p.143).

The issue of memory arises when public discourse on the monument turns to the lack of physical manifestation of enslavement on the figures in the monument. Another issue was the lack of physical reference to resistance. For some involved in the discourse ignited by the monument, the form of the figures in no way shows the enslaved resisting their oppression. It was also said to be devoid of the black experience during slavery.

Another issue dealt with by Dacres (2004) was the medium for the representation of such a traumatic past. The issue questions the suitability of such a monument as a medium to memorialise the slavery past of the nation. The author makes reference to attempts at representing that traumatic past by artists in other regions of the world.

One very important issue which Dacres deals with is the tradition of using memorials to national heroes who were involved in struggles against enslavement and colonial inequalities. For the author, this allows for the appropriation of these figures to project the struggle for independence into deep time in the absence of wars of liberation. While this legitimises the nation state with the majority African descent population, and is evidence of a rise in political consciousness, it also undermines the national project of political unity which is important in the context of the Jamaican society.

For Dacres (2004), Redemption Song and other monuments to emancipation perpetuate the marginalisation of women in the history and politics of the Caribbean. This is an inheritance of the European tradition of great men as national historical and political figures and as national heroes (2004 p.146). The discourse ignited by this monument, and controversies which followed its unveiling exposed the role which issues of history, identity and memory play in how societies interpret monuments and what they mean in the context of a traumatic history such as that which obtains in Jamaica, and, by extension, the wider Caribbean.

The Redemption Song monument is employed by Wayne Modest in his attempt to provide a perspective on the reasons behind abolition celebrations in Jamaica, where the political actor and the general population are both descended from enslaved Africans, in contrast to those in the United

Kingdom where the political actor and the perceived victims are separated along the lines of race (Modest 2011). Modest's main question focusses on whether the celebrations were held to help the nation come to terms with the memory of slavery and memorialise the ancestors, or whether it was a symbolic act of politics which exploited the memory to satisfy the masses in order to score political points (2011 p.76).

For Modest, much of the activity around the celebrations was intended to legitimise the institution of the state, and by extension the political party in power at the time, in order to win votes. The memory of the slavery past was one that was sure to resonate with the majority of the population. In this regard the author sees the reinstatement of Emancipation Day, August 1st, on the national calendar as a holiday, as a symbolic political move in the wider plan (2011 p.79).

In dealing with the monument Modest seeks to avoid the controversies already highlighted by previous authors and focusses instead on how the artist, who is by Jamaican standards "white" and by extension a descendent of the former "oppressor", was chosen to sculpt the monument. The author suggests that the park in which the monument was raised initially had nothing to do with emancipation but the political directorate saw an opportunity for a symbolic move by changing the name of the park and installing a monument to emancipation within the park. He suggests that the competition for the monument was rushed and provides evidence of a lack of historical context for the monument and the park (2011 p. 80).

The text of the Prime Minister's speech at the opening ceremony of the park raised it as a monument to the strength of character of the ancestors and the human spirit. The Prime Minister had also identified himself as being descended from the line of the oppressed thus legitimising himself as leader of the majority of the society. For Modest the unveiling of the park and the monument as memorials to the slavery past was an attempt to use the political symbolism of the act even while commemorating slavery and emancipation (2011 p. 82).

Thompson (2006) deals with one of the earliest monuments to slavery commissioned by a government in the Anglophone Caribbean. Thompson's intention is to highlight the various methods of commemoration of slavery in Guyana and how they are used. The monuments to slave rebellions because they have become sites of memory in the wider Guyanese landscape, are very central to the commemorations (Thompson 2006). The author gives a background to the monuments by underlining the rebellions they memorialise and the main characters they have to represent. The most well know of these in Caribbean historiography is Cuffy, the leader of the 1763 slave rebellion. Thompson shows how the nationalist government in the immediate post- independence period made a deliberate effort to connect itself with the leader of that rebellion and to raise him as a hero and liberator. The monument was used to connect the rebellion and Cuffy to the liberation struggles of Guyanese which were purported to have started with the fight for abolition. Thompson shows how, through public

pronouncements, the government controlled the interpretation of the monument even when there were alternative views to those of Cuffy as a liberator.

While the state acted to ensure that the image of the liberator became enshrined, other private and non-governmental organisations joined in to support this agenda. Thompson highlights the work of several authors of national prominence, whose work supports this interpretation. He also highlights the fact that, despite the official agenda there are alternative, and competing narratives within the political landscape of the nation. Despite this however the monument has become the anchor for annual emancipation celebrations for the African descended population in that nation.

Thompson (2006) also refers to the monument used to memorialise the leader of a rebellion which took place in 1834, the year of British Emancipation. Damon was the leader of what was initially planned as a non-violent protest against the Apprenticeship Act which effectively ensured that the newly emancipated were tied to the plantations where they had worked during slavery, but with compensation for their work. The monument, which was unveiled in 1988, became the focal point of ceremonies commemorating emancipation.

While the monuments are not the focus of the article, Thompson is able to show how monuments to memorialise slavery are interpreted and used, within the political landscape of Guyana, to legitimise the state and connect the fight for emancipation to the eventual creation of a nation state after independence.

Sites of Heritage: Monuments to the Transatlantic Slave Trade in West Africa

On the West African coast memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade is very different from that which exists in the Caribbean. Monuments in this region for the most part are the very edifices which had been erected to facilitate the slave trade. The old slave trading forts are the most popular monuments to the trade in the region, and the most popular of these are Goreé Island in Senegal and the Elmina and Cape Coast castles in Ghana. These sites have been designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites and are major tourist attractions. This status has led to much research on the use of these sites. Much of the literature on these monuments is focussed on the uses of the sites and the dissonant nature of the heritage.

Bruner (1996) looks at the various meanings attached to the slave forts of Ghana, and the use of the sites as a slavery heritage and tourism sites. The author looks at the multi-layered history of the forts, and how different constituents create meaning at those sites. As stated earlier these are important tourist attractions for Ghana. Bruner shows how conflict has arisen because the largest market for the forts is diaspora Africans who visit the forts on what can be termed pilgrimages, to reclaim identities

lost through the slave trade (Bruner 1996). The author points out that for these visitors the forts are sacred.

For the Ghanaian however these forts have been more than slave trading forts. They have been put to many uses since abolition of the trade and for the Ghanaian slave trading is only one part of the history of these sites. This difference in interpretation of the forts has led to much conflict as African Americans believe that, through the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, they have some ownership in the forts, much to the chagrin of Ghanaians. The African Americans have become stake holders in the heritage of the forts and have impacted on the representation of slavery at the forts.

Bruner illuminates that fact that tourism is important to the country and this plays a role in the amount of power wielded by the diaspora tourist, but another factor is that much of the financing for the restoration of the fort complexes and the museums attached comes from American donor agencies. These agencies also offer technical assistance to the Ghanaian institutions responsible for the forts. This raises questions of ownership of the forts and whose heritage is to be represented at these forts. Bruner shows how the varied interpretations and meanings attached to the forts have shaped how the sites are used.

In a very similar look at the use of the forts Singleton (1999) focusses on them as sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade to analyses how the trade is remember in West Africa. She compares how the trade is remembered in different parts of West Africa and what forces impact on how this is done. The author compares the memory of the trade in Ghana and in the Republic of Benin.

The forts of Ghana have great significance for diaspora Africans for whom they are important sites of memory of the slave trade. Like Bruner, Singleton examines tourism and its impact on representation of slavery at the forts, and the fact that it also makes them sites of conflict with Ghanaians. One constant point of conflict is the matter of whose heritage the forts represent. Is it the multi-layered heritage of the Ghanaian, or the slavery heritage of the diaspora African? (Singleton 1999). This is further muddled by the issue of ownership of the forts. This the author goes into not just with reference to Ghanaian versus diaspora tourists, but also to conflict within the local Ghanaian community.

With questions of ownership among local stake holders, government agencies, and the influence of tourism and the diaspora tourist concerning the slave forts of Ghana, Singleton highlights how contentious heritage sites can become, and how complicated the memory of slavery is for the forts of Ghana.

In comparison with Ghana Singleton proffers that in Benin the memory of slavery resides in modern monuments and memorials (Singleton 1999). The author contends that, unlike in Ghana where the memory of slavery is not pervasive, in Benin it is acknowledged and was an issue with which the people have largely come to terms. In this country there are recreations of old slave routes, museums

and memorials with direct cultural connections to diaspora communities across the Atlantic. There are also monuments which memorialise the slave trade. For Singleton the memory of slavery is alive in Benin and is evident among the people.

Benin is comfortable with its past. It has even erected a monument to Toussaint l'Ouverture, leader of the Haitian Revolution. He is considered a hero and a symbol of independence. The Haitian rebellion has significance in Benin because of the fight against the colonialism of France. The Haitians had defeated the French. It is also believed that Toussaint was a descendant of Africans from that region.

For Singleton the memory of slavery as constructed in the two West African nations shows how that memory can be used differently. Through direct cultural ties to the African diaspora across the Atlantic, Benin celebrates the memory of slavery. In Ghana the tone is more sombre with a focus on dungeons in medieval forts and the pain of the trade. With very similar histories of involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, each nation has its own narrative and way of remembering the slave trade.

Singleton uses the monuments as sites of memory to show the variety of what and how each nation chooses to remember about the slave trade. While the narratives are presented, there is very little discourse on the processes which led to these disparities in slavery memorialisation. This however was not within the parameters of that study.

A common theme among authors looking at the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in West Africa is the idea of the contested nature of the histories and heritage represented by the slave forts which are the most popular sites of memory. Macgonagle (2006) continues this approach in a paper which compares the heritage and memory attached to the popular forts at Elmina and Cape Coast Castle to that at other forts which were also trading forts but have been put to different uses during the modern period.

At odds are the use of Elmina and Cape Coast Castle, which are perceived and often presented as "sacred" sites of memory by diaspora tourists claiming the history of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and the other lesser known forts by Ghanaians to hold dance parties. For the Ghanaians, slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are only part of the wider and diverse history which they claim (Macgonagle 2006). These two categories of meaning and how they are used is the focus of Macgonagle's paper. The author borrows Pierre Nora's *lieux de mémoire* to explain the diaspora tourists' interpretation of the forts. These tourists see the forts as frozen in the time of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. None of the other uses of the forts before or after the slave trade are taken into account (Macgonagle 2006). As a result of the various interpretations of the forts, there is conflict over the heritage to be commemorated at the forts.

While the varied interpretation and contestation of the history and heritage attached to the forts are clearly highlighted in the paper, Macgonagle (2006) does not explore the reasons for this beyond the fact that different groups have different perceptions of the history of the site. Diaspora tourists have a

frozen perception of the history of the forts, and as a result ignore or are not aware of those other histories. Ghanaians have a broader perception of history and for them the varied uses of the fort over the centuries is what matters. Macgonagle does not interrogate the fact that this broader history is silent on the Transatlantic Slave Trade nor the reasons for this silence.

The exploration of memory and meaning and identity creation continues in the work of Sandra Richards (2002). The author covers these two themes with reference to diaspora tourism but with a focus on the African American tourists. There is reference to the memory work of others, for example that of the tourists who are of European descent. It must be noted that the author's experience as a visitor to the forts frames and informs much of the study (2002 p.373).

Richards devotes some time to looking at the rise in importance of the slave forts of Ghana and the role played by aid agencies and foreign development agencies in the development of the forts as heritage site with relevance for the entire Atlantic world. What is not focused on here is the impact of this process on the development of those sites. As with much of the literature which focusses on memorialisation in West Africa, little attention is given to the role of Ghanaians themselves in the creation of these sites of memory. The role of the state is sometimes mentioned but that of the average Ghanaian is hardly looked at, although the response of these people to the product of the process is.

Teye and Timothy (2004) also focus on tourism and by extension how the forts are used, but the authors take a very different approach by looking at the problem of assuming that the primary consumer of the West African forts as heritage sites is African American and diaspora African tourists.

The authors raise an issue which is obvious but not dealt with in other literature. That is the fact that the heritage being preserved and presented is part of the history and legacy of European and American involvement in West Africa. The reference is to "whites'" involvement in West Africa (Teye and Timothy 2004). In short, slavery legacy is also part of European and American history. As a result whites should not be ignored. Diaspora Africans should not be the only focus market.

To support their argument the authors explore the history of the forts and the historical activities of Europeans at the various sites. They also highlight the fact that, even in the modern age, that involvement remains relevant. While the historical involvement is pervasive and manifests itself in the forts and ruins of West Africa, the role of white Europeans in the renovation and preservation of the forts is also important. Much of the financing for the restoration and maintenance of these sites and the "tourism product" comes from European and American sources. For the authors this exclusion of pasts raises issues of authenticity but highlights the nature of the contested heritage as contained in these forts. It also raises the issue of ownership and the question of whose heritage it is.

While the process of heritage creation is dealt with indirectly by looking at the financing and maintenance of the forts, the input or lack of it by the Ghanaian is not dealt with. This may not have

been within the scope of this study but it is important if the multiple interpretations of the forts are being looked at.

In a study of the politics of memory at the slaving forts of Elmina and Cape Coast Castle, Bayo Holsey (2008) looks at the impact of the slave trade on identity formation in coastal Ghana. The author reveals that many Ghanaians distance themselves from the tourism industry developed around the forts because of the connection with the Transatlantic Slave Trade. There is disparity between the prominence of the slave trade in tourism and in other aspects of Ghanaian society. Holsey states that slavery is a subject rarely discussed outside of the tourism industry. In the author's opinion, many Ghanaians see the castles as being exclusive to tourists, and have little interest in them (2008 p.22).

The use of the forts as sites of memory by diaspora Africans has had a significant impact on the towns. While diaspora Africans generate much income for the communities, their focus on the castles as sites of memory for the slave trade and the need to have them interpreted in that way is at odds with the memory work being done by Ghanaian nationals (2008 p.17). The same issues which are raised in previous works are discussed in this paper. Holsey situates this conflict however within the realm of global economics.

The diaspora tourists come to the castles to help in their construction of an identity by "returning home" to "family" to recover from the trauma associated with the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its continuing legacies of race and racism. For them it is a respite from the oppression inherent in those legacies. For this to be successful they require a stagnant and non-racial Africa (Holsey 2008 p.23). The author suggests however that the people at those sites are suffering from trauma caused by the very global economic system which initiated the trade in Africans.

The role of history in this conflict is also explored. Holsey shows that Ghanaians distance themselves from the forts, and by extension the slave trade, because of the fear of stigmatisation. This is because there was also a local trade in slaves. The silence on slave trading allows the families with a history as slave traders or as victims of the trade to avoid identities associated with the trade. While there is acknowledgment of slavery, it is located in the north outside the immediate region of the castles. This silence also pervades the authorised historical narrative since the Transatlantic Slave Trade is absent from the school curriculum.

Hartman (2002) does not focus on the slave forts themselves but on the heritage tourism product presented. The author looks at how the politics of memory is played out in the trade between hosts and diaspora tourists. Much of it is built around slavery and suffering and requires that Africa remain stuck in history. The author is very critical of the role governments play in creating and marketing the type of heritage product consumed at Elmina in Ghana and Goreé Island in Senegal.

One difficulty Hartman expresses is the fact that the visit to these forts is supposed to be an opportunity to return home, mourn long lost ancestors and reclaim identity. The absence of Africa in

the narrative presented, and the fact that the Transatlantic Slave Trade had a major impact on Africa, is ignored. The focus is on slavery, suffering and return. Hartman questions the ultimate goal of the heritage presented at those sites of memory. The author questions the type of relationship that is being developed with the past at those sites and what it means for the present and even the future.

The author gives cursory attention to the work of governments and donor agencies in developing the heritage product. The role of UNESCO is also mentioned but no attention is paid to the processes which led to the creation of these forts as sites of memory. Like a number of researchers Hartman highlights the fact that there is a deliberate attempt to discourage nationals from entering the forts. An investigation into the process of memorialisation at those sites might give some insight into why this is so.

Plantation Heritage and Slavery in the United States

Buzinde and Santos (2008 p.469), using the collective memory framework, explore how historical narratives are created on former slave plantations in the American South. With the increase in the popularity of these plantations as heritage tourism sites, the authors argue that the narratives developed on these sites have very little to do with the history of the sites. They state that plantations have been converted into “beguiling locales” for tourist consumption but these plantations are “sites of death disaster and depravity” .

This dissonance between the history and heritage presented in the tourism product, they argue, is a result of “socially constructed master narratives” which produce a past that is acceptable and restores national legacies (2008 p.470). For Buzinde and Santos the tourism product created on the plantations is directly related to the contemporary political needs of the region which require the subordination of the politics of race which is an issue of contention in the wider United States. Collective memory in this instance is made to serve the contemporary society’s construction of the past and reflects the socio-political order (2008 p 470).

According to Buzinde and Santos heritage impacts on social identity and this creates sites which bring people together and help them reflect on a shared past. They argue that even sites of atrocities like plantations can help give a sense of unity, as identities can coalesce around specific narratives, for example of victims. This solidarity comes from the narration of experiences which could help lead to healing. However, they highlight the fact that plantation heritage sites, because of a dominant narrative, often do not function in this manner as slavery, the atrocity, are avoided.

The absence of slavery on the plantation ensures that the visitor to the site does not have to be confronted with it and also does not have to connect it to contemporary issues of race and inequity in

the society. Buzinde and Santos (2008 p.473) argue that descendants of enslaved Africans cannot be part of the historical narrative without internalising their subjugation.

In their study, which explores the text of websites and promotional material for Hampton plantation in South Carolina, the authors find that there is selective remembering and marginalisation of the slavery legacy in order to pursue a specifically white indent. There is emphasis on the white gentry and the race conflict is minimised. According to Buzinde and Santos , collective memory is used as a unifying force, presenting an image of a nation with a shared heritage based on a hegemonic narrative avoiding any counter-narratives which would undermine it. This route to heritage presentation ensures that the plantation maintains the status quo and does not allow for critical discourse on the multicultural nature of the wider American society. The issue of slavery is still an issue in the contemporary society and is not resolved.

Modlin (2008) looks at the narratives about slavery presented by tour guides at plantation museums in North Carolina and how these narratives impact on the understanding of the history of slavery by visitors to these museums. The marginalisation of slavery and the slave experience is largely documented in the region, where plantation museums have become very common and are the heritage sites tourists prefer to visit. This increase in prominence has also led to critical analysis of what is presented to the visitor. In general, Modlin argues that calls for narratives and artefacts that are more inclusive have not been productive. His findings suggest that slavery is misrepresented on plantation tours.

The author deconstructs the marginalisation at the plantation house museums by focusing on the scripted and rehearsed narratives which guides present to visitors at those sites. Coupled with the narratives presented in the text available at plantation museums, Modlin (2008 p.227) argues that myth production is key in the misrepresentation of slavery and of the contribution of enslaved Africans. The author states that very often multiple myths are presented to visitors and that some myths need to be supported by other myths. These myths include the temporal limiting of slavery to the period before the Civil War, the spatial limiting of the phenomenon by presenting it as being practised in rural America, the distancing of the site from slavery by suggesting that slavery did not happen there, the suggestion that little is known about the enslaved, the suggestion that the life was difficult for everyone during slavery and that they were not slaves but servants (2008 p.277). Modlin also finds that the specific biographies of slaves who were not typical were used to suggest that slavery was not as harsh as some might think.

The role of tour guides is central to the narratives these plantation museums present. They are also reinforcing the metanarratives which have been produced on these sites. Thus an analysis of their role in the production and perpetuation of these myths allows for the understanding of how guides impact on what is consumed by the visiting tourist. Modlin concludes by suggesting that the meta-narrative on

plantations will change slowly and myths will not be eliminated quickly unless African Americans become more involved in the administration of plantation museums. He remains acutely aware of the fact that while they share in the history of slavery, African Americans are not a homogenous group who share the same perspective on the public presentation of the slave past. Some African Americans may resist the idea of presenting what has been referred to as the “victimisation” in memorials (Alderman 2002). This would lead to the introduction of multiple voices in the narratives which are created around these plantation museums. Multi-vocality would certainly challenge the meta-narratives which have been sustained at plantation heritage sites. One of the case studies of this project examines the role of the tour guides at Whitney Plantation who present the narratives using the mnemonics in the landscape.

Araujo (2014) in a comparative study interrogates how different groups choose to appropriate the slave past to assert specific identities in the public space. Araujo compares the public memory in different parts of the Atlantic World, and how the public deployment of this memory varies depending on the place and time of that deployment. This study is multidirectional as the sources are not uniform and not linear. The study explores the public memory of slavery from the traveller accounts of visits to West Africa about what was witnessed of slavery as it functioned during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and progresses to specific spatial categories which include West Africa, the Americas, sites of enslavement, memory of emancipators and rebels who fought enslavement.

Araujo (2014) first focusses on visual images and narratives created during the period of the Transatlantic Slave Trade by travellers and traders into West Africa, the sources of information about the human beings who were captured and sold in this trade. These narratives and paintings were produced centuries ago but, according to Araujo, they still have a major impact on how slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are presented in museums and other displays today, because the interpretation is still largely based on the abolitionist narrative of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which first deployed them in public. Many of these narratives and paintings were deployed in the debate for abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Araujo 2014, p7).

Araujo goes on to look at the development of slavery heritage sites in West Africa which she refers to as “Ports of Embarkation”. In this region there are a number of heritage sites with particular attention being paid to the more popular sites of Ghana and Senegal which she stated have been very successful at attracting visitors. She also discusses small lesser known sites where monuments were actually created for memorialisation purposes. Araujo makes a connection between the rise of sites of memory for the Holocaust and for the Transatlantic Slave Trade. She shows how sites of memory for the Holocaust and the Transatlantic Slave Trade rose to prominence during the 1990s (2014 p.45). Araujo (2014 p.46) argues that the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade is not based on direct testimony of those descended from the people trafficked across the Atlantic, unlike the memory of the Holocaust sites. This raises questions about the authenticity of the heritage and of what is commemorated at

those sites . The sites which became prominent are based on the very narratives and paintings by travellers and chroniclers already mentioned earlier.

The heritage site on Gorée Island in Senegal comes under much scrutiny in that regard as the author's analysis shows how the memory of slavery there was connected to Holocaust sites in France and its significance exaggerated despite historical and archaeological evidence to show that slave trading was not a major activity on that site. There are sites in South West Africa which were involved in the deportation of higher numbers of Africans but have not become sites of memory of the trade. Araujo's questioning of authenticity applies if we are to scrutinize those sites within the framework of heritage tourism. As sites of memory these sites are imbued with memory based on the performance of memory at those sites. For those diaspora Africans whose memories of a homeland are non-existent the performance of memory in claiming the heritage is as powerful as the historical fact. Araujo also suggests that this constant comparison of the Holocaust and the Transatlantic Slave Trade can be seen as a way of legitimising memorialisation of slavery and the slave trade in the public space (Araujo 2014 p.9)

Araujo does not address why some sites have become more popular with tourists than others. The sites of Elmina and Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, for example, owe their prominence to their historical connection to the British Empire and the Anglophone world. Today one of the largest diaspora African populations, and by far the richest, resides in the United States. This group's affluence and its connection to the independence movement through Pan Africanism and Kwame Nkrumah has meant there is a long-standing relationship with Ghana, and thus a strong influence on the development of sites of memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade there. When the government of Ghana moved to restore the slave castles, African Americans were powerful stakeholders in the process.

Araujo also argues that the forts and castles of Ghana and the work of the government and international agencies to convert them into memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade focusses on the victims of the trade and not the perpetrators. Araujo argues that these sites were developed for the purposes of heritage tourism and not as sites of reconciliation for the legacies of the trade. She further argues that the sites are "based on imagined accounts and not historical evidence" (Araujo 2014 p.71).

In the Americas, Araujo looks at memorialisation in Brazil, the United States and the Caribbean. Brazil and the United States are compared in one section, where slavery can be seen as silenced and the trauma of slavery is largely absent in the public space, even when heritage sites connected with these activities are developed. The author raises the issue of the absence of enslaved African descendants in the historical narratives of these nations, and suggests that the end of the Cold War and global exchanges allowed for black activists to publicly assert their identities and raise issues of absences, of the enslaved and of slavery itself in their respective national historical narratives. Araujo also focusses on the rise of the narratives around "Great Emancipators" in Brazil and in the United

States through monuments and in museums, and shows how these commemorations actually silence the role of the enslaved in the process of abolition in the respective nations in the public sphere.

The rise of what the author refers to as “Iconic Rebels” is also part of the discourse in this book. Araujo traces the change of image of enslaved people from the submissive enslaved person in public representations of abolition, to lionised rebellion leaders immortalised in monuments throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The author’s analysis shows how this transformation of the enslaved person was one in which the public image served the groups who controlled the narratives. In the Caribbean many of the monuments erected to commemorate slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade were more closely associated with the creation of national identities around the time of independence from colonial powers. Araujo argues that these changes are the results of three main factors. These were the civil rights movement in which people of African descent demanded rights in their respective countries, the independence movement which led to the creation of new nation states with majority populations of people of African descent, and the rise of resistance and agency in academic work (2014 p.179).

In conclusion Araujo suggested that the many commemoration projects which she surveyed were not successful in “depicting the complex processes of slavery” (2014 p.215), because those doing the commemoration often held contested interpretations of the past, and that one group ultimately dominated the discourse. However, this conclusion neglects the fact that memory, and public memory in particular, is the product of contestation. While there may be hegemonic narratives, there is very often a contest between alternative narratives, as consumers of the heritage enter sites of memory with their own narrative available to make meaning of those sites.

In most of the literature reviewed here the emphasis has been on the creation of meaning and the use of the monuments by those who consume and interpret them in the public space. This is of great importance as it highlights how monuments as sites of memory are as much about the politics of the present as they are about the commemoration of the past. Memorialisation deals specifically with social memory and the meanings applied to it by the public, therefore it is important that we understand the processes which create it. If we are to gain insight into how these monuments and memorials are encountered by the specific societies within which they are created, we should contextualise them and interrogate the processes which created them.

Chapter 3

Making Sites for Weeping: Transatlantic Slave Trade Memorialisation in Ghana

I have been to the dungeons to feed the ghosts

Was I scared? I fear more the silence of the living

Kwadwo Opoku Agyemang (1996)

The West African nation of Ghana became an independent state in 1957, after a protracted anticolonial campaign led by Kwame Nkrumah, who became the nation's first president. Previously known as the Gold Coast when under British control, this colony had played an important role in European trade with West Africa since the sixteenth century, when the Portuguese set up trading relations with African states in what is today called Elmina. The name "Gold Coast" came about because gold was the principal commodity traded by early colonisers (Miller et al 2009 p.2). The forts and castles which dot the coast of the Gulf of Guinea are relics of the European trading and colonial activity on that coast. The high profits which were accrued from the Transatlantic Slave Trade attracted many European nations to the Gold Coast, and the forts are evidence, in the Ghanaian landscape, of this legacy. Since the 1990s the Ghanaian government, with the help of international organisations, has invested considerable economic resources to develop two of the largest forts, at Cape Coast and Elmina, as tourist attractions, using the legacy of their involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In an interview for this study, one of the informants suggested that the process was about creating a place for diaspora Africans to "come and weep" (Informant 4 Ghana). As a result the forts have become transnational memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This chapter will examine how these forts became memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade by examining the process which imbued them with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. First the context for memorialisation in Ghana will be laid out by looking at memorialisation in the country in general. This will be followed by the examination of the state initiated process which led to the imbuing Cape Coast Castle and Elmina with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Ghana is a very complex issue. In Ghana slavery and slave trading continued right into the early twentieth century, and the legacy still has implications for the society today (Kankpeyeng 2009 p.211). While the Transatlantic Slave Trade has been memorialised there is silence about the domestic trade, despite the fact that the slave trading families and the descendants of slaves can be identified in the society. There is a strong collective memory of the domestic slave trade among the citizens of the country (Holsey, 2008). Over the past

four decades Ghana has become one of the most popular destinations for tourists visiting sites of memory associated with the Transatlantic Slave Trade with visitors from all the places involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Europe, North America and the Caribbean (Bruner, 1998). The forts and castles built by the Europeans and used as slave trading posts from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries have become memorials to and sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies. While for most of their histories these edifices served as slave trading ports, after the abolition of the trade by Britain, in 1807, they served various purposes ranging from seats of government, through prisons to schools (Macgonagle, 2006).

Ghana became an independent country in 1957 after a protracted struggle with the British authorities, who had governed it as a colony since the late nineteenth century (Hansen and Collins, 1980). At independence Ghana inherited the forts and castles which had been built by a number of European nations, led by the Portuguese, from the sixteenth century, to facilitate their trade in gold and slaves. These forts and castles punctuate the coastline and are physical manifestations of the long legacy of Transatlantic Slave Trading in the country. While many of the forts remain in a state of disrepair, and some have crumbled, their importance as national heritage was recognised in 1972 when they were declared by legislation to be part of Ghana's national heritage. (Kankpeyeng and DeCorse, 2004). In 1979 Ghana's forts and castles were declared World Heritage Sites. Cape Coast Castle and Elmina are the most famous of these (Kreamer 2006), and these two castles have become the centre of Transatlantic Slave Trade memorialisation in the Ghana.

Whilst today these castles are specifically linked to the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, this was not always the case. In interviews carried out during field work in Ghana, informants told stories of visiting the castles as children during school tours or on weekend excursions to see the magnificence of these large European buildings. During these trips no connection with the slave trade was ever made. It appears that, to the Ghanaian visitor, the castles' designation/association as sites of memory for slavery is relatively recent and tightly associated with the Tourism Development Project (Williams, 2014). For some Ghanaians the association of the castles to the Transatlantic Slave Trade places too much emphasis on only one aspect of their history, because these forts have a very long history and slave trading is only one aspect of that history (Haviser, 2006). The fact of designation as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO imbued the castles with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, a status which would be exploited for its economic benefits by the government.

Memorialisation in Ghana

Ghana was the first African nation to win independence, in 1957, after a protracted political struggle against British colonial rule. The struggle was led by Kwame Nkrumah who became the country's first

prime minister until 1960, when the change to a republican constitution saw him become the first president. Under colonial rule he had led government since 1952. Nkrumah's leftist government lasted until 1966 when he was overthrown in a military coup because of dissatisfaction with his continued concentration of executive power in himself, the creation of a one party state and discontent with his socialist policies (Williams, 2015 p.2). During the period of Nkrumah's leadership and in the immediate post-independence period, memorialisation in Ghana focused on celebrating the main political actors in the independence movement. This involved memorials in the form of the naming of landmarks and streets after the core anti-colonialist actors, the "magnificent six", and Nkrumah himself. These men had collaborated with Nkrumah during the anticolonial struggles. A statue of the leader was installed in front of the national parliament with a series of inscriptions including, "We prefer self-government with danger to servitude in tranquillity," "Seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things shall be added unto it," and "To me the liberation of Ghana will be meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa", attributed to him from his many public speeches (Hess, 2000 p.35). These phrases, from the pre-independence period, give a very clear indication of his vision for the national identity and what its foundation should be.

This early post-independence memorialisation was clearly aimed at creating a coherent national identity which was Ghanaian in nature. This was evident in the leader's attempt to use the space of the national capital of Accra to express this new national identity through monuments which countered the colonial identity, which previously had dominated the country. In his continued attempts to use monuments to define the national identity of his new nation, Nkrumah commissioned two major monuments to independence: Black Star Square and the Independence Arch in the capital city of Accra. These monuments commemorated independence but also embedded it in the wider public space. Vale (1992) argues that governments create symbols to represent singular identities, and in Ghana the government had decided to use symbolism to circumvent national history, which included diverse cultures, in order to create one national identity. These monuments were an attempt to create what Anderson (1992 p.6) referred to as "an imagined community" in a country with multiple ethnic groups. Nkrumah built monuments and renamed others within the landscape of the capital to counter the colonial legacy of the country and to provide mnemonic devices to signal a change in the nation's status. For an emerging nation the symbolism of these monuments was meant to solidify the legitimacy of the new state and its right to self-determination (Hess, 2000 p.42). To Nkrumah's political opponents the monuments also represented his ideology and approach to governing.



Black Star Monument marking Independence: Source Wikimedia.org



Black Star Square: Source George Appiah, Wikimedia



Statue of Nkrumah which was beheaded and toppled during the riot in 1966: Source Wikimedia.org

The destruction and neglect of monuments which were employed by Nkrumah in his attempts to create a new Ghanaian and Pan-Africanist identity is very important. It shows how those monuments were being used, and highlights their significance in the creation of a specific type of national identity and the government's attempts at domination of the national political landscape. The treatment of monuments which were connected to Nkrumah is similar to the denigration of Roman rulers who had been deposed. Verner (2010 p. 46) refers to this as *Damnatio*, which completely condemns a person's reputation after death. In this process the memory of that ruler was eliminated. The beheading of the statue of Nkrumah was the ritual killing of his memory and influence in public.

