



# *Slavery, Colonialism and their Legacy in the Eurocentric University*

## **The Case of Britain and the Netherlands**

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**Abstract:** Drawing inspiration from the critique by Patricia Hill Collins of the “Eurocentric, masculinist knowledge-validation process,” the author examines various ways in which universities, both in Britain and the U.S., have long suppressed critical inquiry into the history of empire, slavery and the slave trade. Parallel to this critique, he examines museums and other memorial sites devoted to slavery in Britain and the U.S., including a small number of initiatives that challenge hegemonic accounts and draw attention to the agency and the resistance of the enslaved. He further draws attention to initiatives within academic institutions in the U.S., Britain and other parts of Europe to challenge dominant accounts of slavery and its legacy.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This paper, which seeks primarily to cover current developments in Britain with reference to the US, should be read in conjunction with that of Kwame Nimako also included in this volume, who brings

insights from the Netherlands and Britain. We hope to demonstrate some of the common patterns, but also some of the distinctive features, of Eurocentrism in western universities, with particular regard to research and analysis on slavery and its legacy.

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Stephen Small has taught in the Department of African American Studies since 1994. He received his B.A. (honours) in Economics and Sociology from the University of Kent at Canterbury, his M.S.C in Social Sciences, from the University of Bristol (both in the UK), and his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley. He taught in the Department of Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (1988-1992); in the Center for Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick (1991); and in the Department of Sociology at the University of Leicester (1992-1995). He was Study Center Director of the University of California's Education Abroad Program in France (Bordeaux and Toulouse), 2002-2004; and he was Director of UC, Berkeley's travel study program in Brazil (Salvador and Rio de Janeiro) from 2001-2005. He has three active programs of research. The first is on race and representations in public history and collective memory, in which he explores how colonialism, slavery and Jim Crow segregation are interpreted and explained in museums, memorials and monuments in the 21st century. The second is on racial formations in Europe and the USA, which explores migration, institutional inequality and discrimination, community organization and community resistance, both within individual nations, as well as patterns across these nations. The third area is race and race mixture (so-called 'miscegenation') in the United States and the Caribbean under slavery, and in the contemporary USA. He explores institutional experiences, material resources and ideological articulations of race mixture at different historical moments. His most recent publications include: *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (co-edited with Darlene Clark Hine and Trica Danielle Keaton), University of Illinois Press, 2009; *Representations of Slavery. Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (with Jennifer L. Eichstedt). Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002; "Racisms and Racialized Hostility at the Start of the New Millennium," in David T. Goldberg and John Solomos (editors), *The Blackwell Companion to Race Relations*, Blackwell, 2002, pp. 259-281.

By way of background, let me inform readers that I was born and raised in Britain before going to the US in 1984, and obtaining my Ph.D. there in 1989. Although I have lived mainly in the US since then, I make frequent trips to Britain and the Netherlands, carry out research projects and teaching initiatives with colleagues in Europe, and have established and/or directed international teaching programs for American students and others in Europe (France and the Netherlands), Africa (Zimbabwe) and in Brazil. I have been involved for the last 30 years with community initiatives across Britain around the legacy of slavery and colonialism, as well as with contemporary patterns of migration, settlement, discrimination and resistance. I have also worked on issues having to do with museums, representations, images and discourses, in the context of institutional disparities and disparities of access, in the US and in Europe. These experiences have given me ample opportunity for sustained consideration of research and teaching practices at the heart of the western academy as well as exposure to the links between academic research and both museums and community education projects.

The organization of universities across Europe and the US is predicated on assumptions and principles of objectivity, impartiality and scientific inquiry. Universities claim to encourage rigorous and broad-minded academic inquiry and to be open to all perspectives while subjecting them to rigorous interrogation and critique. However, any examination of universities in the US, Britain and the Netherlands leads one to observe institutions, processes and procedures that operate quite to the contrary (Essed and Nimako 2006). They are more likely to be restricted in access, limited in scope of study, narrow-minded in the range of epistemologies, and lacking in ethnic, gender and class diversity.

