

**SUMMER  
2024  
WEEKS 4-6**



## Liverpool and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade (5 credit module)

**IEEL044**

\*this module is awaiting final approval

Credit Value	Delivery	Contact Hours Per module	Self-Directed Hours Per module	Total Hours Per module
5 UoL credit, 2.5 ECTS	On-campus	12-16	34-38	50

### Module Leader: Lois Wignall

*Lois is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at the University of Liverpool. Her project investigates the role of subscription libraries in spurring British industrialisation during the long eighteenth century. Her research explores how subscription libraries sustained – and reflected – the interconnectivity of Northern towns, focusing on the 'commercial-industrial nexus' of Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham. Following revisionist economic historiographies, Lois's work argues how cultural institutions and associated industrial knowledge depended on capital flows constructed and sustained by the transatlantic slave trade.*

### Module Description

In 1772, the actor George Cooke famously retorted that every brick in Liverpool was cemented by the blood of the enslaved. Cooke's remark has since generated much speculation and historical enquiry into Liverpool's complex past, but what role did the trans-Atlantic slave trade play in shaping the early social, cultural, economic and physical development of the burgeoning eighteenth-century port town? To what extent did individual merchants, their families and the wider locality benefit from the profits of the triangular trade? How has its legacy affected

present-day Liverpool, and how does it continue to have contemporary societal consequences in the city?

This module aims to explore how Liverpool's changing built environment, socio-economic structure and architectural landmarks were shaped by the town's involvement in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. It will introduce students to the merchant community – cemented by familial and commercial networks – whose personal fortunes were linked to the slave trade and contributed to Liverpool's impressive urban progress. A case study of the Liverpool Athenaeum, a private members library and newsroom which was funded by some of Liverpool's leading slave merchants, will shed light upon the complexities of disentangling wealth generated in a multi-occupational environment. It will also highlight the dichotomy of the pursuit of enlightenment knowledge funded by slavery. This module will conclude by considering the legacy left by Liverpool's involvement in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and how we may begin to re-contextualise the city's past.

This course will combine a selection of eighteenth-century primary sources such as maps, account books, petitions, diaries, directories and topographical literature. It will introduce historiographical theories and debates surrounding Liverpool and the 'African' trade, whilst also exploring available research methods, approaches to accessing the archives, and the cultural significance of the city's surviving Georgian and Victorian buildings.

#### **Module Aims:**

- To build students' confidence in understanding, discussing and communicating complex ideas, both in written and spoken language.
- To develop skills in research and collaborative learning.
- To provide students with a critical introduction to Liverpool's eighteenth-century social, cultural and commercial history, with a particular focus on the city's links to the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

#### **Content**

The following topics will be considered on the module:

- The eighteenth-century social, cultural and commercial history of Liverpool
- Liverpool's complex relationship with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and its profits
- The cultural significance of Liverpool's surviving Georgian and Victorian buildings
- The necessary skills for conducting historical research

#### **Module Structure**

Each classroom session will take the form of a lecture or interactive seminar/workshop (see Learning Outcomes, below). The module leader will encourage discussion of the relationship between Liverpool and the slave trade, particularly in reference to the city's landmarks. A series of primary sources and case studies will be provided for students to analyse in group tasks. Students will be expected to participate fully and actively throughout the sessions.

The final block will consist of an assessment session. This module will also include a guided building tour of the Liverpool Athenaeum, which will include an opportunity to handle historical works from their collection.

Additionally, students are expected to complete 34–38 hours of self-directed study outside of classroom contact hours. Students will be expected to complete any assigned reading and preparation for each session and final assessments in order to fully benefit from this course. Students are also encouraged to pursue further reading and research on areas of personal interest linked to the course.

## Teaching Methods

The teaching approach will include the following:

Taught sessions (Lectures / Seminars)

Workshops / Case Studies

Live Research

Group / Class Discussion

Group Activities

Self-Directed Learning / Preparation for Sessions

## Assessment:

Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000–1200 words (e.g. poem/lesson plan etc. + commentary, design folder/scrap book (worth 100% of the overall mark)

Standard University policies apply with regard to late submission of assessments

## Course Structure:

The indicative schedule is as follows:

### Session One:

#### **What it May Grow to in Time, I Know Not', Georgian Liverpool: Architecture, Space and Place**

This two-hour classroom-based session will examine Liverpool's growth from an insignificant fishing village to a global port by the closing of the eighteenth century. Students will study maps, paintings and sketches of early Liverpool and will discuss available topographical literature to determine the scale of demographic and economic expansion in the town during this formative period. The session will also present broad eighteenth-century theoretical concepts including Peter Borsay's 'English Urban Renaissance', the Consumer Revolution and principles of Georgian politeness, as a means to interrogate and contextualise Liverpool's transformation. Students will be provided with historiographical sources which develop these central frameworks.