Connerton (1989 p.18) states that memory is only sustained if it is performed around the monuments created to commemorate it. The goal of the new regime, in neglecting these monuments when it came to their use for national ceremonies, was to diminish their original meaning within the public space and their association with the previous administration. The regime needed to remove these symbols as part of a move to marginalise the political ideologies they represented, if it intended to change the political landscape within which it had to govern. The unpopularity of the Nkrumah regime, because of his adoption of the one party system and his tendency toward authoritarianism in order to achieve his goals, ensured that this symbolic erasure was not problematic.

Successive governments in the post-independence period spurned Nkrumah's ideologies. The large monuments, like Black Star square remained in the landscape with their associations and original meaning of independence. This meant that memory of Nkrumah was not completely eradicated from the Ghanaian political landscape (Williams 2015 p. 367). The importance of monuments and memorials as tools for the creation of national identity in Ghana once again become apparent when,

after successive coups, a military government took over the reins of power in 1985 (Williams 2015 p.367).

The new leader of the country, Jerry Rawlings, who took power in a popular military coup, made efforts to connect his policies and political ideologies to those of Kwame Nkrumah. In his inaugural speech he made several references to the nation's first president Rawlings set out to pursue many similar policies, such as Pan-Africanism. He also set out to capitalise on this legacy by memorialising Nkrumah and other Pan-Africanist who had settled in Ghana during the immediate post-independence period (Schramm 2010 p.72). The rehabilitation of Nkrumah will become the centre of the memorialisation.

Memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: The making of Sites of Weeping

European colonisation of West Africa left a lasting legacy on the Ghanaian Gulf of Guinea coast. For almost five centuries European settlements on this coast had been the centre of trade in West Africa. Forts and castles were built to facilitate trade in gold, and eventually trade in humans for sale as labour for the endeavours of European nations in the New World. In Ghana alone there are more than forty such forts and castles. These were declared national monuments very early in the post-independence period, through legislation issued by the new government (Kankpeyeng and DeCorse, 2004). These forts and castles were largely seen by Ghanaians as relics, which continued to find new uses in the national landscape (Macgonagle, 2006), of the European past. From 1957, the year of independence, Elmina Castle, for example, housed a secondary school, and Cape Coast Castle was the site of a police training academy and served as offices for the country's education service (Bruner, 1996). Other forts served as prisons, museums and even post offices (Singleton, 1999). Their continued use by the local communities contributed to their meaning being redefined in the present, and few if any were imbued with historical meaning or memory that tied them to the slave trade.

The status and meaning of Ghana's forts and castles began to change in 1979 when the two largest forts, Elmina and Cape Coast Castle, were listed as World Heritage Sites by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The listing of these buildings was specifically to ensure that their significance for the Transatlantic Slave Trade was recognised. According to Holsey (2008) the designation of these large forts, which were still very much in use by the government, did little to alter local perception of the forts. In fact Holsey suggests that very few Ghanaians knew anything of the part played by these forts during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The forts were most certainly not connected to the slave trade in the minds of the average resident of Cape Coast and Elmina (2008 p.160). For these residents the edifices were significant for their size and their dominance of the local landscape, and even for their beauty, because they were unlike anything else in the region. While internationally, during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the significance of the forts and their connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade was becoming very important, in Ghana it meant very little (Holsey 2008).

Ten years after the castles were listed on the World Heritage list, the Ghanaian government was intent on developing tourism as a source of income. They began to actively attempt to change local perception of the forts in Ghana. In 1989 the minister responsible for the Central Region, the administrative part of Ghana in which the forts are located, travelled to the United States of America to raise funds to develop Elmina and Cape Coast Castle as heritage tourism sites. This was in order to attract more tourists to the region, following the interest in Black American heritage, largely prompted by the Civil Rights movement and the iconic TV series 'Roots' (Holsey 2008 p.161). This visit was a fruitful one, as the delegation was able to access funding to the tune of \$5.6 million from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for the Natural Resource Conservation and Historic Preservation Project which held the forts at Cape Coast and Elmina at its core (Holsey, 2008). This initial round of funding laid the foundation of what would become one of the largest heritage tourism developments in Ghana, with the assistance of the Smithsonian Institution and the International Council of Monuments and Sites among others. It was part of a wider economic development policy by the Rawlings administration, which saw tourism as one of the forces driving economic regeneration for the country. This push to exploit tourism around the forts and castles of Ghana, on the basis of their World Heritage status, necessarily involved raising awareness about the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies.

The listing of the forts and castles by UNESCO started the process which made them sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The ensuing processes to develop them as tourist attractions based on that role inevitably imbued them with the memory and history of that trauma which was synonymous with the slave trade (Hartman, 2002). These new sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade were at odds with the Ghanaian historical narrative which included very little on slavery and even less on transatlantic slavery (Richards, 2005 p.262). The performance of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and the history in reference to Ghana's forts and castles, were now in opposition to each other as the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade had now been inserted into Ghana's historical narrative (Macgonagle, 2006). It must be noted however that slavery as an institution is not part of this historical narrative and is not taught in primary schools in the country (Perbi, 2007). Richards (2005) stated that Ghanaians were now "forced to remember a history they had learned to forget" (2005 p.262). Macgonagle argued that imbuing the castles with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade had frozen them in a time, thus escaping earlier histories and more recent histories (2005 p.250). The castles effectively became memorials to the trade in Africans and, with the help of international developmental agencies, the government was intent on using these memorials to attract foreign tourists into Ghana's Central Region to help boost economic growth.



Cape Coast castle: Photograph by Author

In 1993 the Ghanaian government created a Ministry of Tourism responsible for the development of the industry in the country. It was given support from international bodies such as the World Tourism Organisation and the United Nations Development Program (Williams, 2014). This support allowed the government to build a very strong industry around the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina, with plans to conserve and restore the edifices which had already become sites of pilgrimage for many diaspora Africans who were interested in connecting to their “roots” at the site where their ancestors had been shipped away from Africa. The diaspora Africans were the target market for the tourism product being developed around those sites. The push for African Diaspora tourism was also reflected in the government’s approach with the rapidly developing Ministry. In 2002 the Ministry became the Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City, with responsibility for Accra added to its portfolio. By 2005, it had become the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations, a clear indication that Ghana’s tourism policy was increasingly focused on attracting diaspora Africans (Pierre, 2009).

By inheriting the largest number of European trading forts along the West African coast, and with its long history of contact with the African Diaspora in North America, Europe and the Caribbean through Pan-Africanism, Ghana had a strategic advantage, in this type of tourism development, over the rest of the West African nations which also had a history of involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The fact that Ghana was connected to the Anglophone world also gave her a competitive advantage, as it meant that her market would be larger than that of West African countries which did not have this colonial legacy. These historic and contemporary connections with the African diaspora had allowed the country to build a vibrant tourism industry which would help with economic development, the goal of the government since the early 1980s (Hansen and Collins, 1980).

The push by the government of Ghana to make the castles into sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade involved the refurbishing of the castles and forts with funding and expert guidance from international agencies such as ICOMOS, UNESCO and USAID. In order to sustain the process

ceremonies and events were developed around the sites. These will now be explored with reference to the performance and sustenance of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.



Elmina castle: Photograph by Author

The PANAFEST Festival

To understand the government's attempts to place the role of the castles in the Transatlantic Slave Trade at the centre of memorialisation, the ideology of Pan-Africanism must be placed into context. This is because the ideology would become central to the efforts of the government. The Pan-African ideology has its roots in the 19th century. This movement grew among African and African Diaspora intellectuals who engaged in discourse on the impact of the colonial relationship among Europeans, Africans and the African Diaspora (Legnum, 1965 p.22). This was an anti-colonial critique of western culture and worldview. The Pan-African movement rejected Black exceptionalism and the notion of black inferiority vis-à-vis Europeans. It was based on solidarity among Africans and people of African descent who lived outside Africa. Proponents of this ideology included intellectuals from the Anglophone and Francophone areas of the Atlantic region (Legnum, 1965). Between 1900 and 1958 the movement had grown into a political and anti-colonial movement with calls for independence and self government for Africans and people of African descent, led by West African Francophone intellectuals such as Leopold Senghor in Senegal and Nkrumah in Ghana (Holsey, 2008 p. 128).

This movement is significant in Ghana because Nkrumah who led the country to independence from Britain was a proponent of Pan-Africanism and he had developed strong ties to many black political and cultural leaders in the African diaspora (Gaines, 2006 p.10). Black intellectuals from the Caribbean, and from the United States found a home in Ghana during the immediate post-independence period (Gaines, 2006 p.10). At the heart of Pan-African ideology is the idea of black dispossession which resulted from the Transatlantic Slave Trade and colonialism.

One of the first state-sponsored ceremonies to build specifically on Pan-Africanism in Ghana was PANAFEST, a Pan-African Arts and Culture Festival held in 1992, which aimed to connect the culture of Africans around the world. It was the brainchild of Efua Sutherland, a prominent Ghanaian playwright (Holsey, 2008), who had direct connections with Nkrumah's Pan-Africanist period. The success of the first festival led to its becoming a biannual festival (Holsey, 2008) and the benchmark for commemorative festivals held around Cape Coast Castle and Elmina. There was a strong Pan-African theme, with performers coming from across the African continent and the African Diaspora. According to Holsey, the inaugural PANAFEST put much of the culture of the Central Region on display; for example it included processions of chiefs in traditional dress, and the performance of indigenous dances and music.

The festival was successful in attracting tourists to the Central Region. Visitor numbers for the region rose from around seven thousand in 1990 to over forty thousand by the end of the decade (Agyei-Mensah, 2006). In 1997, organised under the theme "The Re-emergence of African Civilization, Uniting the African Family for Development", the festival attracted an attendance that was estimated in the thousands, and attendees were drawn from an estimated twenty-three countries. The festival had won sponsorship from seventy private sector organizations (Azu, 1997), and in the same year the festival was estimated to have brought in more than a million dollars of tourist spending to the region, which impacted on every aspect of the tourism sector (Dadson, 1997). The emphasis on Pan-Africanism and its deployment for development was pervasive. During the opening ceremony for a Women's Day symposium the wife of the vice president, Mrs Naadu Mills, spoke in her official capacity. She suggested that Africa must re-discover its identity which was based on the African family (Quainoo, 1997a).

While it primarily celebrated contemporary art and culture, PANAFEST did not ignore the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. At Elmina a traditional funeral procession, akin to that reserved for local royalty, was held. Dressed in mourning clothes, chiefs and members of the public processed to the Elmina castle with war songs, drumming, and musket fire in honour of ancestors taken as slaves. Libations were poured and wreaths were laid in honour of Kwame Nkrumah and other Pan-Africanists who had passed away (Quainoo, 1997b). By 1997 PANAFEST had become a mainstay of the tourism calendar of Ghana. According to Agyei-Mensah (2006) the festival was a success, with visitor arrivals growing from under ten thousand in 1990 to over forty thousand in 1999 (Agyei-Mensah, 2006 p.710).

As the festival developed, the Nkrumah Mausoleum and the Dubois Centre for Pan-African Culture, two monuments which espoused the spirit of Pan-Africanism and memorialised the most prominent leaders of Pan-Africanism, were included in the festivities. The Dubois Centre is a cultural centre named for W.E.B. Dubois the famous African American proponent of Pan-Africanism who moved to Ghana when the country became independent. Dubois is buried on the grounds of the centre. The site is a national monument on a par with Ghana's slave castles (Schramm, 2004 p.156).

Wreath laying ceremonies at these sites and lectures by prominent Pan-African scholars became a regular part of the opening ceremony in the capital city of Accra (Pierre, 2013). The festival created a space within which groups with Pan-African ideologies expressed these to audiences which were sympathetic (Schramm, 2005). Most of these groups were made up of diaspora Africans who chose to hold their conferences during the celebrations of PANAFEST. The festival had become very successful at attracting diaspora Africans who were using the occasion to celebrate Pan-Africanism and its political implications for their identity.

MEMORIALISING EMANCIPATION IN GHANA

Ghana's attempt to connect to the African Diaspora continued in 1998 when, under the instruction of the president, Jerry Rawlings, the country inaugurated the first Emancipation celebration on the African continent, to celebrate Emancipation Day on August 1st, 1998 (Daily Graphic, 1998). Rawlings had experienced the celebrations of Emancipation in 1997 when he was on an official state visit to Jamaica. He saw the celebrations as a way to attract diaspora tourists to Ghana (Daily Graphic, 1997). These celebrations complemented the PANAFEST which had been successful already in bringing thousands of tourists to Ghana (Agyei-Mensah, 2004 p.711). It would be the first time that Emancipation would be part of the public discourse on the African continent (Schramm, 2004 p.140).

Emancipation commemorated the end of slavery in the British Empire in 1834, and had been celebrated in a number of nations in the Anglophone Caribbean, but was not part of the discourse on slavery in West Africa. From May 1998, features on British Emancipation began to appear in the Ghanaian press. The first of these appeared in a Daily Graphic Supplement on the 7th May. It attempted to explain what Emancipation was, and justified why its commemoration was "being brought home to the motherland" (Daily Graphic, 1998a, 1998b). The article put the number of Africans transported to the Americas at three hundred million which is at odds with the estimated twelve to fifteen million which scholars of the slave trade have settled on (Richardson, 1998). Such a figure, however, captured the imagination of the reading public. The article also attributed emancipation to the acts of resistance by the enslaved, and connected this resistance to anti-colonial resistance, the civil rights movements in the United States, and Pan-Africanism. The theme for the inaugural ceremony was "EMANCIPATION HERITAGE, OUR STRENGTH".

The public campaign continued with articles highlighting the importance of Emancipation to the Caribbean countries, such as Trinidad and Jamaica, which President Rawlings had visited in 1997. The connections between the Caribbean and Ghana were stressed, by highlighting the cultural connections between the diaspora in the Caribbean and in Ghana. Examples of the retention of African names for people and objects were used to support the argument. The article stated that Emancipation Day would

“enable the peoples of Ghana and the diaspora...to understand, appreciate and tolerate each other” (Sasu, 1998). This highlighted the connection between the African diaspora and the continent of Africa, with Ghana as the centre.

On the inaugural Emancipation Day, August 1st, 1998, press coverage of the event continued with articles on the history of transatlantic slavery, and on abolition, written by prominent academics (Boadi-Siaw, 1998). The commemorations started with a wreath-laying ceremony at the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, with the vice president J.E.A. Mills laying a wreath. Wreath-laying also took place at the Du Bois Centre for Pan African Culture in Accra. The First Lady, Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, presided over the opening ceremony of an Afro Caribbean cultural festival at the State House (Daily Graphic, 1998). Celebrations in the capital city culminated with an inter-denominational service which was attended by President Jerry Rawlings, the Council of State and members of the Ghana Parliament (Daily Graphic, 1998). Much of the celebrations in the capital city of Accra involved drama and dance presentations, some of which were re-enactments of slave raiding and trading activities (Opoku, 1998). A number of ceremonies were held to commemorate the day with cultural presentations in Accra. They continued with the return of the remains of two formerly enslaved Africans, one from Jamaica and the other from Syracuse, New York, to the slave burial grounds at Assin Manso which had been the last trading post along the slave trading route to the Cape Coast Castle. A large delegation of diaspora Africans from the United States and the Caribbean accompanied the remains of these formerly enslaved people to Ghana and their final resting place (Nunoo, 1998b). There is no evidence to suggest that these remains were of individuals who originated from Ghana.

These remains were carried by canoe to Cape Coast Castle, then brought through the “door of no return” into the castle grounds, and then taken in a funeral convoy to Assin Manso where traditional burial rights were performed (Quainoo, 1998). Many Ghanaian government officials spoke at the ceremony with some referring to the event as a “home coming”, and the offering of the grounds where slaves were sold and the river, where it is believed the enslaved took the final baths before they got to the forts on the coast, as a “memorial complex to the Pan-African world” (Quainoo, 1998). As with PANAFEST, the Emancipation celebrations were centred on the Cape Coast Castle with a number of ceremonies taking place there. The inaugural celebrations of Emancipation in Ghana were organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism and were sponsored by Guinness Ghana Limited. The festival was foreign to Ghana and the government needed to justify the expenditure. As a result, officials of that ministry had launched a public campaign to promote the Emancipation celebrations which lasted from July 25th to August 1st (Daily Graphic, 1998)

This campaign climaxed in a special supplement in the Daily Graphic, the popular state owned newspaper in Ghana, on Thursday 30th July, 1998, which focused solely on the pending inaugural Emancipation Day celebrations. In a multipage article Seth Nii Ahele Nunoo, writing for the Ministry

of Tourism, laid out the justification for Ghana's move to commemorate the event. The author presented a very Pan-African view of slavery and the slave trade, speaking of the "black race", and conflating the resistance by enslaved Africans in the Americas and anticolonial activity of Africans on the continent in the twentieth century (Nunoo, 1998a). The memory of several prominent rebellion leaders like Toussaint L'Ouverture and Jacques Dessalines, and of writers such as Frederick Douglas, was evoked in the process. Nunoo stated that by celebrating Emancipation Day, Ghanaians would "demonstrate their awareness of the significant role played by those who fought and died or suffered to bring about the emancipation of the black race" (Nunoo, 1998a).

In response to possible questions about the expenditure on the celebrations, while many in Ghana were "in bondage of poverty", the author argued that the celebrations would create the "sense of unity, co-operation and understanding" needed to work towards total emancipation (Daily Graphic, 1998). The co-operation and understanding again referred to the principles of Pan-Africanism which seemed to be the foundation of the Emancipation Day celebrations. The author's constant reference to Pan-African ideals was clearly not accidental as he proceeded to proclaim Ghana's status as the first independent African nation, and the country's role in the African liberation movement in the immediate post-independence era (Nunoo 1998a). Ghana's initiative to be the first nation to celebrate Emancipation Day was testament of her continued leadership role in the on-going "emancipation" of Africa.

Nunoo left no doubt when he wrote of the strength of Africa lying in the one billion Africans, not only on the continent but the world over, taking time to highlight the skills of experts in the African diaspora and the importance they attach to Emancipation Day. This he argued would boost Ghanaian tourism and provide opportunities for collaboration with diaspora Africans in areas of trade, economics, politics and culture (Nunoo, 1998a). Ultimately, if taken as an expression of government policy, it appears that while much was made about the emancipation of the black race and the principles of Pan-Africanism, it was clear that it was the economic benefits of the celebrations that drove the commemoration of Emancipation Day in Ghana. The goal was to attract as many diaspora Africans as possible to Ghana in order to boost the Ghanaian economy. The newspaper supplement attempted to educate the country about Emancipation Day, justify the need to introduce a commemoration which was foreign to the average Ghanaian, and highlight the many possible benefits of doing this.

The theme for the inaugural Emancipation Day celebrations in Ghana was 'Our Heritage, Our pride' and this was promoted in the national press. The theme clearly demonstrated the intent of the Ghanaian government to claim the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery. This is significant because, as Holsey (2008) has argued, slavery is sequestered and is not integral to the national historical narrative of the country. Thus, by claiming slavery as part of the official national heritage through the commemoration of its abolition, the authorities were inserting into the national

discourse an issue which was not in the consciousness of the average Ghanaian. This became clear from the level of activity in the national press to promote and educate the general public on Emancipation and why it was in the best interests of the country to commemorate it. The desire to make the commemoration another manifestation of Pan-Africanism is also significant, as it tapped into the Pan-African heritage for which Ghana was well known.

While this new commemorative festival relating to slavery had been imported to Ghana by the government, slavery was still not on the curriculum in the country. An examination by the author of the Junior High Social Studies syllabus available during the time of field work in Ghana, found that slavery is mentioned only in the context of human rights and not in a historical context (Social Studies Syllabus, 2007). Like the PANAFEST ceremonies, this new festival, which was centred on the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina, was inserting a tradition which had no connection to the country that the country was aware of.

The Joseph Project

In 2005 a new government, formed by the New Patriotic Party (NPP), came to power in Ghana after winning the general election. The new government remained acutely aware of the importance of the tourism industry and its impact on the national economy. It also demonstrated an interest in the African Diaspora and the potential of accessing this market. Very early in the life of this administration a new project called the Joseph Project was conceived, with the intention of attracting more diaspora Africans to Ghana. The project was very similar to the PANAFEST/Emancipation celebrations which had been started by the previous government, and it appeared that this new project was the government's attempt to leave its own impression on diaspora tourism, harnessing Pan-Africanism as a resource (Pierre, 2012). According to the webpage of the ministry of Tourism, the purpose of this project was to make the twenty-first century the African century by uniting African peoples across the world. Based on the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis, which importantly appears in the both the Bible and the Koran, the government planned to attract Africans to return home. This would be done through what was referred to as "healing", and would involve traditional rulers whose ancestors "engaged in the Transatlantic Slave Trade across the West and Central Coast of Africa" and "Africans in the diaspora" in a ceremony of reconciliation.

The project was planned for 2007 in order to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Ghanaian independence and the bicentenary of the passing of the Act of Abolition in the British Empire. The intention behind this project was the same as the other Pan-African celebrations which had already become established in the national calendar of Ghana. The goal was to bring Africans and diaspora Africans into Ghana to boost tourist numbers. What was different about this project was that it included what had become known as the UNESCO slave route which started in the north of the country and ended at the forts and castles on the coast (Schramm, 2007). The Slave Routes Project was part of a wider UNESCO project to highlight the slave trade and its impact. In Ghana, the project mapped the route taken by slave traders from the north of the country to the slave trading castles on the coast. This route can now be traced by tourists as part of their ritual commemoration of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This connection of the inland trade to Transatlantic Slave Trade meant that many other parts of the country would now be able to benefit from the tourists on the pilgrimages which would involve travelling the routes believed to have been those taken by captives who were marched to the coast. Schramm (2007 p.77) has pointed out that parts of this route to the coast were not part of the trade which connected to the coast. Their use in slave trading started after the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The minister responsible for tourism embarked on a tour to promote the project. In an interview on National Public Radio in the United States he elaborated on the project. He stated that Ghana was

“interested in all the Africans in the Diaspora who were affected by the slave trade. And that includes in North America - not just the United States, but also Canada. It includes the whole of South America - who have big African populations - the whole of the Caribbean, and then those who went through the Western Hemisphere and are now in Europe.”

(npr.org, 2007)

A statement from the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations elaborated on other aspects of the project which included diaspora visas which allowed diaspora Africans free entry into the country after the initial stamp. This also involved a number of economic initiatives which enabled diaspora Africans to own property in the country. Reference was also made to the mapping of the DNA of diaspora Africans. In short, with very few exceptions, the new Joseph Project simply duplicated many aspects of the PANAFEST and Emancipation. While these initiatives had initial success, the critiques of the project, citing mass marketing and commercialisation of “home coming” tourism, raised concerns that the commercial aspects appeared to be exploiting the African Diaspora (Schramm, 2004).

Nkrumah’s Rival and State Appropriation of Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism has its roots in the 19th century. This movement grew among African and African Diaspora intellectuals who engaged in discourse on the impact of the colonial relationship between Europeans, Africans and the African diaspora (Legnum 1965 p.22). This was an anti-colonial critique of western culture and worldview. The Pan-African movement rejected Black exceptionalism and the notion of black inferiority vis-à-vis Europeans. It was based on solidarity among Africans and people of African descent who lived outside Africa. Proponents of this ideology included intellectuals from the Anglophone and Francophone regions of the Atlantic region (Legnum 1965). Between 1900 and 1958 the movement had grown in to a political and anti-colonial movement with calls for independence and self -government for Africans and people of African descent. This movement is significant in Ghana because Nkrumah who led the country to independence from Britain was a proponent of Pan-Africanism and he had developed strong ties to many black political and cultural leaders in the African diaspora (Gaines 2006). At the heart of Pan-African ideology is the idea of black dispossession which resulted from the Transatlantic Slave Trade and colonialism.

In the immediate post-independence period President Kwame Nkrumah had been a staunch advocate of Pan-Africanism. As a student in England and the United States of America Nkrumah had been influenced by the work of many diaspora African intellectuals, for whom Pan-Africanism was seen as the only hope for Africa and the African Diaspora (Gaines, 2006). These intellectuals, such as George

Padmore from Trinidad and W.E.B. Dubois from the United States of America, were frequent visitors to Ghana and had a strong influence on Nkrumah. Dubois eventually made Ghana his home (Gaines, 2006). As many of these people found it difficult to function politically at home in the United States of America and the Caribbean, they sought refuge in Nkrumah's Ghana where he created a safe haven for these Pan African and Marxist intellectuals. He also invited them to Ghana as part of his commitment to Pan-Africanism, that demanded that Africans from the diaspora and the continent work together to develop Africa and to fight colonialism (Gaines, 2006, Williams, 2015). This powerful political philosophy attracted many diaspora Africans who had been engaged in fighting segregation and racial discrimination in the United States (Williams, 2015 p.15). It is important to note that Pan-Africanism as a political philosophy was a radical movement, diametrically opposed to capitalism and what was referred to as neo-colonialism (Walters, 1997, Gaines, 2006, Pierre, 2012, Williams, 2015).

During this period Ghana attracted not just political activists and intellectuals from across Africa, Europe and America, but many artists, popular African American entertainers and sports figures. Ghana was the first African nation to break the bonds of colonialism, and this positioned the country as the destination for diaspora blacks who could afford an expensive trip to Africa. Many skilled African Americans had been invited to Ghana by President Nkrumah to help build the country and strengthen links between Ghana and the African diaspora (Gaines, 2006 p.4). Many doctors, engineers, and other skilled professionals heeded Nkrumah's call and moved to Ghana (Gaines, 2006). For many of these diaspora Africans, Ghana represented the hope of self-governance and self-determination. Nkrumah continued to pursue a continental system of self-governance in the face of opposition within Ghana and outside its borders within and beyond Africa. All of this hope and optimism came to an abrupt end when Nkrumah's government was overthrown in 1966, while he was on a state visit to China (Gaines, 2006, Williams, 2014). The coup was the first in a series which plagued governance in Ghana, and marked the end of official policies in support of African liberation and Pan-Africanism in Ghana (Gaines, 2006 p.4).

Pan-Africanism as an ideology was discouraged by successive military and civilian governments. They also went to great lengths to erase all of Nkrumah's political influence and achievements. In

1981 the final coup of a series which had caused much instability in Ghana took place. This was a military takeover of the government led by a junior officer Jerry Rawlings. This was the second coup led by Rawlings, and this time he promised a revolution to take Ghana out of the economic and political stagnation which it had endured for decades (Williams, 2014). Very early in his regime Rawlings began to rehabilitate the reputation of the first president, and even used some of Nkrumah's rhetoric in order to appeal to the citizens. In order to effect his "revolution", and pull Ghana out of economic stagnation, Rawlings, whose political rhetoric at home was leftist and populist, resorted to accessing funding from international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Williams, 2015). This led to Ghana being the first nation to come under the structural adjustment regimes of these Bretton Woods institutions. His Pan-African rhetoric and call for African self-reliance, along with the rehabilitation of Nkrumah, enabled him to respond to criticisms about the severe austerity which was required by these institutions, as being part of the economic conditions of aid and assistance (Pierre, 2009).

Rawlings' use of Pan-Africanism was not restricted to rhetoric. He also resorted to using memorials and monuments, as previous governments had done in the post-independence period. In 1985 the former home of Pan-Africanist, W.E.B. DuBois, who was closely tied to Nkrumah, was dedicated as the DuBois Memorial Centre for African Culture (Hess, 2000). By commissioning this memorial, the government had effectively enshrined DuBois and his Pan-African legacy into the Ghanaian political landscape. After the coup which removed Nkrumah from power, DuBois' wife, along with many Pan-Africanists, had been exiled from Ghana by the military government (Gaines, 2006). The rehabilitation of Nkrumah and Pan-Africanism came to a climax in 1992 when the Nkrumah Mausoleum, a large memorial complex in which Nkrumah's remains were interred, was dedicated by Rawlings (Hess, 2000).



Nkrumah Mausoleum: Photograph by Author

At the ceremony to unveil the Nkrumah monument, several African American dignitaries and African heads of state were present. This ceremony in many ways echoed Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism.

This rehabilitation of Nkrumah and Pan-Africanism allowed the Ghanaian government to tap into Ghana's long history of connections with the African Diaspora, a legacy which predated independence. The push to develop tourism as one of the engines of economic growth would ensure that the revolution achieved what had been promised in 1981. With an industry which centred on the forts and castles associated with the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies, the government was poised to target the African Diaspora. The rehabilitation and commodification of Pan-Africanism enhanced the tourism product. It allowed the state to use the historical foundations of the ideology as a tourist attraction, while trying to minimize the political aspects of it. In the tour of the United States of America in June, 2007 to promote the Joseph Project the minister made it clear, when asked about the political aspects of Pan-Africanism, that he did not "want to get into the ideology. We want to just get the African family together again." (npr.org, 2007).

Paul Connerton (1989) argued that memorials by themselves do not sustain memories and that the group or society involved in the memorialisation must continually sustain memory through ritual performance (Connerton, 1989). The forts and castles of Cape Coast and Elmina had been designated memorials for the trauma experienced by the victims of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, but in order to convey and sustain that memory in a society where the historical narrative did not include the Transatlantic Slave Trade, performances relevant to the trade were needed. In this regard, tours which diaspora Africans took when they arrived at these memorials helped to create and sustain the memory. Before the listing by UNESCO these forts had had nothing to do with slavery in Ghanaian society, but they became the centre of memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Under the direction of the

state, with funding and expertise from international funding agencies, they became the site for a number of national ceremonies which had the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies as their focus. With the state having appropriated Pan-Africanism and Ghana's long legacy of association with the ideology, and redeploying it in order to present Ghana as the location of very important sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the stage was set for massive promotional campaigns to entice diaspora Africans to "return" to Africa. Two cultural and memorial activities which became the core of memorialisation around Cape Coast Castle and Elmina were PANAFEST and commemoration of Emancipation.

As sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies, Cape Coast and Elmina stood in direct contradiction of Ghana's established historical narrative. As stated above, slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are not part of the consciousness of most Ghanaians. According to Akosua Adoma Perbi (2004) slavery is not part of the general historiography of Ghana (Perbi, 2004). The Transatlantic Slave Trade is not a topic in the school curriculum for junior high school Social Studies. When it is mentioned in the content of the syllabus it states that "the Europeans also started Transatlantic Slave Trade and later colonization" and as a negative effect on development it caused a "reduction of our human resources" (Social Studies Syllabus, 2007 p.6). There is very little else in the curriculum on the . Slavery as a topic is only dealt with in reference to human rights enshrined in the constitution. This absence of slavery and the slave trade from the curriculum explains the lack of knowledge about the history of the forts which Holsey (2008) highlighted.

Memorialisation and Dissonance

Since 1979 Cape Coast Castle and Elmina have become important sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Africa, and these sites have been developed as the anchor for diaspora tourism through the memorialisation festivals centred on them. This memorialisation - based on these sites of memory - has not been without its problems. Earlier in this chapter the issue of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade being in opposition to the historical narrative of Ghana was raised. At issue here is the fact that, in its push to develop the economy of the Central Region and by extension Ghana itself, the state inserted the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade into the discourse surrounding the forts. Holsey (2008 p.5) has argued that slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade have effectively been sequestered by the state, and that this allows the residents of the coastal towns of Elmina and Cape Coast Castle to distance themselves and their history from these activities .

Very early in the process of memorialisation, the rise of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade at the castles was at odds with the recognised history of Ghana. The first phase of the development was a part of the Ghana Natural Resource Conservation and Historic Preservation Project which was to develop tourism in the Central Region of Ghana. Two of the aims

were the restoration of the castles, and the creation of a museum which would highlight the history of the Central Region and Ghana at Cape Coast Castle. These two sub-projects around the castles brought the dissonance between memory and history to the fore on two fronts. The first was the furore which developed when the news of the restoration of the castles became public. For Diaspora Africans the castles, which were imbued with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, were sacred sites and had, by the 1990s, been established as popular sites of pilgrimage (Bruner, 1996 p.294). Many interpreted the plans to restore and preserve the castles as an attempt to sanitise them to diminish the traumatic memories of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Bruner 1996 p.294).

When the Ghanaian authorities began to implement the restoration project and install amenities which were supposed to facilitate the provision of services to visitors, diaspora Africans protested because they saw the castles “as memorials to the slave trade – the sacred ground where their ancestor forcibly departed from Africa” (Singleton, 1999 p.157). Conservation plans, which included whitewashing the outer walls of the castles to protect them from the direct sea blast, led to accusations that the “Black Man’s History was being whitewashed” (Singleton, 1999 p.157). The effects of this public dissonance are still apparent in Ghana. During a visit to Cape Coast Castle in April 2014, while doing research for this project, the author inquired about the colour of the walls of the castle and the tour guide explained that the colour was the effect of the lime used, but also retorted that no history was being “whitewashed “ (Ghana informant.3).

The second area of dissonance was the content for the museum to be developed at Cape Coast Castle. As part of the project funded by USAID and involving the Midwestern Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA) and the Smithsonian Institution in collaboration with the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, a museum showcasing Ghana’s history was to be set up to replace the old museum at the Cape Coast Castle which focused on West African History (Kreamer 2006 p.451). In order to create a museum which was representative of the community wide project, managers invited various stake-holders to give input on what should be presented at the museum. In keeping with the theme of memorialisation, for which the castles were being restored, the exhibition was titled “Crossroads of People, Crossroads of Trade”. According to Kreamer, this exhibition was supposed to span five hundred years of Ghana’s history up to the present (Kreamer, 2006 p. 439).

