

Introduction. Falling Statues around the Atlantic: Colonizers, Enslavers, and White Abolitionists as Targets of Anti-Racist Activism and the Historical Background of Not-decolonized Memorial Cityscapes

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ABSTRACTS

Die Welle stürzender Denkmäler im nordatlantischen Raum steht im Zusammenhang mit der Black Lives Matter-Bewegung nach der rassistischen Ermordung von George Floyd am 25. Mai 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Statuen von Versklavern, Kolonisatoren, kolonialistischen Politikern und Missionaren, Ideologen des Rassismus und konföderierten Generälen wurden von Demonstranten in der britischen Karibik und in Großbritannien, den USA, der französischen Karibik und Frankreich, den Niederlanden, Belgien, Dänemark, Schweden, Spanien, Portugal gestürzt, entfernt, enthauptet oder zumindest angefochten. Vorliegende Einführung gibt einen Überblick über das Geschehene sowie einige Hinweise zur Beantwortung der Frage, warum das Jahr einer globalen Pandemiekrise nicht alle Menschen an die gegenwärtigen Probleme gebunden hat, sondern Bewegungen von People of Colour und anderen Protagonisten einer kritischen Erinnerung an Versklavung und Kolonialismus auch veranlasste, über diese Vergangenheit zu diskutieren und ihre Symbole zu zerstören.

Das *Comparativ*-Heft vereint Experten der Geschichte und verwandter Disziplinen, die über verschiedene Länder schreiben, in denen Denkmäler gestürzt oder gegen sie protestiert wurde. Die Autoren analysieren lokale Bedingungen, Agenten und globale Netzwerke einer starken politischen Bewegung im Jahr 2020, dem Jahr der Krisen und fallenden Statuen. Die Texte argu-

mentieren nicht für die Erhaltung dieses Denkmals und die Entfernung eines anderen, sondern sie fragen, wo, warum und mit welchen Argumenten Denkmäler von wem in Frage gestellt werden und auch, wo Statuen nicht zertrümmert wurden und warum. Was sagt die Erinnerung oder das Schweigen über die Hinterlassenschaften von Kolonialismus und Sklaverei über gegenwärtige Gesellschaften und Machtverhältnisse aus? Wie hängen die Argumente der Aktivist:innen mit Ergebnissen der akademischen Geschichtsschreibung zusammen?

The circum-Atlantic wave of tumbling monuments is connected with the Black Lives Matter movement after the racist murder of George Floyd on 25 May 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Statues of enslavers, colonizers, colonialist politicians and missionaries, ideologues of racism, confederate generals were toppled, removed, beheaded or at least contested by protesters in the British Caribbean and Great Britain, the USA, the French Caribbean and France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Portugal... This introduction delivers an overview about what happened and gives some hints to answer the question why the year of a global pandemic crisis did not tie all people to the present problems as to be supposed, but led movements of People of Colour and other protagonists of a critical remembrance of enslavement and colonialism to argue about this past and destroy its symbols.

This issue of *Comparativ* reunites experts in history and related disciplines writing about different countries where monuments were toppled or protested against. The authors analyse local conditions, agents, and global networks of a strong political movement in 2020, year of crises and falling statues. They do not argue for the maintenance of this monument and the removal of another, but they ask where, why and with which arguments monuments are contested by whom, and also, where statues were not smashed and why. What does remembrance or silence about the legacies of colonialism and slavery say about present societies and the relations of power? How are the arguments of activists related to results of academic historiography?

This comparative issue is the result of a long-lasting research effort about a topic, which suddenly moved to the centre of media attention by the end of May 2020 due to the murder of Georg Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests in the United States. The research, especially Ulrike Schmieder's study, was based on the assumption that today's *Memoria* should lean on historical knowledge concerning the remembered pasts. *Memoria* and historical research belong thus together. Whereas *Memoria* is a highly controversial field in today's politics, research on history must be developed professionally and on the basis of sources (including archival sources, visual sources, architecture, oral history interviews, landscapes or cityscapes).

In February 2020, editor Ulrike Schmieder held interviews in Barcelona with local agents of *Memoria*, in the context of the mentioned long-term project on sites of memory and hidden traces of Atlantic slavery in Europe, with special focus on France and Spain, and its Caribbean colonies, particularly Martinique and Cuba.¹ She asked the question if the half-hearted half-removal of the monument for enslaver Antonio López in 2018 would

1 Ulrike Schmieder's project *Memories of Atlantic Slavery* has been funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG; German Research Foundation, reference: SCHM 1050/5-1).

be everything what the “capital of return”² from Cuban plantation slavery would do to come to terms with its role in trafficking Africans (see the contribution by Martín Rodrigo in this volume). Her interlocutors related the local conflicts with the toppling of about 70 monuments of conquerors in Chile at the end of 2019.³ Plummeting statues of colonizers was noticed then as curiosity of the former colonies. The destruction of two statues of white abolitionist Victor Schœlcher in Martinique on 22 May 2020, an expression of profound anger of the descendants of the enslaved in the French Overseas-Department about creole white economic power, French rule in higher administration and French hegemonic discourses on slavery and abolition was hotly debated on the island and in France (see the respective article by Ulrike Schmieder in this issue), but not seen as something of international relevance.

The wave of tumbling monuments in Europe and North America and its perception as global phenomenon began with the Black Lives Matter movement after the racist murder of George Floyd on 25 May 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Statues of enslavers, colonizers, colonialist politicians and missionaries, ideologues of racism, confederate generals were toppled, removed, beheaded or daubed by protesters in the British and French Caribbean (see contributions by Claudia Rauhut and Ulrike Schmieder) and in Great Britain, the USA, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland, and others. Even in Germany, the participants of the BLM movement and critical academics not only protested against current police violence and discrimination of afro-descendant people in the United States and Germany, but also pointed to the hidden past of German colonialism. Editor Michael Zeuske brought the question to the media what to do with the legacy of racist theorist, ideologue of white supremacy in German Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant.⁴

For those who do not research the dissonant cultural heritage of slavery, monuments for enslavers, residences of enslavers, buildings of banks and insurance companies, factories, universities, railroads and steam-shipping companies, cultural and charitable institutions

2 M. Rodrigo y Alharilla, Barcelona, capital del retorn, in: M. Rodrigo y Alharilla (ed.), *Les bases colonials de Barcelona, 1765–1968*, Barcelona 2012, pp. 79–91.

3 During the manifestations of native Mapuches the statue of conqueror Pedro Valdivia in Temuco was toppled, his bust in Concepción was burned at the feet of the monument for Mapuche leader Lautaro, in Collipulli the bust of General Cornelio Saavedra, who killed resisting Amerindiens (Mapuches) in the nineteenth century, was burnt. In Temuco, the statue of aviator Dagoberto Godoy was beheaded and his head hung on the statue of Mapuche leader Caupolicán (L. Blair, *Conquistadors tumble as indigenous Chileans tear down statues*, in: *The Guardian*, 9.11.2019, revised version <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/05/chile-statues-indigenous-mapuche-conquistadors>). In Cañete, the statues of Valdivia and the town's founder García Hurtado de Mendoza were destroyed. In Valdivia the monument of Valdivia was toppled. In La Serena, the bust of conqueror Francisco de Aguirre was replaced of one for the people diaguita. (V. Parra Villalobos, *Rebelión popular contra los genocidas de Chile: fiel reflejo de la crisis de un modelo*, in: *El Nacional*, 9.11.2019. <https://resumen.cl/articulos/rebelion-popular-contra-los-genocidas-de-chile-fiel-reflejo-de-la-crisis-de-un-modelo> (accessed 30 March 2021)).