## II. THE KNOWLEDGE VALIDATION PROCESS IN THE ACADEMY

This institutional infrastructure of research and teaching are characterized by what Patricia Hill Collins has called the Eurocentric, masculinist knowledge-validation process, by which certain types of knowledge, theories and methodologies are validated while others are invalidated (Collins, 1991). This process is constituted through an interlocking and overlapping set of institutions that produce, modify and validate knowledge. They disseminate it and give it a stamp of approval for academic and public consumption. These institutions include universities, professional associations, conferences, publishers, university presses and journals, and a community of credentialed experts. At the pinnacle are Harvard, Yale, Stanford and Berkeley in the US; in England there is Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Warwick (those of us inside the university know how these institutions operate). The process works to marginalize and suppress any challenge to its authority structure. This is especially the case with regard to work on slavery and its legacy. The kind of knowledge that is valued is abstract and objective, grounded in European traditions of the disciplinary founding fathers such as Durkheim and Weber in sociology. Collins argues that the kind of knowledge produced by Black women—knowledge that is concrete, subjective, and grounded in their experiences—is marginalized and invalidated. This narrows the focus of analysis and discussion and limits the vision. Collins argues that individuals who wish to re-articulate Black women's standpoint through Black feminist thought can be suppressed by prevailing knowledge validation processes. Black women have long produced knowledge claims that contested those advanced by elite white men. But because Black women have been denied

positions of authority, they often rely on alternative knowledge validation processes to generate competing knowledge claims (Hull et. al. 1982). Black women within the academy experience estrangement and alienation, since the institution squeezes the soul out of them. She calls upon us to help find a way to recognize, confront and overcome the weight of such processes.

In Britain a similar validation process occurs, both in general, and with regard to teaching and research on slavery, colonialism and their legacy; it is also the case with regard to issues of race and ethnic relations. Access to the academy by scholars of color, especially women, is highly impeded. Their numbers are tiny. In the Netherlands the number is even smaller. This reflects, of course, demographic factors, but also clear patterns of direct and indirect discrimination. UC Berkeley, by comparison, is not as progressive as imagined by most outsiders: we have only 40 Black faculty out of around 1600 and this has been the case for the last 30 years. At universities in Britain, they are a good deal rarer and the numbers are still incredibly low. However, there are researchers and teachers outside the academy, in Black and minority organizations such as the Franz Fanon Centre in Birmingham, New Beacon Books and Southall Black Sisters in London, and Charles Wootton Centre and the Liverpool Black Caucus in Liverpool. There is also, of course, the Institute of Race Relations (Liverpool Black Caucus 1986; Sivanandan 1990). These groups are working on many issues having to do with slavery and its legacy and with contemporary patterns of racism, discrimination and Black agency. Many people also work independently on issues of Black life, history and culture. One example would be Wally Brown, a Liverpool-born black like myself, who is a former director of the City College.

Beyond the fact that access for progressive scholars is limited, there is also the organizational culture and climate of the

academy. Studies of slavery and colonialism are framed by widely held social beliefs according to which Britain is known first and foremost for its abolitionist movements and for its assault on the slave trade and slavery elsewhere outside the British Empire (Richardson 1985); and according to which the British Empire is best understood as a generous endeavour, beneficial to natives and savages, bringing Christianity and civilization to barbarism, and also free from the violence of other empires. It is common to highlight the ways in which 'race relations' in British colonies through the 1960s were remarkably different from (meaning "better than") Jim Crow segregation in the US and apartheid in South Africa (Rose et al. 1968). There is a common joke in the Black community in Britain: the English people's conception of themselves as good and decent is so strong that if slavery had not existed, then it would have had to be invented, just so that the English could abolish it. This self-image prevails despite the fact that some English traders were absolutely central to the slave trade; despite the fact that the English established slave colonies in the Caribbean and what became the US—despite the fact that British governments and companies gave succour to slave nations like Brazil and the US for many decades after the slave trade and slavery were abolished in the British empire (Sherwood 2007).

The few scholars who have resisted this cultural hegemony have remained largely under the thrall of a highly restricted range of topics such as the economics and politics of slavery, the history of "big men," the profitability of slavery with regard to capitalism, and the role of slavery in the growth of capitalism. Much of this literature gives the impression that slavery was marginal to the industrial revolution of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Britain. This work has ignored the human dimensions of slavery—the resistance and agency of Black men and women. It has marginalized both the humanity of the

enslaved and the inhumanity of the master-enslavers. This began to change only starting in the 1970s with growing criticism from within the Black community and with the access of small numbers of scholars to the academy.