## **Session Two:**

### **An Enterprising Spirit? Liverpool's Path to Prominence and Merchant Community**

This two-hour classroom-based session will provide context to Liverpool's path to prominence, with a particular emphasis on the town's slaving activity and the contributory factors which secured Liverpool's dominance in the slave trade from 1740 onwards. It will introduce Liverpool's eighteenth-century geographical advantages, dock provision and spirit of enterprise. The session will also introduce students to the merchant class that dominated Liverpool and its slaving ventures, by exploring various case studies. Students will be familiarised with the Slave Voyages Database and the UCL Legacies database and will have the opportunity to lead their own enquires into Liverpool's merchant community via live research. (Laptops required).

## **Session Three:**

### **'Beyond a Doubt': Liverpool and Slavery Workshop**

This workshop will enable students to discuss the impact of the completed self-led Liverpool and Slavery walking tour and the intricate financial, social and cultural connections present between Liverpool's built environment and the city's colonial legacies. It will additionally introduce contemporary historical debates surrounding the profitability of the slave trade in Liverpool.

## **Session Four**

### **A Library Funded by Slavery? A Case Study of the Liverpool Athenaeum**

This two-hour session will be held at the Liverpool Athenaeum, Liverpool's longest-surviving eighteenth-century library. The workshop will introduce students to its origins, and reflect on how – and why – Liverpool's leading slave merchants funded the institution. Students will have the opportunity to search the holdings of the library when it was founded, using the Eighteenth-Century Libraries Online (ECLO) database. Students will also view case studies of proprietors on both sides of the abolition debate, from William Roscoe (abolitionist), to John Gladstone (pro-slavery), in order to understand how individuals from opposing sides may have interacted with one another within the institution. The session will conclude with a brief tour of the building, led by the Athenaeum's club secretary (*tbc*). (Laptops required)

## **Session Five**

### **Liverpool and Abolition, Legacies, and Resistance**

This two-hour seminar will introduce the role of abolitionism in Liverpool versus the port's 'slaving fraternity'. Students will have the opportunity to investigate petitions for and against the trade's abolition during the eighteenth century. They will also search records of the Slave Compensation Commission, set up to manage the distribution of the £20 million reimbursed to slave owners once abolition occurred. These considerations lead to a discussion of the long-term impacts of slavery and abolition in Liverpool, and also urge students to consider how we can challenge the limitations of dominant abolitionist narratives through our academic praxis.

## Session Six

### Application and Reflection: Assessment Workshop

During this workshop, students will have the opportunity to discuss research undertaken for the module assessment and raise any final questions/concerns.

Building on session five and associated set reading, students will reflect on the course themes and discuss research methods they may adopt in future academic ventures and how they would further promote/approach intellectual decolonisation.

### Learning Outcomes:

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

Learning outcome	Assessment component which assesses this learning outcome
Understand and communicate complex ideas in written and spoken language	Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000-1200 words (worth 50% of the overall mark)
Complete a relevant piece of research and formally present findings in an academically suitable style, including relevant source material and referencing system	Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000-1200 words (worth 50% of the overall mark)
Demonstrate a general understanding of Liverpool's growth and urban progress, particularly in connection to the town's relationship with the trans Atlantic slave trade and its profits.	Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000-1200 words (worth 50% of the overall mark)

### Skills:

Key skills that will be developed:

Skill	How this skill is developed	Mode of assessment
Collaboration and Teamwork	Group Discussion, Activities in Class and Case Studies	
Communication	Group Discussion and Debate, Activities in Class, Written Assignment	Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000-1200 words (worth 50% of the overall mark)

Problem Solving	Group Discussion and Debate, Activities in Class, Live Research, Brainstorming and Case Studies	Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000-1200 words (worth 50% of the overall mark)
Research	Self-directed Learning, Assessed Assignments, Analysis and Evaluation of Sources, Critical Reflection of Theoretical Frameworks, Historiographical Theories and Contemporary Debates	Written essay/reflection or other written piece 1000-1200 words (worth 50% of the overall mark)

### Books, ebooks and websites:

The University Website at [www.liv.ac.uk/library](http://www.liv.ac.uk/library) provides access to many relevant books and electronic books, as well as academic journals and databases. Each resource listed below can either be accessed via the university's library or has an external web-link provided.