4 Michael Zeuske im Gespräch mit Gabi Wuttke, *Antirassistischer Denkmalsturm. Auch der Philosoph Immanuel Kant steht zur Debatte*, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, 13.6.2020, https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/antirassistischer-denkmalsturm-auch-der-philosoph-immanuel.1013.de.html?dram:article_id=478593 (accessed 30 March 2021).

financed with profits of Atlantic slavery in European towns⁵ the tumbling of the statue of Bristolian Edward Colston on 7 June 2020 might have come as surprise. The black movement and post-colonial critical civil society had demanded the removal of that monument since the late 1990s, but the City Council had let the statue where and how it had been. It was not transported to the museum. The enslaving endeavours of Colston had not been explained on a commemorative plaque. *After* the statue had been thrown into the river, it was retrieved and displayed recumbently with the protesters graffiti on in Bristol's M Shed Museum with an explanation of his enslaving business.⁶ The Bristol monument is one example of the contested cultural heritage of slavery in European towns, another was the monument for the enslaver and merchant Heinrich Carl Schimmelmann in Hamburg-Wandsbek, erected in 2006 and demolished again in 2008. Some efforts to build new monuments remembering slavery, abolitions, (once-) enslaved persons have been made for example in Nantes, Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Paris and surroundings, London, Bristol and Lancaster, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Mid-

- 5 Historiography, United Kingdom: M. Dresser, *Set in Stone? Statues and Slavery in London*, in: *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007) 1, pp. 162–199. A. Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic*, Liverpool 2010. M. Dresser, A. Hann (eds.), *Slavery and the British Country House*, Swindon 2013. K. Donington/R. Hanley/J. Moody (eds.), *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a "National Sin"*, Liverpool 2016. N. Sadler, *The Legacy of Slavery in Britain*, Stroud 2018. J. Moody, *The persistence of memory: Remembering slavery in Liverpool, 'slaving capital of the world'*, Liverpool 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1675bpb5> (accessed 30 March 2021). O. Otele, *Mourning in Reluctant Sites of Memory: from Afrophobia to Cultural Productivity*, in: O. Otele/L. Gandolfo/Y. Galai (eds.), *Post-Conflict Memorialization: Missing Memorials, Absent Bodies*, Cham 2021, pp. 35–54. See also: *Physical Legacies*, in the database "Legacies of British-Slave-ownership", <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/physical/> (accessed 7 April 2021). Portugal: M. Araújo, A. Rodrigues, *História e memória em movimento: escravatura, educação e (anti)racismo em Portugal*, in: *Revista história Hoje*, 7 (2018) 14, pp. 107–132. M. Lanca, *De/Re-Memorization of Portuguese Colonialism and Dictatorship: Re-Reading the Colonial and the Salazar Era and Its Ramifications Today*, in *Mezosfera.org*, Nov. 2019, <http://mezosfera.org/de-re-memorization-of-portuguese-colonialism-and-dictatorship-re-reading-the-colonial-and-the-salazar-era-and-its-ramifications-today/> (accessed 16 August 2021). Spain and France: see contributions of M. Rodrigo and U. Schmieder. The Netherlands: G. Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands. Sixty-five years of Forgetting, Commemorating, Silencing*, Amsterdam 2011. K. Nimako/G. Willemsen, *The Legacy of Slavery: The Unfinished Business of Emancipation* in: K. Nimako/G. Willemsen (eds.), *The Dutch Atlantic. Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation*, London 2011, pp. 149–183. D. Hondius/N. Jouve/D. Stam/J. Tosh, *Gids Slavernijverleden Nederland. The Netherlands Slavery Heritage Guide*, Volendam 2019. A. Cain, Artwell, *Slavery and Memory in the Netherlands: Who Needs Commemoration?*, in: *Journal of African Diaspora Archaeology and Heritage*, 4 (2015) 3, pp. 227–242. Denmark: A. Nonbo Andersen, *"We Have Reconquered the Islands": Figurations in Public Memories of Slavery and Colonialism in Denmark 1948–2012*, in: *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 17 (2013) 1, pp. 57–76. A. Nonbo Andersen, *Curating Enslavement and the Colonial History of Denmark, The 2017 centennial*, in: J. Apsel/A. Sodaro (eds.), *Museums and Sites of Persuasion. Politics, Memory and Human Rights*, London, pp. 56–73. Germany: J. Zimmerer (ed.), *Kein Platz an der Sonne: Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte*, Frankfurt a. M. 2013. Comparisons: A. L. Araujo (ed.), *Politics of Memory. Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space*, New York, London 2012. A. Gueye/J. Michel (eds.), *A Stain on our Past. Slavery and Memory*, Trenton 2018.
- 6 D. Olusoga, *The toppling of Edward Colston's statue is not an attack on history. It is history*, in: *The Guardian*, 8.6.2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/08/edward-colston-statue-history-slave-trader-bristol-protest>. D. Olusoga, *A year on, the battered and graffitied Colston is finally a potent memorial to our past*, in: *The Guardian*, 6.6.2021; <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jun/06/year-on-battered-graffitied-colston-finally-potent-memorial-to-our-past> (accessed 7 June 2021); M. Dresser, *Remembering Slavery and Abolition in Bristol, Slavery & Abolition*, 30 (2009) 2, pp. 223–246.

delburg, and Copenhagen.⁷ The question aroused what to do with the old statues, the tainted heritage. Should the old monuments be removed to and explained in museums or questioned with new art work (as “Ship in a bottle” vis-à-vis to Nelson’s Column in London⁸)? Should multicultural and multi-ethnic societies renovate the memorial cityscapes according to a new, critical, de-colonized memory of slavery and its legacies, prosperity and (economic, political, cultural) dominance for people of European descent, poverty and discrimination for people of African descent? The authors of this issue can and will not offer solutions but they try to promote the discussion about dominant narratives of history told in the urban space by public artwork and its relation to the counter-memories of the descendants of enslaved and colonized. They ask questions, starting with *why* the statues were smashed.

Why Black Britons were tired in June 2020 is quite clear. The murder of an unarmed African American by a police officer who was obviously (as we know now erroneously) sure that his crime would never be punished, was only the catalyst for bringing anger to the public space. Black Britons as African Americans, Afro-Brazilians, Black French and Antilleans,⁹ suffered more socio-economically from the Corona-crisis, and worse even, infection, hospitalization and death rates from Covid-19 are higher among people of African descent around the Atlantic¹⁰. The situation was resumed by the Midterm Report on the International Decade of People of African Descent (2015–2024) of the United Nations by the Human Rights Council:

The devastating health consequences of COVID-19 for many people of African descent have been acknowledged, as they have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Structural inequalities and racial discrimination have been manifested in access to medicines, medical procedures, and are likely also to have had an impact on diagnosis and

7 M. Dorigny, *Arts & Lettres contre l’esclavage*, Paris 2018, no. 153, 171, 186. F. Hubert, *Traite, esclavage et enjeux patrimoniaux dans la Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine*, in: C. Le Mao et al. (eds.), *Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Rochefort, Bayonne, Mémoire Noire. Histoire de l’Esclavage*, Abbéville 2020, pp. 223–244, esp. pp. 241–242. B. Martinetti, *La traite négrière à La Rochelle*, La Crèche 2017, pp. 42–45. U. Schmieder, *Sites of Memory of Atlantic Slavery in European Towns with an Excursus on the Caribbean*, in: *Cuadernos Inter.cambio sobre Centroamérica y el Caribe*, 15 (2018) 1, pp. 29–75, esp. pp. 42–46. Rice, *Creating Memorials*, pp. 17–23, 47–51. Dresser, *Remembering Slavery*, p. 230. Hondius, *The Netherlands Slavery Heritage Guide*, pp. 120, 129, 149. “I am Queen Mary”, <https://www.iamqueenmary.com/> (accessed 30 March 2021).