The past is not dead; we still live with its legacy—thousands of racist books and articles in libraries that are still being read—while so much of the literature developed by progressive writers has had to be dedicated to challenging the nonsense of the past. In Britain we have had to expend considerable energy simply rejecting the idea that all Blacks are recent post-WWII immigrants, by documenting the Black presence for the last 400 years or more (see for example, Fryer 1984; Ramdin 1987; Small 1991), and by documenting the ways in which slavery and the slave trade directly fed British industrialisation and capitalism. In the US, scholars spent considerable time repudiating the “concentration camp analogy” for slavery expounded in the 1960s (Elkins 1959) and the thesis of the matriarchal family as the basis of Black pathology as articulated by Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1965).

Societal beliefs and concerns frame research today just as they shaped earlier studies. In Britain, most of the current research on race and ethnic relations is framed by a focus on immigration problems: refugees, asylum seekers, immigration policy and terrorism (read ‘Muslims’). As Kwame Nimako has pointed out for the Netherlands, it is no accident that large amounts of this research are funded by the central government.

I believe that in Britain there was more promise in earlier decades than today. The overwhelming cultural narrative that shapes academic study in Britain today is one in which there has been a move away from the study of race, ethnicity and colonialism (which was prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s at universities like Bristol, Aston in Birmingham, Liverpool and Warwick

toward a focus on refugees, asylum seekers and Muslims (a proxy for terrorism).

These issues within universities are becoming exacerbated as the mantra of standardization, routinization, efficiency and productivity directly shapes universities in Britain. Much of the reorganization of European universities over the last 30 years has borrowed insights and momentum from the US and this has worked to consolidate and expand, rather than to challenge and replace, these limitations. Britain and the Netherlands have borrowed ideas for standardization and institutional flexibility from the US, e.g., semester system or modules. As mentioned, this makes the situation more inimical to critique. So we must be constantly vigilant and alert. But there are other lessons from the US that are not currently part of the shared exchange and which offer the potential for sustaining such challenges.

### III. KNOWLEDGE CREATION OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY: MUSEUMS AND COMMUNITIES

My purpose here is to examine not just the academy itself but also institutional linkages, initiatives and momentum outside the academy. The relationship between knowledge and ‘facts’ produced within the academy and their dissemination outside the academy—for example, in museums and exhibits on slavery and colonialism—reflects similar constraints and limitations to those just described. Museums are significant because they are an increasingly important location where these issues are being contested (Tibbles 1994; Greenhill 1997; Wallace 2006). They are one institutional context among others in which slavery is remembered or rearticulated at the present time (Nimako and Small 2009). For example, with regard to museums, Annie Coombes has described the duplicitous relationship in Britain

during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, between academics and museums—including the British Museum, the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford, the Liverpool Museum and the Horniman Museum (Coombes 1994). She documents how academics in general, and anthropologists in particular, sold their souls for pounds, shillings and pence, to build up their academic departments. Anthropologists provided information on natives and savages, for example in Africa, as part of the British colonial mission of conquest and control. Museum collections of material culture from the colonies, as well as world fairs and other exhibits, functioned effectively as ‘constituents of an imperial ideology’ (Coombes 1994:43). A fundamental feature of the state policy of social imperialism was the desire to unite all classes in Britain in defence of nation and Empire, by convincing the (white) working classes that their best interests were best served by the development and expansion of empire (*ibid.*:126).

It is true that there have been some improvements in the nature of the academic curriculum in Britain, including an expansion of the scope of inquiry and a small but significant body of knowledge that challenges such hegemony. This has taken the form of increased focus on what they call equal opportunities, ethnic diversity, and anti-racism awareness and training. Some people even engage with a review of the role of the British Empire in the nation’s development. However, when considered historically, and in the context of comparative resource mobilization, such changes have hardly been transformational. These initiatives remain institutionally marginalized, lacking in resources and support. The intractability of historically entrenched and institutionally inert Eurocentric principles have resulted in a limiting of the mind and a preponderance of Eurocentric males, along with their priorities and values, at the pinnacles of power in European universities. They have contin-

ued to flourish by limiting access to like-minded thinkers and by pushing critique to the margins.