The general approach to the history of Ghana and the Central Region, which was the original intent of the exhibit, was heavily criticised. Much of this criticism came from diaspora Africans, both tourists and those resident in Ghana, who were increasingly uncomfortable with the restoration of the castles. For them the castles were sacred sites of memory (Singleton, 1999). Many felt that the museum project was an attempt to minimise the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade at those sites. Pressure in the international press also impacted on the project, as African Americans accused the Ghanaian government of bowing to pressure from funding agencies to limit the story of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the exhibition (Kreamer 2006p.456). The debate over the memory of the

Transatlantic Slave Trade and the history of Ghana at the castles continues. An interview with one of the guides at Cape Coast Castle suggests that some of his colleagues would like to move on from just talking about the Transatlantic Slave Trade. They argue that there is more to the castles than the history of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The activism of diaspora Africans impacted on the final exhibit which went on public display. Kreamer (2006 p. 450) argues that the final product was dominated by the story of diaspora Africans as it deals with the Transatlantic Slave Trade, slavery, resistance to slavery and the civil rights movement in the United States, whilst the deeper history of Ghana and the Central Region was effectively marginalised in the final exhibit.

Another area of dissonance has to do with the meaning of the castles to the various stakeholders in the Central Region. In an interview with an official from the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board it was revealed that Cape Coast Castle is a very important site for the one of the local religions. The interviewee stated that the priests believed that the site on which the castle was built had been sacred even before the arrival of the Europeans (Ghana informant 1). They have reclaimed the site and built a shrine for their worshippers in one of the male dungeons in the castle. The local chiefs, as a result, have to be consulted on issues which will impact on the use of this shrine. The official stated that the priests host a very large annual feast outside the door of the castle in September.



Shrine inside the Cape Coast castle dungeon; Photograph by Author

The listing of Cape Coast Castle and Elmina as World Heritage Sites effectively imbued them with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The state attempted to capitalise on this in order to foster economic development. This was done through the restoration of the castles and the development of a museum, but also through the creation of Pan-Africanist festivals to memorialise the Transatlantic Slave Trade. These acts inserted the memory of the trade into the discourse on identity around the forts for residents of Cape Coast and Elmina, Ghanaians and diaspora Africans. While it may not have been the intention, the invention of traditions around the castles which sustained the memory of the

Transatlantic Slave Trade inevitably impacted on national identity. While slavery was absent in the Ghanaian discourse on national identity and had been suppressed in Ghanaian collective memory it was forced into the debate by the actions of the state.

Hosley (2006) has argued that while slavery was absent in national history it was in the memory of people of the Central Region. While the state commemorated Emancipation which was enacted in 1834 in the British Parliament, slavery in Ghana continued into the early twentieth century. This fact is ignored in the commemoration process. During interviews for this research project in 2014, several informants intimated that it was still taboo to speak of slavery in Ghana. It was suggested that discussing slavery would lead to uncovering the uncomfortable background of individuals who had profited from the trade in Africa, and who would be affected in a society where one's origin and family history had an impact on status (Ghana info 3). The memorialisation around the castles and the impact of tourism has brought the issue of slavery to the fore however, despite its absence from the curriculum in primary and junior high schools.

The state's promotion of Pan-Africanism in order to attract diaspora African tourists also has an impact on Ghanaian identity creation. When the Rawlings regime sought to rehabilitate Nkrumah and Pan-Africanism, it was placing Ghana at the centre of Pan-Africanist discourse on diaspora and African identity. The promotion of African unity in the newspapers, and political rhetoric, and the use of "one African identity" as the theme for PANAFEST, Emancipation and the Joseph Project inserted a diasporic component into what it meant to be African, but the Africa which was being promoted as the "homeland" was Ghana. Africa as home for the diaspora became Ghana, but this Ghanaian/African identity became transatlantic in order to accommodate the Africans in the diaspora. In order to frame this identity, which was being promoted through the policies of the government and the many festivals around the forts, it was necessary to co-opt the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This trade created the African diaspora and the filial relations which were being tapped in the process. This was Pan-Africanist at its core.

Hartman (2002 p.760) critiques the performance of memory at the sites of memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade by stating that what is presented is a creation of "memories of what was not witnessed." Araujo (2014 p.10) argues that despite the international recognition received by those same sites of memory, they are based on imagined accounts and not based on historical fact. These analyses of the sites of memory suggest that the sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade lack authenticity; Nora (1989 p.8) states that memory only accommodates those facts which suit it. Memory is relevant only to the group to which it is useful. Testing the authenticity of memory is requiring it to be history, the fact based enterprise. The sites of memory which are the subject of this chapter are sacred sites to members of the African diaspora (Bruner, 1996, Osei-Tutu, 2004; Richards 2005). Diaspora Africans perform ritual visits to them in their search for a connection to the continent

which they long for. The sites are construed as sacred because of horrors imagined to have occurred there. Thus the narrative presented at these sites is one of trauma and hardship.

Chapter Four

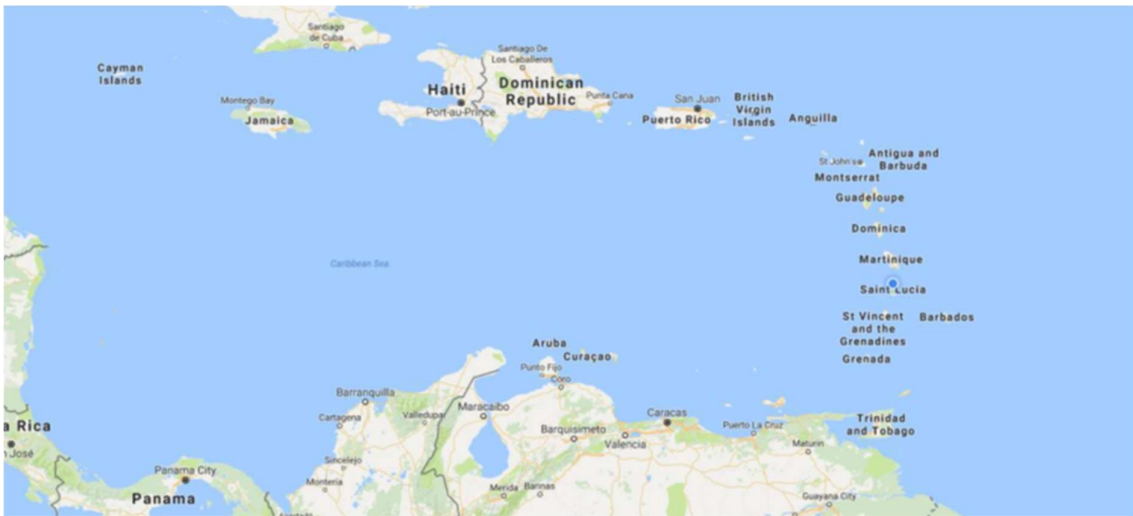
Remembering and Forgetting: Memorialising Slavery in Saint Lucia

Where are your monuments, your battles, martyrs?

*Where is your tribal memory? Sirs,
in that gray vault. The sea. The sea
has locked them up. The sea is History.*

Derek Walcott (1979)

Saint Lucia is a former British colony which gained independence in 1979 after having been part of the British Empire since 1814, when France ceded the island at the end of the Napoleonic Wars (Harmsen, Ellis & Devaux, 2012). The island had a very turbulent history, changing hands between the British and the French a total of five occasions between the 1790s and 1815. This was because its location, midway in the Caribbean archipelago, made it of strategic importance during the ongoing wars between European colonial powers.



Map of the Caribbean : Google Maps

While it was not as economically productive as the larger islands colonized by European powers, the plantations on the island were also worked by enslaved Africans. The prevalence of war during this period meant that the status quo was under constant threat. The many battles fought in the Caribbean, from the time of the French Revolution to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, had a profound impact on slavery and its legacy on the island. As in many other Caribbean nations in the post-independence period (Brown 2002, Thompson 2006, Lambert 2007), attempts have been made to memorialise this

legacy on the island. The memorial is to take the form of a monument to commemorate a group of formerly enslaved Africans who defended the island against a British invasion in 1796, which restored slavery to the island after French Emancipation in 1794. This battle in Saint Lucia is part of the so-called Brigand Wars. Many of those fighting to resist the British invasion had abandoned the plantations and had been living in the forests (Harmsen, et al 2012 p.65). During the second Brigand War of 1796, some 2000 formerly enslaved Africans defended the island and their freedom from the British Army under General Abercrombie numbering an estimated 12,000 (Harmsen 2012). The British sought to dislodge French Revolutionary troops and their influence in the Eastern Caribbean. The French controlled Saint Lucia and from there they had been making life difficult for the British in the islands to the south by supplying guerrilla forces in those island with arms and ammunition (Harmsen et al 2012 p.74). These guerrilla forces had proven troublesome for British colonial power, and had severely disrupted the profitable trade routes. The battle ended with the siege of Fort Charlotte at Morne Fortune and the eventual surrender of the island's troops. The process to memorialise the enslaved Africans who fought to defend the island started in 1996 and was the first official attempt at memorialising any aspect of the legacy of slavery on the island. In this chapter the process of creating the memorial will be explored, to highlight what factors led to the creation of the monument, the issues which impacted upon it, and the role of the state and state authorised institutions in the process. Finally, it will reflect on how the contemporary memory of slavery was deployed in the memorialisation process. Interviews with members of committees, people involved in the commissioning of the monument and the artist who sculpted the monument will help inform this chapter.

Memorialisation in Saint Lucia

Since independence there has been an increase in efforts to create monuments to commemorate people and events of national significance. Before independence only two public memorials existed on the island, and these memorialised the British colonial legacy in the nation. The most prominent of these pre-independence memorials is a cenotaph built to memorialise soldiers who fought in the two world wars. This memorial is located in the centre of the Derek Walcott Square in the capital city of Castries, where memorial ceremonies are performed annually on Remembrance Day, in November. Plaques on this monument bear the names of Saint Lucians who fell during active service in the British military.



Cenotaph memorialising soldiers serving the British military in the World Wars ;Photograph by Author

The other monument is the Inniskilling Monument. This was erected on Morne Fortune, also known historically as Fort Charlotte, within the site of the colonial European forts. This monument was unveiled in 1932 by the captain of the Royal Navy ship HMS Danae, to commemorate the victory of the British 27th Inniskilling Regiment of Foot, which was victorious over a detachment of formerly enslaved Africans. The monument was erected on the highest point of the fort here the battle was won. This was the only public monument which made reference to this battle, until a second monument memorialising the enslaved Africans who fought the 27th Inniskilling Regiment of Foot was commissioned by the Saint Lucia National Trust in 1997.



Inniskilling Monument, erected in 1935 to commemorate the 27th Inniskilling Regiment of Foot which defeated the Brigands in 1796 on Morne Fortune (Fort Charlotte) Castries: Photograph by Author

While the monuments erected during the colonial period took the form of the cenotaph and an obelisk, the monuments erected in the post-independence period are in the form of statues and busts. Since 1979 six such monuments have been erected in the capital city of Castries. The first of these monuments are in the form of busts of Simon Bolivar (1773-1830) and Jean Baptiste Bideau (1770-1817), to commemorate the bicentennial of the birth of Simon Bolivar, the first president of Venezuela and leader of the Venezuelan struggle for independence from Spain in the nineteenth century. The busts were commissioned and installed as a gift to the Saint Lucian government by the government of Venezuela in 1983 in a small park renamed Bideau Park in the capital city of Castries.



Bust of Simon Bolivar (1773- 1830) in Bideau Park Castries



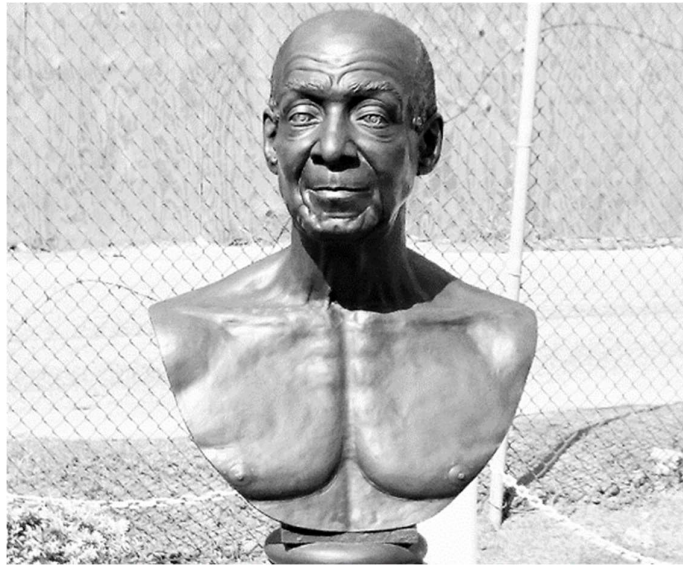
Bust of Jn Baptiste Bideau (1770-1817) in Bideau Park Castries

Jean Baptiste Bideau was a Saint Lucian born coloured, who was Bolivar's companion during the war of independence in Venezuela, and is believed to have saved his life during the battle of Ocumare in

Venezuela in 1816 (The Voice, 1983). Bideau had been active as a corsair during the Revolutionary Wars, serving as a captain for Victor Hugues, carrying troops and plundering British ships. He is believed to have joined revolutionaries on the Venezuelan coast, becoming a confidant of Bolivar (Williams, 1995). While Bideau does not feature in the historical narrative of Saint Lucia, he was celebrated as a national hero for his revolutionary activity in the Caribbean and Venezuela by Saint Lucian Prime Minister John Compton in a speech delivered during the unveiling ceremonies for the busts at the opening ceremony of the park (Compton, 1983).

The first monument commissioned by the government of Saint Lucia was the bust of George F.L. Charles, and was unveiled in 1997. George Charles came to prominence in 1945, during industrial action by workers employed on the construction of an extension of the national airport, where he was a time keeper (Charles 1994). The workers on that project were members of the St Lucia Workers Cooperative Union, and George Charles had become popular with the members during the strike (Cooper, 1981). This led to his election as secretary of the branch and thus started his career as a trade unionist. He eventually became the leader of the St Lucia Labour Party, the first political party in Saint Lucia in 1950 (Charles, 1994). The 1951 general elections were the first to be held in the country under Universal Adult Suffrage. The St Lucia Labour Party, led by Charles, emerged victorious and entered parliament for the first time. Charles and his party agitated for workers' rights and benefits which colonial officials had rejected. During this period, elected members of parliament did not have executive responsibility, which lay with the appointed colonial officials.

George Charles also advocated for constitutional reform. This started with partial ministerial government in 1954, full ministerial government in 1960 and Associated Statehood Status in 1967, and made elected members responsible for governing. This meant that, for the first time, the executive branch of government was made up of members who had been elected. Charles became the first Minister of Education in 1954, and, in 1967 with full ministerial government, he became the first Chief Minister of Saint Lucia (Saint Lucia Nation Wide, 2002). He retired from active politics in 1974. By that time his advocacy for workers' rights, along with his direct involvement in gaining control of government from the colonial authorities, had made him a stalwart in the history of the labour movement and anti-colonial campaigns. These eventually led to full independence in 1979 (Charles, 1994).

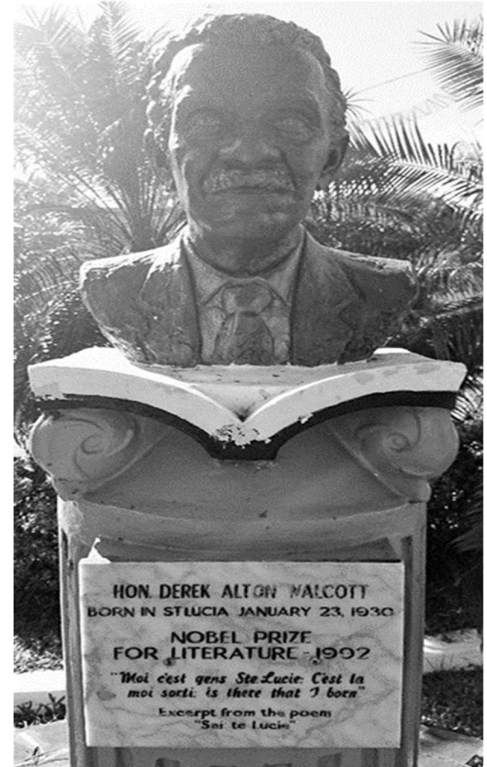
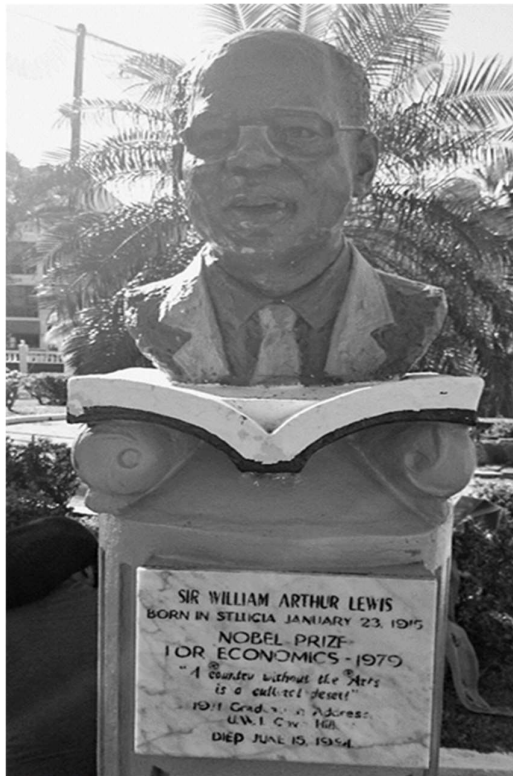


Bust of George F.L. Charles by Ricky George unveiled in 1997 at the GFL Charles Airport in Castries ; Photograph by Author

During the ceremony in which the airport was renamed for him, George Charles was lauded as a national hero by several of the speakers including the Prime Minister, Dr Kenny D. Anthony, for his contribution to both the trade union and the independence movements in the country (Anthony 1997). It must be noted that by 2002, when his bust was finally unveiled, he had been out of active politics for more than thirty years, and the political party of which he was a founding member had been out of power from 1982 to 1997 when it won a 16 to 1 majority in the general elections. The bust to honour him was commissioned by the Saint Lucia Labour party. The bust was sculpted by Ricky George, a local artist. After the unveiling ceremony, a small controversy started around the form of the piece. Some Saint Lucians asked that it be modified because it was bare chested and the nipples were exposed. The argument was that a bust to commemorate a nation hero in public should be more dignified.

Two other busts were erected in the Derek Walcott Square in the capital city of Castries, to honour the nation's two Nobel laureates, Derek Walcott and Arthur Lewis. Arthur Lewis (1915-1991) was the nation's first Nobel laureate having won the award for his work in economics in 1979. Derek Walcott (1930-) won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1992. These two men are both held up as national heroes, having won the most prestigious awards for their achievements in their respective fields. The only public tertiary educational institution was named after Lewis, and the main square in the centre of the capital city was renamed to honour Derek Walcott on January 23rd in 1993. The achievements of these two individuals were a source of pride for the new nation and, by enshrining the new heroes into the national landscape with these monuments, a new nationalism was being fostered with a focus on academic achievement. It is important to note that these two national heroes share January 23rd as a

birthday, and that, since 1995, Saint Lucia has celebrated the week within which this day falls as Nobel Laureate Week.



Busts of Saint Lucia's two Nobel Laureates in Derek Walcott Square, Castries: Photograph by Author

During this week the Nobel Laureate Committee, which is chaired by the Governor General, the head of state, organises public lectures by distinguished scholars from around the world. Other activities include arts festivals which involve schools and young artists.

In 2014, a nine foot statue of Sir John Compton, the first Prime Minister of an independent Saint Lucia, was unveiled in Constitution Park in the capital city, during a ceremony to mark the thirty fifth anniversary of independence (Nicholas 2014). Sir John was the longest serving Prime Minister, having served in office for almost thirty years from 1979 to 1982 and from 1982 to 1996. He was hailed as the “father” of the nation, because he led the country into independence (Bishop, 2014). In his speech honouring John Compton the current Prime Minister stated that,

“John Compton was the ‘Father of Independence’. He completed a process of self-determination that stretched from the resistance of the Amerindians against the arrival of Europeans, the rebellions of the slaves against slavery and the rejection by George Charles against colonial disenfranchisement.” (Anthony, 2014).



Statue of Sir John Compton in Constitution Park, sculpted by Ricky George unveiled in February 2014: Photograph by Author

In this speech the Prime Minister, Dr Kenny Anthony, projected the struggle for independence and the anti-colonial struggle into prehistory and placed two political leaders - Sir George Charles and Sir John Compton - at the end of this process claiming the victory. The purpose of the monument was also clearly laid out when Dr. Anthony stated that monuments “tell a tale of achievement, of courage and of honour. They proclaim the progress of nations and identify the character of the people they represent” (Anthony, 2014). It is important to note that Anthony, as incumbent Prime Minister, was also responsible for the commissioning of the bust of George Charles whom he had proclaimed as a national hero in his previous administration which lasted from 1997 to 2006. Anthony was defeated in the general elections in 2006 by Sir John Compton and his United Workers Party.

In 2014, thirty five years after independence, these monuments, to Compton, Lewis and Walcott, were installed into the public space as part of a new and concerted effort by Anthony to create a national identity. The lionisation of popular political figures and internationally recognised Saint Lucians was central to that process. The monuments erected all commemorated individuals who are lauded as national heroes for their achievements and character. These individuals exhibited qualities which should be emulated. This drive to commemorate national heroes is the context within which the memorialisation of slavery became part of the discourse.

Memorialising Slavery and its Legacies

Until 1997 very little had been done by the national government or state sanctioned institutions to memorialise slavery or its legacies in Saint Lucia. This changed in 1997, when the Saint Lucia National Trust initiated a process which culminated in the commissioning of a monument to commemorate a group of two thousand previously enslaved Africans, and a battle on the Morne in 1796. They had fought to maintain their freedom. won after rebellions during the period of the French Revolutionary Wars in a battle call the Brigand War of 1796. As mentioned above, the only other monument in the country memorialising this battle is a memorial to the British regiment which invaded the country to regain British control and reinstitute slavery.

Saint Lucia has a national holiday commemorating the abolition of slavery, held on the 1st August annually. Despite this, there was no official ceremony to acknowledge the significance of the date by the state, apart from its appearance in the official calendar as Emancipation Day. The fact that there was interest in memorialising the events of 1796 on its bicentenary was significant because this was in 1996, the year of the eighteenth anniversary of independence. When the planning process for the commemoration of the 1796 event started, the intention was to erect a monument and have it unveiled on the twentieth anniversary of independence in 1999. It must also be noted that in 1997 the St Lucia Labour Party led by Dr Kenny Anthony, formed a new government after winning sixteen out of the seventeen seats in the house of parliament: the party had been out of power for almost thirty years.

The organisation behind the idea for a memorial was the Saint Lucia National Trust, which had been set up, in 1975, by an act of parliament, as a quasi-governmental organisation (National Trust Act, 1975). This legislation made the National Trust the only institution legally mandated to protect the cultural and natural heritage of the nation, by vesting in it a number of protected historical sites and nature reserves across the country. Among these sites was the Morne Fortune Historical Site which is the site of the battle of 1796. This is a very important military site. It overlooks the capital city and has several phases of fortifications. The National Trust receives a yearly subvention from the government, but the organisation is responsible for its own finances and can raise funds to finance individual projects (National Trust Act 1975). The institution has an executive which handles the business of the organisation; however this executive is responsible to an eleven member general council. The Council is made up of seven members who are elected annually by the general membership of the organisation, two members nominated annually by the Saint Lucia Archaeological and Historical Society, and two further members nominated by the Minister responsible for the National Trust bi-annually (Saint Lucia Statutory Instrument, 1984, No.27, 1984). Membership of the National Trust is opened to individuals.

They pay an annual subscription which gives them voting rights and free admission to the properties managed by the Trust. According to the act however, the Trust is directly responsible to the cabinet of ministers and falls under the portfolio of the office of the Prime Minister (National Trust Act, 1975). This means that the organisation's activities are sanctioned by the highest ministerial office in the country.

The commissioning of the monument in 1997 marked a major shift in the official attitude toward memorialisation of slavery and its legacies in the country. This decision to commission the monument was the culmination of a process which started in 1996, when the Saint Lucia National Trust officially started commemorating Emancipation Day with a public ceremony. Before this no attention had been given to this occasion by any state or quasi-state institution. The only group, which commemorated Emancipation in any public form and connected the holiday to slavery and its legacies, was the Rastafarians, an Afro-Caribbean religious movement which started in Jamaica and arrived in Saint Lucia during the 1970s. For the rest of the population it was an ordinary bank holiday with no official fanfare. The Rastafarians became known for their anti-establishment rhetoric and Afrocentric political world view. The group was perceived by the authorities and the Catholic Church as problematic, due to the use of marijuana, an illegal drug, in the religious ceremonies and for their anti-Catholic rhetoric (Issac 2013). The Catholic Church was the largest denomination in the country and exercised considerable social and political power. It is one of the legacies of French colonisation in the country. The verbal attacks on the church by Rastafarians were based on the premise that it was the religion aspect of the oppressive socio-political system which they called "Babylon".

The Rastafarians held ceremonies of drumming and singing in their commemoration, ceremonies which took place in various parts of the country where pockets of Rastafarians had settled. In 1996, the Saint Lucia National Trust incorporated the Rastafarian ceremonies into the first official public ceremony commemorating Emancipation on August 5, 1996 (Mirror 1996). The first official memorialising activities were held in a very symbolic location, a village on the west coast of the country called Anse la Liberté, which translates as the Bay of Freedom, by the Saint Lucia National Trust. This first event marked the beginning of commemoration of Emancipation by state institutions in the country, and, by extension, the commemoration of the memory and legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. From this point on such ceremonies fell under the jurisdiction of the National Trust until 2000, when they passed to a new government institution called the Cultural Development Foundation (Claviere, 2013). This new institution's was to manage and promote cultural activities which are of national importance, and the commemoration of Emancipation fell into that category. Beginning in 2000, the grass roots commemoration of Emancipation had been effectively appropriated by the National Trust, and the Afrocentric theme (Issac, 2013), which had been the centre of the Rastafarian commemorative ceremony, became just one part of a ceremony which involved artistic presentations of dance and music (Mirror, 1996). These performances at the ceremonies were perceived as popular

manifestations of Saint Lucian culture which then came to symbolise an emerging national identity. The officially sanctioned commemoration activity of the country's history was also the largest, and took commemoration of the Emancipation from a fringe activity to a mainstream and officially sanctioned status.

The commemoration ceremony of 1997 proved pivotal in igniting interest in the commemoration of Emancipation, as government officials became directly involved in such ceremonies, with government ministers and the Prime Minister giving speeches at the ceremonies from this point on. In 1997 the newly elected, Prime Minister Dr Kenny Anthony, attended the ceremony and sanctioned the project which would lead to the commissioning of a monument to commemorate the "heroes and heroines" of the events of 1796 along with a national heroes park. The political environment seemed to encourage commemoration and the National Trust moved forward with its plans.

Three years later, in 1999, the Prime Minister and a number of ministers attended the National Trust's ceremony commemorating Emancipation on the 1st August. The prime minister's address to the nation on the occasion of Emancipation was published in the national newspapers and laid out his vision of what the commemoration of Emancipation should be (Anthony 1998). He emphasised the need for the nation to look forward and not look to the past. This trend of increasing official engagement and recognition continued until 2004, with Emancipation addresses to the nation by the Minister for Social Transformation. As the Saint Lucia National Trust moved to commission a monument to commemorate the enslaved Africans who participated in resisting the British invasion, it sought government assistance in raising the funds required to build it.

National Heroes and Heroes Park

By 1998 the project, which had started with plans to build a monument, had morphed to incorporate a national heroes' park, and multiple government agencies were brought in to provide technical assistance with the execution of the plan (Info 4). The National Hero's Park was supposed to be a space in which the heroes of the nation would be commemorated with statues or busts. A multiplicity of committees was created, as the planning was extended, to choose individuals who could be raised as national heroes, and an appropriate date on which to celebrate national heroes' day to complement the Emancipation celebrations. According to informants involved in the process, invitations went out from the Ministry of Social Transformation to form a National Hero's Day Committee which was responsible for choosing an appropriate day for commemoration, and a National Hero's Committee which was responsible for selecting national heroes. These committees were supposed to present their results after a two year period, but their work could go beyond that time frame (Info 3). Within three years, the Saint Lucian government had moved from a passive engagement with the event of

Emancipation to using it as a platform on which build a national identity, by elevating specific citizens, dead and alive, to the level of national hero, and by creating a national hero's park with a pantheon of national heroes.

Remembering Resistance

In 1996 the National Trust embarked on a public campaign to promote the “heroic” actions of the formerly enslaved Africans who held Fort Charlotte for a month before their inevitable defeat (Waite, 1996a). The two hundredth anniversary was used to promote the battle and raise public awareness, with schools targeted since this event was not included in the national curriculum. As in many other Anglophone Caribbean nations, history is not taught in primary schools or in the lower secondary schools (Watson 2009, Scher 2012). A survey of the primary school syllabus revealed that slavery and the slave trade are mentioned only with reference to the arrival of different ethnic groups into the country.

Len Waite, a white British expatriate who eventually became the marketing officer for the National Trust, authored a booklet which chronicled the 1796 battle for the first time, and this booklet became the cornerstone on which the public campaign for the monument was built. In this booklet Waite presented the narrative of the battle and described the events which led to the fall of Fort Charlotte. On the final page of this booklet Waite laid out the Historical Heroes Monument Project and Proposed Freedom Park (Waite 1997 p.18) The booklet was supposed to be the marketing tool for the monuments project.

The National Trust's campaign also used articles in national newspapers focused on this one battle, to highlight and emphasise its importance for the country (Waite 1996a, Waite 1996b). With raised public awareness, the commemoration of the battle included retracing of the route marched by the British Army before it laid siege to the fort defended by the enslaved Africans, in an event labelled the “National Walk of Pride” which took place on 13th December 1996 (Waite 1996). This day is marked on the official national calendar as National Day and for many years rivalled the celebration of Independence on 22nd February.

National Day was celebrated in Saint Lucian popular culture as the day the island was discovered by Christopher Columbus, despite the fact that there was no historical evidence to support the claim. However, the organisers of the National Walk of Pride understood the cultural significance of the holiday, and chose the day to commemorate the more recent historical event that they believed was of arguably greater national significance. The campaign sought to raise public consciousness of the battle and to create a national historical narrative which would become the foundation, in the general public, of a sense of national pride. The history of a battle in which the perceived ancestors of the

majority of the population had been involved, allowed for the creation of a historical narrative in a manner similar to what Young (1993 p.6) referred to as a 'common history', a history accessible to all. This was important in a country with a history and legacy of slavery and a historical narrative which had marginalised it.

Resistance and Identity

The year 1996 also marked the seventeenth anniversary of independence for Saint Lucia. This young nation was in the throes of constructing its own post-colonial identity and the activities of the Saint Lucia National Trust were part of that process. The emphasis on the 1796 battle and the raising of the nameless and faceless soldiers of the battle to the level of heroic national ancestors was intended to create a specific kind of identity. According to Young (1993), national institutions help create a common identity based on shared experience and common memory of events or memorials of events. The National Trust chose an event which was historically significant and one which could be made accessible to every citizen as part of their history, because these heroic ancestors belonged to the entire nation not just the people of African descent, for the very reason of their anonymity. The Walk of Pride memorialised the spirit of resistance of the two thousand formerly enslaved Africans, who fought to keep their freedom, against twelve thousand British soldiers who landed to restore British control of the colony, and, incidentally, to reinstate slavery. The resistance to British invasion fitted very well with an historical narrative of resistance which has been a dominant trope in Caribbean history since independence in the Anglophone Caribbean (Schere 2011).

The focus on freedom and the legacy of resistance shows what was to be remembered. In her study of memorialisation in Jamaica, Dacres (2004) points out that in the new nation states of the Anglophone Caribbean the issue of slavery is peripheral to the nation building project. These new nation states have majority African descendent populations, with Asian and European minorities. The European descendent minority is part of the socio-economic elite of these nations. If monuments are going to be used as mnemonic markers for the creation of national identities, what they commemorate has to be accessible to the entire population. A monument commemorating slavery is limited in appeal. In the Saint Lucian context, the emphasis on resistance suggests that a very similar approach was being taken towards identity creation because slavery and its legacies are too divisive to be part of the national project. The Trust, in its public campaign to promote the history of resistance, tried to make connections between the historical event and the birth of the nation. In a newspaper article to promote the Walk of Pride Len Waite wrote "Although they eventually surrendered to the British, their heroism is to be applauded as the commencement of St Lucianism" (Waite 1996 p.10). He continues, saying that "in these times, when we struggle to engender a sense of national pride in our children, it is heroic acts like this, by our ancestors, which have to be made known to them" (Waite 1996 p.10).The

intention of this attempt to connect the birth of the nation to resistance, and to place that birth in recent historic times by referencing a battle against a colonial power, appeared to be the legitimisation of the nation state. This bore strong similarities to memorialisation activities in Antigua, where a monument to the leader of a plot to rebel and destroy plantations was lionized, and his qualities were deemed to be the genesis of what became the “national character” (Brown 2002).

