



# ***Slavery, Colonialism and Museums Representations in Great Britain***

## **Old and New Circuits of Migration**

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One of the consequences of British colonialism across the world was the appropriation of cultural artefacts, sacred and precious objects; and one of the legacies is their display in British museums. For more than one hundred years the museums of Great Britain have functioned to bolster national (white) pride and glorify British culture by showcasing a wide array of artefacts plundered and looted during European slavery and colonialism. One of the most significant legacies of British colonialism is the migration of minorities to the metropolis, their permanent settlement there and the growth of local-born populations. These groups have mobilized successful challenges to the hegemonic representations of British glory prevalent in museums. At present, dramatic and irreversible transformations in the representations and discourses of colonialism are under way in long-established museums across the nation. And new exhibits, galleries and museums projecting markedly different representations and discourses, and questioning the very foundation of museum principles, knowledge and functions have also emerged in recent decades. None of these developments are conceivable, or their dynamics understandable, outside the framework of international migration and settlement. And at the same time, new circuits of international migration, fuelled by inequalities of wealth and the ravages of war, all in the maelstrom of globalization, have led to the recent arrival of new migrants—and permanent settlers—new artefacts, new debates, and the potential for new transformations.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In the 1950s, a majority of white people in Britain had never seen a 'coloured colonial immigrant' in person. The Black<sup>1</sup> population was tiny in number, and concentrated in the historic port cities of

Liverpool, Bristol, London and Cardiff (Rose, et al. 1969). But all that has changed. By 2011 the Black population in Britain

<sup>1</sup> By 'Black' I am referring to people of African and African Caribbean origin, including people who identify as 'mixed-race' from these groups.

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numbered more than 1.5 million, and there are sizeable Black populations in all the major cities. At the same time, even larger numbers of immigrants and settlers arrived from India, Pakistan and later, Bangladesh; by 2011 they numbered over 3 million. And in the last decade, Britain has seen the arrival and settlement of hundreds of thousands of new migrants—EU citizens from Poland and Romania, and refugees from nations in Africa that were not part of the British Empire (like Somalia, Congo and Rwanda). There are similar patterns elsewhere in Europe, particularly in former imperial nations, like the Netherlands, France, Belgium and Spain; as well as in Germany and Italy (Hine, Keaton and Small 2009).

In Britain, through the 1950s and beyond, most museums said little or nothing of slavery and empire, and they ignored, downplayed, or marginalized explicit discussion of slavery and its legacy. If they said anything it was to glorify Empire, and/or British abolition of the slave trade, and they focused mainly on material culture, rather than human chattel. They housed objects and art that presented crude and mono-dimensional stereotypes of Africa, Africans and slavery; and almost none had Black people involved as agents, or organisers. They were overwhelmingly visited by white people. This was also the case for the series of world's fairs that took place in Britain (and elsewhere) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Blanchard et al. 2008). And it was true for monuments and statues that memorialized empire (Dresser 2007).

Today (2011) in Britain, if you look in the press, on television, in popular culture, it seems like the legacy of slavery is a key aspect of British museums. There have been temporary or permanent exhibits in the main museums in Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham and Hull (Wallace 2006). And of course, let's not forget London (Littler and Naidoo 2005). Some

museums now have permanent exhibits and galleries of slavery, colonialism, or on Africa. Many are rich, textured, progressive even, and have striven to convey a wide range of the Black experience, in Africa and the Diaspora. In several of them there is significant critique of Empire, critique of slavery, even of slave trade abolition. And Black people are more actively involved than ever before—as curators, managers, writers—though still in numbers below their proportions in the population (Tibbles 1994; Visram 2002; Young 2002; Tulloch 2005). And there has been extensive outreach to draw on resources, insights, and information from across the African Diaspora and Africa itself. Some of these activities began several decades ago, but the biggest spur occurred in 2007, which was the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legal abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire. The anniversary attracted extensive scholarly interest, a wide range of museum initiatives and significant funds from government (Hilton 2010). Many Black and multi-racial organizations were involved, and there were increased calls for reparations (Brennan 2005, 2008).