And yet they are fundamentally wrong. Abolition, the slave trade and slavery itself are not at all marginal to British history but indeed absolutely integral to an understanding of that history. The study of slavery and the slave trade should be central to the national curriculum, central to our understanding of the significance of British history, and central to a full understanding of the nature of British society today. In other words, African people, Black people, the slave trade, slavery and colonialism are at the heart of every major aspect of British history. They are the heart pumping the blood through the veins of British history, society, culture and politics. They are central in defining who is free and who is slave (why else would they sing “Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves, Britons never, never, never shall be slaves”?). They are responsible for the expansion of British shipping, trade, and mercantilism, from cotton and coffee, to tobacco and textiles and they are a major factor in the vast accumulation of wealth in banking and insurance, shipping and manufacture over several centuries. They contributed directly to the growth of Britain’s biggest cities from Liverpool to London, from Bristol to Birmingham, and from Manchester to Leeds. They are central to the spread of Christianity and are the very reason why Christianity has more adherents across the planet today than any other religion. They are responsible for the migration of tens of millions of people across the Atlantic Ocean and for the fact that hundreds of millions of people across Africa, the US and the Caribbean speak English. Needless to say, slavery and the slave trade are central to the growth of the British colonies and the British Commonwealth and central to the formation of gender identities—to notions of masculinity and femininity, of the home and repro-

duction—and to the promotion of expectations of virtue in (white) women, and honour in (white) men. Without an understanding of the slave trade, slavery and colonialism, our understanding of all these institutions, social ideologies and social practices is incomplete.

When Liverpool announced its Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery more than 20 years ago, there was considerable opposition from Black people in the city. Some Black organizations, including the Consortium of Black Organizations, and the Liverpool 8 Law Centre, declared that the museums on Merseyside were racist, had nothing but stereotypical images of Africans, especially naked women, throughout their museums, did not employ Black staff, and were located in the Albert Dock—a place historically enmeshed in the legacy of slavery and, in the 1990s, hostile to Black visitors. Other Black groups in Liverpool, such as the Federation of Liverpool Black Organizations and the Merseyside African Council, agreed with these criticisms of the museum and its personnel but believed it was necessary to engage with them in a struggle over who shapes and controls Black history. I was involved in many of these discussions and I argued that we should be involved in everything the museum does (Small 1997). I insisted that no matter how we responded, the museum was going to go ahead with its plans and so we had to be part of what happens. I had low expectations of what a museum could achieve and I constantly suggested that a museum was simply a first step to addressing a much larger set of issues having to do with the legacy of discrimination. I addressed some of these issues in a chapter of the museum catalogue (Small 1994). Similarly today, the relationship between the academy and museums is one in which museums largely seek academic validation and status for the work that they do, and the academy provides scholarly support to their missions, with one or two exceptions.

This is exemplified by the establishment of the Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery, (which in 2007 became The International Slavery Museum) in Liverpool's Maritime Museum in 1991 (Tibbles 1994; Small 1997). In this instance, the museum attempted to establish a gallery based on academic expertise entirely from career historians, and with only token gestures to critical approaches such as afrocentricity. However, the community resisted and pushed for the inclusion of more Black scholars, in particular Black women, for some Afrocentric scholars, and for significant community involvement. They moved the focus of the gallery in a fundamental way, from an exclusive focus on the slave trade to a focus on slavery as one phenomenon in the context of European intrusion in Africa, as well as on the legacy of slavery after its official abolition.

The Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery opened in 1994. On reflection it is clear that we had a considerable amount of success. With constant pressure from community groups and others, the museum changed the focus of the gallery to include not just the slave trade but also African culture and civilization prior to slavery. It also included significant consideration of the legacy of slavery, including reparations (Small 1994). Leaving aside its plans to have only one curator, the museum increased their number to eleven, including seven Black people. None of this would have happened without the efforts of community organizations and our supporters. In 2007, when the gallery opened as the International Slavery Museum, it covered a much wider range of issues and with very substantial Black involvement. The International Slavery Museum now (2011) attracts thousands of visitors and many of them claim it is the best permanent museum on the subject of slavery in the world. It is fulfilling an important role in raising awareness of slavery and its legacy in Britain and across the world. The museum now reveals many

progressive elements, including the linking of contemporary racial inequality to slavery, and the use of progressive language like 'enslaved' rather than 'slave.' These developments took place only after the significant involvement of the community.

There are also similar—if tenuous—relationships between the academy and museums in the US. The situation would seem to be worse, overall, than in Britain. Progressive scholarship in the academy does not necessarily reach museums because they don't share the same goals and work under the grand narrative of American progress. Between 1996 and 2001 I visited more than 200 museums across the US South.<sup>1</sup> Since 2007 and the present time, I have visited another 80 sites, from Louisiana to Maryland (Small 2009). All these museums used to be slave plantations and have now been turned into tourist destinations. I call them 'plantation museums.' I also visited more than 20 Black museums. The stories that the 'plantation museums' tell are fundamentally different from those told at the Black museums. All of them are managed, operated and controlled by white people. Very few of them take the issue of slavery seriously. Slavery and Black people are frequently ignored altogether. They simply describe the big mansions on the slave plantations—the architecture, furniture, interior design, and the lifestyles of rich white men and women. This is a form of symbolic annihilation of Black people. If they talk about Black people at all, then the story almost always begins with slavery and focuses on stories of faithful, happy slaves and docile mammies who loved their so-called slave masters. One searches in vain for a bad slave master or a rebellious or unhappy slave.