In his analysis of the creation of a monument to slavery in the state of Georgia in the United States Alderman (2006) highlighted that even among the African descendent population there was little consensus on how to commemorate it. He found that there were members of the community who even expressed the desire not to commemorate slavery because it was a shameful part of their history, and that a monument would be constant reminder. While officials in Saint Lucia did not express such a sentiment, there was a concerted effort to ensure that resistance was the subject of commemoration and not slavery.

Leonard Waite, Saint Lucian Nationalism and Identity Creation

During the campaign to commemorate and memorialise the formerly enslaved Africans, previously characterised as Brigands, the marketing officer for the National Trust was Len Waite, a British expatriate living in Saint Lucia long before he started work for the National Trust. As marketing officer his responsibilities included public relations and promoting the image of the Trust and the projects on which it had embarked. Waite was very prolific in producing material for the public relations campaign and he kept the National Trust and its memorial project in the news between 1996 and 1997 with eleven newspaper articles in the national press. Many of these had a particularly nationalistic tone, aimed at promoting the events of 1796 as seminal to the development of Saint Lucian national pride (Waite 1996a, 1996b, 1997a, 1997b).

However, it appears that Waite’s involvement in the memorialisation process went well beyond his official role at the National Trust. Waite had spent much time researching the events of 1796 and had by 1996 self-published a booklet entitled *Saint Lucia the Brave* which chronicled the events and bravery of the formerly enslaved Africans who had defended the fort (Waite 1997). In the first newspaper article (Waite 1996) which predated his promotion of the events of 1796 for the Saint Lucia National Trust, Waite lamented the fact that the Saint Lucian authorities had very little interest in the history of the country. He stated that he “gave up one year ago (having already spent one year) trying to convince the powers that be that there was mileage to be gained from promoting the two-hundredth anniversary” of the events of 1796 (Waite, 1996).

Waite went on to state that he had personally handed copies of his booklet to several ministers of government and high ranking officials who did not respond to his request to support some form of

commemoration. He claims that there was no interest in the promotion of the anniversary and that he was told that it “smacked too much of colonialism” (Waite 1996). The fact that he was a white British expatriate promoting the history of a historic battle in which the British were involved (and which the British won), may have influenced the general response to him, and the fact that he was often asked about his consultancy fee for doing such work, suggests that he may have been perceived as promoting the event for financial gain. He argued that “the Americans would certainly have done something about it had it all happened in the USA!”(Waite, 1996). He went on to prove his dedication by highlighting his volunteer work for the National Trust and his production of historical material which is freely available. Waite seems to have been oblivious to the dynamics of race and the inherent legacies of colonialism, which operated in a former British colony which was born out of a slave society. While he spoke of his loyalty to Saint Lucia, he was a white British man in that society.

In a letter addressed to the prime minister in 1996, Len Waite ask the question “When does St Lucianism being?” and he proceeded to make connections between 1796 and 1996. He described the formerly enslaved Africans, who had fought the British invasion, as national heroes, and presented the Walk of Pride as a way of commemorating their heroism. He also highlighted the fact that forty “young Saint Lucians” had been trained as guides for the walk (Waite 1996). In this letter he presented plans for the installation of a plaque on the Morne Historic Area at the site of Fort Charlotte, and went as far as informing the Prime Minister that he had already procured the marble for the installation (Waite, 1996). What is most significant about this letter is that Waite signs the letter not as an officer of the National Trust, but as a private individual even using the honour of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

The former executive director of the Saint Lucia National Trust, Giles Romulus, credited Waite with being the catalyst for the idea of a monument to memorialise the defenders of the fort in 1796 during an interview (January 15, 2014), when he was the programmes officer for the Trust. Waite’s idea eventually became part of a broad plan which was being developed by Romulus for the executive of the National Trust, to help with the management of the many natural and cultural heritage sites which came under the its jurisdiction. Waite’s idea was the creation of an historical park with the monument memorialising the events of 1796 at its centre. This monument would be a memorial to the formerly enslaved Africans who held the fort during the one month siege. Fort Charlotte and the surrounding Morne Fortune is a historical site which is was vested in the National Trust, and, as a result, any plan to build a monument in the general vicinity could be worked into the institution’s management of the area.

According to the contents of a press release, which Mr Waite himself had drafted, on behalf of the National Trust, on the occasion of the launching of the monuments project, his research had led to the idea of commemoration. The document stated that the “bias of the past published history writers concerning the campaign of 1796 did not do St Lucians justice” (Waite 1996), and that there was a

need to set the record straight. The desire to “do justice” led to the organising of the Walk of Pride which was used to insert the memory of the 1796 campaign into the consciousness of the general public. It appears that the Walk of Pride was intended as an annual event on the calendar of the National Trust as a second walk was planned for 1997.

Waite’s booklet *Saint Lucia the Brave 1796*, was eventually published by the National Trust in 1997, and became the cornerstone on which the public campaign was built. It is not clear whether the institution commissioned the booklet or whether it was Waite’s own initiative, but from the texts of the articles written before he assumed responsibilities at the National Trust, it appears to predate his work with the institution. It was sold by the National Trust in order to promote and raise funds for the memorial initiative. Waite’s actions suggest that he had a vested interest in the memorialisation project which went beyond his role as the marketing officer of the National Trust. By 1997 he was also the secretary of the monument committee and, in a letter to the chairman of the Trust (Waite, 1997), Waite chastised officials for the lack of initiative on the part of the National Trust and complained about difficulties he was having in meeting both the chairman and the executive director to discuss issues which were impeding the project. In the same letter Waite complained that the National Trust’s newsletter was not being published on time and that therefore the members of the organisation were not being informed of the progress of the monument project. He went on to volunteer for the position of editor of the newsletter in order to speed up the process. His interest in the project clearly went beyond his role as the public relations officer of the Saint Lucia National Trust. He was not just the catalyst for the project, but spent much time advocating for it both as a private citizen and an officer of the National Trust. Waite’s push for the commemoration of this battle and the formerly enslaved Africans involved is very intriguing, considering his background as a white British expatriate in a majority African descendent country. Much of his work focused on what he saw as the building of the national character, and projecting the national identity of Saint Lucian into a distant past. It is also significant that he chose “soldiers” for commemoration as national heroes. I argue here that Waite’s actions were in the tradition of European nations where monuments to soldiers traditionally were an essential part of the identity creation process.

Freedom Monument and Heroes Park

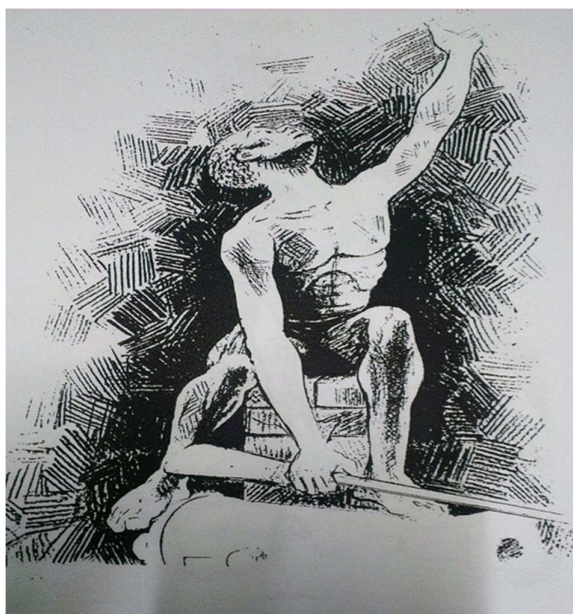
By 1997 the National Trust had developed a major campaign to build a monument to the formerly enslaved Africans who had held Fort Charlotte in 1796. The project had attracted the attention of the government and this had enabled the recruitment of various arms of the state to help with planning, and the execution of the plan. The project had evolved into a national heroes’ park with the physical monument at the centre of it, and a number of committees were set up to help manage the process and push the project along (SLU Info 4). There was a Monuments Committee, a National Heroes

Committee and a National Heroes' Day Committee. The members of these committees were senior civil servants and local business people, who were invited to join those committees based on their standing in the society and the skill set which would help the function of the various committees.

The Monuments Committee was responsible for managing the process which led to the creation of the monument and heroes park and selecting the winning designs. The National Heroes Committee was set up to choose the first heroes of the modern nation state of Saint Lucia, whilst the National Heroes' Day Committee was set up to decide on a day appropriate to celebrate as 'National Heroes' Day' (Carasco 2014, Williams 2014). These committees were appointed as advisory bodies to the cabinet of ministers (Charles 1997, Carasco 2014, Williams 2014). The search for new national heroes, and the commemoration of the actions of the formerly enslaved Africans who had fought the British, thus became part of the same process. The memorialisation of the events of 1796 had become the basis for the creation of a new national identity for the new nation and not an end in itself. The nameless soldiers of the battle of 1796 were now destined to be national heroes, and would be memorialised with other heroes who had made significant contributions since independence.

Plans for the Freedom Monument were made public in newspaper articles from early February 1997 (Waite 1997). This heralded the start of a new campaign to raise public awareness, and to get public participation in the creation of the monument. The plan was officially launched at a public ceremony on the eighteenth anniversary of independence, at which the executive director of the National Trust invited the public to participate in the process of creating the monument and park, and gave the reasons for their creation. He also issued the timeline within which the project would be completed (Romulus 1997), suggesting that the unveiling of the National Heroes Park and Freedom Monument would be one year later at a ceremony on Independence Day, February 22nd 1998. It is important to note that the unveiling of the monument being planned for Independence Day meant that it was no longer connected to the date of the events to be memorialised, but to the anniversary of political independence from Britain.

One year later than originally planned, on 1st August 1999 Emancipation Day, the Saint Lucia National Trust held a ceremony to unveil the design for the Heroes Park and Freedom Monument (Program 1999). This ceremony bore all the hallmarks of a state sanctioned ceremony, with addresses from ministers of government, the keynote address being given by the Prime Minister, Dr Kenny Anthony. The architect responsible for the design of the park presented his model for the park and the winning design for the Freedom Monument was also presented (Program 1999). The committee responsible for the design of the park had approved the work of the architect, which was commissioned by consultation. The Monument Committee had chosen, from the submissions to a competition, the design submitted by Ricky George, which had proved to be the overwhelming favourite.



Winning Design for Freedom Monument: Source Saint Lucia National Trust

The Public and Memorialisation

The Monument Committee had presided over the public competition for the design of the monument, and had set out the criteria for judging the submissions, which ranged from the preferred dimensions of the monument to specific instructions which suggested that the events of 1796 should be the inspiration for the design (Ricky George 2013). The winning artist, Ricky George, suggested that while he did his own research to come up with the design, the booklet which was authored by Len Waite was a considerable influence on his design. He stated that the monument was a celebration of the victory of the ancestors (George 2013). It must be noted that despite the fact that the Trust ran a campaign to get the public involved in submitting designs for the competition, none of the people interviewed for this study could remember that it was a competition. The only design officially documented was that submitted by George.

The campaign inviting members of the public to submit designs for the monument was not successful. Schools were targeted in the hope that students would participate, but despite visits by representatives of the National Trust, only six schools had responded positively, with some joining the fund raising effort (Charles 1997). All of these schools were in the north of the country, near the site of the proposed memorial park and monument, and had had a number of visits from officers of the National Trust. It must be noted that the head office of the Trust at the time was near the capital Castries, and all the schools visited by representatives of the Trust were within a three mile radius of the city. It is also important to note that the officer who visited the schools was in fact Len Waite, the marketing

officer. It appears that school visits were not carried out in the rest of the country, suggesting that the schools campaign failed because the officers in the regional offices of the National Trust had not done the promotion.

By May 1997 little progress had been made with fund raising and there appeared to be very little interest in the project from the general public (Charles 1997). There were fears that the February 1998 target would not be met, yet, despite this, the project continued. The marketing officer targeted a number of large businesses and made some progress, but, in general, the fund-raising did not go as the organisers had intended. During this period there were a number of high-profile fund-raising initiatives by other institutions, which provided stiff competition for the monument project. This was considered a blow to the project, since the campaign were using television, newspaper and radio to promote the project of the Heroes Park and Freedom Monument. The difficulties which the project faced seem to have been more than just financial. Len Waite, the marketing officer and the secretary of the Monuments Committee, was clear that the project was not a priority for the council of the National Trust (Waite 1997).

This apparent lack of public interest in the project raises difficult questions about the memorialisation process initiated by the National Trust. The use of the broadcast and print media did not lead to the type of public response which the executive had been expecting. There are a number of reasons why this public campaign failed. One of the most important of these is the fact that the National Trust was trying to build public interest in an event which was absent from the public consciousness. The general public was not familiar with the story of the Brigand Wars and the battle of 1796. The same lack of engagement was encountered after the print and broadcast media promotion, in which the campaign consisted of discussions on national radio, news clips on television and articles in the newspapers. The campaign presented interesting tidbits on the history of the fort and the battle. This failed to resonate with the people nor did it sustain the interest of a public unfamiliar with the content. The general public simply could not identify with the events which the Trust was trying to memorialise.

The Memorialisation Project

The plan for the project was unveiled at the Emancipation commemoration ceremony on 1st August 1998, after the proposal for the National Heroes Park had been presented to the Prime Minister by the council of the National Trust. At the centre of the park would be the National Freedom Monument to commemorate the resistance of the formerly enslaved African defenders of 1796. The duration of the project was supposed to span a two year period (1998-2000). Multiple groups were to be invited to join the committee and assist the National Trust in managing the project. These included the National

Archives, the Archaeological and Historical Society, the Prime Minister's office, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Info. 4).

The justification for the project was coloured by a very nationalistic tone, and was clearly aimed at building a new national identity. The project was also presented as a bulwark against the effects of globalisation. It stated that "globalisation as a force produces a mind-set and a diminished sense of national pride and sense of purpose, while national self-actualization is negated" (Romulus 1998). A number of questions was also raised for consideration: "where do we come from?", "who are we and who do we want to be?", "what is our vision for the future?", "where are those signs and symbols which celebrate our achievements and help us to vision a greater future?" (Romulus, 1998). For the council of the National Trust, the National Heroes Park would help answer those questions and help create a sense of a national identity and pride.

The project was very comprehensively laid out, with the role of all the parties invited to join and contribute clearly outlined. An itemised budget was presented, and the possible sources for the funding identified. They included donations from the general public, charitable donations from the private sector, and donations from central government. In the document it was suggested that, if the project was to become a national project, it would have to receive a public endorsement from the government through a Cabinet Decision and the office of the Prime Minister.

The Freedom Monument: Memorialisation and Dissonance



Freedom Monument: Source National Trust

The winning presentation for the Freedom Monument was a sketch depicting a male figure sitting on what appears to be rubble, holding a musket in one hand and a cannon ball in the other. In his description the sculptor, Ricky George said that the “monument depicts the perspective of victory. The design is relevant, because it exhibits a male figure that can be viewed as an insurrectionist or freedom fighter” (George 1997,1). This clearly was in line with what the National Trust intended to memorialise, and there was very little reference to slavery in the description submitted by the artist, who instead referenced a freedom fighter intent on rising above “his oppression” (George 1997). The historical face is that the battle was lost despite George’s assertion

In an interview for this study George saw himself as a surrogate for the enslaved Africans who he had been commissioned to memorialise in sculpture (George 2013). He lamented the fact that although these brave men had fought long and hard to maintain their freedom, their heroic acts had been neglected in the history of the country. He saw them as brave and heroic ancestors who should be given their place in the annals of the island’s history (George 2013). He also raised the issues of other nations having heroes for future generations to look up to, and of shaping national character. He felt that it was his responsibility to provide such heroes to his country, through his work memorialising the events of 1796 (George, 2013).

The decision to choose a design of a male insurrectionist was not without controversy. Interviews for this study with members of the committee revealed that there were issues with the gendered nature of the sketch, as a female member of the committee asked about gender equity in the representation of resistance to slavery. She stated that, despite the fact that women feature prominently in the events of 1796, only a man was represented on the monument (Carasco 2013). In the description submitted with the sketch, the artist acknowledges that women were involved in the events to be memorialised; however he proceeded to justify his design by stating that his focus was on the male leader of the group of 2000 formerly enslaved Africans, a man named La Croix (George, 1999). He also stated that the issue of the cost of creating the monument necessitated restricting the number of figures depicted. This discourse on the silencing of women in the resistance narrative in Caribbean historiography is pervasive and has been highlighted by Dacares (2004 p.152) who argued that postcolonial monuments in the Caribbean “exemplify the marginalized or absent role of women as political and historical actors”. A brief survey of monuments to slavery and its legacies in the postcolonial Caribbean affirms this, as most of these monuments are of male leaders of rebellions such as Prince Klaus in Antigua, and Bussa in Barbados (Brown, 2002), as well as Cuffy in Guyana (Thompson, 2006) , all monuments commissioned in the postcolonial period.

Another issue raised was that of the form of the figure to be sculpted. The figure held a musket in one hand and cannon ball in the other whilst seated on a cannon. For some members of the panel, the depiction was problematic. One of the main issues was the fact that the figure was in a seated position. Such a position, it was argued, could not be one of resistance (Williams, 2013). Rather, if the figure

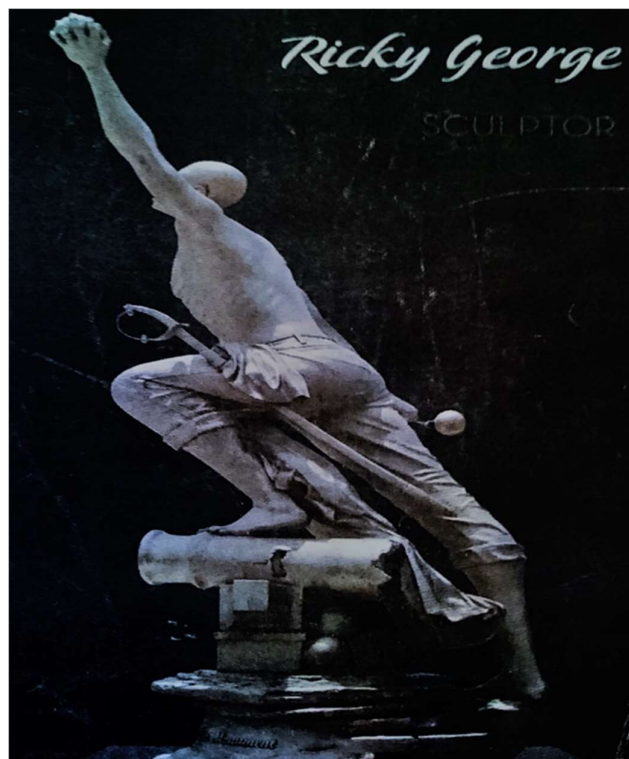
was to represent a freedom fighter, he should be standing. It appears that for the members of the committee, for whom resistance was important, the form of the monument had to embody physical resistance if it was to memorialise the events of 1796. When the final sketch of the monument was presented the male figure had been changed and was depicted standing holding the musket over his head.



Original Design by Ricky George: National Trust

Although the committee went ahead with the final design, issues of interpretation and representation arose again two years later in 2000. By this time the executive of the National Trust had changed, and Giles Romulus, who had been the Programmes Officer when the project started, was the new Executive Director at the helm of the National Trust. The Chair of the National Heroes' Park Committee had also changed, along with the Chair of the Council of the National Trust. In his new role Romulus expressed disappointment with the debate and interpretation of the monument. He stated that: "the Committee is more focused on celebrating victory over the colonial power and European Imperialism than providing our young people and visitors with an image of inspiration based on the realities of the past, the present and the future which instructs us that the 'future is what we make it.'" (Romulus 2000)

He felt that the musket and the cannon ball represented violence, and that violence should not be seen as part of the future. He stated that the future should be “based on a vision of non-violence and intellectual excellence” (Romulus, 2000), as perhaps captured more fittingly in the earlier monuments to the Nobel Laureates. The Executive Director also suggested that “words of war” should be avoided in the description and interpretation of the monument. He also took issue with the musket held by the figure. He felt it should be replaced with a book, such as the Bible, held close to the torso of the figure near the heart to represent a “source of values of love, humility, intergenerational equity”. In short the Director felt that the monument should focus on “mental” freedom, and not physical freedom which had already been won: the monument should reflect the national vision, a look to the future and not to the past.



Freedom Monument: Source Ricky George

Memory Identity and Forgetting Slavery

The Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery left enduring legacies in Saint Lucia, the most obvious of them being the majority African descendent population. The conception of the Freedom Monument suggests that the memory of these events still exists in the society. The memorialisation process suggests that forgetting is concomitant with remembering. The commissioning of the Freedom Monument in Saint Lucia had as much to do with the creation of a national identity as it did with the

memorialisation of the resistance to the British invasion of 1796 in order to maintain freedom which had been earned through French Emancipation a few years before. From the work of Len Waite, who launched a personal crusade not only to mark the two-hundredth anniversary of the event, but to memorialise it through the Walk of Pride and eventually to create a monument, the goal was to create a focus for a new narrative of a national identity. The newspaper articles promoting the work of the National Trust made constant reference to this. The focus on finding the beginning of “Saint Lucianism” suggested that there was an attempt to locate a Saint Lucian character in history. The resistance of the formerly enslaved Africans who fought against overwhelming odds to maintain their freedom was put forward as evidence of this Saint Lucian character in history.

This drive to create a national Identity through a monument to “national heroes” who had started the fight for freedom belies the fact that the narrative did not resonate with the wider public despite many attempts to promote it using the mass media. The monument was conceived and designed by a handful of individuals, who felt that it was the best way to garner support and get the public to buy into what was being presented as national characteristics. Thus even when the public campaign failed, the memorialisation project continued. This process is akin to what Smith (2006) referred to as the “authorised heritage discourse”, which privileges monumentality and the use of historic spaces and expert skills in the nation building process (Smith 2006 p.1).

It must be noted that very little reference was made to slavery itself during the campaign to set up the project, or the process of creating the Freedom Monument. The main themes were freedom, resistance and identity creation. The memory of slavery is not referenced at any point in the memorialisation process, and the vocabulary used during the process made reference not to enslaved people but to freedom fighters, soldiers and warriors. The title of the booklet, “Saint Lucia the Brave”, which was central to the process, highlights this issue. The author of the booklet projected the nation of Saint Lucia back into 1796 and claimed the 2000 formerly enslaved Africans who fought the British invasion as Saint Lucian freedom fighters, using monuments in the history of the country to mark the dawn of a national consciousness or character. Since the fight was against invasion by a European colonial power it meant that the fight was against colonialism. This narrative omits the fact that, while these formerly enslaved Africans were resisting the British to prevent their re-enslavement, they were actually the foot soldiers of the Republican French forces on the island, and that Saint Lucia was in fact a French colony, and would have remained one if the British had been defeated.

The themes of resistance and freedom are echoed in the speech given by the executive director of the National Trust. He presented the National Heroes Project as an attempt by the National Trust to “contribute to creating a national identity”, and as a bulwark against the forces of globalisation (Romulus 1998). He highlighted the lack of national heroes and monuments, and argued that the creation of the monument would provide “visual positive mental stimulus” and would contribute to “the cultural and psychological development and the growth of national pride”. He also stated that the

“park and monument will recognise where we came from, and will give us the sense of pride and that source of motivation required as vectorial power in writing our future.” (Romulus 1998) Clearly this site of memory, as envisaged by the executive director, had as much to do with the needs of the future as with remembering the past.

A year later the Prime Minister’s vision was very similar to what the executive director had presented the previous year. In a speech at the commemoration for Emancipation and the ceremony launching the design of the National Heroes’ Park in 1999, the Prime Minister placed the emphasis on looking forward to the future. He stated that “a people must never forget their pain, but scars of the past must serve to heal their future.” The memory of slavery is minimised and he went on to stress that “there is always resistance, resilience, survival and triumph to celebrate” (Anthony, 2004). Emancipation Day, he implied, was not a day to revisit the trauma of slavery, but a day to assess what he called the “miracle of survival” (2004, 63). The monument, for him, represented this resilience and survival. It represented freedom and looked to the future, a theme which seemed to be prevalent throughout the memorialisation process and the creation of the Freedom Monument.

What was important in the memorialisation process was the memory of resistance, and the speeches presented by the Prime Minister and the executive director of the National Trust at the launch of the National Heroes project made it clear that the monument was meant as a signpost for the future, and not a site to dwell on the “trauma of the past”.

Throughout the campaign to memorialise the events of 1796 very little reference was made to slavery or the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Despite the fact that the defeat of the formerly enslaved Africans at Morne Fortune led to the re-enslavement of the African population, the authorities chose to remember only that they had put up a valiant effort in the battle against the British. The re-enslavement was omitted from the narrative, in spite of the fact that it lasted another 42 years until the British Act of Abolition in 1838 (Harmsen 2012). The narrative also omits the fact that most of the formerly enslaved Africans who surrendered to the 27th Iniskilling Regiment at the end of the siege of Fort Charlotte became prisoners of war and were sent to England where they were exchanged for others prisoners of war (Harmsen et al 2012 p.85)

Roth (2012 p.117) states that, when faced with traumatic memory, some would prefer to put the event which caused the trauma into perspective. This involves forgetting the trauma itself but placing the event as one of many in the nation’s history; he refers to this as 'powerful forgetting'. The trauma of slavery is acknowledged to the extent that it should be the basis for framing the future. According to LaCapra this approach could be seen as the creation of a narrative which marginalises the trauma of an event to remove the negative elements for progressive purposes. The desire for inspiration for the future requires the silencing of elements of slavery, and relegating it to the margins of the memorialisation process by emphasising resistance. What is remembered is the “resilience and

resistance” of the ancestors, who are raised as heroes with characteristics which should inform the national identity and what it means to be Saint Lucian. Two decades after the memorialisation process started, slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are still not part of the wider discourse on Saint Lucian history and development.

Chapter Five

Whitney Plantation: Slavery, Memory and Trauma

There is no place you or I can go, to think about or not think about, to summon the presences of, or recollect the absences of slaves; nothing that reminds us of the ones who made the journey and of those who did make it. There is no suitable memorial or plaque or wreath or wall or park or skyscraper lobby

Maya Angelo (1989)

Whitney Plantation a Brief History

Whitney Plantation is located in Wallace Louisiana on River Road on the banks of the Mississippi river. It was originally established in 1752 by a German immigrant who purchased the property and developed it from an indigo plantation to one which produced sugar (Seck, 2015). The plantation remained in the Heidelberg family until it was sold in the post-civil war period. Until the sale it was known as Habitation Heidelberg, but after the sale it was renamed Whitney by the new owner. In December 2014, the plantation opened its doors to the public as a museum focusing on the lives of enslaved people who worked there. It is the first plantation site which is dedicated solely to memorialisation of the slavery and its legacies in the south of the United States of America, the region where slavery was finally ended after the Civil War in 1861. This chapter explores the creation of this site of memory of slavery and how it is used to memorialise this difficult period in the history of Louisiana.

Habitation Heidelberg as the plantation was first known from it was established in 1752, became one of the largest and prosperous plantations in the St John the Baptist Parish and one of the most important in Louisiana (Seck 2014:2). The plantation increased in size and productivity when after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 when it transitioned into the production of sugar and thousands of enslaved Africans were brought in to provide labour on the plantations from West Africa and the Caribbean. Ambroise Heidelberg the founder of the plantation was one of fifteen hundred German speaking labourers brought to Louisiana in the early eighteenth century while it was under French control (Seck 2014:18). These settlers took up residence on what is now referred to as the German coast and built some of the more prosperous agricultural entities during their time, buying up property as their income increased. By 1790 however the success of the plantation was built on the indigo trade and this success allowed for further expansion when sugar became the most important crop in Louisiana. In 1834 records show that seventy eight enslaved people were attached to the plantation (Seck 2014:90). In 1860 an inventory of the plantation after the death of its owner Azélie Heidelberg showed that plantation had grown to two thousand two hundred acres and included one of the largest number of enslaved people on any plantation in Louisiana at the time. The number of enslaved was listed as one hundred and one (Seck 2014:99).

There has been an increase in the number of sites of memory of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the United States in recent decades. These have taken the form of monuments for example in Savannah, Georgia (Alderman 2010), the African Burial Ground in New City (Kardux, 2011), slave markets in Charleston, and Wall Street (Phillip 2015). This rise of the memory of slavery in the public space in the United States, is in sharp contrast to the relative silence on slavery in the national historical narrative. Araujo (2014) attributes this rise of the memory of slavery in the public space to a general increase in public memory in the post-Cold War period of the 1990s and collaboration between black social activists and scholars who are forcing the national government to recognize slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade as being central to the nation's history (Araujo 2014 p.2). In December 2014, a new museum memorializing slavery and the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade opened on a former sugar plantation in Wallace, Louisiana (Warren 2015). While other sites such as the Museum of African American History which will deal with slavery as part of a wider history, this museum is dedicated solely to memorialising slavery, the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies. The museum also differs from other sites of memory, because unlike others which have been state sponsored projects, it is a private venture which is owned and financed by one individual. This chapter explores this private site of memory within the wider context of the rise public memory in Louisiana and the wider United States.

According to the plantation's website it is "the only plantation museum in Louisiana with a focus on slavery" (Whitney Plantation, 2015). It also states that "through museum exhibits, memorial artwork and restored buildings and hundreds of first-person slave narratives, visitors to Whitney will gain a unique perspective on the lives of Louisiana's enslaved people" (Whitney Plantation, 2015). As a plantation museum Whitney's focus on slavery and the lives of the enslaved goes against what has been the norm on plantation museums in the south of the United States. Such plantations have been accused of silencing slavery and the contributions of African Americans to the history of the southern states and the nation, by ignoring slavery or minimising its importance in the history of plantations and the wider national historical narrative.

On December 7th 2014 Whitney opened its doors to the public as the Whitney Plantation Museum, the first and only museum in the United States which is devoted solely to slavery. While the story of slavery had in recent times slowly been inserted into the narratives of plantations museums in the South of the country, such as the famous and the Smithsonian Institution is about to open the first Museum of African American History and Culture, Whitney Plantation is the only one which deals exclusively with it's the history and legacies of slavery. (Read 2014, Amsden 2015). there are a number of other plantations in this region which are open to the public, but many of these focus on a historical narrative which is centred on the creole planters' life with the big houses at the centre, and have only very recently integrated the story of slavery into the narrative (Alderman and Modlin 2008, Bright et al 2016, Cook 2016).

The current owner of Whitney plantation, John Cummings, began the development of the plantation as a museum fifteen years before it opened, during which time he estimated that he spent eight million dollars developing the property into this museum (Amsden 2015). Cummings bought the property in 1998 from Famosa, a Taiwanese petro-chemicals corporation which had failed in its attempts to build a seven hundred million dollar rayon manufacturing plant, after the purchase of the plantation in 1991 (Amsden 2015). Famosa had come under scrutiny of environmental and heritage activists when plans to raze the plantation and convert it to a rayon factory became public (Amsden 2015). Protests forced the company to commission environmental and heritage impact surveys of the property before any construction could start. The concession would be that the sections of the plantation which were considered of historical and cultural significance would be preserved (Amsden 2015). According to Cummings, by the time the assessments were complete the bottom had fallen out of the world rayon market and the company abandoned all plans to develop the property (Cummings 2015). When the plantation was listed on the market, Cummings - who is a real estate developer - acquired it along with the “eight volume” survey which had been commissioned by Famosa.

Based on his own assessment Cummings reasoned that the survey documents which he inherited with his purchase of the plantation endowed him with more knowledge about it than any other plantation in the United States outside of the very famous and well-researched and preserved Monticello Plantation which had been owned by Thomas Jefferson (Cummings 2015). Being well informed by the survey documents and his supplemental reading on slavery in the United States, Cummings said that he became very conscious of its legacies and the “hangovers” of slavery in southern society (Amsden 2015). For Cummings the museum is a very personal project which he has financed himself. According to Cummings, in his quest to develop the museum he hired people who could inform the process and right skill set which he certainly did not possess. Much of the historical data used to build and interpret the museum is the work of the Research Director, Dr Ibrahima Seck, a Senegalese historian, whose previous research was focused on the cultural connections between West Africa and Louisiana (Seck 2015). He also intimated that his ability to read the archival documents which were written in Old French allowed him to access data that would have otherwise been inaccessible. The impression is that such a skill is rare but with Louisiana having a very strong French heritage, scholars with interest in the state’s history would certainly have to develop that skill.

Plantations as Sites of Memory

In the south of the United States the plantation was the site on which enslaved Africans were the labour force which ensured that the crops, such as cotton which made the southern states rich and allowed for the creation of the lifestyle which has become associated with the with those sites (Taylor 2001).

The plantation was the key industrial-agricultural unit of production in the southern United States, predominantly producing cotton, upon which the region prospered from its global market. Economic prosperity of the cotton industry was, however, founded upon the use of enslaved labour from Africa. Since the 1930's a number of plantation sites have been opened to the public in various guises, under the umbrella term – 'plantation museum'.

