

colonialism would have been helpful. Nevertheless the book is to be recommended for bringing together a number of rich case studies.

Missionsseminar Hermannsburg

FRIEDER LUDWIG

LIVERPOOL'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE SLAVE TRADE

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Liverpool and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Edited by DAVID RICHARDSON, SUZANNE SCHWARZ and ANTHONY TIBBLES. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press/National Museums Liverpool/Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 2007. Pp. xii + 315. £50 (ISBN 978-1-84631-066-9).

KEY WORDS: Shipping, slave trade.

This timely book comprises ten essays originally presented at the International Conference on Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery, held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in 2005. The inspiration for the conference was the influential, yet flawed, book *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade, and Abolition*, edited by Roger Anstey and Paul Hair in 1976. The essays presented in this new volume cover a variety of topics related to Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade, some of which provide comprehensive new information. All essays benefit greatly from the important statistical research presented by David Eltis *et al.* in *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database on CD-Rom* (New York, 1999).

Although most of the articles will be of general interest to the student of African history, two are particularly relevant. Lovejoy and Richardson's 'African agency and the Liverpool slave trade', highlights the importance of sophisticated systems of credit provision that enabled European and African merchants to engage in effective trading partnerships. The authors also go into some detail explaining how credit systems varied at different locations on the West African coast. This essay provides additional weight to the case presented in journal articles that Lovejoy and Richardson have previously published on this subject, utilizing some important statistics gleaned from the data base mentioned above. These statistics highlight Liverpool's important role in pioneering trade in previously neglected West African markets, which contributed to the town's dominance of the British slave trade during the late eighteenth century.

Trevor Burnard's 'The Atlantic slave trade and African ethnicities in seventeenth-century Jamaica', also profits greatly from *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* in accounting for the various origins of enslaved Africans transported to Jamaica during the period in question. Although the essay has no relevance in relation to the title of the book, as current research shows that Liverpool merchants did not embark upon their first slaving voyage until 1695, this article does have much wider importance, demonstrating the danger in generalizing about the survival of distinct African cultural practices throughout the Americas. Burnard challenges the current orthodoxies of Gwendolyn Midlo Hall and others, who state that ethnically homogenous Africans tended to be clustered together on the same plantations by landowners, thereby allowing collective cultural practices to remain intact. Burnard is far more sympathetic to what he considers to be the currently out-of-favour interpretations of Mintz and Price, which state that the trauma of slavery made it very difficult for cultural practices to be transmitted from Africa to the Americas. Although not going as far as seeing enslavement as a form of

'social death', Burnard provides an interesting account which reflects on the work of Mintz and Price whilst recognizing the contributions of John Thornton and others.

A criticism of the book is that in revisiting Liverpool's role in the slave trade it fails to critically re-examine the conclusions presented in *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade, and Abolition*. Jane Longmore's paper nevertheless challenges an important finding that needed revision. Anstey and Hair claimed that 'Liverpool was more important for the slave trade than the slave trade was for Liverpool'. Longmore dismisses this viewpoint, repositioning the slave trade as integral to the development of Liverpool during the eighteenth century. She claims that the 'African trade' employed one out of every eight Liverpool families, and also makes a bold leap suggesting that the abolition of the trade led to the decline of the town's manufacturing industries. This decline left Liverpool with a predominantly unskilled labour force, ultimately leading to the industrial relations problems the city would experience in the future.

Liverpool and the Transatlantic Slave Trade will be undoubtedly of use to anyone who has more than a passing interest in the role the African slave trade played in developing one of the Atlantic World's most prominent ports.

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LAURENCE WESTGAPH

THE RISE OF THE 'LIVERPOOL OF WEST AFRICA'

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Slavery and the Birth of an African City: Lagos, 1760–1900. By KRISTIN MANN. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 473. \$55 (ISBN 978-0-253-34884-5).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, labour, slavery, slave trade, urban.

Lagos, Nigeria, is a city on the make. With a documented population of 8 million now, Lagos is expected to be the third largest city in the world by 2020. Commerce thrives there, as street vendors take advantage of traffic jams to peddle to captive markets, and business people constantly negotiate deals large and small. Lagosians' legendary entrepreneurship makes sense in a city founded on trade, but the settlement's magnitude could hardly have been predicted when the first Europeans encountered it in the sixteenth century. One of many regional trade crossroads, Lagos formed the village capital of a small and insignificant kingdom. Yet by the first half of the nineteenth century, Lagos was becoming an international port linking West Africa's hinterland to the Atlantic world. *Slavery and the Birth of an African City* details both the major transformations in Lagos's political economy during this period and the social history of the residents most affected by it: slave-traders, slaveholders and enslaved men, women and children themselves.

Lagos's development was intimately tied up with the international slave trade and domestic slavery. After 1808, as the Atlantic slave trade entered its last, illegal phase, Lagos became the leading slave port north of the equator. More than 200,000 captives, many seized in the Yoruba wars of the hinterland, departed Lagos for slavery in Brazil and Cuba. Lagos's rulers guaranteed safe conditions for trade and invested the proceeds in canoes, weapons and people, all of which helped transform the small kingdom into a significant commercial and political power. As elsewhere, the slave trade brought a major new means of acquiring and holding