Migration and museums brings together two fields of studies for which there are large and fascinating literatures and, which are not usually associated with one another. But with regard to Black people and the legacy of slavery/colonialism and museums in Britain I argue that the two fields are intricately and, in fact, inextricably related, to one another. We know all the reasons migration is important in and of itself, but why are museums important, and how are they connected to migration? Museums are important because they are one institutional site among many where hostile representations, images and discourses of Black people and Africa continue to occur. In fact, historically, museums in Britain have held some of the most reprehensible images of Blacks as barbarians and savages; and the most

vicious images of Black women, since the advent of European colonialism (Fryer 1984). Museums are important sites for the contestation of identity and ethnicity, including national and religious identity (Greenhill 1997). They are important sites for contestation over grand narratives of history, especially nationalist and imperial history (Trouillot 1995; Littler and Naidoo 2005). And where you have history you always have memory. This is clearly the case in Britain and elsewhere when it comes to slavery (Nimako and Small 2009). And more generally, museums raise issues of power, inequality and access to resources, just as with so many other racialized institutions, including employment, education and politics (Small 1997). They are one terrain, as elsewhere, in which groups stratified by class, gender, race, ethnicity and nation compete. In what follows my concern is with the connections between museums on slavery, colonialism, and their legacies on the one hand, and the facts, processes, and analysis of migration on the other.

## II. FOUR OVERLAPPING MIGRATIONS

In the context of the relationship between the Black experience in Britain, and museum representations of slavery and colonialism, four broad types of migration have shaped the museums that I discuss. The first three have had substantial impact already. The fourth one is more recent and its effects are still yet to be fully felt. Each of these migrations have been and continue to be shaped by class, race and gender.

First, the migration of Europeans to Africa, Asia and what became the Americas, and the establishment of empires (Fryer 1984). Without this migration, conquest and settlement over the last 500 years, many museums of Europe would be

dramatically different, or largely empty. For several hundred years the museums of Britain have functioned to celebrate empire, promote imperial glory, bolster national (white) pride and glorify western culture by showcasing a wide array of artefacts plundered and looted during European slavery and colonialism. Gender was also central in the management and representations in these museums. These patterns are also reflected in the various world's fairs in Britain and across Europe (Coombes 1994; Blanchard 2008).

Second, the migration of West Indians and African-Caribbeans to Britain in large numbers since the 1950s—which has both extended and diversified the long-established Black populations of Liverpool and elsewhere (Fryer 1984). There is no need here to discuss the vast details of the migration of Blacks to Britain, but simply to mention that there were small Black communities in the nation going back several hundred years—my home city Liverpool was one of these. And to place them in the context of the much larger populations of Blacks in Britain today, who trace their most immediate origins to post world war II migration—in which a population of less than 50,000 in 1950s had by 2011 grown to more than 1.5 million. This is the one clear example of the direct human legacy of slavery and colonialism (Miles and Phizacklea 1984).

Third, there is the migration of other significant groups from within the British Empire, in particular Asians, from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and from East Africa. They too were the victims of colonialism and imperialism (Visram 2002). These populations arrived in larger numbers and are currently larger in size than the Black population, with a population in 2011 over 3 million. Though they have not yet pushed through their issues in terms of museums, representations and exhibits, it is quite possible, indeed quite likely, they will do so. For a variety of

reasons, they have relatively greater access to resources—including financial and political—than do Blacks, and this will be a key factor in the competition for cultural representations in the decades to come.

Fourth, dramatically new, demographically large, and politically significant patterns of migration and settlement have unfolded since the 1980s. This involves the large-scale migration and settlement of whites from what used to be Eastern Europe (they joined the already established hundreds of thousands of whites from elsewhere in Europe). And it involves tens of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers from elsewhere, including Africa and Asia, e.g., Somalia. Though their involvement with museums is negligible at present, these groups are significant because as they become established and more indigenous, it is highly likely that they too will demand representations and exhibits that reflect their unique histories. It is possible that these groups will form another collectivity, competing for access to resources to present their own hidden or suppressed histories and legacies.