8 A. Procter, *The Whole Picture. The Colonial Story of Art in our Museums & Why We Need to Talk about It*, London 2020, pp. 215–223, fig. 20, p. XIV.

9 We follow the most common self-identifications.

10 S. Sze/D. Pan/C. R. Nevill/L. J. Gray/C. A. Martin/J. Nazareth/J. S. Minhas/P. Divalle/K. Khuntif/K. R. Abrams/L. B. Nellums/M. Pareek, *Ethnicity and clinical outcomes in COVID-19: A systematic review and meta-analysis* 12.12.2020. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(20\)30374-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(20)30374-6/fulltext). R. Gondim de Oliveira et al., *Racial inequalities and death on the horizon: COVID-19 and structural racism*, *Cad. Saúde Pública* 36 (2020) 9, Epub, Sep 18, 2020, https://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0102-311X202000903003&script=sci_arttext&lng=en. S. Papon/I. Robert-Bobée, *Une hausse des décès deux fois plus forte pour les personnes nées à l’étranger que pour celles nées en France en mars-avril 2020*, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4627049#titre-bloc-1> (accessed 30 March 2021).

treatment.¹¹ Additionally, people of African descent represent a significant percentage of frontline workers who are more exposed to the risk of contamination, and have been making up the large numbers of those infected or dying in the pandemic.¹²

The inauguration of this Decade was surely well-intended, but the result was less than zero. Black lives did matter less in 2020 than in 2015, particularly in the United States and Brazil, where the Presidents Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro propagated race hatred, instigated police and paramilitary violence against non-white people, particularly citizens of African descent. Is there hope in 2021? Perhaps. The BLM protesters were not all Persons of Colour, many very young white persons (the same generation which is to be found at the Fridays for Future demonstrations) were present. This means that a de-colonial reform of public history is not only the aim of the affected communities, but of broader groups of civil society. A series of European towns, some not anymore governed by White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Men, with London's Mayor Sadiq Khan, Liverpool's Mayor Joanne Anderson, Bristol's Mayor Marvin Rees, Rotterdam's Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb, decided to deal critically with the contested heritage of slavery and colonialism and reform the memorial cityscapes. On the other hand, from the declaration of the European Union "on the anti-racism protests following the death of George Floyd" followed little.¹³ Priorities in vaccination considered age, illness, and certain professions in public service, seldom (racialized) social vulnerability. The prolonged lockdown will harm Black children more than White children, as the first live more often in overcrowded apartments and they are more often excluded from online-learning.¹⁴ The World Health Organization initiated Covax-Fonds should distribute the vaccine globally, but failed. The inoculation rate in African countries is the lowest one of all.¹⁵ The reasons of anger remain.

Let's resume what happened in European countries: In Great Britain between June 2020 and January 2021 "an estimated 39 names – including streets, buildings and schools – and 30 statues, plaques and other memorials have been or are undergoing changes or removal" across the United Kingdom, following Black Lives Matter protests in 260

11 RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS, 22.6.2020, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Racism/COVID-19_and_Racial_Discrimination.pdf (accessed 30 March 2021).

12 Midterm report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the activities of her Office in follow-up to the implementation of the programme of activities within the framework of the International Decade for People of African Descent, A8 HRC/45/47, 17.11.2020, p. 3; <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/InternationalDecade/Pages/Reports-and-publications.aspx> (accessed 30 March 2021).

13 European Parliament resolution of 19 June 2020 on the anti-racism protests following the death of George Floyd (2020/2685(RSP) https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0173_EN.html (accessed 30 March 2021). It called its Member States "to officially acknowledge past injustices and crimes against humanity committed against black people, people of colour and Roma; declares slavery a crime against humanity and calls for 2 December to be designated the European Day commemorating the Abolition of the Slave Trade; encourages the Member States to make the history of black people, people of colour and Roma part of their school curricula".

14 Racial Discrimination, p. 4–5.

15 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations, in: Our World in Data, <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>, 31.8.2021 (accessed 2 September 2021).

towns and cities. In London, the statues of the traders in enslaved Africans in the London Guildhall, Sir John Cass and William Beckford, the John Cass statue at building of the Sir John Cass Foundation, and of Robert Milligan at the Docklands were removed. The same happened with the statues of Robert Clayton (1629–1707) Lord Mayor of London, member of the Court of Assistants (=board of directors) of the Royal African Company, at St Thomas's Hospital, Lambeth, and Thomas Guy (1644–1724), at the Guy's Hospital, Southwark. The latter made a fortune in the South Sea Company which had acquired the monopoly of trading Africans to Spanish America (*asiento*).¹⁶

In Oxford, the monument for Cecil Rhodes, the colonizer pioneer in South Africa, was protested against and Oriel College announced the removal.¹⁷ As to be supposed, a counter-movement of conservative people who oppose any de-colonial reform of memorial cityscapes, led by the governing Tories, developed against these changes.¹⁸ Some emblematic memorials as Nelson's column at Trafalgar Square whose possible removal had been controversially discussed since 2017 (when journalist Afua Hirsch had pointed to the role of the Admiral in defending slavery in the Caribbean and in British politics and his personal connections to enslavers at Nevis) were targeted anew,¹⁹ but Nelson is still there. The most controversial critique expressed was surely that on Winston Churchill through defacing his statue at Parliament Square, Westminster. Secretary of State for the Colonies (1921–1922) and Prime Minister (1940–1945, 1950–1955), Churchill is adored as national hero in World War II, but he was also a racist and staunch defender of the colonial Empire.²⁰

In the Netherlands, in Amsterdam, protesters called for removing the statue of the officer of the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), Jan Pieterszoon Coen, who led the conquest of the Banda Islands in Indonesia in 1621, accompanied by a massacre

- 16 Quotation from: Tributes to slave traders and colonialists removed across UK, in: The Guardian, 29.1.2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/29/tributes-to-slave-traders-and-colonialists-removed-across-uk>; on specific statues: Robert Milligan: Slave trader statue removed from outside London museum, in: BBC news, 9.6.2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-52977088>, Thomas Guy and Robert Clayton statues to be removed from view, in: London-se1, 11.6.2020. <https://www.london-se1.co.uk/news/view/10306>. The historical facts about the enslavers and their statues in London: Dresser, Set in Stone?, pp. 166, 170, 179. A list with statues or plaques to be removed or buildings/institutions to be renamed is to be found here: F. Greig, 'Topple the racists': full list of UK statues campaigners want removed because of racist associations - from Robert Peel to Robert Milligan, in: The Scotsman, 10.6. 2020, <https://www.scotsman.com/news/people/topple-racists-full-list-uk-statues-campaigners-want-removed-because-racist-associations-robert-peel-robert-milligan-2880117>. Amongst others, on this list Francis Drake (Plymouth), Thomas Picton (Cardiff), Edward Codrington (Oxford, Brighton), Bryan Blundell (Liverpool), Henry Dundas (Edinburgh), Horatio Nelson (London, Liverpool) are connected with Caribbean slavery as enslavers, political or military defenders of slavery. (accessed 30 March 2021).
- 17 S. Coughlan, Oxford college wants to remove Cecil Rhodes statue, in: BBC news, 8.6.2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/education-53082545> (accessed 30 March 2021).
- 18 Save Our Statues <https://saveourstatues.org.uk/> (accessed 30 March 2021).
- 19 Sadler, The Legacy of Slavery, p. 31. D. Manning, The 10 London statues that Black Lives Matter want removed – including Nelson's Column, 10.6.2020, in: My London, <https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/10-london-statues-black-lives-18394250> (accessed 30 March 2021).
- 20 Black Lives Matter protest: Why was Churchill's statue defaced?, in: BBC news, 8.6.2020; <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-england-london-52972531>: The 10 greatest controversies of Winston Churchill's career, in: BBC News, 16.1.2015; <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-29701767> (accessed 30 March 2021).