<sup>1</sup> For the findings of this study, see Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery. Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*, Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.

These sites offer many reasons why they can't do things differently: problems of resources, limited data and evidence regarding Black life, objections from local Black communities. But it's all a fallacy. To see how things could be done differently, all they would have to do is look at the Black museum sites, which tell a fundamentally different story. They begin where the story should begin, in Africa, describing the variety and vitality of African cultures and the contributions of Africa to world civilization. Then they move to slavery and talk about Black resistance, resilience, honor, dignity, and the ways Black men and women survived the atrocities committed against them. Unlike in the mainstream museums, there is not a good slave master in sight and the enslaved are rebellious at every opportunity. Men and women are presented in their dignity and humanity. More importantly, most of the Black museums spend more time talking about other aspects of Black history, such as the Civil Rights Movement, Black inventors, artists and creators. For example, at the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco, we are told as we enter the building that slavery is just one issue in Black history.

One reason for inertia at the main sites is that knowledge created and produced outside universities, especially by Black people, is typically neglected, marginalized or invalidated. In the Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery, as mentioned above, we had specialists and people in the Black community who had been working on these issues, but without PhDs. They were asking different questions, challenging many of the academic assumptions about knowledge, epistemology, interpretations, especially about women under slavery and its legacy. In this case, we were able with community support to push some of their ideas onto the main agenda.

#### IV. CHALLENGING THE KNOWLEDGE VALIDATION PROCESS

Clearly in Britain these dynamics and processes within the universities and in museums do not go unchallenged, as we have seen from broader critiques of the academy in a range of areas. In Britain and the Netherlands there is a small but rising current of institutional and ideological opposition, made up of individual professors and researchers, components of research groups, as well as student groups and organizations (Miles 1981; Ben-Tovim et al. 1986). There are also initiatives outside the academy, either parallel to it or engaged with it. For some groups such as the Institute of Race Relations or the Southall Black Sisters have policy change as their primary goal. Others undertake research on the same topics as within the academy, or on different topics, with a far greater focus on Black agency and subjectivities and on the lives of others who are marginalized. These groups are of course limited in scope and resources, due to demography and to the institutional urge to standardization and the continued exclusionism on the basis of credentialization—but they persist.

Within the Eurocentric system too there are challenges. Despite all the limitations, its structure has allowed for progressive scholars from whom we can gain insights. It is clear from examples in the US that far more productive, progressive and innovative investigation and analysis emerges from contexts in which there are scholars with a diverse and even divergent set of backgrounds, who bring multi-disciplinary training and differing perspectives on the nature, processes and goals of knowledge creation and dissemination. Innovation and progressive work always works best when the rules of the game allow everyone to play. Racism in the academy could be perpetuated easily when it

was controlled by 99.95% white men. But since the arrival of Blacks, other people of color and women, the game rules have been changed. The staidness, the mediocrity and the partiality have been challenged with alternative paradigms, a multi-disciplinary focus, and new concepts and evidence. It's a continuing struggle.

This is evident for example in my field, African American Studies. From the end of the Civil War to the 1960s, studies of African Americans were dominated by scholars under the thrall of the plantation mythology. Their memories of the Civil War were mainly about what they saw as the injustice and cowardice on the part of the North. Foremost among them was Ulrich B. Phillips, whose work shaped that of his contemporaries and future generations with its inveterate racism and bias (Phillips 1920).

But with the existence of small numbers of progressive white scholars (like Herbert Aptheker), of African American scholars and of women scholars, including white women and women of color, the questions, the issues, the research, the data and the conclusions were subjected to more rigorous interrogation. These scholars challenged the academy and produced scholarship that broadened epistemologies (most notably in accessing data and evidence produced by the enslaved rather than just the enslavers) (Hull, et al. 1982). They also insisted on and documented the role of gender as institution and ideology (Morgan 2004) by examining vernacular culture such as folktales, rather than just the documentary evidence left by elite and/or official whites in power (Levine, 1977), and by bringing in material culture such as archaeology and architecture from, for example, the slave cabins and slave quarters (Singleton 1985; Ferguson 1992). In this way, the insights into slavery from the back of the big house proved to be far better than those from the dining room in the big house itself (Vlach, 1993). And all of this highlighted