Needless to say, each of these migrations was and is irrepressibly gendered, and reflects the prevailing divisions of labor, and the differential allocation of men and women to realms of production and reproduction at each stage the migration occurred. Slavery and colonialism involved overwhelmingly white men rather than women, with very low proportion of white women in the colonies (Morgan 2007). The European Slave trade captured and enslaved mainly African men because planters preferred men to women, though over time there were very different patterns in the US than in the Caribbean. And the proportion of white women increased dramatically in mainland USA, while it failed to increase at all in the Caribbean (Morgan 2007). West Indian migration to Britain involved a majority of men, but with significant numbers of women—

many of whom came on their own—and others as spouses or children of male immigrants (Miles and Phizacklea 1984). This reflected the significantly independent economic role of Black women in the British Caribbean. Among Asian immigrants, men were very significantly over-represented and Asian women came primarily as spouses, and family members. The gender patterns of other, more recent populations are highly varied, but again reveal higher proportions of men than women.

The precise ways that gender has impacted museums is yet to be fully investigated. But some initial observations can be made. The most important 19<sup>th</sup> century museums in Britain were articulated through a preoccupation with masculinity as represented in military combat, and have continued to frame subsequent museums development. Sexist stereotypes of women have prevailed from the inception of museums, and stereotypes of Black women have been the most demeaning of all racist representations in museums. Women have been less involved in mainstream museums, though Black women were more active than men in the smaller community organizations involved in commemorations and remembrance of slavery (Bryan 1985; Sudbury 1998). Black women have been active in all the efforts to transform representations of museums in the last two decades and remain at the forefront of efforts today, including reparations. In these ways they seek to ensure that issues of gender, and the distinctive problems confronting Black women, are high on the agenda of museums.

### III. MUSEUMS AND EMPIRE IN BRITAIN

In the decades following World War II, museums were not on the radar of the majority of Black people, whether in the long-standing Black communities of Brit-

ain, such as Liverpool and Cardiff, nor in the newly arrived and emerging Black communities of London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. Overwhelmingly working class, mostly convinced they were in Britain only for a short while. Black peoples' priorities were jobs and housing. However, as they became settled priorities increasingly focused on education for children, and access to politics. At all times they dealt with racism—because it directly affected them and they most certainly confronted hostile and racist images in television, press and other media. Some campaigns began. But overwhelmingly Blacks did not collectively look at museums or bother with the very explicit racial stereotypes in museums (Sivanandan 1990; Small 1994a; Sudbury 1998).

There were issues of commemoration in Black communities—in churches, in community organizations and groups, including churches. They may have had artefacts, monuments, memorials, but all were on a small scale, and tended to be personal or family based. Rastafarian organizations were central here—especially for the second generation, people like me, born of a West Indian immigrant parent (Campbell 1985). Rastafari brought African images, artefacts, sacred objects, from West Africa and from Ethiopia in particular, to the centre of many Black communities. They also brought images, ideas, icons from Jamaica and the Caribbean (Small 1983). But again these groups did not address museums. They simply set up separate institutional arrangements for commemoration and memorialization. By the 1970s and 1980s, especially as the Black population was being transformed from an immigrant to a British-born population, there was increasing unhappiness in Black communities over the stereotypical representations of Blacks in museums, especially of Africans. Some initiatives to challenge them began in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and elsewhere (Simpson 2001;

Rice 2007). And of course, London.

It was the Right Honourable Bernie Grant, MP, who put museums on the agenda of most Black people. And he did so in a direct and innovative way, by linking museums and reparations. Bernie Grant was one of 3 Black politicians elected to parliament in 1987, along with Diane Abbott and Paul Boateng. All three were members of the Labour Party and represented constituencies in London. Born in Guyana, and migrating to Britain as a young man, Grant rose through trade unions, became leader of Haringey Council in London, before being elected to Parliament for a working class multi-racial district—Tottenham—in north London. He was a founding member in 1989 of the Parliamentary Black Caucus, modeled after the Congressional Black Caucus in the United States. His work reflected his priorities in helping working class people, Black and white. He was actively engaged in a wide range of activities, including combating racism and inequality in Britain, and addressing the legacy of slavery and colonialism in the West Indies and Africa. He travelled to Black communities across Britain, and in Europe; he was also involved in Pan-African organizations and conferences. And he initiated and led the largest movement in Britain for Reparations for slavery.