of the native population, and the introduction of enslaved labourers for the nutmeg-production.²¹ Recently the Dutch historiography emphasizes that not only the West Indian Company, but also the East Indian Company had been engaged in enslavement.²² The events around BLM led to a debate in the media – not always to physical attacks on the monuments – about other personalities besides Coen, Peter Stuyvesant, enslaver of the West-Indian Company trading enslaved Africans via Curaçao to New York where he owned 40 of them during his time as Governor of the New Netherlands (there is a statue of him in the Court of the *West Indisch Huis* in Amsterdam and a monument in his birth town Peperga), and Witte de With, merchant in enslaved Africans with functions in the East and West Indian Companies after whom a street and an art museum in Rotterdam are named. Witte participated at the successful assault on the Spanish silver fleet near Matanzas in 1628 (which allowed for the financing of the conquest of “Dutch” Brazil) with Piet Hein, pirate, warlord in service of the East and West Indian Companies, to whom a big monument is dedicated in Rotterdam. The debate refers also to Paul Godin, trader in African captives, director of the West Indian Company and the Company of Suriname, in whose house in Herengracht 502 the Mayor of Amsterdam resides, and Johan Maurits, the conqueror and governor of the Dutch colony in Brazil acquired with the aim to profit from sale of sugar produced by enslaved Africans.²³ His house in Den Haag serves as art museum. A monument in Vlissingen honours Michiel de Ruyter, Admiral engaged in the wars with England and Portugal in the seventeenth century led with the intention to dominate Atlantic slavery and to profit from its gains. The statue for Hugo de Groot in Rotterdam was also questioned. The philosopher and jurist legitimized enslavement under certain circumstances.²⁴ In Zurich, the statue of Albert Escher came under attack in the context of the Black Lives Matter Movement, because this founder of modern Switzerland and the *Credit Suisse* is descendant and inheritor of a family profiting from Atlantic slavery. His grandfather Hans-Caspar Escher had invested in the voyage of the ship *Olympe* which sailed from Bordeaux to West Africa and deported 264 African captives to Saint-Domingue in 1788. Albert Escher’s

21 21 Netherlands protesters call for removal of colonial-era statue, dw, 20.6.2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/netherlands-protesters-call-for-removal-of-colonial-era-statue/a-53878846> (accessed 30 March 2021). Hondius, The Netherlands Slavery Heritage Guide, p. 44. P. Brandon, The Political Economy of Slavery in the Dutch Empire, in: M. Zeuske/S. Conermann (eds.), The Slavery/Capitalism Debate Global: From “Capitalism and Slavery” to Slavery as Capitalism, in: *Comparativ, Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung*, 30 (2020) 5-6, pp. 581–599, here p. 587.

22 Hondius, The Netherlands Slavery Heritage Guide, p. 14. L. Mbeki/M. Van Rossum, Private Slave Trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean world: a study into the networks and backgrounds of the slavers and the enslaved in South Asia and South Africa, in: *Slavery & Abolition*, 38 (2017) 1, pp. 94–116.

23 L. F. de Alencastro, Johann Moritz und der Sklavenhandel, in: G. Brunn/C. Neutsch (eds.), *Sein Feld war die Welt. Johann Moritz von Nassau-Siegen (1604–1679). Von Siegen über die Niederlande nach Brasilien und Brandenburg*, Münster 2008, S. 123–144.

24 T. Sijsma, 7 historische figuren waar we liever niet meer naar vernoemen, in: *Het Paool*, 12.6.2020, <https://www.paool.nl/amsterdam/7-historische-figuren-waar-we-liever-niet-meer-naar-vernoemen~b4eedef0/?referrer=htps%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>; T. Holland, Studenten blikken terug op racismeprotest: hoopvol, maar nog een lange weg te gaan, in: *EM*, 5.10.2020, <https://www.erasmusmagazine.nl/2020/10/05/studenten-blikken-terug-op-racismeprotest-hoopvol-maar-nog-een-lange-weg-te-gaan/> (accessed 30 March 2021). Hondius, The Netherlands Slavery Heritage Guide, pp. 34, 113, 114.

father Heinrich-Escher Zollikofer traded with land, cotton and colonial goods like coffee, sugar and rice produced by enslaved Africans in the United States. He inherited the coffee plantation *Buen Retiro* in Cuba with more than 80 enslaved workers, from Albert Escher's uncle Friedrich Ludwig Escher in 1845. Albert Escher had been involved in sale of captives and land.²⁵ In Sweden, it was Carl Linnaeus, one of the founders of "scientific" biological racism in the late eighteenth century, who statues in various Swedish towns shall be removed according to anti-racist activists.²⁶

In Belgium, manifestations about colonial monuments focused on the statues for King Leopold II in Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp, and achieved its relocation. In the personal colony of the King, the Congo, the exploitation of Africans who were forced to win rubber and cocoa and neglect their fields, had attained a genocidal dimension. The colonial army had killed or cut the hands of thousands of Congolese people and their children (for resistance or for simply not fulfilling the daily quota of rubber or cocoa) and thus condemned them to death through starving.²⁷ In Denmark, an activist and artist, Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld, drowned a bust of King Frederick V. (reigning 1745–1766) in the port of Copenhagen, because this King had promoted and participated at the trade in enslaved Africans – his big equestrian statue at Amalienborg Palace had not been touched. The act provoked a heated pro and contra debate.²⁸ In Greenland the giant monument of colonizer Hans Egede was painted red, on his statue in Copenhagen was written "DECOLONIZE".²⁹