issues of gender and women's experiences in radical and progressive ways—the ways in which gender shaped the honor and masculinity of white men as protectors, and of Black men too; the limited number of white women who occupied the institution location of “plantation belles” (Clinton, 1982); the diverse strategies of Black women under slavery, and their solidarities and priorities, as Patricia Hill Collins calls them, for group survival and institutional transformation (Collins, 1991). It is because of scholars of a wide and divergent set of backgrounds, training and motivations that the US academy is not as bankrupt as it could easily have been, or could easily become, if we do not continue to resist the drift—or, rather, the rush—to standardization. The recent success of the State of Arizona in abolishing Ethnic Studies courses is but the tip of the iceberg of what could eventually happen.

There are also challenges within the academy in Britain and the Netherlands too—from progressive white scholars, feminists, and the small number of black scholars (Essed and Nimako 2006). But they are far fewer in number and effect, given demography and institutional context. The opportunities for divergence from these patterns is far greater in the US, than in Europe, given the far larger range of institutional settings, and the bigger range of organizations, units, community groups—and the links between them—outside the academy. This is evident in several fields, and especially in African American Studies, in Ethnic Studies, in Latin American Studies and in Gender and Women's Studies.

## V. CONCLUSION

Those of us trying to tackle the enormity of what transpired in slavery and colonialism in the past several centuries must figure out how to unravel the tangled knots of distortion and bias that so often

pass for fact in academic analysis. And we should seek to do so both within and outside of an institutional context best described by Patricia Hill Collins as the Eurocentric masculinist knowledge validation process. In the context of the institutional changes under way in the academy, and the economic climate, things could become worse. In some respects our confrontation is simple: we must add perspectives and add people—other people of color, women as well as men—so that we can go beyond the frameworks, focus and facts deemed appropriate within the validation process for the study of slavery and its legacy. But in other respects it is highly problematic; the weight of dead generations rests on our heads and the records that have been collected constrain our approaches. The canons of the academy and the criteria established for validating scholarship still contain and constrain us. These frameworks are the criteria against which we must fight to establish a more comprehensive and multi-faceted appreciation of the unfolding of human events.

This validation process has faced continuing challenges, from within and without, which gives us some grounds for hope. Although scholars of color and progressive scholars operate in Eurocentric academic spaces, they now have greater and greater access to public platforms from which they can challenge this validation process. We need to keep up this spirit and create the institutional mechanisms and dynamics to challenge the prevailing hegemony. We need to continue developing institutional initiatives such as the present colloquium (for which we thank Ramón Grosfoguel); the Black Europe Summer School (and we thank Kwame Nimako); and initiatives within NiNsee (and we thank Artwell Cain); and similar initiatives in Britain. All of these will continue to benefit from international and Diasporic exchange, with many insights coming from colleagues and communities in the US and

other nations who work on issues concerning other marginalized groups and knowledge production, and who can provide insights and lessons for our benefit.

With regard to the study of slavery and its legacy, in Britain and the Netherlands, we believe that a significant way forward is to continue pushing alternative epistemologies and sources of data to those dominant in the academy through alternative institutional mechanisms such as the Black Europe Summer School. In particular, we believe we must continue to draw on the range of Black voices and visions that exist: for slavery, including non-documentary sources like folktales, music and vernacular culture, as well as archaeology, architecture and art (Giley 2000; Galle and Young 2004). The views from the back of the Big House and the cultural messages in the creative work of artists challenge the validation process in fundamental ways. We continue to challenge assumptions, develop perspectives, collect evidence, and make all of it available to broader constituencies, and with a greater array of media, than the academy is likely to do at any time in the near future. Clearly our initiatives will benefit from the voices and visions of other marginalized peoples. That is another reason we participate in seminars like the one today. We also believe that we should continue to exchange Diasporic resources—continue a healthy flow of institutional ideas, of individuals and insights in the form of symposia, literature and meetings. NiNsee is already actively involved in such activities—with exchange across the Dutch former colonies, with Britain, with the US well under way. The Summer School on Black Europe also has an extensive web. Clearly, the internet can be very useful here if used widely.

We must continue to mobilize to challenge this knowledge validation process; to challenge the dominant institutions through which it is constituted; and continue to mobilize individuals, groups,

even communities. In these ways, we can continue to create different pathways to knowledge and empowerment.

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