Eichstedt and Small (2002) define a plantation museum as a site "based on physical structures that were originally used as part of plantation complexes during the period of slavery and which now are organised to provide exhibits and tours of southern history" (Eichstedt & Small 2002 p.9). Whitney Plantation sits comfortably within this definition and was developed in this manner, but it has also developed exhibits which were not part of plantation infrastructure. These include the church which was brought in from a nearby town, the jail which is of post slavery origin and was brought in from another state and the black granite walls on which the names of enslaved people from Whitney and Louisiana are inscribed.

Since the end of the nineteenth century plantations have become sites of leisure for many in the United States (Seaton 2001). These sites which were the engine of the economy of the American South which depended on the labour of enslaved Africans have become places where the nostalgia and the romance of pre-civil war Southern society could be experienced and acted out. Many of these plantations are now heritage sites and museums which attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every year .

Plantations may have been sites of agricultural production but have in many cases been converted to heritage sites. These sites have become displays which celebrate and mythologize aspects of southern culture which builds on the historical narrative of the romantic plantation life in the antebellum south. The big houses have been converted to museums which display the artefacts of daily lives of those who occupied them.

The plantation house has been at the centre of memory making in the southern United States. This space was home to the planter and his family and it has been the place where life in the antebellum south has been memorialised. In popular culture the plantation house is where the gentlemen and ladies of the south enjoyed a genteel lifestyle until the Civil War (Taylor 2001). This has been romanticized in popular movies like *Gone With The Wind* (1939), which according to Von Drehle (2011) is the top grossing film in the United States (2011 p.50)

The romanticizing of this life style with the plantation museum space has allowed for the appropriation of the word plantation to create what Bourdieu referred to as 'symbolic capital' (1989 p.21). For Bourdieu 'symbolic capital' is economic or cultural capital which could be used to reproduce or reinforce power relations within the social space. According to Alderman, that process has led to the positive association of the word plantation, with positive points of identity for white Americans, who do not associate such place names to the sites of trauma of slavery (Alderman

2008:203). The dissociation of the plantation from slavery and its legacies led to the erasure of the trauma and of the people who experienced that trauma in the historical narrative which has been constructed around the plantation.

For decades the plantation museums in the South of the United States have been criticized for such displays and the marginalising of the history of African Americans and Slavery (Butler 2001, Roushanzamir and Kreshel 2001, Modlin 2008, Montes and Butler 2008, Buzinde and Santos 2008, Small 2013, Carter et al 2014, Alderman et al 2016, Potter 2016, Stone 2016). The emphasis on the 'Big House' ensured that the life ways of the plantation owners were the focus of such museums and this perpetuated the romantic notions of southern living as portrayed in popular films and literature such as 'Gone With the Wind' (1939). According to Taylor, these have "sealed in the popular imagination a fascinated nostalgia for glamorous southern plantation house and ordered hierarchical society" where landowner and slave lived in a mythical bond with the rich soil (Taylor, 2001). These romantic narratives of benevolent masters and happy obedient servants became the theme for much of the marketing of plantations as tourist destinations. Taylor argued that these myths of southern life were "carefully nurtured" by those who profited from its success (Taylor 2001). The text of many of the brochures for these sites promoted the house and the life style of the southern gentry (Alderman & Moldin 2008, 269). The narrative omitted the traumatic aspects of plantation life and agricultural production which depended on the labour of enslaved Africans and therefore by extension the history of African Americans.

According to Eichstedt and Small (2002) who looked at plantation museums across the south of the United States, these sites tell a history focused on white male elites and silence the labour and lives of the enslaved and African Americans. They argue that these sites construct and perpetuate public white racial identities "that both articulate with, and bolster a sense of (white) pride in a partial history of freedom, democracy and hard work." (Eichstedt & Small 2002 p.4).

The master narrative presented in contemporary plantation museums is typically very selective in what it portrays, and constructs a sanitized version of the past that is deemed an acceptable legacy for a society still largely dominated by a white elite (Buzinde 2007).

As museums these plantations play a key role in the creation and sustaining of a regional identity which negates the role of those who do not fit into this wider narrative. Slavery and its legacies are not part of this narrative which focused on the wealth and life of the planters and the enslaved were "depersonalised and dehumanised" (Eichstedt & Small 2002 p.7), when they did appear in the narrative they were portrayed as faithful and loyal to their generous and benevolent masters.

Buzinde and Santos (2008) argue that the plantation museum is not a neutral site in the wider landscape. It is a political space within which much negation of historical meaning is enacted and where collective memory privileges the needs of the present and what is presented as heritage

(Buzinde & Santos 2008:470) whatever is remembered, forgotten, ignored or silenced is influenced by - and also influences - social order and political relations (Buzinde and Santos 2008 p.471). The meaning created on these plantations have an impact on the wider narrative and this makes them import as sites of memory.

While plantations have become popular as tourist attractions their status as sites of leisure has also impacted on the meaning of the word “plantation”. Alderman (2008) has argued that the word is very often used as a “form of symbolic capital” which creates notions of prestige on properties and businesses (Alderman 2008p.203). Once a site of agricultural production, the term is now associated with prestige and perceived as luxurious in the minds of many, as new housing developments, golf courses and other places of leisure use the word in their titles and marketing. This change phenomenon is related to and reflects the notion of the plantation as the symbol of power, prestige, and nostalgia in the southern states. The consumption of plantations as sites of leisure and the concomitant increase in prestige indicates that notions of what southern culture was or should be, were being directly impacted by what was consumed at those sites and what tourists expected to experience. The marginalising of slavery and the experience of slavery from the narrative on the plantation was not unusual since the national historical narrative for the nation had done the same for decades. For the average tourist the absence of slavery would not be an issue because exposure to slavery and its legacies were not at all unusual. National identities are based on historical narratives people prefer historical facts which present a positive view of the nation (Gallas and Perry 2015 p.8)

Von Drehle (2011) has pointed out that forgetting the role of slavery in the making of the United States of America has been a long and complicated process. The author argues that in the immediate post-civil war period it was believed that forgetting the issues of the war and moving on was in the best interest of the nation. He stated that “for most of the first century after the war; historians, novelists and filmmakers worked like hypnotists to soothe the post-traumatic memories of survivors and descendants” (2011,28). As a result, much of what was written about the American Civil war in the century following the war did not deal with the issue of slavery in the historical narrative of the of the nation. Von Drehle further argues that while in the 1950s academic historians began to insert slavery and its legacies into the national historical narrative, this had very little impact on popular perceptions of the war and its relationship with slavery as an institution.

The extent of this amnesia belies the importance of slavery to the building of what became the United States of America. While for many in the public, slavery is closely associated with the southern states this is not the whole story. The importance of slavery is woven into the economic fabric of the entire country and ranges from Wall Street in the New York which depended on financing cotton (Gallas and Perry, 2015,1) trade to the north-east from which eighty five percent of the slaving voyages left the country. Slaves worked as domestic servants in cities right across the north-east of the country, as well as on the docks and small farms. The impact of slavery was such that cotton amounted to sixty-

five percent of the exports of the United States from the early nineteenth century into the early twentieth century (Gallas and Perry, 2015,4). Baptist (2014) has argued that slavery as an institution was foundational to the economic development of the United States with no region being left untouched.

With slavery having been so pervasive and integral to the history of the country its absence from plantation where it was at the centre of the cultivation of crops like sugar cotton is very conspicuous. Azoulay (1994) argued that, slavery is absent because plantation curators are in fact agents who impact on the creation of the narratives developed at these sites (Azoulay 1994:90). Such narratives often reflect and reinforce the popular historical narratives with which visitors can identify. The curators are therefore involved in the creation of and perpetuation of narratives which fit the national historical narrative, and are in part responsible for the creation of myths and partial histories which feed into the wider narratives and silences about slavery on the plantations (Hoffman 1994;16)

The Tour

The Whitney Plantation Museum is very new. |Even after the opening in December 2014 work has continued on the site. When this researcher visited the museum in April, 2015 work was still being done on the plantation in order to expand the exhibits. The experience of a visit to Whitney is a carefully managed ritual which has to be ordered to get the maximum effect. In this section the tour which is taken through the museum will be explored. Since the tours are led by guides who are given prepared text for the narration of the tour, the will be interspersed with the experience of the tour.

All the guides are trained on site by the research director, who is also responsible for the narrative which the guides present to visitors. In an interview for this project Seck(2015) stated that all the material is developed from archival sources, which are available around the parish and the state. Seck is Senegalese historian who has been involved in the Whitney Plantation project for some time now.

When visitors arrive at the plantation they enter into the visitor centre and after having paid the entrance fee they are given a lanyard which is attached to a card with an image of one of the terra cotta figures which are positioned throughout the plantation to represent enslaved people from its history. The text on this card gives the slave name of that enslaved person and part of the text of the interview which they gave during the WPA Federal Writers' Project.

The tour of the Whitey Plantation begins just outside the visitor centre. As visitors are called to join the tour the guide who gives a brief overview of the history of the plantation and how it was converted to its present form as a museum to commemorate slavery. At this point on my tour the guide introduced herself and asked visitors about their origins before moving to the first location - a church in which life-sized terra cotta figures of children sit in the pews. These figures were commissioned by

John Cummings and created by sculptor Woodrow Nash. In the church the guide spoke of the origins of the church and how it became part of the plantation display. There were no churches on plantations, so this church had been brought to the plantation in the “early 2000s” to be part of the museum (Guide notes 2015). It is significant because it was one of the very few African American churches in the parish. It must be noted however that while the parish was a Catholic one this church was a black Baptiste church. This church was bought by the owner of Whitney Plantation to be part of his display.

According to the material used to train the guides on the plantation this church came from Paulina, Louisiana and was founded in 1868 by formerly enslaved people. It was for a very long time the only church which served the African American community around the plantations on River Road of which Whitney is one (Guide Manual, 2015). The structure was donated to Whitney when a new chapel was constructed in its place. While Whitney is devoted to slavery it appears that it also tries to connect with the history of African Americans in the area. The moving of the church from its original site however has led to criticism by preservationists who frown on the practice of moving historical structures out of the original contexts. The movement of buildings to the plantation and removing them out of their original context has been criticised by some (Read 2014) but it is effective and may only be an issue for the more discerning visitors.



Antioch Baptist Church: Photograph by Author

Inside the church visitors are invited to watch a short documentary of the work of the WPA Federal Writers’ Project and how it was used during the Great Depression of the 1930s to fund an oral history project which documented the lives of African Americans who lived during slavery. This documentary is used to prepare the visitor for the next part of the tour which uses text from this project to evoke the memory and the voice of the enslaved on the tour. After the documentary visitors are given a brief history of the plantation and the families who owned it, along with a description of the work done on the plantation highlighting the different cash crops which were cultivated on the land. This historical narrative of ownership starts with the first owners and ends with the current owner of Whitney. Inside

the church visitors come into contact with some of the terracotta figures which are spread around the site. They are figures of children sitting in the pews of the church.



Terracotta figures of enslaved children in the pews: Photograph by author

The Wall of Honour

The next stop on this tour is the Wall of Honour. This is a granite wall with the names of all the enslaved people who worked on the plantation etched into it. According to the research director of the museum, Ibrahima Seck, these names were taken from archival documents which were the records of business on the plantation, stored in the parish archives (Seck 2015). The guides at this point that the names on the wall can be used to gain some knowledge of the biography of the people who were enslaved on the plantation. Reference is made to the names and what might be their cultural and geographic origins in West Africa. Guides are trained to use specific names and connect them to discrete ethnic groups in West Africa. For example the name Moussa is a muslim name meaning Moses, Samba is a name given to a second born male among the Fulbe and Couacou is a name for boys born on Wednesday among the Akan (Guide Manual, 2015) During the time at this wall, issues of the Transatlantic Slave Trade are raised as the plantation and the African coast are connected across the Atlantic using these names and the place of origin given. Information about the internal slave trade which developed after the 1807 abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the thousands of slaves who were marched into the Deep South from more northern plantations is also provided. Archival information is also used to highlight the economic value of the enslaved on the plantation by showing the criteria used to value enslaved people.



Whitney Plantation Wall of Honour: Photograph by author

Guides are instructed to use specific names from the wall. One of those is a girl named Anna who was of mixed race. She was purchased at an auction as a gift for a female member of the plater’s family who had no children. While her age is not given the text in manual states that “when she was a bit older” she was impregnated by a male member of the family. Tours are instructed not to share Anna’s story if children are in the tour group (Guide Manual 2015)

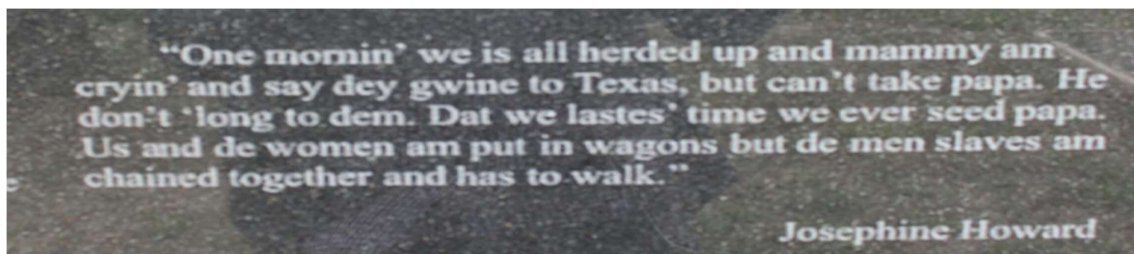
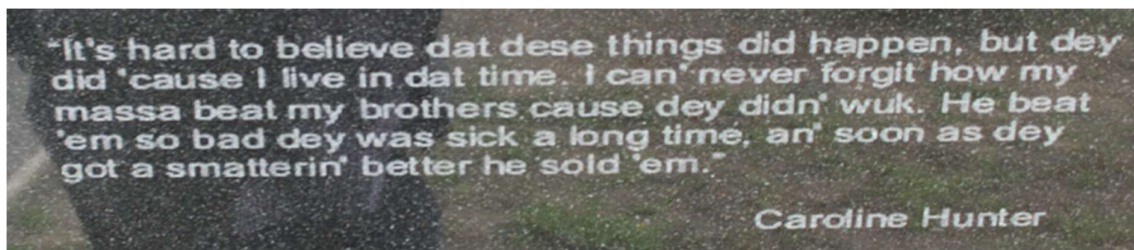
Midlo Hall Memorial Wall

Station three is the Alles Gwendolyn Midlo Hall Wall which is named after the famed Louisiana historian responsible for the creation of the Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy Database (ibiblio.org/laslave/). This database of slave names in Louisiana was the source of the names inscribed on the walls of this memorial.



Midlo Hall Memorial: Photograph by Author

There are one hundred and seven thousand names on the walls and these are the names of people enslaved in the state of Louisiana before 1820 (Guide Manual, 2015). Interspersed among these names is text taken from the WPA Federal Writer's Project which recorded the experiences of those enslaved on the plantations of the southern United States. Visitors walk through the maze of granite walls reading these slave narratives and slave names as they go along. Some of the narratives etched into these walls relate gruesome accounts of slavery and the brutality which the enslaved had to endure. The manual for the guides, which this researcher was given access to (Tour Guide Manual 2015), instructs them that they should inform the visitors that they have ten minutes to browse along the walls and a bell will sound at the end of that period. Members of the group of which this researcher was a member, looked visibly shaken by the text which they encountered as they moved through the memorial.



Inscriptions of slave narratives on granite walls: Photograph by Author

Field of Angels

Station four follows and this memorialises the two thousand two hundred enslaved children who died in the St John the Baptiste parish of Louisiana between 1823 and 1863. In the middle of this memorial, is the statue of an African American angel holding an infant.



African American Angel: Photograph by author



Narrative of Enslaved Children on the wall around the Field of Angels: Photograph by Author

It is surrounded by granite walls with the names of the infants who died, along with their date of death and the names of their mothers. Another section of the walls has narratives of slave children taken from the WPA project inscribed on it. The tour manual for the guides instructs them to give the statistics of infant mortality for the plantation and the state, during the time which the memorial references. Two thousand two hundred died in St John the Baptist Parish and thirty nine of those died on Whitney Plantation (Guide Manual 2015). The director of Research at the museum explained that the data used to inform the text of the memorial came from the archives of the parish. This memorial is very sobering as it deals with infants of the enslaved. It has a definite emotional impact on visitors who have to read these narratives. When this researcher took the tour in March of 2015 many of the visitors in the tour group were families with children, and many were visibly shaken.

The slave huts are the next station on the tour and visitors are allowed to enter the huts and walk through them getting an idea of how enslaved people were housed. During the tour of the slave huts

guides describe the daily lives of the enslaved. According to the manual for the tour guide, visitors are to be informed of the number of enslaved who occupied the huts and family structures which existed during slavery. Information was also to include details of the work regime and the precarious nature of the life of the enslaved and their role in the production of crops, which led to prosperity of the plantation. The diet of the enslaved on the plantations is discussed giving the visitor some insight into how they might have lived and the conditions which the enslaved endured during the time of enslavement.

From this point the visitors move to the slave jail which is at the centre of the compound and can be seen from the slave huts and the plantation house. This allows the guides to clearly see and understand the power dynamics of plantation life and how it was exercised through the violence and the threat of violence. At this point guides go into detail about the harsh conditions and punishment which was meted out to enslaved people on plantations. The jail which the visitors can enter was not the one used on Whitney Plantation during enslavement., this jail was manufactured in 1867, but is identical to jails used during slavery. It had been brought to the plantation and installed was part of the restoration process. This like many of the installations on the plantation raises questions of authenticity. It does however allow the visitor to engage with the materiality of slavery on the plantation and ensures that guides are able to insert the violence of enslavement into the narrative in a way that text would not allow.

From the jail visitors move to the blacksmith's shop where they are told about the work of the enslaved people who were the skilled blacksmiths on the plantation. Once again, this is not the original building. According to the research director it was reconstructed during the restoration of the plantation on the site that archaeologists found many artefacts during excavations which would have been part of the tool kit of a blacksmith's shop. This building is proudly presented to the visitor as the place where a scene from the 2012 movie, D'Jango Unchained was shot. The guide explained that it was a scene in which Jamie Foxx's characters is tortured. At this point visitors are introduced to the fact that many enslaved people on the plantation were actually highly skilled and very valuable to the workings of the plantations. The tour then moves to the kitchen where visitors are informed that the kitchen on Whitney Plantation is the oldest detached kitchen in the entire state of Louisiana, having been restored using much of the original material. According to the research director much of what is known about this kitchen is informed by archaeological excavations that were carried out in and around the site of the kitchen. While there are few artefacts on display in the kitchen, guides are instructed to tell visitors about the diet which would have been prepared in this kitchen for the planter and his family

The next stop on the tour is the Big House which the planter occupied with his family. At this point guides give much information about the history of the family and the plantation. They speak of the arrival of the ancestors of the original owner's family from Germany and the development of the

plantation. They also speak of the succession on the plantation along with details of the daily lives of those who lived in the house. While the grandeur of plantation living is apparent from the architecture and artefacts which are in the house, the guides constantly weave in the presence and work of the enslaved into the narrative on the history of the Big House. The artefacts are used to show the role of the enslaved people in the house and who might have done what, based on the respective responsibilities. As the tour goes through the house the narrative of plantation families and the enslaved people who worked on the plantation constantly reminds the visitors of the dangers of working in the house and the prevalence of sexual predation which enslaved women faced as they worked in the house, in order to dispel the notion of life being 'better' for domestic enslaved people.

The tour ends with the visitors exiting the plantation house. Guides invite them to return to the visitor centre where it all started but also suggest that they could return to the various walls through which the tour had gone. This tour could very easily be called "Back of The House", because visitors never get to see the front of the Whitney Plantation big house. From the slave cabins, through to the blacksmith's shop, and the kitchen the tour enters the house from where the enslaved working inside would have entered. The focus is clearly the life of the enslaved and how difficult their lives were, and not the splendour of life in the planter's house. This is in sharp contrast to what plantation museums are known for.

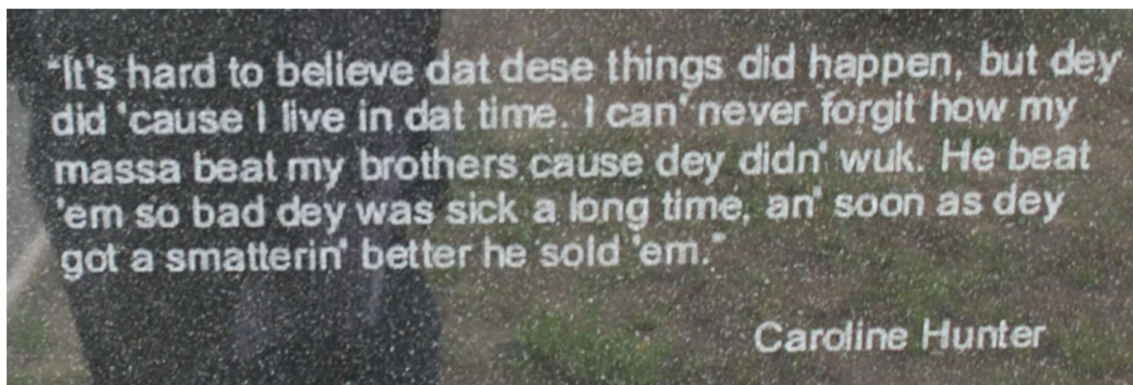
Sources: Making the Museum

As a site of memory Whitney Plantation proved to be very thought provoking and the tour forces the visitor to engage with the lives of those who had been enslaved on the plantation. Most of the data used to inform and train the tour guides was produced by a professional historian who spent years working in the many archives in Louisiana and other parts of the American South to inform what was done with the plantation. The emphasis on the lives of the enslaved people and their life ways as opposed to that of the planter and his family makes this plantation unique. For more than a century plantation museums in the south of the United States have focused on reproducing life in the Big House and perpetuated the many myths which are associated with the pre-civil war period (Alderman and Modlin, 2008, Adams, 1999, Butler 2001, Butler and Dwyer, 2008, Buzinde and Santos 2008, Giovannetti, 2009).

The use of text on the walls which make direct reference to life on the plantation is an attempt to give voice to the enslaved people who are normally voiceless in plantation museums in the American South. The WPA project was started during the Great Depression by United States President Woodrow Wilson to get citizens back to work under the New Deal. One of the projects included in this was the recording of first-hand accounts of slavery by people who went across the country.

(Baptist 2014). Cummings informed this researcher that he got access to some of the recordings and the text inscribed on the black granite walls at the Midlo Hall memorial and the Field of Angles come from these recordings.

The texts are drawn from the WPA Federal Writers Project is very effective at breaking the silence of slavery on the plantation as it forces visitors who read them to engage with slavery and its inhumanity on a very real, personal and individual level as they read excerpts from the oral narratives recorded from survivors during the project. These texts are inscribed into the wall using the colloquialisms of those interviewed. Many of the accounts are very harrowing and leave little to the imagination of the reader unlike other plantations where slavery is sequestered or even ignored, visitors to Whitney come face to face with the uncomfortable accounts and narratives of slavery while walking around the granite walls which stand as memorials to the enslaved on the plantation.



Excerpt from WPA Slave Narratives Source: Author

Memory and Authenticity

There are some questions however that could be raised with reference to the issue of 'authenticity' in the way the site and its people are presented. Many of the buildings on the plantation are not the originals and have been brought in to create the museum. The church, for example, holds very little connection to the plantation and does not correspond to the time period being memorialised on the plantation. Slavery ended in the United States in 1865 but the Antioch church was founded in 1868. The building was brought from elsewhere in the parish, although it was used by formerly enslaved people. The enslaved were not permitted to create or build their own churches on plantations. Guides explain that the church is not from the plantation and that it was brought in from across the parish.

The same could be said of the jail which dates from the post-emancipation period and was bought by the developer of the museum for display as an artefact of slavery. The jail was manufactured in 1867 in Philadelphia and the tour guide explained that it was similar to jails used during slavery and was

manufactured by a company which made jails for plantations (Guide Manual 2015). Guides are instructed to inform visitors that the cell is not in situ. Unlike the church the jail fits in with the memorialisation of the traumatic life of the enslaved and works very well as a mnemonic device for visitors to the plantation. When visitors enter the cells as they are invited to by the guide they get to imagine what it might have been like to be locked in there.

Interviews with John Cummings and Ibrahima Seck for this study revealed another memorial which was not currently part of the tour available to visitors. This is a memorial to the enslaved resistance of slavery. The memorial which was incomplete at the time of visiting will memorialise the slave revolt which took place in Louisiana in 1811 and is believed to have been one of the biggest slave revolts to have occurred in the United States (Rasmussen, 2011). The enslaved people rose up and marched through the parish on their way to New Orleans, freeing others and taking weapons and the numbers in their ranks as they went along. The rebels never reached New Orleans and they were eventually defeated and scattered into the nearby swamps. Eventually 69 rebels were executed by beheading and their heads were placed on spikes along the road in order to make examples of them and to deter others from taking similar action (Rasmussen, 2011). The memorial to this rebellion has started on Whitney Plantation and will involve placing sixty-nine terra cotta heads on spikes near a pool on the plantation. The research director believes that this is important because resistance was an integral part of slave life and that this must be memorialised on the plantation to show that enslaved people were not passive and constantly resisted their condition (Seck 2015). This gives agency to those who were enslaved and avoids perpetuating the notion of the obedient and contented servants who were happy to serve their benevolent employers.



Potential 1811 Rebellion Memorial: Photograph by Author

The intention to commemorate a rebellion by installing a monument which consists of terracotta heads on spikes is in sharp contrast to what has occurred elsewhere in the Americas. In the Caribbean for

example rebellions lionize the leaders of rebellions with statues in triumphant poses (Brown 2002, Lambert 2007).

The Big House is the final stop on the tour and there visitors are given detailed information about the lives of the families who occupied the house. Starting from the ground floor at the back of the house as the enslaved would have done, the tour goes through the building with the guide describing activities which would have taken place in each room the guide inserts the story of the enslaved who worked in the house into that of the family. The dangers of life in the Big House for the enslaved were highlighted. All of this was interwoven with the history of the building and its architecture. After the tour of the Big House, visitors are led back to the visitor centre where they are informed that they can return to the memorial walls through which the tour had passed, if they so desire. From this author's observation many of the visitors with whom the tour was taken seemed visibly upset by the end of the tour. Many visitors became increasingly subdued and quiet as the tour wound through the plantation.

Making A Site of Memory

It is impossible to study the development of the Whitney Plantation Museum without dealing with the role of its owner John Cummings for whom this museum is a personal project. According to Cummings, he bought the plantation without knowing what he was buying. For him it was just another real estate investment (Read 2014). The seeds of the plantation museum were planted when he began to go through the documents including the impact assessment reports which had been commissioned by the previous owner of the property (Read 2014). The documents dealt with the history and heritage of the plantation which included the tenure of the property and the enslaved people who worked on the plantation. According to Cummings, as he read he became more interested in the people who built the plantation and their story (Amsden 2015). In an interview with the New York Times (Amsden 2015) Cummings stated that after having read through the documents he began to read whatever literature he could find on slavery. He goes on to credit the work of Gwendolyn Midlo Hall with being one of the authors who influenced him (Amsden 2015). The interview reveals how little Cummings knew about slavery in Louisiana and the United States in general, as he expressed amazement with the figures of the slave trade and the destinations of the vessels which took part in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. His curiosity and the thirst for knowledge led him to the creation of the museum with a focus on slavery and its legacies in the United States.

However, John Cummings does not fit the profile of an individual who one would expect to be building a memorial to slavery in the south of the United States. Cummings is a wealthy white man who is not an academic or historian nor is he professionally trained in museology. Cummings is a retired trial lawyer, born and raised in New Orleans. His practice has won over five billions dollars in

class-action settlements (Read 2014). He owns three thousand acres of land and a 12-story luxury hotel in New Orleans, six thousand acres in St John Parish where Whitney is located, a cattle farm in Mississippi and a twelve hundred acre ranch in Texas (Amsden 2015). He represents the minority wealthy white elite which dominates the city of New Orleans, despite its majority African American population. He is the least likely person one would expect to be building such a museum. A look at his politics and his past involvement in activism however reveals a different perspective of Cummings. He was politically active in issues involving African Americans and equality during the 1960s, when the then mayor of New Orleans Victor Schiro, decided to close a large public swimming pool rather than give African Americans access to it (Read 2014).

Cummings' political connections also shed more light on his work at Whitney. During the opening ceremony for the Whitney Museum on December 7, 2014 one of the keynote speakers was the mayor of New Orleans, Mitch Landrieu (Amsden 2015). The ceremony took place while issues of race and black disenchantment pervaded the news in the wake of police shootings across the United States (NBC News 2014). In his speech Mayor Landrieu made a direct connection between slavery and the conditions that led to the protests and had gripped the attention of the country (Amsden 2015). Mitch Landrieu is the son Maurice Landrieu, a white liberal politician who as mayor of New Orleans in the 1970s championed social justice of African-Americans (Amsden 2015). Landrieu's connection to Whitney goes back to 2008 when the plantation was part of the African-American Heritage Trail which highlighted African-American contributions to the history of Louisiana (Stodghill 2008). During a tour of Whitney Landrieu, who was lieutenant governor of the state at the time, drew comparisons between visiting the slave quarters and visiting Auschwitz (Stodghill 2008). The African-American Heritage Trail concept was developed by Landrieu when he was lieutenant governor of Louisiana and he played a key role in creating the environment which allowed John Cummings to pursue the development of his plantation as a slavery museum.

On a tour with reporters to promote the African American Heritage trail in 2008 Mitch Landrieu made it clear why this trail was important. He stated that he, along with Cummings, wanted the trail which included the Whitney Plantation to transform the discourse and race and poverty in the United States (Stodghill 2008, 8). It must be noted that this trail was being developed three years after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina had put the racial inequality and poverty in the city of New Orleans on the national agenda with the Federal Government's inadequate response in the aftermath raising tensions further. Landrieu who had been a member of the Louisiana legislature, was mayor of the city of New Orleans by the time the plantation museum was opened to the public in 2014 (Amsden 2015).

Landrieu's speech, connecting the contemporary social inequalities to the legacy of slavery was in line with what appears to be Cummings' rationale for the museum. In an article for the New York Times in

2008 he is quoted asking, “Is the black men not caring for their children today in any way connected to slavery? These are the kinds of questions we should be asking”(Stodghill 2008). It is clear that by this time Cummings had become fully aware of the implications of building a slavery museum and was determined to make a contribution to the conversation about the impact of slavery and its legacies on the contemporary society. It was also apparent to him that the historical narrative which dominated the plantations in the south of the United States was one which was at best partial and at worst inaccurate. Cummings has stated that in building the museum on the plantation he wanted “to get beyond the moonlight and magnolia myths of the plantation” (Stodghill 2008,8). Wallace, the county in which the Whitney Plantation is located, is home to several heritage plantations which are popular with visitors to the region. Laura Plantation, for example, has come under much criticism for promoting a creole themed narrative which sequestered slavery as a part of the narrative which visitors are exposed to when they tour the plantation (Butler 2001).

When Butler visited Laura Plantation he found that slavery had been marginalised and was not part of the narratives presented to visitors (Butler 2001 p.164). However, Alderman et al (2016) suggest that some progress has been made in including slavery in the narratives on the plantation tours (Alderman et al 2016 p.210)

The rationale for Whitney Plantation as a slavery museum which went “beyond moonlight and magnolias” seems to lie in Cummings’ encounter with slavery in the documents which came with the plantation and the education he got from it. When asked why he built the museum he stated:

If guilt is the best word to use, then yes, I feel guilt,....I mean, you start understanding that the wealth of this part of the work- wealth that has benefited me- was created by some half a million black people who passed us by. How is it that we don’t acknowledge this?”

(Amsden 2015 p.9)

In interviews for this study Cummings also questioned why it was that although slavery was a very important part of the history of the United States, it was not taught in the schools. He stated that he certainly knew nothing of it until he read the reports on Whitney Plantation (Cummings 2015). To highlight this issue he mentioned that many visitors to the museum had very little idea of what slavery entailed until they got to the museum (Cummings 2015). Clearly Cummings believes that the major role for the museum which he has created is to educate the public about slavery as a part of the history of the plantation and by extension, the country as a whole. He believes that in order to understand the issues of racial inequalities which exist in the United States the connection to slavery has to be made. He constantly connects these inequalities to slavery and sees them as legacies of the unjust society., Cummings believes the by highlighting this aspect of the country’s history he is forcing visitors to confront it in the museum he will be able to raise consciousness of the connection between slavery and contemporary society into their minds.

Cummings' creation of a museum exploring such a contentious issue in the country's history has not been uncontroversial. He stated that he often had to explain to a sceptical African American community that he was not trying to profit from the history of slavery (Cummings 2015). During interviews with Cummings however it became clear that as much as this project is aimed at putting the discourse on race and slavery front and centre on the regional and national agenda, there has been very little input sought from the African American community (Cummings 2015). It must be noted that a small African American community of Wallace is a few miles away from the plantation and some believe that some members of that community are descendants of the enslaved people who worked on the plantation. This project is clearly very personal to Cummings and to ensure that it meets the standards of the industry he has consulted with experts and academics, but the African American community played no role in the development of the site.