- 25 Banking and Slavery. Switzerland examines its colonial conscience. BLM protests and fresh historical evidence are raising question over the legacy of the founder of modern, Switzerland, Alfred Escher, in: *The Guardian*, 19.11.2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/19/banking-slavery-switzerland-examines-its-colonial-conscience>. M. Brengard/F. Schubert/L. Zürcher, Die Beteiligung der Stadt Zürich sowie der Zürcherinnen und Zürcher an Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel vom 17. bis ins 19. Jahrhundert, Bericht zu Händen des Präsidialdepartements der Stadt Zürich, Zürich, 2. September 2020, <https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/190541/>, pp. 4, 32–41 (accessed 4 April 2021). M. Zeuske, Tod bei Artemisa. Friedrich Ludwig Escher, Atlantic Slavery und die Akkumulation von Schweizer Kapital ausserhalb der Schweiz, in: *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte*, 69 (2019) 1, pp. 6–26.
- 26 M. Axelsson Därrh, I skuggan av Lundagårds statyer, in: *Lundagard.se*, 3.9.2020, <https://www.lundagard.se/2020/09/03/i-skuggan-av-lundagards-statyer/> (accessed 26 September 2021).
- 27 M. Birnbaum, Black Lives Matter protesters in Belgium want statues of colonialist King Léopold II to come down, in: *Washington Post*, 9.9.2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/black-lives-matter-protests-king-leopold-statues/2020/06/09/042039f6-a9c5-11ea-9063-e69bd6520940_story.html; King Leopold II statue removed in Antwerp after anti-racism protests, in: *dw*, 9.6.2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/belgium-king-leopold-ii-statue-removed-in-antwerp-after-anti-racism-protests/a-53755021>. Ghent removes Leopold II statue: 'His criminal actions do not deserve tribute' in: *The Brussels Times*, 18.6.2020, <https://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/117309/ghent-removes-leopold-ii-statue-his-criminal-actions-do-not-deserve-tribute/>; M. Ewans, European Atrocity, African Catastrophe: Leopold II, the Congo State and its Aftermath, London 2002. A photo series of the cruelties is to be found here: Father stares at the hand and foot of his five-year-old, severed as a punishment for failing to make the daily rubber quota, Belgian Congo, 1904, <https://rarehistoricalphotos.com/father-hand-belgian-congo-1904/> (accessed 30 March 2021).
- 28 K. Brown, An Explosive Debate Has Roiled Denmark After a Department Head at Its Top Art Academy Was Fired for Drowning a Bust of a Former King, in: *artnet news*, 2.12.2020; <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/katrine-dirckinck-holmfeld-royal-academy-of-art-1927592> (accessed 30 March 2021).
- 29 Hans Egede, Greenland votes on colonial Danish statue, in: *bbc-com* 16.6.2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53429950> (accessed 30 March 2021).

Belgium, Denmark, and Britain were the only countries where the monuments of Kings who were enslavers and colonizers were plummeted or vandalized. In the United Kingdom, the monument of Queen Victoria (who reigned from 1837–1901, that means after the abolition of slavery, but ruled during the colonial era when forced labour regimes were introduced in the Caribbean and the new Asian and African colonies) has got graffiti on, with the words “BLM”, “racist”, “murderer” “slave owner” “educate”, “justice”.³⁰ The statues of royal enslavers governing during legal slavery in American/Caribbean colonies, from Elizabeth I to George IV have been spared largely from public outrage. Only, the statues of King Charles II and King James II got brandings irons in their hands by artist Rachel Reid because of their role as founders and profiteers of Royal African Company (RAC).³¹ In Sweden, the Afro-Swedish National Federation demanded a relocation of the big monument for Swedish King Gustav III (ruled 1771–1792) in Stockholm who had acquired island Saint-Barthélemy from the French in order to participate in Atlantic slavery and Caribbean slave trade,³² but there was no physical attack on his statue.

The monuments of many other European kings involved in Atlantic slavery have not been toppled or painted. Obviously, many facts are not known to the broader public: King Louis XIV of France was an agent of colonialism and slavery, he promulgated the *Code Noir* in 1685. Louis XIV was promotor and shareholder of monopolistic companies trading in enslaved people, too.³³ Under the rule of King Louis XV French port towns traded freely with captives from Africa, this king issued the *Code Noir* version of 1724 for Louisiana and was the biggest shareholder of the enslaver's *Compagnie des Indes* in mid-eighteenth century.³⁴ Napoleon Bonaparte became Emperor after having re-established slavery in the French Caribbean in 1802, except in Saint-Domingue/Haiti. His Generals Leclerc, Rochambeau and Richepance waged a genocidal war against

30 J. Coper, Queen Victoria statue in Leeds defaced with Black Lives Matter graffiti, in: Yorkshire Evening Post, 9 June 2020; <https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/politics/queen-victoria-statue-leeds-defaced-black-lives-matter-graffiti-2879116> (accessed 7 April 2021).

31 Charles II granted the monopoly in trafficking Africans to the RAC which was directed by his brother James, Duke of York, later James II, the latter being also the largest shareholder of the company. W.A. Pettigrew, Free to Enslave: Politics and the Escalation of Britain's Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1688–1714, in: The William and Mary Quarterly, 64 (2007) 1, pp. 3–38, esp. p. 10; R. Reid, Why I Put Branding Irons into Royal Hands, in: medium.com, 14.6.2020, <https://rachel-c-reid.medium.com/why-i-put-branding-irons-into-royal-hands-7859f71638e9> (accessed 13 August 2021).

32 Afrosvenskarnas riksförbund kritiska mot Gustav III-statyn, in: svt nyheter, 24.7.2020. <https://www.svt.se/kultur/afrosvenskarnas-riksforbund-kritiska-mot-statyn-av-gustav-iii> (accessed 26 September 2021); E. Schnakenbourg, Sweden and the Atlantic: The Dynamism of Sweden's Colonial Projects in the Eighteenth Century, in: M. Naum/J. M. Nordin (eds.), Scandinavian Colonialism and the Rise of Modernity. Small Time Agents in a Global Arena, New York 2013, pp. 229–242.

33 P. Boucher, France and the American Tropics to 1700, Tropics of Discontent? Baltimore 2008, pp. 172–178, 188, 212–213. T. Diakitè, Louis XIV et l'Afrique Noire, Paris 2013, pp. 33–45. P. Haudrère/G. Le Bouëdec, Les Compagnies des Indes, Lorient 2005, p. 9.

34 M. Augeron/O. Caudron, La Rochelle, l'Aunis et la Saintonge face à la traite, à l'esclavage et à leurs abolitions. Un état des lieux, in: M. Augeron/O. Caudron (eds.), La Rochelle, l'Aunis et la Saintonge face à l'esclavage, Paris 2012, pp. 7–28, esp. p. 14: Le Code noir. Édit du Roi, touchant l'État et la Discipline des esclaves nègres de la Louisiane, Donné à Versailles au mois de mars 1724, https://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/amsudant/Code_noir-1724.htm (accessed 21 September 2021). Haudrère, Le Bouëdec, Les Compagnies des Indes, p. 9.

the people of Saint-Domingue and Guadeloupe with the idea that new Africans should replace the freedmen “spoiled by liberty”.³⁵ In 2020, only one of hundreds of statues and monuments for the Emperor was painted red. In the month of commemoration of slavery (27 April–10 June) 2021, coinciding with the bicentenary of the death of Napoleon (5 May) public debates referred to his role in a hideous episode of French history, but President Macron defended the Emperor and belittled his crimes in the colonies.³⁶ Ulrike Schmieder refers in her article to the debates and actions around related monuments in 2020 and 2021, but also the much older debate about streets named after enslavers, particularly in the French port towns of the commerce in enslaved Africans, but also in the capital Paris. One reason of the French focus on streets, not statues, is that there are fewer monuments for merchant-enslavers as benefactors of their home towns than in Britain. A particularity of France is that the commemoration of enslavement is highly formalized and ritualized. The rites with high state functionaries delivering speeches are celebrated on the commemorative day of 10 May, according to the law Taubira of 2001 (condemning enslavement as crime against humanity) and following legal stipulations. The ceremonies take place at new created sites of memory, some of them established at historical sites related to enslavement.