Among the many struggles he mounted against institutional inequality, racial discrimination in employment, housing, education and immigration, he identified museums as an important symbolic issue and he made a big public issue of them. Bernie Grant knew that the British had stolen, borrowed or begged thousands of artefacts from all over Africa, and had them on exhibit across the nation, or locked away safely in the basements of their museums. He identified the Benin Bronzes as one important set of artefacts plundered by the British. The Benin Bronzes included hundreds of artefacts sculptured by indige-



nous Africans, that were plundered during the British Punitive Expedition in 1897 (Coombes 194). This involved a well-documented incident in which the killing of a white man who trespassed on the land of the Oba of Benin became the excuse for a punitive expedition, the destruction of the city of Benin and the plundering of the Bronzes (Coombes 1994). All of this was just a façade for British imperial aspirations to control the trade and territories of that region. A central controversy associated with the Benin Bronzes involved the reluctance and outright refusal of Europeans to believe that they had been created by Africans. Instead, it was claimed that they had white origins—allegedly Portuguese sailors. Similar doubts had been expressed about other African marvels, such as Great Zimbabwe. Worth millions of dollars at the present time—many of them in the British Museum, Liverpool Museum, and scattered around Europe—the Benin Bronzes demonstrate the ways in which intersections of politics, profits and culture, along with national and racist arrogance, remain one of the direct legacies of slavery and colonialism. The return of the Bronzes is a reckoning that has yet to be assessed; and no doubt there are many more such items hidden in museums across that nation waiting to be accounted for.

One of the first things Bernie Grant did was organize a protest at the British Museum over the many artefacts they had plundered from Africa. He called for precious and sacred artefacts to be returned to their rightful owners. And he highlighted the link between museums and reparations. He began the reparations movement in Britain, mobilised thousands of people to be involved in it and in his capacity as Member of Parliament was able to command considerable public and media attention. He travelled to conferences and activist groups in the Caribbean and Africa and spoke on the topic widely.

In his travels across Britain, one of the

trips Bernie Grant made was to Liverpool, to the Charles Wootton Centre, an education and community centre named after Charles Wootton, a Black man murdered by white men in Liverpool in 1919. During that trip he recruited me to work with him. I had already begun working on the Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery in Liverpool (see below), and I was attracted by Bernie Grant's activism and the way he linked Museums, Reparations and more mainstream priorities in the Black community, like employment, education and policing. I knew that the museums in Liverpool had several Benin Bronzes. Many Black people in Liverpool had campaigned for a Black museum, and had argued that the museums had thousands of other artefacts. They had also protested against racism in Liverpool's museums (Gifford et al. 1989). I was strongly attracted to the issue of Reparations—because of the issues it raised about the profits of slavery, and because it promised great potential in mobilizing Black people, and white allies—around the legacy of slavery more generally, especially in the area of education. While working with the organization I made it clear that my priority was never about obtaining cash payments, though it was also made clear to me that for many this was the primary priority. I also urged Bernie Grant to become involved in the Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery that was being developed in Liverpool, and I wrote a chapter on the legacy of slavery in the gallery's catalogue, one that mentioned Bernie Grant and Reparations (Small 1994b).

Over the next decade, I worked as an assistant to Bernie Grant, especially on museums, identifying and summarizing academic studies, gathering information, making assessments and writing speeches. Between 1992-1995, I gave lectures on behalf of Bernie Grant's organization—Reparations UK—at universities around the UK. And I urged him to make museums more central to the debate on Repara-

tions—because museums possessed concrete objects collected during slavery and colonialism, which we could identify and demand accountability for. He agreed and we did that. For both of us—and Reparations UK generally—museums were more than a matter of changing images and artefacts, nor simply of recovering suppressed or forgotten histories. They were a matter of mobilizing populations to access resources, especially in areas of education and employment. We raised issues about how many Black men and women were employed at museums, questions about portrayals of Africa, about the many lies told about slavery, and we questioned the so-called magnanimity of the British legal abolition of the slave trade. These were concrete questions that arose from museums, but which gave rise to broader, wider and deeper issues to do with slavery and its legacies. It was for many of these reasons that so many people supported the movement. Tragically, Bernie Grant died prematurely in 2000, age 57, of Diabetes. The reparations movement continues—in fact is expanding—but the focus on museums is no longer as central as it was in the past.