During interviews with Cummings he made constant reference to highlighting what "this colour skin did to this colour skin", pointing out the difference between this researcher's skin colour and his. Cummings placed emphasis on education, not just educating the public on issues of slavery, but also on education as a solution for the injustices and poverty of the African American community. He believes that a lack of education is one of the reasons for the perpetuation of the legacies of slavery for African Americans (Cummings, 2015).

Slavery and American History

The issue of slavery as part of the history of the United States has been a contentious one and this is what makes the Whitney Plantation Slavery Museum significant. Some authors argue that there has been a collective amnesia where slavery is concerned in the US. According to Alderman and Dobbs (2011) slavery "has been marginalized or misrepresented within the collective memory" of the country and this is more apparent in the former Confederate southern states (Alderman & Dobbs 2011,29). For the authors slavery in the collective memory of the Southern states exists as a benign institution with loyal slaves and benevolent masters and does not acknowledge the victimization and mistreatment of those enslaved. This is manifested in how the topic is dealt with in the schools across the country. Von Drehle (2011) argued that after the civil war the North and South which had fought a war over slavery chose to forget it for the benefit of healing the republic because it was still such a very divisive issue. Slavery was too contentious and the memory of the Civil War too traumatic, to continue to be on the national agenda. The Federal government had started Reconstruction of the south and ensuring that the formally enslaved got the rights of citizens. This process was stopped altogether on the principles of State's rights. This meant that such issues were the responsibility of individual states and would not be imposed on them. It was in the interest of both parties and the nation in general to avoid the issue (Von Drehle 2011). Von Drehle goes on to argue that the southern states which had lost the war have

since created a narrative in which they were defending their constitutional rights against an aggressive North. He calls this the 'Lost Cause' narrative and it removes slavery from any discourse on the cause of the American Civil War.

The selective amnesia which Von Drehle explores is one which still exists on a national scale and suggests that there is collective forgetting of slavery. This view of the memory of slavery and its significance to the nation is, however, a little myopic because by focusing the issue of slavery solely around the Civil War and its aftermath localises slavery to the south. It ignores the fact the slavery as a historical experience was not confined to the plantations of the southern states. This traditional narrative actually sequesters the history of slavery from the national narrative which should include all of the country (Gallas and Perry, 2015). It relieves the Union states of remembering that they also have a long legacy of slavery (2015,4).

Enslaved Africans worked in Boston, Massachusetts, in Bristol, Rhode Island, in Missouri and Oregon, all states which are excluded from the slavery narrative. There were large plantations on Long Island in New York and many white households had enslaved persons working as domestics (Gallas and DeWolf Perry 2015:1). In New York City the abolition of slavery in 1827 brought large crowds of African Americans onto the streets in celebration (Harris 2003:11). Rhode Island, a state with strong ties to Transatlantic commerce, was home to slave traders responsible for close to fifty percent of slaving voyages to North America (Lin 2002:21). In short, slavery affected most of the United States and sequestering it to the historical narrative of the south presents a distorted picture of the issue surrounding its silence in the national and collective historical narrative. The ubiquity of slavery and its intendant legacies across the United States raises questions about the relative silence in the national historical narrative. This general silence however makes the Whitney Plantation a site of memory which goes against the historical narrative of not only the state of Louisiana and the South, but also of the nation as a whole.

Guerrilla Memorialisation and Counter Memory

The issue of the silence of slavery in the historical narrative of the southern states has been highlighted above. Its absence from the narratives of Southern Plantations has also been explored. The theme for plantations in the south has been the celebration and commemoration of antebellum life as creole, productive, pleasant, and romantic. Whitney Plantation as a site of memory for slavery and its use of artefacts from that era to present the slavery narrative comes off as a form of commemoration that Rice (2012) refers to as "guerrilla memorialisation". While a number of plantations have started including some aspects of the lives of enslaved people into the plantation narrative (Alderman et al 2016), Whitney deals first and foremost with the lives of the enslaved. They are at the centre and

cannot be avoided by visitors to the site. This makes the site of memory a bulwark against the national historical narrative and, according to Nora (1989), a place where the minority in the society protect and preserve their memory (Nora 199). What makes this site even more anomalous however, is that the creative individual behind creating it as a site of memory and seeking to preserve it as such, is not from the relevant minority. If Whitney Plantation as a site of memory of slavery achieves its goal of destroying the plantation narrative of Louisiana based on the notion of the genteel creole lifestyle of the benevolent planter and his obedient and content servants, then it will have done so from outside the African American community.

Whitney Plantation was opened as a site of memory at a time of great turmoil and debate about slavery and its legacies in the United States of America. During 2014 several cases of police shooting young black men dominated the national news and raised the issue of discrimination and institutional racism. For many African Americans these shootings, which were caught on camera, were a continuation of institutional racism as one of many legacies of slavery. After the acquittal of a police officer who had been involved in one of those shootings demonstrations in cities with large African American populations were met with swift responses by heavily armed riot police (NBC News 2015). These issues were on the mind of the mayor of New Orleans Mitch Landrieu when he spoke at the opening ceremony of the Whitney Plantation Museum in December 2014 (Amsden 2015). In an interview for a radio call-in program on a New Orleans radio station, John Cummings explained why he had built a museum to memorialise slavery (Cummings 2015). He stated that it was time for the nation to own what happened during slavery and the legacies which ensued.

The historical narrative of the Southern States of the United States is one which diminishes the significance of slavery. At the heart of this narrative is the notion that the Civil War was fought over states' rights and not slavery. James Loewen (2015) argued that Confederates lost the war, but have been able to distort the history of the Civil War and why it happened in order to further the cause of white supremacy. Loewen argues that through the writing of histories that clearly ignore the facts of what happened and by installing monuments into the landscape right across the south, the resultant historical narrative has effectively reduced slavery to a footnote. This narrative has been so effective that it is now part of the national historical narrative that the nation is "still digging" itself "out from under the misinformation" which are bolstered by history books and monuments (Loewen 2015).

Whitney Plantation as a site of memory and as a memorial to slavery and its legacies goes against the dominant narrative which Loewen (2015) highlights. The plantation museums of the southern United States have played a very important role in perpetuating that narrative and impacting on the collective memory of the South and the nation in general. These sites are not neutral as they were constructed within a specific socio-political frame work which serves up a past that reinforces it. Whitney Plantation is hardly a traditional museum, with its black granite walls and memorials. The agenda is to put forward the trauma of slavery unlike the traditional plantation museums. It is a site of mourning

because the visitor is forced to engage to the horror of slavery and the impact on the people who were its victims. This focus on victims whoever runs the risk of casting the enslaved just as victims and not human beings with agency. According to Nora (1989) there is an increase memory and the creation of sites of memory because history threatens to obliterate memory. The plantation museum in the south of the United States has been a site where the memory of slavery and its legacies have been obliterated, ignored and silenced.

Chapter 6

Slavery, Counter-Memory, Identity in the Circum-Atlantic

The memory of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is presented in various forms around the Atlantic triangle that framed it. In the case studies which are the subject of this project, it is clear that the public manifestation of that memory is very much contested by the parties involved. According to Young (1993 p.1) the type of monument which is erected to memorialise traumatic events depends on the specific needs of the society or of groups within that society. In his study of memorials of the Holocaust, which included examples in Germany, Israel and the United States of America, he argues that to understand the monuments which were developed one needs to understand the specific political contexts within which these monuments were erected. This study has considered monuments that commemorate a similarly traumatic event in the history of the Atlantic nations, and this event has implications for the entire region. The constant in each case study is that what is remembered is directly related to its perceived use to the society. In Ghana the heritage of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was identified as a potential tourist attraction. In Saint Lucia the memory of slavery and resistance appeared to be a catalyst for nationalism, and in Louisiana the insertion of the traumatic memory of slavery and its legacies seemed to be an opportunity to educate whilst tapping into a largely ignored tourism market.

Within the framework of Young's (1993) investigation in to the manifestation of memory of the Holocaust in the form of monuments, this chapter will interrogate the issues of what these sites of memory are used to commemorate by looking at the processes of commemoration and memory performance. According to Connerton (1989) for memory to be sustained it has to be performed and constantly commemorated. Within this framework of how societies choose to remember, and, by extension, forget, this chapter will unpack how memory, as performed in the commemoration process as observed in each of the case studies, engendered certain memories but sequestered others. This chapter will also explore how the political contexts within each of these case studies led to the creation of the monuments.

Slavery, Memory and Counter Memory

While this process is consistent with Young's (1993) analysis of Holocaust memorials, the case studies used in this project involve a variety of actors in the creation of the memorials. They range from the state and state sanctioned institutions with funding by international aid agencies to private individuals. In each case the memorialisation process had different specific goals, but was ultimately driven by the needs of specific groups within the society at the time, that contested to influence the wider national historical narrative. In each of the case studies the commemoration of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery created narratives which were not part of the historical narrative of the respective countries where slavery was marginalised

According to Said (2000, p.176) national histories are based on memory and the making of history is not in any way a neutral exercise. The goal of national historical narratives is to engender loyalty among citizens. Memory is thus based on "founding fathers and documents, seminal events" (p.177). Issues which would destabilise these narratives are forgotten or suppressed.

According to Perbi (2004), in Ghana the national historical narrative did not include slavery. Thus the commemoration ceremonies of PANAFEST and Emancipation, which were instrumental in imbuing the historic sites with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, celebrated a history that had been marginalised until its economic value became obvious. The heritisation of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was driven by its commodification (Richards 2005; Holsey 2008). We must consider that by making them into sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade the buildings have become sites of counter-memory.

While the government of Ghana was instrumental in sourcing the funding that would lead to the restoration of the castles, and the making of memory at those sites, we must accept as Richards (2005) and Bruner (1996) have shown, that the African diaspora community played a large role in determining what was remembered at those sites, and how it would be remembered, by lobbying and protests. Their power and influence in determining what would be remembered depended on their being potential consumers, because the heritage being developed at those sites was aimed at attracting

this same group to visit the sites and by extension the country. In that regard it will be argued that diaspora Africans ensured that Cape Coast Castle and Elmina became counter-memory monuments which inserted slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade into Ghana's historical narrative. The same argument can be used with reference to slavery in the general historical narratives of many of the nations which border the Atlantic.

The creation of counter-memory is relevant because, as we have seen with the memory of slavery in the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands (Rice, 2004, ; Alderman, 2010 ; Reinhardt 2006 ; Balkenhol, 2011) for example, the memory of slavery has been marginalised. Alderman (2010 p. 92) explored this issue, and presented the creation of the African American monument to slavery as a counter monument. The activist encountered much difficulty in her attempt to create such a monument in the southern state of Georgia. The political atmosphere in that environment was hostile to the memory of slavery, and much debate impacted on what was represented. In Ghana however the economic power that African Americans wielded ensured that they were able to create a counter memory site. The fact that much of the funding for the restoration and development of the Ghanaian sites into heritage products came from the United States is also not insignificant.

In Saint Lucia the process to create the Freedom Monument highlighted the fact that what was being commemorated did not resonate with the wider public (Waite, 1997), and was not in fact part of the national historical narrative, which is dominated by European wars in which the island had been involved. The popular history, which is known by most Saint Lucians, is that the island was seven times British and seven times French. In Louisiana and much of the American South slavery history had been largely silenced and marginalised. Whitney Plantation, as a museum to slavery and its trauma, was inserting the issue into the wider national narrative.

Another issue which came to the fore in these studies was that of who is deciding what should be commemorated. These factors have great influence on how meaning is created around the monuments and memorials (Connerton 1989 p.10). This chapter will look at the specific political contexts within which the memorials were created, and what specifically was to be remembered. By interrogating the

memorialisation and commemoration processes we will come to understand why these monuments were created at the time that they were, who were the stakeholders in the process, and how they influenced that process. We will also look at what was memorialised and commemorated, and how this was manifested in the public space.

Uses of Memory

According to Araujo (2014 p. 2) the emergence of the memory of slavery in the transatlantic context is a phenomenon which occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War. Araujo argued that this interest in the memory of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade came about because, at the end of the Cold War, the slave past provided an important support to the attempts to assert national identities in the region (Araujo 2014 p.2). This explanation for the increase in sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery seems to fall short especially when applied to the Ghana case study. This is because the memory of slavery being commemorated at the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina had little to do with Ghanaian attempts at asserting a national identity. In this memorialisation process the group which seems to have been doing the memory work among the stakeholders was the diaspora African group led by African Americans (Brunner 1996;Schramm 2004;Richards 2005). It must be noted that this group had been in Ghana since the country became independent, when the president, Kwame Nkrumah, gave refuge to many African Americans who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement (Gaines 2006 p.10). Thus if identity work was the rationale for their contestation of the memorialisation process one would have to interrogate why this work was being done in West Africa and not in the United States. Ghana's status as the "homeland" was imaginary, since it would be very difficult for most diaspora Africans to prove that their ancestors had been shipped across the Atlantic from the specific Ghanaian sites.

Another issue with Araujo's explanation for the increase in the public memory of slavery is that the Cold War as a phenomenon impacted differently on nation states within the Atlantic World. The geopolitics of the Cold War meant that developing and developed nations in this region responded very differently to the end of it. In Europe there has been an increase in memorialisation of slavery through monuments: for example in France (Hourcade 2012), the Netherlands and the United

Kingdom (Kardux, 2011; Balkenhol, 2011; Rice 2004). In the Caribbean the process started in the 1980s, decades after independence (Brown 2002; Paul 2009; Dacres 2004). In the United States monuments which referenced slavery such as the African Burial Ground monument (La Roche and Blakey 1997) and the monument in Savanna, Georgia (Alderman 2010) were also built long after the end of the Cold War.

In the case of the Ghana castles in the Central Region, the memory of slavery was restricted to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This fitted with the official historical narrative of the country in which slavery as practiced in Ghana was silenced. The importance of the forts and castles which dotted the coast was obvious to the national government even before independence when they were listed as important to the national heritage (Singleton 1999; Kankpeyeng and DeCorse 2004). As early as 1969 legislation was passed to protect the forts and castles. This legislation was further refined in 1972 with Executive Instrument 42 National Historic Sites which placed these sites under the management of the Ghana Monuments and Museums Board (Kankpeyeng and DeCorse 2004 p.96). Their significance in the colonial legacy of the country was also a reason their preservation.

The castles were listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites because they “represent unique artistic or aesthetic achievements and constitute characteristic examples of architectural styles (UNESCO, 1979 p.4).” Nothing in the justification of the listing suggested that their role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade made them sites of interest for the wider world. Many of the buildings were being used by the national government to house institutions such as schools and prisons. The memory of slavery was not associated with these buildings during this time (Macgonagle, 2006; Bruner, 1996; Holsey 2008). The sole or dominant legacy connected with these forts and castles at the time was a generic colonial one. In fact, as observed during field work in Ghana, these building were constantly referred to by Ghanaians as ‘European forts’. In an interview, an official of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board remembered that when she visited the forts of Elmina and Cape Coast on school excursions as a child, the attraction was their European legacy (Ghana Informant One). What made these places remarkable for Ghanaians was the fact that these large structures, which were so old, remained part of the coastal landscape. Until the Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) project in the

early 1990s there was very little official connection between these structures and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The increasing interest in the castles as sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade did coincide with the end of the Cold War as Araujo (2014) has suggested, but it also occurred at a time when there was an increasing interest in heritage tourism from the United States and Europe (Seaton 2001). To remember these buildings as European trading castles would not have attracted enough visitors to have a significant impact on the economy of the Central Region. Making and emphasising the connection to the horrific Transatlantic Slave Trade brought a new perspective to their significance and history. According to Hartman (2002), remembering slavery requires one to imagine the past and make it central to one's identity (2002 p.2), and this act was important to the group who were the target of this endeavour. The sites had to be imbued with a strong legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which could then be marketed to affluent diaspora Africans who were the target audience. The rebranding of the castles with a very strong connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade turned them into valuable assets in the burgeoning heritage tourism market. The sudden state interest in the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was thus directly tied to the need, as an emerging market, for Ghana to attract heritage tourists.

The interviews conducted during fieldwork in Ghana make it clear that the rise of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Ghana's Central Region was directly connected to the government's goal of improving the economy of the region by attracting more tourists. An informant who worked on several projects tied with the redevelopment of these forts and castles made it clear that the plan was the brainchild of the minister responsible for the region at the time (Ghana, Informant 3). He stated that the minister was responsible for a region which had experienced an economic slump for decades, and he saw the listing of the castles as a World Heritage Site as creating an asset to be exploited. With Ghana experiencing severe economic difficulties, partners had to be found to help develop and exploit this new economic asset (Williams 2014).

The listing of these sites and their connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade immediately made them sites of contested heritage. As has been illustrated earlier, the forts and castles mean different things to

different people (MacGonagle, 2006). To the people of Ghana, and those of the Central Region more specifically, these sites were remnants of a European colonial legacy; to the government they were potential tourist attractions; but to diaspora Africans these were now recognised as important sites connected to the trauma and human tragedy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Osei-Tutu, 2008; Holsey, 2008). One of the people interviewed for this project stated that the Central Regional Development Commission (CEDCOM) officials wanted to attract diaspora Africans from around the world to “come and weep” at those sites (Ghana, Informant 3)

It must be noted that this official approach to restore the image of the castles as slave trading castles was new only to Ghanaian government officials. African Americans had taken an interest in these castles as sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade two decades before the initiatives taken by CEDECOM. In 1972 a group of diaspora Africans, who called themselves the African Descendants Association Foundation, began fund raising activities to restore Fort Amsterdam (Ebony 1972 p.89). These diaspora Africans wanted to create a “shrine” to preserve the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. However, the restorations were never completed because the funds raised were insufficient, and the Ghanaians living near the fort had misgivings about the activities upsetting spirits in the vicinity.

The new CEDECOM initiative meant that many diaspora Africans, who could afford to make the expensive journey, would visit the castles as sites of pilgrimage. The policy decision made by the government of Ghana and the minister for the Central Region to use these buildings for heritage tourism and to commemorate the Transatlantic Slave Trade, meant that the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade should be asserted as the primary remembrance at these sites. The state sponsored performance of memory at these sites was specifically focused on ensuring that the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was remembered (Pierre, 2009).

It is significant that these developments were eventually augmented with plans to attract these diaspora Africans not just as tourists but as future investors in the wider economy of the country. According to Williams (2015) the government attempted to converge tourism and investment. Jerry Rawlings, the president of Ghana at the time, made clear overtures to African American investors to visit Ghana (2015 p.12)

A closer look at the memorialisation process initiated by the Ghanaian government suggests that while the state was intent on developing tourist attractions, it also took the opportunity to position Ghana as the homeland for diaspora Africans in order to make strong connections across the Atlantic (Pierre 2009 p.31)

One of the earliest PANAFEST celebrations had the theme “Ghana a Beacon of Hope” and this was highlighted in the state owned Daily Graphic Newspaper. This was also the title of a speech delivered by the minister for tourism at Cape Coast Castle, in which he presented Ghana as the home for Africans in the Diaspora. This capitalised on the Ghanaian connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade, thus putting the country at the forefront of the movement to consolidate an identity around the African diaspora, and making this identity one that was closely tied to the nation’s identity.

Across the Atlantic, where Africans had arrived at their destinations and been enslaved, interest in the creation of sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade also occurred in the post-Cold War era as Araujo (2014) has suggested. It is however more significant that this memorialisation was taking place in what, for the Anglophone Caribbean, was the immediate post-independence period. In the island nation of Saint Lucia, the push to commemorate slavery, and by extension the Transatlantic Slave Trade, officially started eighteen years after the country became independent (Saint Lucia Informant One). As noted above, even then there was very little official state interest in the memorialisation of slavery. The few memorials which had been erected in the nation by that time dated back to the colonial period and made direct reference to the country’s colonial relationship with Britain, having been erected by the colonial government. The Inniskilling Monument, for example, was erected in the 1930s to memorialise the British regiment which had won a battle to take a strategic fort from formerly enslaved Africans who were the foot soldiers for the French in the war. These particular formerly enslaved Africans are the subjects of the memorialisation process in this case study. They are referred to as the Neg Mawon.

A second monument was an obelisk which had been erected in the square in the city centre to memorialise Saint Lucians who had fought for the British in the two World Wars. It appears that the interest in memorialising the Neg Mawon increased around the same time that monuments which were

nationalist in nature began to be erected, and national heroes were being selected. It is also important to note that this period was marked by severe economic and social upheaval in the country (Joseph 2011). From the colonial period into the immediate post-independence period the nation's economy had experienced relative political and economic stability because the main economic driver was a banana industry which had enjoyed preferential access to the European market. From 1992 the arrangements for Saint Lucian bananas to enter the European market began to change, with a reduction in favourable terms (Slocum 2003). This had a major impact on the economy which had been very dependent on the industry.

During this period there was social unrest with banana farmers and farm workers striking and disrupting transportation across the island. These strikes and riots impacted the tourism sector. The route from the international airport in the south of the island to the hotels in the north ran through the major banana producing districts in the country, which experienced most of the unrest. According to Slocum, unlike farmers in neighbouring St Vincent, farmers in Saint Lucia blamed the state for the difficulties which they were experiencing (Slocum, 2003). The loss of protection for their bananas on the European markets meant that the prices, which had been guaranteed for decades, were no longer exempt from market conditions and incomes were severely affected (Joseph 2011).

To many of the farmers the inability of the state to protect their livelihood led to the questioning of the state's legitimacy (Slocum 2003). This young nation state's economy and political stability was rocked by the new trade liberalisation regime which had become the order of the day. The banana industry had effectively been destroyed, political unrest ensued, and, by 1997, the incumbent government, which had run the country since 1982, lost control of the parliament by a margin of 16-1 (Joseph 2011). Within the context of this rapid economic and political change there was a need to anchor the national identity to a unifying historical narrative. Within this context the memory of slavery, and more importantly the resistance to slavery, became relevant. According to Joseph (2011) the change in the banana regime led to much social upheaval related to trade liberalisation and neoliberalism. In interviews conducted in Saint Lucia on the issue of commemoration of slavery and its legacies, it was revealed that only the Rastafarian community was initially involved (Saint Lucia Informant One; Saint

Lucia Informant Two). Until the Saint Lucia National Trust held a ceremony commemorating emancipation in 1997, there had been no state sanctioned commemoration of slavery or its legacy. It was only then that the Saint Lucia National Trust started the process which would lead to the creation of what became the Freedom Monument and a 'heroes park' (Saint Lucia Informant Two).

Analysis of the process which led to the monument shows that one of the main reasons for the creation of this monument was the need to engender what was perceived to be a Saint Lucian identity. The monument was to commemorate the actions of a group of formerly enslaved Africans who had resisted the invasion of the island by the British Army in 1796 (Harmsen, 2012). What was remembered within this context was the resistance of the enslaved to the island's invasion by a superior foreign force. It is within the context of this economic and political turmoil caused by globalisation and trade liberalisation that the memorialisation process started. According to Nora (1989 p.12) unless identities are threatened there is no need to build lieux de mémoire as bastions to defend them.

Those who fought the British invasion in 1796 were to be lionised as national heroes and their actions depicted as one of the first acts of anti-colonialism in the history of the nation. What was to be commemorated was resistance to slavery and, by extension, colonialism, but it would not focus on the trauma of slavery. The conflating of the resistance to slavery with an anti-colonial act allowed for the creation of a historical narrative which was accessible to all in the country not just the people of African descent. Essentially the commissioning of a monument to memorialise the formerly enslaved Africans who fought the British invasion in 1796 was an attempt to forge a national identity.

The memory of slavery in the south of the United States of America is very controversial because of the legacy of slavery and its implications for the current society. Lowen (1999) argues that across the United States most historic sites impact on what visitors think by the stories they tell (1999 p.22). Plantation museums in the south are among the more popular tourist attractions (Dann and Seaton 2001). In the state of Louisiana there are many plantation houses that have been converted to museums, and provide visitors with a narrative which invariably suppresses the memory of slavery (Butler, 2001; Carter et al., 2014; Buzinde and Santos, 2008). While there have been attempts to

address this (Alderman, Butler and Hanna, 2015), Whitney Plantation Museum has turned its entire landscape into a space where the experience of the enslaved Africans dominates the narrative presented.

Whitney Plantation Museum, according to the owner, has been in development for eight years. When it opened, the political climate in the United States was very volatile (Cummings 2015). For much of 2014 race relations had been in the news and the subject of public debate. A number of popular movies, such *Twelve Years A Slave* and *Django Unchained*, which dealt with the subject matter of slavery, had placed slavery within the context of popular entertainment and allowed for some level of public discourse. The first African American president was in the middle of his second term, having won a convincing victory (Farenthold 2012). There were widespread protests by African Americans against the police for the killing of young African American men in a number of large cities (NBC News 2014). The protests expanded to focus on the treatment of African Americans in general at the hands of law enforcement across the country.

In interviews, John Cummings, the owner/developer of the Whitney Plantation Museum, constantly brought up the theme of the legacy of slavery and its impact on the present society (Cummings, 2015). Cummings highlighted the fact that he only began to understand the nature of race relations in his own society after he came across documents which came into his possession as a result of the purchase of the abandoned plantation. He emphasised that these documents, about the slaves who had worked on the plantation, led him to do more research which opened his eyes to the history of the nation. He was clear that he had not been taught about slavery at school and that it is still not on the curriculum of Louisiana public schools (Cummings 2015). Cummings' late 'discovery' of slavery is perhaps not surprising, since slavery and the slave narrative have been largely suppressed in the historical narrative of the south and the United States in general (Alderman and Dobbs, 2011). Loewen (1996) has raised this issue in his award winning book, *Lies My Teacher Told Me* which deals with the problematic narratives perpetuated in American history text books.

His reaction however was perhaps less conventional: the conversion of an abandoned plantation into a museum which focused mainly on the lives of the enslaved who had worked on the plantation.

Cummings' project proved to be a form of insurgent memorialisation, as it went against the historical narrative which had placed the enslaved on the periphery of southern history, if they were present at all. On Whitney Plantation the enslaved were placed at the centre of the narrative, and visitors to the site could not avoid them. For Cummings this approach to presenting the historical narrative of the South would ensure that the story of the enslaved would be told. In interviews he made constant reference to the contemporary society and how the structures of the society were impacted by the legacy of slavery (Cummings, 2015). For Cummings the insertion of slavery and the memory of slavery and its legacies into the public discourse was an attempt at educating those who chose to visit the plantation museum which he had created. While the demographics of plantation visitors is a new area of research (Bright and Carter 2016), traditionally the majority of visitors to plantation heritage sites are white. This would mean that the audience that Cummings is expecting to educate is largely a white one.

The insertion of this type of memory into the landscape is contrary to what had existed as the norm for Southern plantation museums. Museums had traditionally presented the narrative which reinforced the romantic notions of pre-civil war southern lifestyle while marginalising the role of slavery (Buzinde and Osagie, 2011; Carter et al., 2014; Alderman and Moldin, 2008). Cummings' creation of a museum which contested this narrative is akin to what Rice (2012) referred to as 'guerrilla memorialisation'. It is problematic however that this museum is clearly for profit, and it is difficult to ignore a certain level of commodification of that memory.

The theme of education and the connection between the legacies of slavery and the issues of race and politics in contemporary society were also repeated during interviews with the research director of the museum, Ibrahima Seck. He argued that unless the story of the enslaved is told, the legacies of slavery and its impact on contemporary American society could not be placed in its proper context (Seck 2015). The displays and experiences which the visitor has while at the museum are supposed to facilitate that process. Seck was responsible for training the guides who led the tours, and developing the text which informed the narratives presented by the tour guides on the plantation. According to Modlin, Alderman and Gentry (2011) guides on plantations have been responsible for perpetuating the

inequalities which pervade narratives on plantations (2011 p.5) For the creator of the Whitney Plantation Museum, if the site was intended to insert slavery into the historical narrative in Louisiana, Seck felt that he had to be involved in the process of changing these narratives.

Cummings saw his creation of the museum as a form of resistance against the national historical narrative. The museum thus can be perceived as an example of what Schein (1997) refers to as 'discourse materialized', as the creation of this site of memory is a manifestation of the discourse on which aspects of the history of the region should be memorialised (Schein, 1997).

While Cummings stressed the educational nature of his museum, he also made it clear that it was a business venture which he had every intention of making successful. He made a point of stating that he had spent eight million dollars of his own money on the project and that he intended to spend more to keep the displays dynamic and up to date (Cummings, 2015). This raises the issue of commodification, and is problematic in that the museum and monuments are dealing with a very dark and difficult history. In the vicinity of Whitney Plantation, on River Road, the narratives presented on several plantations were slowly beginning to include the slavery narrative in their presentation (Carter et al., 2014), but Whitney had been developed with slavery and slave experience at its core. While the majority of visitors would likely be white, focussing on slavery would certainly attract African Americans, who have been underserved. This site of memory however, despite it being a private project, may very well become a site of contested memory because of its commodification. He fully expects that the plantation museum project will return a profit as his other real estate ventures have done.

Thus Whitney Plantation Museum and the deployment of the memory of slavery must also be seen as a capital intensive business venture which was moving to serve a market which has been underserved by museums for decades. This follows on the emergence of slavery heritage tourism and thanatourism in general, as Seaton has highlighted and as was also noted in Ghana (Seaton, 2001). While this trend may have been delayed within the heritage tourism of the southern United States, this massive investment by an astute real estate businessman in the creation and promotion of slavery heritage on

Whitney Plantation suggests that the market in the United States is shifting. In interviews with Cummings he referred to his bank as a stake holder in the venture (Cummings, 2015). His bank had financed the project to create the museum on the old plantation site.

After the opening of the museum there was interest from national and international media in the project. The coverage ranged from small local New Orleans newspapers to large publications including the New York Times and several European newspapers. While the fieldwork for this project was being carried out at Whitney Plantation in March 2015, several academics and foreign reporters visited the site. Whitney Plantation Museum had already garnered international acclaim as the only museum in the United States dedicated solely to the experience of the enslaved. This was not accurate as there are small museums which deal with the subject. In an article published in the popular magazine *The Atlantic* a number of these museums were highlighted (Nyce, 2016). They included Old Slave Mart Museum in South Carolina and the Lest We Forget Black Holocaust Museum of Slavery in Philadelphia.

Memory and Commemoration

When the Ghanaian government chose to develop Elmina and Cape Coast Castle into sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade, it has not always been clear what aspect of the slave trade it was intended should be remembered. It must be noted that the Transatlantic Slave Trade did not start on the coasts of West Africa. The trade in humans started in the interior, and captives were marched to the coast where they were sold off to European traders (Schramm, 2007). It was not possible to ascertain what the initial intention of the Ghanaian state was when the memorialisation process started. It was once the plans were drawn up and partners joined in the restoration and development of the sites, that the contested nature of meaning of the castles emerged.

When the plans for the project were unveiled to the public, protests were raised by African Americans who saw the castles as sacred sites and their protests included letters in the Ghanaian press and the international media (Osei-Tutu, 2004). These protests had an impact on what was commemorated and

memorialised at those sites. Since African Americans and other diaspora Africans had insisted that these sites be seen as sacred sites, because of the suffering of their ancestors in the dungeons of the castles, what was memorialised was the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade(Osei-Tutu, 2008; Osei-Tutu, 2007; Osei-Tutu, 2004). This emphasis on the traumatic experience which captive Africans would have received when they arrived on the coast became the centre of the memorialisation process at these sites of memory. Initially the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was supposed to be only one of several aspects of the narrative on the sites.

The struggle to insert the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade had much to do with identity formation for African Americans. According to Ebron (1999) the identity politics for African Americans involves “constant negotiation and continual reframing” within the context of citizenship in the United States, but also within the diaspora (1999 p.911). The rupture of memory caused by the slave trade impacts heavily on this. For many of the Ghanaians who were involved in the project the original plan was to use the museum as a platform to promote the history of Ghana and West Africa (Osei-Tutu, 2004)

The issue of what should be commemorated played out throughout the development of the sites from the 1990s. This issue was raised in an interview with an academic who was involved in the archaeological work associated with the project. He spoke of the museum at the Cape Coast Castle which was an integral part of the project, and of the fact that the originally planned emphasis on Ghana was changed (Ghana Informant Three). This is born out in work done by Kreamer (2006), who highlighted the discourse and negotiations between the Ghanaian authorities and diaspora African interests over what was to be displayed in the museum. In the end the display was heavily influenced by the demands of diaspora Africans that the story of deportation and enslavement be a major part of the narrative in the museum.

This aspect of the commemoration process brought to the fore issues which are problematic: the idea of a tourism product developed to attract diaspora Africans for whom consumption of that product is foundational to identity creation. These issues were dealt with during a two-day seminar where the grievances of the various groups were aired in public (Osei-Tutu, 2004 p.198) and the African

American concerns were addressed. The fact that they were richer and had better access to media than the average Ghanaian did, gave them an advantage. Thus for African Americans their being American in this process was as important as their “African-ness”. Their wealth and their media access gave them a louder voice in the negotiation for what should be commemorated. It must also be noted that the American government, through USAID and academic bodies such as the Smithsonian Institution, were providing most of the funds for the project.