The same silence as about French kings reigns about the role of all Portuguese kings and princes from *Afonso o Africano* (reigning 1448–1461) and *Enrique o Navegador* (1394–1460), monopolist trader of African captives in the fifteenth century, via José I (ruling 1750–1777), the enlightened Monarch and shareholder of the *Companhia de Pernambuco e Paraíba* which deported Africans to Brazil, till Luís I under whose reign 1861–1889 slavery was abolished between 1869–1879 and replaced by forced labour (abrogated in 1962) in Portuguese Africa.³⁷ The statues of Prince “Henry the Navigator” in Porto, Lagos, Tomar, and Sagres have not been touched, but there has been a longer debate of the giant *Padrão de Descobrimentos* in the Belém quarter of Lisbon, a monument established of the Salazar dictatorship, planned for World Exhibition in 1949, inaugurated in 1960 on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the death of Prince Henry honouring him and a series of other early colonizers.³⁸ Nobody tried to plummet

35 J.-P. Le Glaunec, *L’armée indigène. La défaite de Napoléon en Haïti*, Montréal 2020, pp. 89–125. R. Bélénus, *Saint-Domingue et Guadeloupe en 1802*, in: S. Dracius et al. (ed.), *La faute à Bonaparte*, Paris 2021, pp. 26–69; M. Dorigny, *Le rétablissement de l’esclavage sous le Consulat: Une décision improvisée ou le fruit d’un projet préparé?* in: *ibid.*, pp. 71–92.

36 N. Pipelier, *La Roche-sur-Yon: la statue de Napoléon vandalisée, nettoyée “avant la fin de l’été”*, in: *Le Journal du Pays Yonnais*, 28.7.2020. https://actu.fr/societe/la-roche-sur-yon-la-statue-de-napoleon-vandalisee-nettoyee-avant-la-fin-de-l-ete_35210616.html; “Napoléon Bonaparte est une part de nous”: Emmanuel Macron célèbre le bicentenaire de la mort d’une figure controversée, in: *Le Monde* 5.5.2021, https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2021/05/05/emmanuel-macron-celebre-les-200-ans-de-la-mort-de-napoleon-figure-toujours-contestee_6079228_823448.html (accessed 9 May 2021).

37 M. Newitt, *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, 1400–1668*, London/New York 2005, pp. 22–26. M. Caldeira, *Escravos e traficantes no império português. O comércio negreiro português no Atlântico durante os séculos XV a XIX*, Lisbon 2013, pp. 51–54, 158–164, 219–225. M. Bandeira Jerónimo/J. P. Monteiro, *Abolição, Abolições: Causa e (In)Consequências*, in: M. Bandeira Jerónimo/J. P. Monteiro (eds.), *O Direito sobre si mesmo – 150 anos da abolição da escravatura no império português*, Lisbon 2019, pp. 25–31.

38 <https://padraodoscobrimentos.pt/missao/>. In 2006, the site was used as place of performance art as protest: The Angolan artist Kiluanji Kia Henda photographed a group of persons of African descent who had climbed

the statue for José I on the central *Praça do Comercio* in Lisbon or the giant memorial for Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, *Marquês de Pombal*, whose “abolition laws” of slavery in mainland Portugal in 1761 and 1773 freed only a minority of enslaved Africans³⁹ and who was the founder of the *Companhia de Grão Pará e Maranhão* and the *Companhia de Pernambuco e Paraíba*, and shareholder of the first. Both trading companies deported African captives to Brazil.⁴⁰

The Spanish kings, from Carlos I (Emperor Karl V) of the Habsburg dynasty to the Bourbon Carlos III, profited from the *asiento*, the monopoly treaties about the deportation to Africans to Spanish America, valid between 1533 and 1789.⁴¹ Carlos III, the enlightened Monarch governing from 1759 to 1788, owned 20.000 enslaved persons.⁴² Maria Cristina, the queen ruling for her daughter Isabel II from 1833 to 1840 traded enslaved Africans to Cuba and exploited them on sugar plantations through the business of her morganatic husband, Agustín Sánchez, Duque de Riansares.⁴³ For Carlos III there are dozens of monuments, the most important is situated on Madrid’s central place, the Puerta de Sol, Maria Cristina is honored with a big monument in front of the Casón del Buen Retiro, near the Museo del Prado. These statues as those of all other Spanish kings were not vandalized in 2020. The monuments in Berlin und Moers, for Friedrich III, Elector of Brandenburg (Friedrich I as first Prussian King, 1701–1713), founder of the Brandenburg-African Company which deported African captives from Ghana to Saint-Thomas rented by Denmark, to Jamaica, St. Croix, Saint-Domingue and Spanish America,⁴⁴ have not been toppled or daubed.

Thus, rather statues of colonizers below royal status have been vandalized. Should there be remains of early modern monarchist ideologies in twenty-first century-Europe? Kings are untouchable, and they did not know anything of the crime of their ministers? In mainland France, the monument of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, promotor of colonial expansion, founder and shareholder of companies trading in Africans, and editor of the *Code Noir*, the slavery code, in front of the National Assembly came under attack,⁴⁵ but not

the memorial and put themselves in front of the giant figures of colonizers. C. Roldão, *Racismo. Desigualdades contemporâneas e legados colonias*, in: *Bandeira/ Monteiro, O direito sobre si mesmo*, pp. 143–154, esp. p. 146. Padrão dos Descobrimentos <https://www.racius.com/aquisicao-da-obra-padrao-dos-descobrimentos-2006-do-artista-kiluanji-kia-henda-padrao-descobrimentos/>.

39 Caldeira, *Escravos e traficantes*, p. 219.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 219–225.

41 E. Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamérica y comercio de esclavos*, Sevilla 2014, pp. 35–68. M. Zeuske, *Sklavenhändler, Negreros und Atlantikkreolen, eine Weltgeschichte des Sklavenhandels im Atlantischen Raum*, Berlin 2015, pp. 296–307, 312–313, 319.

42 J. M. López García, *La esclavitud a finales del Antiguo Régimen*. Madrid, 1701–1837. De moros de presa a negros de nación, Madrid 2020, pp. 50–51, 80.

43 J. A. Piqueras, *La reina, los esclavos y Cuba*, in: J. S. Pérez Garzón (ed.), *Isabel II: los espejos de la reina*, Madrid 2004, pp. 91–110.

44 A. Weindl, *The Slave Trade of Northern Germany from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century*, in: D. Eltis/D. Richardson (eds.), *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Slave Trade Database*, New Haven 2008, pp. 250–273.