If you require additional support with the English grammatical system, it would be advisable to source an English grammar reference book and/or a learner's dictionary. Examples include the following:

- Swan, M., Practical English Usage. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Hornby, A. S., and J. Turnbull., Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, 8th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

If you also require additional support on using the Chicago Style Referencing System, further information can be found at the university's guidance link below:

<https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/referencing/chicago>

### Electronic Sources for the Module:

Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database – <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>  
The Liverpool Athenaeum Archives, <http://archives.theathenaeum.org.uk/calmview/>  
The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: <https://www.slavevoyages.org>

### Recommended Pre-Course Reading:

Ascott, D., F. Lewis and M. Power, Liverpool 1660–1750: People, Prosperity and Power. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.  
Introduction (1–8), Chapter One (8–32), Chapter Two (32–68), Chapter Three (68–106).  
Costello, Ray. Black Liverpool: The Early History of Britain's Oldest Black Community, 1730–1918. (Liverpool: Picton, 2001).  
Belchem, J. (ed.), Liverpool 800. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006.

Richardson, D., S. Schwarz and A. Tibbles (eds.), *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.

Tibbles, Anthony, *Liverpool and the Slave Trade*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018).

### Optional Pre-Course Reading

Allan, David, "Politeness and the Politics of Culture: An Intellectual History of the Eighteenth-Century Subscription Library." *Library & Information History*, 29, (2013), 159 - 169.

Anderson B. L., and D. Richardson, 'Market Structure and Profits of the British African Trade in the Late Eighteenth Century: A Comment.' *The Journal of Economic History*, 43 (September 1983): 713-721.

Andrews, Kehinde, *The New Age of Empire: How Racism and Colonialism Still Rule the World*. London: Allen Lane, 2021.

Borsay, P., *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Bowd, Rebecca. "Useful Knowledge or Polite Learning? A Reappraisal of Approaches to Subscription Library History." *Library & Information History* 29, no. 3 (September 2013), 182-195.

Brazendale, David, and Mark R. M Towsey. *The First Minute Book of the Liverpool Athenaeum, 1797-1809*. Vol. 157. (Liverpool: Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 2020).

Brooke, Richard. *Liverpool as it was During the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century. 1775 to 1800*. United Kingdom: J. Mawdsley and son, 1853.

Chalklin, C. W., *The Rise of the English Town 1650-1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Clemens, P. G. E., 'The Rise of Liverpool, 1665-1750.' *The Economic History Review*, 29.2 (May 1976): 211-225.

Darnton, Robert, 'First Steps Toward a History of Reading', *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 23 (1986), 5-30.

Enfield, W. [1774] *An Essay Towards the History of Liverpool*. Reprint: Gloucestershire: Books on Demand Ltd., 2013.

Haggerty, S., 'The Structure of the Trading Community in Liverpool, 1760-1810.' *Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 151 (2002): 97-125. <https://www.hslc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/151-5-Haggerty.pdf>

Haggerty, S., 'Introduction: Merely For Money?' in *Merely For Money?, Business Culture in the British Atlantic 1750-1815*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012.

Jones, S., *Subscriptions, Schooling and Slavery*. Bluecoat, 2016.

<https://mybluecoat.org.uk/collections/bluecoat-and-slavery/collectioncarousel?id=10303>

Klein, L. E., 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century.' *The Historical Journal*, 45.4 (December 2002): 869-898.

Moore, Sean D., *Slavery and the Making of Early American Libraries: British Literature, Political Thought and the Transatlantic Book Trade, 1713-1814*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Moss, W., [1797] *The Liverpool Guide; Including a Sketch of the Environs: with a Map of the Town*. Reprint: London: Gale, Ecco, Print Editions, 2010.

Muir, R., and E. M. Platt, *A History of Municipal Government in Liverpool: From the Earliest Times to the Municipal Reform Act of 1835*. London, 1906.

Rarity, W., 'The Numbers Game and the Profitability of the British Trade in Slaves.' *The Journal of*

Economic History, 45.3 (September 1985): 693–703.

Roberts, Kyle B., Towsey, Mark, ed. Before the Public Library: Reading, Community, and Identity in the Atlantic World, 1650–1850. Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Towsey, Mark, Reading History in Britain and America, c. 1750–c.1840. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Power, M. J., 'Creating a Port: Liverpool 1695–1715.' The Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 149 (2000): 51–71. <https://www.hslc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/149-4-Power.pdf>

Wallace, J., A General and Descriptive History of the Ancient and Present State of the Town of Liverpool. Liverpool, 1796. Reproduced at: <https://archive.org/details/generaldescripti00walliala>