Diaspora Africans also impacted on the narrative which was built around the sites themselves. In the initial stages of the development project, the Ghanaian officials in charge had decided that a shop selling refreshments would be able to serve the tourists who were visiting Cape Coast Castle (Osei-Tutu, 2008). Diaspora Africans were able to make the case that these are sacred sites and that such activities were disrespectful to the memory of their ancestors and the trauma they had had to go through. For these stakeholders in the memorialisation project nothing should be allowed to diminish the memory of trauma at the sites. Through their protests and agitation during the process of creating these sites of memory they were very successful at prioritising the memory of trauma at the sites.

According to Connerton (1989 p.8) for memory to be sustained it has to be performed, and this must be done around or with reference to a specific site or monument. The memorialising of the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and the performance of memory associated with this started with the first memorial ceremonies in 1992. These took place in the capital city of Accra around the newly created memorial site for Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana and leader of the independence movement. Nkrumah’s remains were interred in the mausoleum on the site. The ceremonies held there included a celebration of the remains of two enslaved Africans which were brought in from New York and Jamaica respectively (Quainoo, 1998). It must be noted that the origins of both of the enslaved Africans being symbolically brought back to Africa were unknown. These remains were taken to the Cape Coast Castle by sea and in a symbolic ritual entered the castle through the so called Door of No Return, through which, it is believed, captive Africans left the castle to board ships which took them to the Americas. The initiation of these ceremonial performances is what Connerton (1989) saw as the means through which memory is sustained (1989 p.8). Without those

ceremonies and ritual which are a part of PANAFEST, it would be difficult to sustain the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade at those sites.

According to Hartman (2007 p.115) what is recollected from the past depends on what the desires of the present are. The ritual entry into the castle through what has been referred to as the “Door of No Return” suggested that the impossible had been achieved. Two formerly enslaved Africans, who had been taken to plantations in the Americas, had made the voyage back to the homeland. This act of symbolic return ended the disruption of memory many diaspora Africans feel. The ritual allowed them to imagine that Cape Coast Castle was where their ancestors started the journey across the Atlantic thus allowing for emplacement in a homeland, one of the desires of diaspora Africans (Bruner 1996).

We have established that the castles meant different things to different groups who were involved in the memorialisation process. Osei-Tutu (2004) argued that what was emphasised with these ceremonies and the performances around the castles with elaborate rituals, many of which were funeral rituals, was the horrible experience of enslavement of the ancestors of diaspora Africans. This is what made the castles sacred spaces within which diaspora Africans as a group could mourn the loss created by the rupture of the slave trade and slavery in their sense of being. This space, as Halbwachs, argues, is important as a reference for remembering. Diaspora Africans’ resistance to restoration of the castles was an attempt to ensure that the space within which these ritual performances of mourning took place was reminding them of the trauma that their imagined ancestors experienced.

For the government of Ghana which had been interested in attracting large numbers of tourists to these sites, memorialising the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade proved to be an attractive proposition (Osei-Tutu, 2004). The discourse on the memorialisation process was significant, and contention about the meaning created at those sites was equally about the power of diaspora Africans, especially African Americans. Richards (2005 p.635) argues that discussions on what should be displayed at the museum at Cape Coast Castle were dominated by African Americans as they pushed for their stories to be told at the museum. This became a platform on which African Americans “performed American hegemony”, and highlighted Ghana’s neo-colonial relationship to the United States.

The creation of monuments to the Transatlantic Slave Trade out of the forts and slave trading castles in Ghana's Central Region raises several issues about the use of collective memory and the creation of sites of memory which are also heritage sites. The first of these is the problematic making of meaning by various stakeholders at those sites. In his study of monuments to the Holocaust Young (1993) asks "to what end have people been moved, to what historical conclusions?" (1993 p.13) in response to monuments. In Ghana the answer to this question varied depending on the group being asked the question. For the government the monuments were tourist attractions and their preservation would ensure that the sites were maintained for paying visitors. Diaspora Africans were moved to preserve the dark history with which the sites were connected. This also meant that the diaspora Africans maintained a historical connection, on which to base their identity, with Africa, and repaired the rupture caused by the slave trade.

As sites of memory for this trade the castles have become sites of forgetting, about slavery as practiced in Ghana. While the castles have become spaces for commemorating British Emancipation, which occurred in 1834, the narrative of the Transatlantic Slave Trade ignores the fact the fact that emancipation of slaves in Ghana was completed legally in 1908, but continued illegally until 1928 (Perbi 2004 p.205). At Cape Coast Castle, one of sites where rituals and ceremonies continue to commemorate the Transatlantic Slave Trade, officials in the government in 1837 were asserting their right to continue the domestic slave trade (Perbi, 1992 p.64).

In Saint Lucia the emphasis for remembering was on the resistance of enslaved Africans rather than on slavery or on the trauma associated with it. The creation of the Freedom Monument placed great emphasis on the form of the monument and on a symbolism which communicated resistance to enslavement (Informant GW). The Caribbean has a long legacy of resistance to slavery, starting with the first people and their initial contact with Europeans. For the officials of the St Lucia National Trust it was clear that what was to be remembered and memorialised was resistance to enslavement in a nation where the majority of the population is descended from enslaved Africans.

It is significant that one battle became the subject of memorialisation. This stood as a proxy for a more general commemoration of enslavement and resistance. The battle is the one of 1796, in which

Africans, who had been freed whilst under French control, fought to resist a British invasion which would ultimately lead to re-enslavement. What was also remembered was that the formerly enslaved were outnumbered 6 to one and fighting against great odds, as the enemy was the well trained and armed British Army (Harmsen et al 2012; Waite, 1997). The battle was lost and slavery was reinstated but this is not part of the discourse. The memorialisation of the resistance to slavery was important to the committee which oversaw the creation of the monument (Saint Lucia Informant Four and Five). In fact the design, which had won the competition held by the Saint Lucia National Trust, was recommissioned because some members of the committee felt that its form did not represent resistance (Saint Lucia Informant Four). The male figure in that design was in a sitting position. This was supposed to be a national monument which represented active freedom fighters. Lambert (2004) argues that monuments in the Caribbean are a form of surrogation in which the society tries to fill voids created by loss with replacements (2004 p.345). I argue here that the committee was performing surrogation by using this monument with a male freedom fighter to represent soldiers of a war of independence which the island never had. The Freedom Monument did not represent any specific figure in the history of the country, but it had to represent every fighter in the 1796 battle which Len Waite of the Saint Lucia National Trust had presented as a Saint Lucian battle (Waite,1996).

As the monument went through iterative designs, officials focused on how to represent resistance, but it became clear that this theme had more to do with the contemporary situation than it did with slavery (Romulus 2000). In fact it appeared that resistance to enslavement was being conflated with resistance to neo-colonialism; an issue which was relevant at the time of the memorialisation process. Interviews with those involved in the process made it clear that the monument was as much about contemporary politics on the island as it was about slavery (Informant GW). The artist was adamant that he was speaking for those who had not been able to speak in history and that his work was filling a void which had been left by an education system which did not teach the history of the formidable ancestors (Informant RG). He felt that the story of 1796 and resistance to British invasion and re-enslavement needed to be in the national consciousness. This view of the memorialisation and the battle was very much in line with much of the work which had been done by the marketing officer of the National Trust. He was the catalyst for the process and constantly made a connection between the

“freedom fighters”, who fought in the battle of 1796, and the “Saint Lucian character” (Waite, 1996). What was emphasised was the fact that they continued to resist even when faced with impossible odds.

To understand the process which led to the creation of the Freedom Monument the social and political context must be laid out. Between 1992 and 2000, the country experienced severe social dislocation because of adjustments to the realities of new trading regimes which had come into effect (Slocum 2003). The banana industry, which had been the biggest foreign exchange earner for the country, was in decline because the new free trade arrangement made it difficult to compete on the European market (Joseph 2011). Rural unemployment had increased. Direct reference was made to this threat by Waite, the marketing officer of the National Trust and the memorialisation process was very often constructed around dates which were considered as nationally significant (Waite, 1997b). These included the anniversary of Independence, February 22nd, and National Day, December 13th (Waite, 1997a).

The need to remember resistance rather than slavery, and to frame resistance within the contemporary framework, was also apparent during commemoration ceremonies. On two occasions during public ceremonies the executive director of the Saint Lucia National Trust made it clear that he thought that commemoration and the creation of the monument should resist the temptation to “wallow” in the trauma of slavery. This he believed should be left in the past. He explicitly stated that the lessons which should be taken from this period of history should be the resilience of the ancestors and that this is what should inform the actions of the nation as it moved forward (Romulus, 2000). This suggestion that the trauma of slavery should be forgotten also came from the Prime Minister who addressed the same ceremony. He suggested that to focus on the trauma of slavery would be a choice to remain stuck in the past, and that if the nation was to move forward and look to the future the trauma of slavery would have to be left behind (Anthony 2004). Paul (2009 p.171) highlighted a very similar approach by government officials to the memory of slavery in Jamaica. This active avoidance of the trauma of slavery is what Connerton (2008) refers to as repressive erasure. He argues that this type of forgetting is employed to “deny a historical rupture” (2008 p.60). In the context of the Caribbean, slavery represents a major rupture for the descendants of the formerly enslaved (Lambert 2007).

In Saint Lucia, as in many other Anglophone Caribbean nations, history is not part of the primary school curriculum (Watson 2009; Scher 2011) and thus much of what is known about the national history can be construed as popular history. When the artist who designed the Freedom Monument lamented the fact that the story of the ancestors was not being told, he was speaking specifically about the formerly enslaved ancestors. His monument, it appears, was a personal attempt to end the silence in the national historical narrative.

At the Whitney Plantation Museum in Louisiana much work went into ensuring that the museum did not replicate the romantic notions of the antebellum southern lifestyle which had been the focus of the majority of plantation museums (Alderman and Modlin 2008; Carter et al., 2014; Alderman and Dobbs 2011). While the old plantation house is very much a part of the experience at the museum, a great deal of work went into creating exhibits which put forward the life of the enslaved on the plantation. The creator of the site wanted to present it as a museum which contrasts with other plantation museums in this part of Louisiana. There was clearly an attempt to make this a site of memory to slavery.

The tall granite slabs with the names of every enslaved person to have worked on the Whitney plantation is a very powerful memorial. According to Seck, the research officer from the museum project, this is an attempt to give voice to those whose voices have been silenced in the historical narrative of the south. This black granite memorial, made of several slabs, is inscribed with the names of the enslaved, their age and place of origin. The research officer argues that by reading these inscriptions, which give the story of those enslaved on the plantation, the visitor is forced to acknowledge the role of the enslaved in building the plantation. These dark granite walls and the text inscribed on them make slavery palpable. Their physicality highlight the dislocation and alienation which would have been part of everyday life on the plantation. A very large percentage of the enslaved persons memorialised on this monument originated in diverse parts of West Africa.

The second and largest memorial on the plantation site is also made up of black granite slabs and engraved into these slabs are slave narratives taken from recordings made by the Work Program Administration (WPA) project during the 1930s, which collected narratives of the lives of people who

had experienced slavery and were still alive. The inscriptions give the names of the enslaved and quotations in which they tell of their lives as enslaved persons. These stories are even more horrific when one realises that many of them were being told by people who would have experienced slavery as children. This memorial leaves no doubt as to what is to be remembered of the slavery past. What was being memorialised at this site was the trauma of slavery. Hartman (2002) in her analysis of memory and commemoration highlighted the fact that what was remembered at Ghana's slave trading castles was the trauma of slavery. At the Whitney Plantation the focus is also on the trauma of slavery. This sense is further reinforced when the visitor moves into what the creators of the site call the Field of Angels. This memorial is laid out in the form of a square with walls on four sides. On these granite walls are inscribed the names of all the enslaved children who died in the parish before the age of five. The names were taken from the parish records of the slavery period. In the middle of this square is an angel in the form of an African American woman holding a baby in her arms. This is undeniably a very powerful and moving memorial and, like the previous display, forces the visitor to face the horrors of life for the enslaved on the plantation in a direct and emotional manner.

The slave huts are also part of the museum. Visitors are encouraged to enter as the tour continues to emphasise the traumatic life of the enslaved. This very basic accommodation is eventually juxtaposed with the luxury of the plantation house as the tour continues across the plantation. This aspect of the tour is in direct contrast to tours on other plantations which have been accused of marginalising the slave experience (Alderman and Modlin, 2008; Butler et al., 2008; Buzinde and Santos, 2008).

Another very powerful exhibit, which continues the theme of the traumatic experience of slavery, is a prison cell made of steel. This cell has been restored and is open for visitors to enter. While the tour guide makes it clear that this cell was not in situ, that it was brought in from another state and was constructed after the slavery era, the similarities to those from the slavery period are emphasised. Visitors are then invited to enter the cell which is exposed to direct sunlight and obviously very hot during the day. This artefact helps the visitor imagine what it might have been like for the enslaved people. It continues to push the issue of trauma and the idea of the enslaved as victims.

The tour of the plantation house at Whitney highlights the splendour and luxury of the planter's life. It is deliberately the last stage of the tour so that it is inevitably juxtaposed negatively with the life of the enslaved. On the tour which this writer took of the house, the role of the enslaved was a constant in the narrative related by the guide. In one of the large bedrooms there was a terracotta figure of an enslaved girl to reference the sexual predation which was common on the plantation. There were also constant reminders of the precarious existence of the enslaved who worked in the house, in order to debunk the notion that life in the planter's household was better for those who worked there, than was life for those working in the fields. The emphasis again is on the enslaved as victims.

The tour ends with a memorial to a slave rebellion of 1812. In conversations with the research director of the museum and the owner of the plantation it was made clear that this memorial is intended to memorialise those who had risen against slavery. There was also a notion that it is necessary to show that the enslaved were not just victims, but also had a certain amount of agency (Seck, 2015). This attempt at showing the agency of the enslaved focussed on the rebellion which was a very significant one. The rebellion disrupted the economy of New Orleans and destabilised this region of Louisiana and was a direct attack on the slave system. While the narrative around the memorial insists on resistance, the image continues the theme of trauma because it is made up of terracotta heads on spikes. This exhibit is intended to memorialise the leaders of the rebellion who were beheaded and their heads placed on spikes along the road near the plantations from which they had escaped, in order to remind other enslaved of the consequences of rebellion (Seck, 2015). While there is a clear reference to one of the most devastating slave rebellions in the region, the memorial made up of terracotta heads on spikes does not conjure memories of resistance. From the interviews it became apparent that those building the museum understood the difficulty with this memorial, as they had expressed uncertainty about the appropriateness of the memorial for children. This admission raises issues of the commodification of "dark heritage".

At Whitney Plantation the intention of the creators was to insert slavery into the historical narrative of Louisiana and, by extension, of the south of the United States, which has for a very long time focused on the life of the planters and their families (Buzine and Santos, 2008). In doing this, however, much

of what is commemorated is the trauma of the slave experience. Taking the tour of the plantation, it was impossible to escape the horrors of slavery. The constant use of terracotta figures of children reinforced this. The use of the words of the formerly enslaved gave authenticity to the memorials. If earlier plantation museums in Louisiana had romanticised life on antebellum plantations and creole living, Whitney Plantation succeeded in memorialising the trauma and the horrors of the life of enslaved Africans on plantations during the same historical period. The presentation of the horrible life of the enslaved presented at Whitney Plantation Museum must be framed by the fact that its creator is a rich white American businessman. In interviews he makes reference to the fact that he is the type of person least to be expected to have built such a space. Macdonald (2008 p.93) states that majority groups may engage in “critical self-reflection” in terms of the past, and include even the dirty laundry of their society which has not been part of the authorised heritage. It must be noted however that the developers of Whitney Museum have focused so heavily on the trauma of slavery and the victims of the system, that they run the risk of overextending the concept of victim and presenting the history of slavery as a history of trauma (LaCapra, 1998 p.23).

According to Halbwachs (1992) individuals acquire their memories from their society – all memory is social memory. He suggested that society provides the framework which enables the reconstruction of the past, but this is always done according to the needs of the society at the time. This raises a question about who determines what needs to be remembered. The case studies of this project engage some very important questions about who determines what is remembered of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its legacies.

Transatlantic Slave Trade Memorialisation and the Authorised Heritage Discourse

In the case of Ghana and the slave trading castles of Cape Coast and Elmina, it is clear that the central government, state sanctioned institutions and international heritage organisations were at the forefront of the memorialisation process. In order to convert these forts and castles into memorials to the Transatlantic Slave Trade, expertise and finance were needed. With the help of the Central

Government the minister responsible was able to access funding and support from USAID, UNESCO, the Smithsonian Institution and several other international agencies (Kreamer 2006; Holsey 2008; Richards, 1999; Williams 2014).

This memorialisation project was predicated on the fact that the forts and castles had already been listed as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. While the Transatlantic Slave Trade was not in the consciousness of the average Ghanaian, nor was it much of an issue for those who lived near the castles, the listing by UNESCO allowed for the existing meaning around these buildings would be disrupted and the memory of slavery inserted. Interviews with officials of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), the institution at the centre of the memorialisation process, suggested that, before the project to restore the castles, there was very little public or official consciousness in Ghana of the connection between them and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Ghana Informant One).

The relationships among the aid agencies and the other institutions which provided the training and expertise for the project meant that, as a collective, these agencies and state authorised institutions determined to a very great extent what would be remembered at these sites. These institutions and agencies had, because of the UNESCO listing, made them mnemonic devices around which the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade would be performed. The role of these institutions in the restoration of these World Heritage Sites raises the issue of authorised heritage as discussed by Smith (2006 p.2). Smith argues that there is an authorised heritage discourse which resides in the institutions of state and other agencies, based on their knowledge and heritage expertise. For her, within this authorised heritage discourse, there is a preference for large scale monuments which are perceived as old and relevant to the act of nation building. In Ghana the listing of the castles by UNESCO in 1979 can be construed as an example of the authorised heritage discourse. The Ghanaian government's decision to use these sites as heritage sites also falls into this realm. It must be stressed however that this heritage project was not only about the restoration of the forts. Williams (2015) argues that at its core it was an economic development project (2015 p.7). Whatever the societal outcome, this project was supposed to lead to income generation for the economic development of the Central Region of Ghana (Williams 2015 p.8). Thus, whatever the emphasis of the heritage project, it had to be

something which would attract tourists to the region and lead to the development of a sustainable tourism product.

Ghana's historic relationship with diaspora Africans also played a role in determining what would be remembered around the forts and castles of the Central Region. During the administration of Kwame Nkrumah in the 1960s the government of Ghana had developed a very strong relationship with people of African descent in North America, the Caribbean and Europe. Many had been invited to settle in the country (Gaines, 2006 p.77). This connection with the Anglophone African diaspora community meant that Ghana became a popular destination for these people. By the time the restoration project started there was a well-established community of diaspora Africans living in Ghana (Bruner 1996). For this community the forts and castles in Ghana's Central Region represented sites from which their ancestors were deported to the Americas. Even before the government of Ghana embarked on this major project African Americans had attempted to restore a smaller fort in the region (Ebony, 1992). For those who attempted to restore the fort, these edifices were sacred sites which had to be preserved as sites of memory. For this group of diaspora Africans only the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was relevant.

In Saint Lucia the National Trust directed the memorialisation process. While it was initiated by the marketing officer of the institution, the executive was ultimately responsible. They published the book *Saint Lucia the Brave* (Waite 1997a) and several newspaper articles on the importance of memorialising the "freedom fighters", who had held Morne Fortune against overwhelming odds, were published by him as the marketing officer of the institution (Waite 1997b; 1997c). He started the "Walk of Pride" which retraced the footsteps of the soldiers and insurgents involved in the battle. Waite had pushed for the creation of a very small memorial on the grounds of the Morne Fortune barracks as a marker until the funding for a larger monument could be sourced (Saint Lucia Informant 5). Waite was adamant that the resistance of these fighters should be memorialised and went as far as making comparisons between the Saint Lucian attitude to memorialising heroes, which he thought was *laissez-faire*, and the approach of the United States (Waite, 1996). He felt that, in a world where globalisation threatened the identity of small island nations like Saint Lucia, those who had fought for

their freedom should become national heroes (Waite, 1996). According to the Act which set up the Saint Lucia National Trust the institution was responsible for the country's cultural heritage (National Trust Act, 1975), and so had some implied responsibility for Saint Lucian national identity.

Eventually a committee was set up by the Saint Lucia National Trust to manage the design and development of a monument (Saint Lucia Informant Four). Interviews with the artist commissioned to design the monument made it clear that he was influenced by material produced by the National Trust. One such influence was the book about the 1796 battle written by Len Waite. He explained that most of what he knew about the event he was memorialising he learned by reading this book. He was like the average St Lucia in that regard. After his design won the competition the committee communicated directly with him to make modifications. This committee decided the form of the monument and what it should represent.

One example was the demand by the monument committee that the male figure in the monument be standing as opposed to being seated, because he was supposed to embody resistance to slavery. During an interview with one member of that committee explicit reference was made to this issue. He asked, how could a man be seated when he is supposed to be fighting for his freedom? (Saint Lucia Informant Four). There were appeals for changes to be made to the weapons being held by the male figure in the monument (Romulus, 2000). Meanwhile the artist felt that he was giving voice to the ancestors' role in the history of the country. It must be noted that the initial design submitted by the artist had won in the competition for the design of the monument. While the original design was enough to have won the competition, the committee apparently felt that more work had to be done to ensure that it was a monument which fitted the intended narrative. In line with Smith's (2006) definition of authorised heritage discourse the National Trust had chosen the medium of a monument to commemorate the "freedom fighters" and dictated the form of the monument in order to control the narrative of commemoration.

Contested Heritage: Stakeholders and Transatlantic Slave Trade Memorialisation in Ghana

The work of the diaspora Africans in Ghana was aimed at ensuring that the trauma legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade were not forgotten, regardless of the Ghanaian context or significance. This approach became even more apparent when the USAID and Smithsonian became involved in the restoration project around Elmina and Cape Coast (Richards 2005 p.629). When discussions were held with those who were believed to be the stakeholders of the project, the African diaspora community in Ghana was very well represented, and they set about ensuring that the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was at the centre of the restoration project (Osei-Tutu 2004 p.196).

They made demands on the managers of the project and, according to the archaeologist who worked on the project and was interviewed, they dominated much of the discussion (Osei-Tutu, 2004 p.198). When this community felt that their views were not being taken seriously they turned to the international press to get their point across (Ransdell 1995 p.33). One example of this is the publication of letters of protest in international newspapers when the clean-up and restoration process started on the forts (Ransdell, 1995 p.33). The letters specifically protested that the use of lime on the buildings was an attempt to sanitize the sites to minimise the impact of the horror there (Osei-Tutu 2004). Officials of the GMMB had great difficulty explaining that, at the time, buildings were not being 'whitewashed' but that the lime was necessary to protect the structural integrity of the buildings which are on the coast and exposed to direct sea spray (Holsey 2008 p.176).

The contested nature of the project was also manifested during the development of the museum which would be set up at Cape Coast castle. In interviews, people involved in the development of the museum lamented the fact that diaspora Africans once again dominated the discussions, and had too much influence on what would eventually be presented in the museum (Ghana Informant Four). The museum project recognised a diverse collection of interested parties and had quite a number of stakeholders. According to Kreamer (2006) these included the government, Ghanaians in the vicinity of the castles and those from outside the region, expatriate African Americans and those visiting,

tourists in general and the international organisations, donors and heritage experts (Kreamer 2006 p.438).

With so many stakeholders, contestation was inevitable. What is significant about the discourse on this project is that the authorised heritage discourse was challenged. The consortium of Ghanaian government and academics and the international donors had sought to present an exhibit which covered a five hundred year span of Ghanaian history. The Transatlantic Slave Trade was only one aspect of that history. Intervention by diaspora Africans extended the exhibit to include the experience of the diaspora (Kreamer, 2006). This meant that the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade which included racism, the civil rights struggle in the United States and the successes of diaspora Africans were included in the display. Thus the diaspora was inserted into what was meant to be a Ghanaian exhibit, unsettling what was intended.

The Ownership of Memory

The Whitney Plantation Museum started off as a real estate investment, and its metamorphosis into a site to memorialise slavery did not depart from the original reason for acquisition. Cummings stated that he had spent over eight million dollars to develop the museum (Cummings 2015). He also stated that he had hired the best experts in the fields of museology and history to ensure that the information displayed was accurate. When asked about the stakeholders of the museum development project he mentioned his bank (Cummings, 2015). Thus there can be no question that this is a business venture with substantial capital investment. Cummings explained that he decided to turn the plantation into a slavery memorial because he felt that this aspect of the history of the country was not in the public consciousness. It was not taught in the schools. Plantation museums are heritage sites which attract tourists as a business model, and there has been much written on how these ventures marginalise slavery history and promote the romantic notions of life in the antebellum south of the United States (Alderman and Modlin, 2008 ; Butler 2001; Small 2013). Whitney Plantation focuses on the slave experience and the trauma of slavery. While it is similar to other plantations as a site of commodification of heritage, what is problematic is its commodification of “dark” heritage by a rich

white entrepreneur. Whitney Plantation, like the former slave trading castles of Ghana, traffics in thanatourism, promoting the harsh life of the enslaved for a profit.

One of the experts hired to ensure authenticity of the product at Whitney Plantation is a Senegalese historian, Ibrahima Seck (research director) whose research focussed on cultural continuity between the African diaspora in Louisiana and Africans in Senegal. Senegal was a very important point of origin for many enslaved people who had been brought to that region. During an interview, Seck expressed the dire need for the slavery history to be inserted into the national historical narrative of the United States (Seck 2015). He felt that the role of the enslaved in developing the culture and economy of the country had been silenced, and that the work on Whitney Plantation should end this silence.

Stakeholders: Who Remembers and Commemorates

In the case studies for this project the actions of those involved in the memorialisation of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade show that increase in memorialisation is directly connected to the issues of contemporary society. One important question which arises from the analysis of these processes is that of the ownership of memory. In Ghana, the state and state sponsored institutions along with international aid and heritage agencies developed memory around the forts and castles as slavery heritage sites, but these sites are devoid of any reference to Ghanaian slavery although the work of diaspora Africans ensures the foregrounding of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Thus it can be argued that, in Ghana, the memorialisation process promoted memory which was not Ghanaian.

This is a very important issue when considering slavery heritage development and what memory is chosen. In cultivating the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade the government and international agencies acquiesced to the demands of a small but economically powerful group of diaspora Africans. According to Kansteiner (2002) small groups with memories of trauma can only influence broader national memories if they have the means to do so, but that their success in doing this depends on

whether their goals align with those of political elites (2002 p.187). The need to develop heritage tourism which attracts large numbers of tourists, including diaspora Africans, allowed for the commemoration and commodification which benefited both groups. While the memory was not specifically Ghanaian it met the needs of the country.

In interviews done during fieldwork in Ghana a tour guide at Cape Coast Castle expressed exasperation with having to deal with the slave trade and its horrors. He felt that there was more history at the castle than the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This was only a part of Ghanaian history not all of it. He appeared to be speaking for other tour guides as well, but continued to do the type of tours which he felt the visitors had come to the castles for. The guide was doing what was mandated by his employer, the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board. These tours had the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its horrors at the centre. For the Ghanaians, this was not their history.

This is problematic because it has silenced a very important aspect of the history of the country and the Central Region as well. Slavery lasted well into the twentieth century in Ghana. Not all captive Africans from the hinterland were deported to plantations in the Americas (Perbi, 2007).

The goal of the memorialisation project, however, was not to remember this history but to promote a memory which would attract a clientele willing to spend money to experience it. This market was the diaspora African.

In Saint Lucia the focus on the resistance to slavery and the need to silence the trauma of slavery is also problematic. The state and a state sponsored institution deployed a memory of slavery that did not dwell exclusively on the trauma of slavery. This raises the question of what is being remembered, whose memory is being promoted, and why. The silencing of the trauma of slavery served the needs of a newly independent nation state which was still in the process of developing a national historical narrative which would be perceived to be inclusive of all citizens. This was within the context of a society which has a population of majority African descended people.

This memory of slavery is devoid of trauma and may very well explain the lack of enthusiasm in the general population for the memorialisation process, even when it was promoted in the mass media. It

must be emphasised that before Waite started his campaign for the creation of a monument to the “Freedom Fighters” of 1796, the memory of slavery had been absent from the public space in Saint Lucia. In fact Waite had to fight very hard to get the issue on the agenda of the National Trust. In an interview with the former Executive Director of the National Trust, Waite’s strategy was explained. He got the monument on to the management plan of the National Trust by including it in one of the programmes developed to manage the Morne Fortune area which also happened to be the site of the last stand of the “Freedom Fighters” whom he sought to memorialise. This ensured that the monument would be on the agenda of the National Trust and on the national agenda by extension.

In Louisiana the deployment of the memory of slavery also raises questions of whose memories were being commemorated at the Whitney Plantation. The site is a private enterprise and the product is being developed for public consumption. The individuals making memory at the site are not descendants of enslaved people, but people with the wealth and expertise to build a museum and access documents in the archives. It is important to note that, despite being adamant that the story of slavery needed to be told on the plantation, when asked who the stakeholders were in the project which created the Whitney Plantation Museum, Mr Cummings never mentioned the African Americans who lived in the area or any other African American group (Cummings, 2015). What is even more instructive is his insistence that education was the solution to what he saw as the problems of African Americans in the United States. During interviews with Cummings he constantly stated that people need to know what “this colour skin did to this colour skin” in effect juxtaposing white skin against black skin. This is the basic premise for race relations around which this museum and site of memory was built. He wanted to educate visitors about slavery. His emphasis on education being the solution and pathway to the improvement of African American poverty and destitution seems reminiscent of W.E.B. Dubois’ “Negro Problem”. Cummings seems to think that there is a problem in the African American community in general and that education is the solution.

Counter Memory and Identity

Kardux (2011), in a broad survey of monuments in the Atlantic which looks at monuments created to memorialise slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, suggests that such monuments are a new

phenomenon. The author mentions several monuments which had been installed, including the African Burial Ground in New York City. Most of these monuments were erected within the previous three decades. Kardux's survey is focussed on the North Atlantic, specifically North America and Western Europe. Araujo (2014) had a broader approach to the subject. She looked at the entire black space of the region involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and thus also looked at parts of the region which had black majority populations. What is significant is that, even in this space, monuments to slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are relatively new. Most of the monuments in the Caribbean were erected starting in the late 1980s and then into the 1990s.

To this author this fairly recent wave of memorialisation and the need to install these mnemonic markers in the public space has been driven by the need of diaspora Africans to forge identities within the wider circum-Atlantic. In the Caribbean this started in the post-independence period, when the new nation states were in the throes of nation building and national identity formation. In Europe, according to Balkenhol (2011), it started with the migration of diaspora Africans into the former centres of colonial power. These monuments which have been built are sites of memory which, according to Nora (1989), are bulwarks to defend memory which is under threat. Within the wider circum Atlantic there was considerable amnesia about slavery, the Transatlantic Slave Trade and their legacies which had implications for diaspora Africans.

In the United States race relations and issues of civil rights and liberties for diaspora Africans were still very much an issue even after the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. In the Caribbean the fairly new nation states with majority diaspora African populations were attempting to build new national identities within the postcolonial space, and in Ghana the government was attempting to extend national identity and so connect the country to the diaspora African community. All of the monuments which are the subject of this thesis are a form of counter memory, pushing against the amnesia which has led to the absence of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in national historical narratives around the Atlantic.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This study focuses on the memory of slavery and how societies in the postcolonial period chose to remember their slavery past and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It builds upon Halbwachs' (1950) assertion that society is the source of individual memory and that remembering is overtly a social activity. It also uses Connerton's (1989) idea that for memory to survive beyond the life of a generation of any group it has to be performed and this performance must be within a specific space. Nora's idea of lieux de mémoire also helps frame the uses of the monuments and memorials which are the focus of this study. The Transatlantic Slave Trade was an economic enterprise which connected the continents of Africa, Europe, North and South America, and carried more than ten million Africans into slavery around the Atlantic (Eltis 2001). For Africa there was a loss of millions of the most productive members of societies, which became a large diaspora African population within the circum-Atlantic. The system of slavery within which this large population was exploited left an enduring legacy of racism and discrimination which still impacts on the nation states in this region. In the Caribbean, diaspora Africans are the majority of the population and for these nations slavery was a founding event. Without slavery these would have been very different societies. In what is now the United States the labour of Africans was pivotal to the development of the plantation economies of the southern states, but it was also integral to the early development of the nation as a whole. In West Africa, North America and the Caribbean, the three regions which were the subject of this study, the memory of slavery is fundamental to the process through which the identity of the nations was created by the members of those societies who are descended from the enslaved Africans. It is also important to note that these three different regions have different relationships with the memory of slavery. What is remembered of these events is not determined by individuals but by the wider groups in these societies and where the descendants are a minority of the population, the memory survives with these minority groups within these societies. The monuments which form the focus of this study are examples of the manifestation of this memory in and to the wider society.