#### **IV. THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE GALLERY 1994**

While Bernie Grant was active in these issues, there were other developments in British museums that would drag slavery to the front of the public and political agenda. The Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery in Liverpool was one of them. Preparations for this gallery (which in 2007 became The International Slavery Museum) in Liverpool's Maritime Museum became public in 1991 (Tibbles 1994; Small 1997; Wallace 2006). With a large financial donation from a local millionaire, the museum attempted to establish a gallery about the Atlantic Slave Trade that would be based on

academic expertise entirely from career historians, and with only token gestures to critical approaches such as Afrocentricity. But the Black community in Liverpool and elsewhere resisted and pushed for the inclusion of more Black scholars, especially women, for 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 the legacy of slavery after its legal abolition.

The emergence of the gallery reflected struggles over museums in Liverpool, and elsewhere in the 1960s and 1970s. When the gallery was announced some Black organizations, including the Consortium of Black Organizations, and the Liverpool 8 Law Centre, insisted 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 (Gifford et al. 1989). Other Black groups in Liverpool, like the Federation of Liverpool Black Organizations and the Merseyside African Council, agreed but wanted to engage with the museum 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 planned (Small 1997). I argued 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 happened. I had low expectations of what a museum could achieve and I constantly argued that a museum was simply a first step to addressing a much larger set of issues having to do with the legacy of slavery. Some of these bigger issues I described in one of the chapters I wrote in the museum catalogue, and in

subsequent publications (Small 1994b, 1997).

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 from just the slave trade, to looking at African culture and civilization prior to slavery. It also included significant consideration of the legacy of slavery, including reparations (Small 1994b). And the museum increased the number of curators from its original plan of 1 curator to a total of 11, including 7 Black people. None of this would have happened if it were not for the efforts of Black community organizations and our supporters. In the following decade, a range of temporary exhibits took place, and Black people were involved in many of them. In 2007, the gallery opened as the International Slavery Museum covering a much wider range of issues and with very substantial Black representation and 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. In this way, it is fulfilling an important role in raising awareness of slavery and its legacy in Britain and across the world.

Clearly this is not an unmitigated success but the important thing is that significant changes happened because Black people and multi-racial organizations got involved in the process, in the debates, the discussions, and in the meetings. And the museum now reveals many progressive elements, including the links made between contemporary racial inequality to slavery, and the use of progressive language like 'enslaved' rather than 'slave.' These are elements that came about only after the significant involvement of the Black community. Bernie Grant spoke at the gallery several times, and

played an active role in mobilizing populations.

## V. DISCUSSION AND SOME ISSUES TODAY

Given all these factors and the rapidly changing context in which museums are being discussed, as just described, I want to raise several important questions. All reflect a concern with how the continuing inequalities in access to resources and power will shape the development of museum representations of slavery colonialism, and their legacies.

First, what is and will be the nature of the stories that museums tell? Now that we have more attention to histories of slavery and colonialism in museums, one challenge will be to prevent the narratives and portrayals from becoming monotonous, anodyne, and devoid of any discussions of the antagonism or conflict and justice at the heart of slavery. I fear the possibility of a drift towards narratives that erase the fundamental violence, brutality and exploitation at the heart of slavery and colonialism. We have seen this pattern become entrenched across the South of the United States where museums that once celebrated and glorified slavery now include passing, facile mention of Black people. In my work in the United States I described this as symbolic annihilation (Eichstedt and Small 2002). I was reminded of this in Veronique's Henelon's presentation on Martinique. This could happen in Britain (and elsewhere in Europe) in particular, because of the financial benefits to tourism from these kinds of museum exhibits, and because of the inescapable power inequalities that continue to shape exhibits. Key here is the national self-referential frame that continues to shape museums. In Britain, of course, this is navel gazing pride about British abolitionism. There remain promising signs that this will be resisted by Black



and multi-racial organizations—such as the Franz Fanon Centre in Birmingham, the Kuumba Imani Millenium Centre in Liverpool, and the George Padmore Institute in London. The vibrant reparations movement may also continue to raise questions of the source and legitimacy of artefacts in museums.