45 M. Boscher, *Déboulonnage de statues: “la République a suffisamment de symboles forts, elle n’a pas besoin de Colbert”*, estime l’historien Frédéric Régent, in: *francetvinfo*, 11.6.2020, <https://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/deboulonnage-statues-republique-suffisamment-symboles-forts-elle-n-pas-besoin-colbert-estime-historien-frederic->

the monuments for the king for whom he acted. In Portugal, the statue for the Jesuit defender of African slavery, Padre António Vieira, established in Lisbon in 2017, was painted red and labelled with the word “DESCOLONIZA”, not only because of his doubtful role in Brazilian colonial history, but also because the monument has a colonialist, white supremacist visual narrative (Padre Vieira stands in the centre, holding the cross, surrounded by small indigenous persons, children?, one kneeling at his feet). With this, a rather secondary personality in the history of Portuguese colonialism was scrutinized. This might have to do with lack of knowledge about colonialism and slavery because Portuguese school books and curricula omitted or distorted this part of the country’s history until very recent times.⁴⁶ The slavery past is not represented in the permanent exhibitions of Portuguese museums except a small museum in the coastal town of Lagos.⁴⁷ A recent temporary exhibition on occasion of the 150 anniversary of the uncomplete abolition of slavery in the Portuguese Empire has attracted only a small number of visitors.⁴⁸ Engaged scholars have focused more on the forgotten heritage of the centuries long presence of Africans in Lisbon which should be made visible.⁴⁹ Associations of people of African descent concentrated on the demand of a memorial for the victims of enslavement which shall be established in Lisbon in 2021.⁵⁰

Martín Rodrigo’s article focuses on monuments for three individuals related to Spanish colonialism in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia: Antonio López, an enslaver (trader and owner of enslaved Africans in Cuba), Juan Güell, a merchant enriched in the Cuban slavery economy and staunch defender of slavery, and colonizer Christopher Columbus. The statue of Antonio López had been removed by the town in 2018, the giant memorial to Columbus is controversially debated, but it remains on site, and about Juan Güell, the only Catalan, there is little discussion. Martín Rodrigo explains the origin of the honoring commemoration of the three historic personalities in an era of colonial nostalgia referring to the lost Spanish Empire and new expansionism in Africa and points to an interesting intertwining in the construction of a new, (Catalan-) nationalist memorial

regent-841712.html (accessed 30 March 2021). Diakit , Louis XIV, pp. 18–19, 33–45. Boucher, France and the American Tropics, pp. 172–178, 188, 202–228. Haudr re/Le Bou dec, Les Compagnies des Indes, p. 8.

46 F. Ribeiro da Silva, Le pass  oubli . La traite, l’esclavage et leur abolition dans le programme national portugais de l’histoire, in: M.-A. De Suremaine/E. Mesnard (eds.), Enseigner les traits, les esclavages, les abolitions & leurs h ritages, Paris 2021, pp. 156–176.

47 N cleo Museol gico Rota da Escravatura-Mercado dos Escravos, in: <https://www.cm-lagos.pt/descobrir-lagos/visitar/equipamentos-museologicos/#685-nucleo-museologico-rota-da-escravatura-mercado-de-escravos> (accessed 9 August 2021).

48 A. Almeida-Mend s, Lisbonne l’Africaine, Lisbonne la m tisse, in: M. Dorigny/M.-J. Zins (eds.), Les traites n gri res coloniales. Histoire d’un crime, Paris 2009, pp. 154–165. I. Castro Henriques/P. Pereira Leite, Lisboa, cidade africana. Percursos e lugares de mem ria da presen a africana, Lisbon 2013. I. Castro Henriques, A presen a africana em Portugal, uma hist ria secular: preconceito, integra  o, reconhecimento (s culos XV-XX), Lisbon 2019.

49 When Ulrike Schmieder visited this exhibition in the Palace of the Portuguese Parliament on 12 December 2019, she was told by the guide that until then, some days before the exhibit ended, only about 1.000 persons had visited the displays. See the catalogue: *Bandeira Jer nimo/ Monteiro, O Direito sobre si mesmo*.

50 The *Djass – Associa  o dos Afrodescendentes* was the pressure group her. A contest about the memorial advertised by the city council of Lisbon was won by Angolan artist Kiluanji Kia Henda with his project “Planta  o – Prosperidade e Pesadelo”, Memorial de homenagem  s pessoas escravizadas-Lisboa, <https://www.memoriale-escravatura.com/> (accessed 9 August 2021).

cityscape in the last decades of the nineteenth century, for example to the participation of enslavers converted to industrialists at the financing of memorial for Columbus in the context of the Universal Exhibition in Barcelona in 1888. The patrons of the monuments were proud of the (exaggerated) role of Catalonia in the colonial expansion of Spain. That's why ascribing colonialism only to Castile/central Spain as modern Catalan nationalists do (sometimes equalizing Catalan victims of Castilian colonial rule with Native Americans and enslaved Africans) has no base in serious historiography about Catalan agents in the Spanish Colonial Empire in America and Africa. The debates, sometimes violent manifestations, around the monuments, particularly that of Antonio López and Cristobál Colón, show a deep divide in the Catalan multicultural society with respect to the evaluation of the colonial and (often negated) enslaving past.

Anne-Claire Faucquez on her part writes about assaulted confederate and racist symbols in the former Unionist States, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio where, maybe surprisingly for many readers, confederate monuments also exist, albeit in a very reduced number compared with the Southern States. Local and federal authorities have removed some of those monuments and our author asks what to do with the empty pedestals and moved away statues. She introduces us to a series of proposals, also from artists, to make a productive use of tainted heritage for a history of slavery as the history of the whole nation, not only of the South, which includes the long times not acknowledged, but recently re-discovered and memorialized history of slavery in the North of the United States. In the South of the USA, the debate about Confederate Generals is much older than the topplings and removals in 2020. Ethan Kytle and Blain Roberts describe an up-and-down-movement for and against a critical revision of confederate monuments which honour defenders of slavery in Charleston, New Orleans, and the U.S. South in general. After the racist massacre of nine members of the religious community of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, on 17 June 2015, by white supremacist Dylann Roof, confederate flags and symbols were removed first in Alabama and South Carolina and then at many places between Tennessee and Texas. New Orleans put down the Battle of Liberty Place Obelisk, the monuments for Jefferson Davis, P. G. T. Beauregard and Robert E. Lee. From 2017 on, violent resistance against the removal of confederate monuments gained ground, confederate symbols returned to the public space. Following Donald Trump's ideology, white supremacists "took their country back", often with terroristic methods.⁵¹ The *Southern Poverty Law Center* explains that the public symbols of confederacy were established particularly at the beginnings of the twentieth century to anchor Jim Crow laws and disenfranchisement of African Americans in the urban memorial space, and during the citizen rights movement since the 1950ies. Georgia, Virginia and North Carolina have dedicated most symbols to the "lost cause". In 2019, 114 confederate symbols (monuments, names of schools, colleges, counties, cities, and military bases, and state holidays) had been removed, but 1.747 still

51 E. J. Kytle/B. Roberts, *Denmark Vesey's Garden. Slavery and Memory in the Cradle of the Confederacy, A 150 Year Reckoning with America's Original Sin*, New York 2018, pp. 1–2, 321–349, esp. p. 342.

remained.⁵² On 29 June 2021, the House of Representatives passed a second time a bill to remove Confederate statues from Capitol⁵³ which has the chance to pass the Senate this time because the Democrats have the majority in the Senate and some Republicans are expected to vote with the Democrats on this issue.

What was new for the United States in 2020 was the targeting of early Spanish conquerors as Christopher Columbus, in Richmond, Baltimore, Boston, New York, Washington, Saint-Paul, Houston, Miami...,⁵⁴ but also the monument of Spanish missionary Junípero Serra, the Franciscan friar who founded the settlement “Dolores”, the origin of the town San Francisco in California.⁵⁵ The same phenomenon as in Britain and Portugal happened here. Not only monuments for enslavers, but also for colonizers, colonising missionaries included, were plummeted or daubed.