Case Studies

The case studies in this project are all part of the Anglophone world and are connected by this colonial legacy. Ghana and Saint Lucia are former British colonies which became independent in the post-Second World War period. The United States is connected to this historically by language and the strong connection of the African American community since Ghana became independent.

In Ghana the emergence of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was connected to the historical relationship between the country and the United States of America. Pan-Africanism as a political ideology had brought Ghanaians and diaspora Africans together during the post-Second World War period when anti-colonial activists in Ghana led by Kwame Nkrumah and Civil Rights activists in the United States shared Pan-Africanism as a political ideology which informed black liberation on the African continent and in the diaspora (Gaines 2006). When Ghana won independence from Britain many activists in the Civil Rights movement in the United States along with anti-colonialists from the Caribbean moved to Ghana (2006 p.77).

This relationship with diaspora Africans impacted on the emergence of the former slave trading castles and forts as sites of memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In 1972, diaspora Africans had already started claiming castles and forts in Ghana as sites of memory for the Transatlantic Slave Trade (Ebony, 1972). This further intensified with the listing of the forts and castles of Ghana by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites in 1979 (Holsey 2008). The work by the government of Ghana to boost tourism by restoring some of the forts and castles as heritage sites gave even more visibility to the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade as the process allows for the direct connection to the trade in an attempt to appeal to diaspora Africans to visit the country.

The memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade was sustained round the castles through PANAFEST/Emancipation festivals which were invented by the state to imbue the castles with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. These festivals drew diaspora Africans to participate in cultural activities and rituals at what became sacred sites around these castles, making them monuments to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In Ghana the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery were not part of the national historical narrative. The imbuing of these castles with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade meant that they became sites of contestation. For Ghanaians the meaning of

the castles and forts went beyond the Transatlantic Slave Trade. These sites had been used for many different activities since the end of the Transatlantic Slave Trade so for Ghanaians Cape Coast Castle and Elmina were not connected to the Slavery.

In Saint Lucia the Freedom Monument was created to commemorate a group of formerly enslaved Africans who had fought a British invading force which invaded the island to expel French Revolutionaries and reinstate slavery in 1796. The Saint Lucia National Trust set about creating the monument as a representation of the resilience of the formerly enslaved and the beginning of a strong Saint Lucian character. While the “freedom fighters” resistance was a failure they were lionised as national heroes and plans were made to commemorate them in 1996 by the Saint Lucia National Trust. During the process of creating this monument the discourse on what it should represent led to a design which would represent resistance. The emphasis was placed on the resistance to the British invasion and slavery, despite the fact that slavery was effectively reintroduced on the island as a result of that battle. This monument commemorates resistance but silences the trauma of slavery. It must be noted that this commemoration is official or state authorized, as during the memorialisation process a number of officials stressed the need not to look to the pain of slavery but to focus on the resilience of the ancestors as inspiration for the future.

In Louisiana, Whitney Plantation a former slave plantation, was converted to a museum focussed on the Transatlantic Slave Trade, slavery and the slave experience and opened to the public in December 2014. This museum presented slavery to the visitor in a manner unlike other plantation museums which focussed on the life of the plantation owner and family. The creators of the Whitney Plantation conceived it as a site of memory of slavery, but also as a profit making enterprise which would be used to educate the visitor on slavery and its legacies in the United States.

The experience of the visitor is dominated by memorials to the enslaved who served on the Whitney plantation and the state of Louisiana. Slave narratives recorded in the 1930s describing the experience of slavery are inscribed into the granite walls interspersed among the names of the enslaved. The site also includes a memorial to infants who died in slavery in the parish where the plantation is located. The museum presents the trauma of slavery to the visitor using spaces such as slave huts and jails

which may have been used during the time of slavery. While the museum commemorates slavery and inserts the memory of slavery into the discourse, and the legacies of slavery, the memory of slavery is the focus on this plantation, this memory is commodified and packaged for sale. In many ways it resembles the dungeons at the castles in Ghana, where what is presented, for sale, is the trauma of slavery.

In these case studies the emergence of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery at the times that it emerged is a response to the silence of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade within the respective societies. I argue here that these monuments are in fact counter-monuments because, as sites of memory, they were erected to insert the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery not only into the wider historical narratives of the respective countries, but also into the wider historical narrative of the circum-Atlantic. The memory of slavery in these case studies emerged, in each case, for specific reasons, but what drove the process in each of these cases is the absence of these memories in the historical narratives.

These cases must be understood within the political contexts in which they were created. In Ghana the government needed to develop the national economy, and tourism was one of the industries with great potential. The Cape Coast Castle and Elmina had been listed as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in 1979 and this raised their profile as tourist destinations, but the government needed to make them into sites which would attract diaspora Africans (Bruner, 1996 ; Williams 2014). Diaspora Africans, however, were interested in the sites not as tourists; they saw themselves as pilgrims visiting sacred sites (Ebron, 1999; Richards 2005). The castles were sacred because of the atrocities believed to have been committed there during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Diaspora Africans, who had historically struggled for civil rights and liberties in the United States because of the legacies of slavery, in the quest for identities looked to Ghana as a homeland (Ebron 1999). Diaspora Africans as a group became immersed in the memorialisation process and to a great extent determined that the castles should be sites of memory of the horrors of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Thus the political realities of the United States of America and of Ghana impacted on the memorialisation in Ghana.

In Saint Lucia the process to create the Freedom Monument started within the context of a difficult political and economic environment caused by changes in the trading relationship with the European Union (EU). The nation had depended on preferential treatment for banana exports to the EU for almost three decades. This relationship had allowed for a steady economic growth and relative political stability. In 1992 the trading regime with the EU changed, with protection for bananas being removed and the banana market liberalised, exposing the country to competition (Slocum, 2003; Joseph 2011). The loss of the protected market led to economic difficulties and political unrest. In the neo-liberal trading environment the response was to raise national heroes to present a national identity. A monument to “heroes”, who had fought to defend Saint Lucia from invasion in 1796, was seen as one way of commemorating what was present as strong national character.

In Louisiana Whitney Plantation was created within the context of a major shift in the political landscape. There was also social unrest in several large cities around the country stemming from police shootings of young African American men. This put race relations and civil rights in the public forum for debate. When Whitney Plantation museum opened, the focus was squarely on slavery and the slave experience. The museum owner was interested in making a connection between slavery and the alleged social injustice which he felt the police shootings represented. It must also be noted that Whitney was the only plantation museum to focus solely on slavery and the slave experience. Other plantations had traditionally dealt with the life of the planters and their families. The owner believed that there was an opportunity to create a wider market by dealing with an aspect of plantation society heritage which had largely been marginalised elsewhere.

The emergence of the memory of slavery must also be looked at in a wider circum-Atlantic context with the focus on neo-liberal and neo-colonial contexts. In each of the case studies it appears that the move to create monuments to commemorate the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery are responses to external forces. In Ghana this occurred within an environment where the government had implemented structural adjustment measures in an effort to access financing from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Williams, 2014). Without these measures the funds needed to expand

the economy would not have been available. The plan to exploit the heritage status of Cape Coast Castle and Elmina was part of the wider national response to the economic pressures.

The rise to prominence of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Atlantic world began at the end of the 1970s with UNESCO listing several associated sites across West Africa as World Heritage sites. These locations range from Ghana to Benin and Senegal, and the listing marked these sites as being important to human cultural development around the world. Singleton (1999) argued that the listing of these sites led to an increase in the awareness of memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. By the 1990s this process intensified with the start of the Slave Route Project in 1994, which, according to Araujo (2014) had a major influence on memorialisation in West Africa and the Caribbean. The goal of the Slave Route Project across the Atlantic was to promote the remembrance of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In Ghana this was manifested with the intense memorialisation process around Cape Coast Castle and Elmina, started by the Ghanaian authorities with the help of international heritage and donor organisations. The intensification of memorialisation was not restricted to the West African coast however, as a similar process had started in the Anglophone Caribbean with monuments being built to memorialise slavery in a number of countries (Araujo 2014), such as the Freedom Monument in Saint Lucia, one of the subjects of this research project. Like the forts and castles of Ghana, the process in Saint Lucia started in the mid 1990s.

In the case of Ghana the process was driven largely by the government and state institutions in the form of the Ministry of Tourism and Central Region Development Committee led by the minister responsible for the Central Region starting in 1992. With the aid of funding agencies and the provision of technical assistance by aid agencies and international cultural organisations the forts and castles were imbued with the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Similarly, in Saint Lucia the process was driven by an institution affiliated with the state. The Saint Lucia National Trust started the process of creating what became the Freedom Monument and maintained close control of the creation of the memorial from concept to creation, although there were some failed attempts to invite public participation. In Ghana, the institution attempted to control what was to be commemorated (and what forgotten) with reference to slavery and the Transatlantic Slave

Trade. What was commemorated was the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and this was manifested and reinforced through the performance of memory at these sites during the PANAFEST and Emancipation ceremonies. These became annual events which were performed at Cape Coast Castle and Elmina. According to Hartman (2002) the performances and site tours focus heavily on the trauma experienced by the enslaved who were imprisoned in the dungeons of these sites while they awaited deportation to the plantations of the Americas. The narrative presented by tour guides, the performance of funeral rites and the presentation of those sites as sacred sites of memory worked to reinforce the trauma.

On the Whitney Plantation the emphasis of the display is on the trauma of slavery. The museum makes a concerted effort to go against what has been referred to as the master narrative which pervades southern plantation museums (Alderman 2008; Butler et al., 2008) by highlighting the experience of the people enslaved on the plantation and, through artefacts brought in from outside the site, the experience of slavery across the American south. The plantation museum uses memorials other than the usual paraphernalia of a sugar plantation to highlight the trauma of slavery. The site memorialises the enslaved who worked on the plantation by etching their names and places of origin into granite walls installed on the plantation. Slave narratives collected during the WPA project have also been inscribed into the walls at the site along with the names of infants who died in the parish during slavery. These walls and the text on them makes this site more of a monument and the guides encourage visitors to engage by reading the text. It is possible to avoid the trauma if one does not read the text. Thus the guide is integral to the making of memory at those sites (Modlin et al., 2011; Potter 2016).

In Saint Lucia the trauma of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade was largely forgotten in the process of creation of the state sponsored Freedom Monument. Resistance is what was commemorated. In a process which was similar to other state sponsored monuments which had been erected in other parts of the Anglophone Caribbean, the Freedom Monument memorialised the struggle by enslaved Africans to destroy the system of slavery. This emphasis on resistance is in keeping with the historiography of resistance which pervaded the historical narrative of the region in

the post-colonial period. In fact, during the process which created the monument, there was a clear effort to ensure that the trauma of slavery was not what was remembered, and that the theme of the memorialisation process was one which looked to the future while ignoring the past.

The memorialisation process in these three case studies revealed that what is remembered at each of these sites is greatly influenced by the needs of the respective societies. In the case of Ghana, trauma is remembered because this makes the former slave castles sacred sites for attracting diaspora Africans who want to connect with these possible sites of deportation of their ancestors. The promotion of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the trauma which was experienced at those sites, this is what diaspora Africans demanded as they view these sites as sacred and their visits there as pilgrimages. This allowed the country to access the growing trend of “roots tourism” in which diaspora Africans were willing to pay the high cost of travel to West Africa to connect with their perceived African origins.

The decision to commemorate the freedom fighters of 1796 as an icon of early St Lucian resistance to colonialism, and as resistance against some of the very nations involved in twentieth century decisions about global trade, was arguably a manifestation of growing unease within the newly independent nation state about its disenfranchisement within the contemporary and post-colonial world (Joseph 2011). The change in the trading relationship with the European Union had led to considerable social dislocation and political unrest. There was a need to remember the resistance to slavery, but to remember it as resistance to colonialism rather than as the trauma of slavery.

The Whitney Plantation Museum opened during a period of profound change in the United States. The nation had re-elected its first African American president for a second and final term in office. In popular culture, movies on the issue of slavery such as *D’Jango Unchained* (2012) and *Twelve Years a Slave* (2013) propelled slavery into the forefront of consciousness for the wider society. During 2014 there had been widespread public debate on the issue of racial equality and the legacies of slavery, raised in reference to the police shootings of unarmed African American males in cities across the country (NBC News 2014). This socio-political environment had developed around the ongoing debate about the silencing of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the historical narrative of the

nation, as manifested in museums and in the school curriculum (Leowen 2015). Southern plantation house museums had endured criticism for the absence of slavery from their displays, and from the narrative around the artefacts in their collections (Alderman 2008; Modlin et al., 2008; Stone 2016).

Neoliberalism and the Memory of Slavery in the Circum-Atlantic

When the government of Ghana initiated the memorialisation process in the Central Region of the country in the 1990s it was within the framework of general economic development within the country. Ghana needed to generate income, and needed to use all of her resources in this process (Williams, 2015 p.2). The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had agreed to allow Ghana to access capital for economic development, on condition that structural adjustment measures were implemented, including austerity policies. It was imperative, therefore, that the government explored all avenues to generate income, particularly investment and currency from overseas (Williams 2014 p.12). During this period the administrative entity referred to as the Central Region had limited prospects for economic development with few natural resources, but it did have cultural resources in the form of the forts and castles which had been listed by UNESCO in 1979.

Within this framework the forts and castles had to be exploited as cultural resources in order to develop the economy of the Central Region and the nation as a whole. Visitors would come to these sites if the sites' profiles as sites of memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade were elevated on the world stage for heritage tourism. The target market for this type of tourism was the descendants of enslaved Africans, diaspora Africans resident in Europe, the Caribbean and the United States. These sites of the memory were imbued with the trauma of the Transatlantic Slave Trade; they became sites of memory and sacred sites for diaspora Africans capable of paying to travel to them to trace their roots or mourn the events which led to the displacement of Africans across the Atlantic. The diaspora Africans had tried developing a fort in 1972 as a sacred site but this project was not successful (Ebony 1972).

In Saint Lucia, along with the promotion of the memory of slavery through UNESCO's Slave Route Project, the impact of the neoliberal global economy had great influence on post-colonial identity

creation process (Lewis 2000). Within a decade and a half of independence, trade liberalisation and the integration of world economies had destroyed the banana industry which was previously the main source of income for the national economy. In the late 1990s there was a change in the European import regime for bananas. This change slowly eroded the protection which banana growers in the former European colonies had been afforded. Lewis argues that the preferential treatment which the banana farmers got from the EU came under attack from several quarters from within the European Union, and from outside from other banana producers (Lewis, 2000 p.52). In 1997 the World Trade Organisation ruled that the preferential treatment for Caribbean bananas entering the European Union was not in keeping with its rules, and ordered the European Union to remove the protections to allow for free trade in bananas. An appeal against this ruling failed and the EU was ordered to comply by 1998, effectively removing most protection for Windward Island and by extension Saint Lucian bananas in the EU market (Lewis 2000).

This had a profound effect on the society and caused a seismic shift in the economy and politics of the country. Social unrest gripped much of the banana growing regions in the country, including violent clashes between striking banana farmers and the police. The changes which resulted impacted heavily on the national identity of the nation and challenged the legitimacy of the state, as farmers challenged the government's involvement and the structure of the industry. Until 1997, the preferential access to the EU market had enable steady economic growth in the country; the loss of this access devastated the economy. The drastic change in the trade regime exposed the inability of the state to protect its citizens, and its impotence in dealing with the demands of international trade. In 1997, when general elections were called, the incumbent party, the United Workers Party, which had been in power for almost thirty years, lost all but one of the seventeen seats in the national parliament to Dr Kenny Anthony's Saint Lucia Labour Party (Joseph 2011).

This socio-political environment was the back drop to the process which led to the creation of the Freedom Monument. Much of the discussion about the creation of a national monument was framed with the idea of the creation of a specific national identity. This narrative of anti-colonialism fitted within the contemporary socio-political environment in which many felt powerless to resist the impact

of decisions which were being made outside of the national political framework (Slocum 2003). The conflating with anti-colonialism of the anti-slavery actions of the formerly enslaved Africans in 1796 fitted the anti-globalisation rhetoric during that period. The creation of a monument to memorialise these “ancestors” by the officials of the National Trust and the government would be a celebration of this spirit of resistance which was being tapped into in order to create a national identity of resistance. In that regard the design of the monument had to represent resistance and when the winning design feature a seated male figure, demands were made to have the figure in a standing position. The Freedom Monument was supposed to commemorate resistance.

While the monument was specifically designed to represent resistance, the committee and the director of the National Trust wanted it to be an indicator of progress and a sign post to the future. This is very instructive as it suggests that this monument was supposed to commemorate the past and show some kind of vision to the future by referencing resistance and resilience. In several public presentations, at ceremonies to mark the various stages of the memorialisation process, speakers who represented the government and the National Trust made it very clear that the horrors of slavery should not be allowed to dominate the national character, and that this trauma should be avoided in the development of the monument (Romulus 2000).

In Louisiana the Whitney Plantation Museum was developed during a period in which a spotlight had been placed on the citizenship rights of African Americans within the United States. In fact, during the opening ceremony in December 2014, reference was made to the public protests which resulted from some of these incidents and their meaning for the nation at large. These issues had arisen because of alleged police killings of unarmed African American males in cities across the country; the response of the African American community was the protest movement #BlackLivesMatter. These issues have been connected to the continued fight for equal rights for African Americans. The social upheavals which have resulted from the alleged police killings have led to political activism and questions about the historical narrative of the country, and about the role of slavery and the civil war in this historical narrative. This political discourse has also been fuelled by hate crimes perpetrated against African

Americans, and the symbolism of the Confederate flag which was the flag of the Southern States, the slave holding states in the civil war (Shoichet et al. 2015).

The issue of slavery and its role in the American Civil War as part of the historical narrative of the southern states and of the nation makes Whitney Plantation and its slavery narrative very important (Taylor 2001). Much has been made about the absence of slavery and the African American contribution to national development in Plantation House museums in the South and their focus on the master narrative (Butler, 2001; Alderman, 2008; Carter et al., 2014). With the emphasis on heritage tourism and the need to cater to a wider audience, there has been a call for change (Adams 1999; Small 2013).

The Whitney Plantation Museum is a private commercial project which has its focus the slave experience. This make the museum, within the context of the usual southern plantation museum, a counter monument, because it goes against the convention of putting the master at the centre of the narrative presented. However despite being a site of memory, this project is also intended to make a profit. Interviews carried out for this research project, and others carried in the press (Amsden, 2015; Rueters 2015; Stodghil 2015) show that commercial success is one of the primary goals of the development of the site. With so many plantation museums ignoring or minimising the slave experience, there was clearly a market for a plantation museum which focusses on the issue of slavery and its legacies. Having explicitly focussed on this issue, Whitney Plantation is tapping into this market by developing a museum and memorial to the trauma of slavery. This falls into the category of 'thana-tourism', a tourism that provides the visitor with the imagined experience of the horrors of a specific event, at a site of memory which is connected that event.

Unlike the National Trust in Saint Lucia, the creators of the Whitney Plantation Museum sought to place the issue of slavery on the national agenda by inserting the trauma of slavery into the historical narrative of Louisiana and, by extension, of the United States. While the plantation owner and the research director refer to their creation as a museum, much of what is experienced and what amplifies the horrors of slavery on the plantation are the memorial walls which focus on specific narratives of the memory of slavery. The first wall, called the Wall of Honour, memorialises those who were

enslaved on the Whitney Plantation. The second maze of granite carries the names of people enslaved in Louisiana, and the first person narratives of people who experienced slavery as recorded by the WPA project. These narratives highlight the traumas of the slave experience, which range from the mundane to the horrible.

The 'Field of Angels' memorialises the children who were born into slavery but did not live past their fifth birthdays, by inscribing their names into the wall which surrounds the figure of an African American angel holding up an infant. This continues this narrative of trauma. Is memorials these black granite walls are very self referential in that, unless the visitor actively engages by reading what is inscribed on the walls, the memorial is pointless. It is not difficult for a visitor to ignore what is etched into the walls if he or she doesn't want to deal with the text. There is also the issue of literacy of visitors. If a visitor is unable to read, the monuments would just be black granite walls in the ground.

The slave narratives recorded by the WPA, which are included on the walls, have come under scrutiny for validity and accuracy. Spindel (1996) has called for a reassessment of the use of these narratives in the production of history. She explains that because most of those narratives were presented by people who experienced slavery as children, their accounts of events and experiences may not be reliable. She also argues that, since these people were elderly when these recordings were made, the accounts may not be reliable. However, Baptist (2014) has dismissed this, stating that the slave narratives are a valid source of information on the slave experience.

While the memory of slavery is relevant to the creation of identity in these three regions of the circum Atlantic, the relationship of the majority of the population to this memory has a major impact on how it is remembered. The Transatlantic Slave Trade carried millions of Africans across the Atlantic to the Americas, but the memory of this trade in Ghana, which was one of the points of deportation of Africans, is sequestered (Holsey 2008 p.22) For many Ghanaians at the time, the commemoration of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and eventually the commemoration of British Emancipation seemed foreign. Slavery in Ghana is not discussed because it has implications for social status and power within the society. The discovery of slavery lineage could strip a family of its status in the community (Holsey, 2008 p.22). When the Ghanaian government decided to commemorate Emancipation in 1998,

a massive media campaign was launched to teach the general population about slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. For an extended period articles were printed in the local press to promote and justify government expenditure on the impending commemoration ceremonies (Boadi-Siwa, 1998; Nunoo, 1998; Daily Graphic, 1998). While Holsey (2008) has shown that the memory of the trade remained silenced in the Central Region of Ghana, for many it is apparent that it has had very little impact on the identity as Ghanaians. The Transatlantic Slave Trade is also not a part of the national historical narrative of the country as has been highlighted earlier. The syllabus of primary and lower secondary school gives only cursory attention to the Transatlantic Slave Trade in relation to the official history of the country. The contestation around the meaning at the castles, between diaspora Africans and Ghanaians, is a manifestation of this. Slavery is not a part of the national historical narrative, even if slavery only ended in Ghana in 1928 (Perbi, 2007 p.205).

Saint Lucia was a plantation colony which was at various times controlled by either the English or the French. This colony exploited the labour of the enslaved Africans who had been brought across the Atlantic. The majority of the population is descended from enslaved Africans, and thus is directly connected to the memory of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. However according to Best and Phulgence (2013) sugar plantations on the island which are now heritage sites make no connection to slavery. Plantations across the Caribbean have become sites of forgetting (Reinhardt 2015). When the Saint Lucia National Trust embarked on the process of creating a monument to commemorate the legacies of slavery, it had great difficulty getting the general public involved in the process (Waite 1997). The institution turned to schools to get students to participate, but was still unable to generate much interest.

While slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is dealt with in the syllabus of primary schools, very little of it is specific to Saint Lucia. The text used for Social Studies, the subject within which the topic of slavery comes up, is a text developed for the wider Caribbean, and it is possible for students to learn about slavery and not make a connection between it and their existence on the island. The topic of slavery is dealt with when there is an attempt to identify the different racial groups in the Caribbean in general, but not in Saint Lucia specifically. This allows for the distancing of the Transatlantic Slave

Trade and slavery by the student body. In short, slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade are treated as part of the general history of the country and not as events which are in any way more significant than other events which were part of the nation creation process, despite the fact that slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade were seminal to the creation of the present population of the country. The majority of the population is descendent from the enslaved African population brought in to work on sugar plantations, but the National Trust was unable to get the population to engage in the commemoration of that legacy.

One issue which must remain in the forefront of any discussion of slavery in the United States is the fact that the institution of slavery had been abolished in the northern states in the early nineteenth century, while it continued in the southern states until the Civil War. This has allowed the sequestration of the memory of slavery in the northern states, and allowed for the creation of a historical narrative which connects the history of the southern states to slavery. This would suggest that slavery was a southern issue. As a result the memory of slavery in this country is assumed to be a southern issue. This is important, because it highlights the amnesia which pervades most states outside of the southern confederate states of the history of the institution in the country as a whole.

While in the two previous examples the state and state sponsored institutions were responsible for the creation of monuments to memorialise slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade this was not the case in the example from the United States. The Museum of African American History opened to the general public in 2016, however there is still no state sponsored memorial to slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The case of the Whitney Plantation Museum is a private project. It received the endorsement of government officials in the state of Louisiana, but it remains a private affair. In the United States issues of race and racial prejudice are legacies of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and have political implications in the present day, as African Americans continue to agitate for civil rights. As a result, this has an impact on how slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is remembered in the country, and in the southern states by various racial groups. The fact that the majority of the population has no obvious direct connection to the institution of slavery also has an impact.

In the majority enslaved African descendent nation of Saint Lucia slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade were remembered for the response of the enslaved Africans to the system. What is remembered is their resistance to slavery and their role in ending the system of enslavement. This is made relevant to the contemporary society by conflating resistance with the fight against colonialism which culminates in the independence movement, and the continued resistance to neoliberal policies which the state is - in many ways - unable to resist. Thus the memory of slavery and the resistance to it is memorialised in the form of the freedom fighter who is lionised as a national hero. The triumph over slavery is what is memorialised, as the trauma of slavery and its intended legacies are silenced in the memorialisation process and the monument which was built.

In Louisiana the plantation as a site of memory had been a site for the memorialisation and sustaining of the national historical narrative which silenced slavery and its legacies. Plantations had been traditional sites for the performance of the memory of the romantic identity of the southern gentry (Taylor 2001). These had become sites where the memory of the fight for freedom had been at the core of the democracy which characterised the nation in the Civil War. Whitney Plantation is an example of what Rice (2012) refers to as guerrilla memorialisation. This type of memorialisation inserts a specific memory which has been silenced by a wider more powerful meta narrative. While other plantation museums have started to move towards including the slavery narrative, Whitney Plantation is foregrounding it. This site of memory inserts the memory of slavery and its legacies and the role of the system into the discourse of what freedom means in this democracy. This goes against the historical narrative of the state of Louisiana and it must be noted that it is being done, not under state sponsorship like the other case studies, but using private capital, with the intension of making a profit in the process. While in Ghana and Saint Lucia the state and state sponsored institutions were pivotal in the memorialisation process and the creation of the sites of memory, in the United States an individual with private capital initiated the process with a specific outcome in that he was responding to market demands with a professionally developed product.

The memorialisation process in the case studies of this project all occurred at different times in the last three decades. In Ghana the process started in the 1992 (Bruner, 1996; Singleton, 1999; Richards,

2005). In Saint Lucia it started in 1996 (Waite 1997; Williams, 2014), and in Louisiana the museum opened in 2014 (Cummings, 2015; Seck 2015). As examples of the memorialisation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade each of them represents a specific aspect of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade; Ghana and Whitney Plantation focussed on the trauma and Saint Lucia on resistance. However in so doing other aspects of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade were silenced. This is inherent in the creation of monuments, because these mnemonic devices are always developed to present a specific narrative which is deemed useful by the creators. In Ghana what was eventually presented and sustained was the aspect of the Transatlantic Slave Trade that would attract paying tourists, the trauma which captive Africans would have experienced before being transported across the Atlantic. This focus on trauma silences a number of other issues at the castles. The first of these I would like to highlight is the fact that enslavement at these very sites of memory is silenced. Holsey (2008) alludes to this. There were slaves who served at these castles and in the towns around them, and this is not part of the narrative.

Slavery in greater Ghana is also silenced. While the Transatlantic Slave Trade was abolished in 1807, slavery in Ghana ended in 1928 (Perbi, 2015). It is an issue in Ghana because the memory of domestic slavery is still very contentious. Kankpeyeng (2009 p.214) identified former slave trading sites where the implements of slave trading are still held by the descendants of slave traders. He presented the example of an eighteen foot chain, which had been used to constrain enslaved people for trading, being a source of conflict in the village. Kankpeyeng stated that the chain makes a distinct sound when moved, and this sound causes conflict between the descendants of slave trader and of slaves.

According to Trouillot (1995 p.49) the processes that create narratives also ensure that silences are created. The foregrounding of one historical fact privileges it over others.

At the Whitney Plantation the trauma of slavery is memorialised, and, while pushing against the original silence which existed on plantation museums, it creates a very one dimensional view of the life of the enslaved. Violence did pervade the life of the enslaved, but the tour and the narrative at the plantation run the risk of dehumanising the enslaved in much the same way that the silencing does. It presents them as victims and little else. From the Wall of Honour through to the plantation house the

suffering is highlighted, but there is very little agency presented. The use of terracotta figures of children around the plantation intensifies that lack of agency as they create a certain amount of empathy from visitors who may engage with them. Even when there is an attempt at presenting agency by the enslaved it reverts to victimhood as in the case of the memorial for the 1811 rebellion. This was supposed to be memorialised with terracotta models of severed heads on stakes. This was supposed to lionise the 69 rebels who were beheaded and had their heads placed on spikes across the parish as a warning to other potential rebels. Such a memorial does not connote agency, because the visual is by itself traumatic.

In Saint Lucia the monument to the formerly enslaved involved in the 1796 Brigand War also silenced aspects of the narrative of slavery in the country. The Freedom Monument lionised the formerly enslaved Africans and presented them as national heroes who resisted the colonial power of Britain, despite the fact that they were fighting to defend the island for the French. This local battle was part of a wider European Revolutionary War and the enslaved were fighting to maintain freedom afforded them by French Republicans. Thus, while they were fighting to maintain their freedom they were in fact foot soldiers for an undermanned army. Their defeat by the British after a long siege is also ignored in that narrative. This aspect of the activities of 1796 are buried under this monument.

Another issue which is ignored in the narrative built around the Freedom Monument is the fact that the formerly enslaved lost the battle despite their valiant efforts. This is lost in the narrative as what is commemorated is that they fought against overwhelming odds with only 2000 of them fighting a well-trained British army of 12,000. Another aspect that is not part of the narrative is the fact that these formerly enslaved men actually became soldiers in the very army they were commemorated for fighting. According to Harmsen et al. (2012) after the surrender of these men to the British troops they were absorbed into the West India Regiment and joined British fighting forces in Sierra Leone in West Africa. In effect they became part of a colonial army but they are being commemorated as anticolonial heroes. The fact that so much is silence in the process of commemorating this event suggests that it is an attempt at closure by ignoring these very obvious issues. Rice (2011 p.271) suggests that this is a

manifestation of state sponsored commemoration which requires political closure of an issue which is sensitive.

Despite the problems inherent in the creation of monuments as sites of memory the emergence of the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery in the circum-Atlantic is evidence of the political maturity of the African diaspora across the region. The national historical narratives of nations across this region excluded this group especially in the north Atlantic (Baptist 2014; Rice 2012; Bulkenhold 2011; Kardux 2011; Oldfield 2012). In places like the anglophone Caribbean these monuments were part of the process of creating national identities. With independence in the post-Second World War period, and the Civil Rights Movement of the same period, the African diaspora population across the circum-Atlantic is now able to assert itself and insert the memory of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade into the national historical narrative through the creation of sites of memory as mnemonic devices which will help bolster their claim to citizenship in the nations of birth, but also allow for the tracing of roots broken by the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery.

Nora (1998 p.12) suggests that without commemorative vigilance identities may be threatened, and these sites of memory are built in response to these threats. The emergence of sites of memory for diaspora Africans is related to identity creation. The legacies of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade continue to be part of the political discourse. With issues of equality and social justice dominating the discourse, the emergence of sites of memory for slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade help mark these issues in the landscape. The memorialisation processes investigated in the case studies highlight the fact that what is remembered of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery is contingent on who is doing the memorialising. This is can be a highly contested process with various stakeholders engaging the process to ensure that their version of the narrative is the dominant one as we saw in Ghana. Alternatively some groups because of the structures put in place and the methods used to engage the wider society maintain control of the memorialisation process as we saw in the case of Saint Lucia and the creation of a public monument. The case of Louisiana highlights how economic power allows individuals to fill a vacuum where certain narratives are silent but allows them to commodify the outcome of memorialisation with the intention of making a profit. As Young (1993)

has shown the memorialisation of trauma is heavily impacted by the needs of the stakeholders at the time. . Ricoeur (2004 p.84) writes “it is justice that turns memory into a project; and it is this same project of justice that gives the form of the future and the imperative of the duty of memory.”

Further Research

This study focused on the creation of monuments which commemorate the Transatlantic Slave Trade and memory. Young (1993) states that monuments are very often officially sanctioned commemorations. They are also the preferred method of commemoration by the elite to insert a specific narrative into the landscape. This suggests that, by using monuments to interrogate the uses of the memory of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the study was confined to investigating how the elite chose to commemorate them. Rice (2009) has suggested that, in the absence of monuments, the art of the African diaspora is where the memory of slavery can be found. I would like to argue here that this continues to restrict the study of the memory of slavery to the elite, as these are the people with access to create the fine art and poetry. I suggest that the music of the diaspora is where the memory of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery are curated. I specifically refer to the musical genres of calypso and reggae in the Caribbean and hip hop in North America. These genres of music all have their roots as forms of protest in the spaces where they were created. It must also be noted that while there are commercial sub-genres the music comes out of the masses of the people and not the elite.

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