As these patterns unfold, I believe that continued engagement with the Diaspora—the exchange of ideas, institutions, ideologies and resources, from the United States and the Caribbean to Africa, should and will play a key role. This has always been the case in Britain. It is increasing the case in other nations, such as The Netherlands and France. It will surely be the case in Spain and Portugal—imperial nations that don't have Black populations of significant size, or community mobilization around museums and related issues—but will surely be drawn into the debates on museums and the legacy of slavery. It is also increasingly the case for Belgium, Germany and Italy.

A second point concerns the potential for reactionary responses. In the context of modern Britain, with the ending of multiculturalism, the increased emphasis on social cohesion rather than a concern with racial discrimination and inequality, and several instances of celebrations of empire, the legacy of slavery might easily become one in which there is even greater emphasis on the celebration of British abolitionism. The recently changed government (2010) from Labor to Conservative/Liberal Democrats, and the deteriorating economic conditions, and government cutbacks, have already begun to intensify competition over resources. This will directly affect museums too.

A third point concerns the potential challenge that may come from multiple groups in competition for access to museum and gallery exhibits and representations. Blacks alone are not the only ones who want their suppressed and hidden

histories told. And as Bob Marley sang 'Every man thinks that his burden is the heaviest,' so with multiple migrant groups from nations around the world—many of whom are arriving from situations of political violence, murder and conflict—there are many stories to be told, each of which is regarded as more important than the others. From the former Yugoslavia to Poland, from Somalia and Congo to Rwanda, there will be competition for resources. Some groups may collaborate; others will compete. As Kwame Nimako said more generally, it is always an issue of resources. While many of these groups have not yet pushed their demands in this domain—because they have other priorities—I suspect that they will become more important as they increasingly demand that their histories are told.

## VI. CONCLUSION

After more than one hundred years of museums in Britain that operated as bastions of imperial glory, the last three decades have seen transformations in the nature of representations and discourses of colonialism. Exhibits, galleries and even museums have been established that challenge this mono-dimensional and distorted memory of the past, and significant changes have been achieved (Nimako and Small 2009). We now have a far wider range of representations than ever before. And the transformations occurred primarily because of the migration and settlement of former colonial subjects in the metropolis, and their mobilization along with multi-racial organizations.

Because museums are racialized institutions; because they continue to house so many precious and sacred artefacts that were stolen or illegitimately acquired; because they are one institution among many in which contestations over grand narratives of national history occur; because museums about Black people arose prima-

rily because of multiple patterns of migration; and because they reflect issues of access to resources, of power and inequality, then the link between museums and migration must remain an important issue of concern to social analysts. It is not my intention to argue that museums are the most important issue confronting the Black community in Britain. They are not. Other issues remain far more fundamental—including the entrenched patterns of racial inequality, racial discrimination and continuing conflict with the police. In addition, the narrow and distorted representations of Blacks that one still sees so often in various media—television, films and the press—remain highly problematic. But museums are significant and they require our attention. They still remain important institutions, in terms of the stories they tell about slavery, colonialism, and imperial glory. In this respect they are key institutions that provide large numbers of people in Britain with an important gateway to representations of the past.

Some of the most crude, vulgar and offensive images in museums have been challenged; and some key exhibits have been mounted that offer a more balanced perspective on slavery and its legacies. But they are far from being comprehensive and embedded, and operate currently without any guarantee that they will be developed further. At the same time new migrants and settlers are increasingly making demands. At the very moment that the struggle to challenge historically dominant representations of colonialism in British museums is gaining traction, these new circuits of migration pose challenges to this trend, and could even threaten to undermine it. Whether these developments will stall and curtail the few gains made, or whether they will lead to more fundamental transformations in museum representations is the issue at stake. In this regard, we must continue to be vigilant about the ways in which migration and museums are intertwined.

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