In Latin America, the conquerors did not only fell in Chile. In Colombia, *indígenas* from the group *Misak* toppled the statue of conqueror Sebastián de Belalcázar in Popayán (Cauca) on 16 September 2020.⁵⁶ In Mexico City, the monument for Christopher Columbus was deconstructed on 10 October 2020 by the *Ayuntamiento*, two days before protesters would have done this on 12 October, the anniversary of the “discovering” of America, still the national holiday in Spain, in Mexico still *Día de la Raza* (but not a free commemorative or national day) whereas other Spanish American States have renamed it, for instance Venezuela in *Día de la Resistencia indígena*, Bolivia in *Día de la Decolonización*, or Argentina in *Día por el Respeto de la Diversidad Cultural*. In Latin America, the conflict around colonial statues saw a revival in 2020, but the debate had begun long before. In Venezuela, President Hugo Chávez had removed the statue of Christopher Columbus already in 2004. In Argentina, under the left-wing Government of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, for example, in 2015 the statue of Christopher Columbus behind the President’s Palace in Buenos Aires, had been replaced by a monument for Juana Azurduy de Padilla, a gift by President Evo Morales of Bolivia to Argentina handed over in 2013. Juana Azurduy, defined as *indígena* or *mestiza* according to different social groups, had been born in Sucre (Upper Peru, today Bolivia) and had fought with the Argentine army for the Independence of this region from Spain. In 2017, the

52 Southern Poverty Law Center, Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy, 1.2.2019, <https://www.splc-center.org/20190201/whose-heritage-public-symbols-confederacy> (accessed 8 March 2021).

53 U.S. House passes bill to remove Confederate statues from Capitol, in: Reuters, 30 June 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-house-passes-bill-remove-confederate-statues-capitol-2021-06-29/> (accessed 1 July 2021).

54 It is impossible to quote here all newspapers reporting that. To get an overview, the website of the *Ajuntament de Barcelona* is useful. *Memòria Col·lectiva/Mnemosina*, Nos. 194–198 include a big selection of newspaper reports (in different languages) about falling statues between June and September 2020. *Ajuntament Barcelona*, *Memòria Democràtica*, *Recursos*, <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/memoriademocratica/es/recursos/> (accessed 30 April 2021).

55 C. A. Miranda, At Los Angeles toppling of Junípero Serra statue, activists want full history told, in: Los Angeles Times, 20.6.2020, <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2020-06-20/statue-junipero-serra-monument-protest-activists-take-down-los-angeles> (accessed 7 April 2021).

56 ¿Quién era Sebastián de Belalcázar, cuya estatua fue derribada?, in: El Tiempo, 17.9.2020. <https://www.eltiempo.com/cultura/gente/derriban-estatua-de-sebastian-de-belalcazar-en-el-cauca-538308> (accessed 7 April 2021).

conservative Government of Mauricio Macri replaced the statue of Juana Azurduy to a less important site.⁵⁷

The articles by Claudia Rauhut and Ulrike Schmieder describe what happened or not happened in the British Caribbean as well as in Martinique and Cuba with respect to statue toppling, other manifestations in the context of BLM, and the debate about reparations for slavery. Both authors use interviews with agents of the politics of memory on the islands as sources for their argumentation. Claudia Rauhut talked to members of the CARICOM Reparations Commission. Her article gives an overview of the public debates about slavery and reparatory justice in Jamaica since the bicentenary of the abolition of slave trade in 2007, of which the elder discussions about the removal of colonial statues, reinitiated in 2020 by Minister of Culture Olivia Grange, constitute only a small part. Claudia Rauhut points to educational activities around slavery and its legacies on that island. She asks to what extent the removal of colonial monuments, museum's exhibitions and the establishment of new sites of memory, to be financed by European countries according to Ten-Point Action Plan of the CARICOM Reparations Commission, are conceived as one reparative measure amongst others aspiring to overcome the legacies of enslavement as economic disadvantages and neglect of education, health and infrastructure.

Ulrike Schmieder asked engaged scholars, students, and members of memorial associations about their opinion concerning the very specific Martinican statue toppling in 2020, an island marked by an enormous socio-economic tension because of the still persisting economic power of the descendants of the enslavers (*békés*) over a majority population of descendants of the enslaved who did not get freedom and equality with the end of slavery. The crisis has been aggravated by an ecological catastrophe for which the French state and the *békés* share liability. She interviewed Afro-Cuban scholars and writers about their evaluation of the politics of memory referring to slavery past and their demands in this context vis-à-vis a State governed by the privileged white majority. She explains why statues were not smashed in Cuba, although there are remaining monuments for enslavers and racists in the socialist country. Her paper also investigates statues which express the counter-memories of the descendants of the enslaved honoring their resisting ancestors in Martinique and the glorification of the resistance of the enslaved as precursory social movement for Cuban revolutions (in 1895 and 1959) as part of the dominant narrative on national history.

A seldom discussed coincidence is that in Martinique (and French Guyana) and the United States statues for white abolitionists were brought down. In Martinique the cult for white abolitionist Victor Schoelcher and the not sufficient recognition of self-emancipation of the enslaved were targeted. Besides, one of the destroyed statues visualized a hierarchical relation between the white politician and a grateful black girl. In the US, in

57 C. Crespo, Memories in Displacement in the Public Space. The Monuments of Juana Azurduy and Christopher Columbus in Argentina, in: O. Kaltmeier/M. Petersen/W. Raussert/J. Roth (eds.), *Cherishing the Past, Envisioning the Future: Entangled Practices of Heritage and Utopia in the Americas*, Trier 2021, pp. 101–122.

Boston, a replica of the Emancipation Memorial in Washington from 1879 was removed. It was not so much Lincoln who was the problem for pro-removal petitioners, but the fact that at his monument a once-enslaved man kneels before him. They interpreted that as maintenance of racist stereotypes of a presumed submissiveness of African Americans and neglect of their role in emancipation.⁵⁸ A bill has been introduced to Congress by Democratic Party delegate for Washington, D.C., Eleanor Norton Holmes, to relocate the original “Emancipation Memorial” in Washington to a museum, too.⁵⁹ It seems that in the UK statues with similar visual narrative, for example the Thomas Clarkson Memorial in Wisbech, with a relief showing the kneeling slave, the icon of paternalistic white abolitionism,⁶⁰ were not attacked.

This volume of *Comparativ* can only focus on some case studies referring to a global movement towards de-colonization of memorial cityscapes, a movement which also faces strong opposition and setbacks. Exhaustive treatment of the complex controversies about the dissonant heritage of slavery and colonialism in the Atlantic space cannot be attained, but our articles reveal a series of commonalities shaping the iconoclastic movement based on the discrimination of people of African descent in Europe and the Americas as legacy of enslavement. However, the precise events and agency with respect to inherited, dissonant memorial sites depend strongly from national and even very local conditions. The latter might also prevent that statue toppling in specific communities and states. The editors and authors take it for granted that the controversial disputes about the remembrance of enslavers, colonialists and defenders of white supremacy will accompany most European and American societies during the coming decades.

58 V. Barone, Boston Arts Commission votes to remove statue of Lincoln with freed slave, in: New York Post, 1.7.2020. <https://nypost.com/2020/07/01/boston-art-commission-votes-to-remove-statue-of-lincoln-with-freed-slave/>.

59 For Eleanor Holmes Norton, new urgency for long-fought battles, in: Washington Post, 10.7.2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/eleanor-holmes-norton-statues/2020/07/09/6e252358-bc8e-11ea-bdaf-a129f921026f_story.html (accessed 4 April 2021).

60 A photo and description of that giant monument: J. Oldfield, “Chords of Freedom”: Commemoration, Ritual and British Transatlantic Slavery, Manchester 2007, pp. 76–77.