PORT CITIES AND GLOBAL LEGACIES

URBAN IDENTITY, WATERFRONT WORK, AND RADICALISM

ALICE MAH

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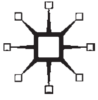

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1
Introduction

Port cities are elemental and captivating: the salt in the air, the connection to distant shores, the ebb and flow of diverse cultures and cargoes. From Osaka to Hamburg and Vancouver to Istanbul, port cities worldwide share narratives of cosmopolitanism and even exceptionalism. But many port cities also share global legacies of empire, colonialism, inequality, and political unrest. These global legacies are contradictory and intertwined. They encompass the nostalgic and the forgetful, the radical and the reactionary, the parochial and the worldly. They are uncomfortable subjects of denial, debate, and ambivalence. This book argues that the concept of 'global legacies'—enduring forms, processes, or ideas of the 'global' that shape urban identity and politics—is an important lens for analysing difficult pasts and uncertain futures in struggling port cities.

Port cities have distinctive global dynamics, with long histories of casual labour, large migrant communities, and international trade networks. As such, port cities offer an important urban context for examining new and old aspects of the 'global'. Information technology has been at the forefront of debates about globalization since the 1970s (cf. Bell 1973; Castells 2000; Masuda 1980). However, many scholars have underestimated the continuing significance of material seaport trade to global capitalism. Ninety per cent of the world's trade is transported by sea.[1] As Levinson (2008) argues, containerization is one of the most significant technological and economic transformations underpinning globalization. The development of intermodal freight transport using shipping containers enabled cheap, efficient, and standardized transport across land and sea. The first container ship was built in 1956 by the American trucking entrepreneur Malcolm Maclean. Containerization rapidly spread throughout the 1960s, and by the early 1970s the

container had become the dominant mode of global transport. Containerization facilitated the development of post-Fordist 'just-in-time' production, where products could be assembled from all parts of the globe. It also contributed to the decline of manufacturing in Western industrialized economies as companies moved their factories to countries with cheaper labour and resources (cf. Harvey 2001; High and Lewis 2007).

While the story of containerization is often neglected in accounts of globalization and deindustrialization, it has been central to accounts of port cities. Container shipping greatly reduced the need for intensive dock labour in waterfront communities and required new forms of port technology and capacity. Echoing global patterns of deindustrialization, many old ports failed to modernize, while new deep-water hub ports emerged, shifting the concentration of leading economic ports from Europe and North America towards Asia (cf. Desfor et al. 2011; Miller 2012; Schubert 2008). Some port cities have become relative success stories of transformation, particularly global hub cities such as Hong Kong and Singapore. The European ports of Rotterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg have also been heralded as success stories in maintaining strong volumes of container trade, although the extent of 'success' within their wider urban economies is uneven in relation to employment and social inclusion (cf. Warsewa 2006). However, most Western port cities have faced urban and economic decline since the 1970s, with varying degrees of recovery through culture-led and tourism-led waterfront development. As Wang et al. (2007: xv) argue, 'seaports that were significant for a "slower" but no less global economy have been undergoing transformation, re-imagining and re-inventing themselves, to stay economically and culturally "relevant"'. Even the hub ports are not immune from decline; shipping is intimately tied to the vicissitudes of global capitalism. In 2009, in tandem with the global recession, the maritime economy witnessed the sharpest decline in the volume of global merchandize trade in several decades. Massive container ships lay empty in hub ports across Asia.

This research focuses on three post-industrial Western port cities with different but related histories and fortunes: Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. These were significant global port cities at the turn of the twentieth century, but they have since declined in economic importance. Their stories of former wealth and success are linked to the ruthless expansion of capitalism and empire between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their subsequent decline and attempts at recovery are marked by these legacies. Precarious work

and multiculturalism, important issues in recent debates about globalization, have thrived in these port cities, as in others, for centuries. Traditions of working-class and grassroots radicalism are also strong in these intensely divided cities, with heated political battles between different social groups.[2] These three former ports of empire and colonialism provide important contexts for examining some of the most enduring and challenging issues of the modern world.

This book advances the concept of 'global legacies' as a critical analytical lens for understanding struggling post-industrial port cities, casting light on uneven and interrelated histories and geographies. Port cities are distinctive and revealing sites of global legacies: older global forms and processes which can be traced back centuries, to the early days of merchant capitalism, empire, and political conflict. These older global forms and processes live on today, alongside more recent forms and processes of globalization. But they are not only vestiges of the past to be discovered as passive objects of history; they are dynamic, active, and productive of complex forms of urban identity and political action.

Port cities and global legacies

Port cities have been the subject of a wide range of interdisciplinary scholarship. Researchers have emphasized the significance of global networks in port cities, particularly in relation to urban and economic development and urban planning (cf. Gandelsman-Trier et al. 2009; Graf and Huat 2008; Hein 2011; Miller 2012; Wang et al. 2007). *Port Cities: Dynamic Landscapes and Global Networks* (Hein 2011) analyses the international exchange of architectural and urban planning ideas through port city networks, with a range of international examples. Hein (2011) argues that port cities are hubs within dynamic maritime networks, with interconnected urban and built environments of 'port cityscapes'. In *Ports, Cities, and Global Supply Chains*, Wang et al. (2007) also examine port cities in relation to global networks but from the perspective of business and economics, focusing on how port cities adapt to uncertainty within rapidly changing logistics and economic environments. These studies offer valuable theoretical, empirical, and comparative insights from different disciplines into port cities and the global maritime economy. My research takes inspiration from these networked approaches, but my focus is ethnographic, historical, and sociological.

An interesting ethnographic comparative analysis of port cities is offered by *Port Cities as Areas of Transition: Ethnographic Perspectives* (Gandelsman-Trier et al. 2009). The authors use case studies of different

port cities around the world to study the local effects of global post-industrial change and waterfront development. From a historical perspective, *Europe and the Maritime World: A Twentieth Century History* (Miller 2012) provides a rich and compelling account of the interrelationships between port cities, shipping, and the spread of globalization, arguing that European ports dominated the maritime world until the late twentieth century. Miller's study situates the rise and fall of European ports and the recent rise of Asian ports in relation to global dynamics of empire-building, colonialism, capitalist development, and containerization. He suggests that these historical periods represent two global ages, the first dominated by Europe and the second dominated by Asia, each with different cultural, economic, and political dynamics. Miller's book is somewhat exceptional within the scholarship on port cities as a sole-authored comparative analysis which takes account of unequal global relations of empire and colonialism.

My research builds upon Gandelsman-Trier (2009) in my use of ethnographic case study methods and Miller (2012) in my attention to historical, comparative interconnections and in my analysis of formerly dominant Western port cities of the 'first global age'. My research also seeks to address some gaps within the scholarship on port cities and globalization. Little attention, for example, has been paid to the contradictory ways in which global legacies have shaped contested urban identity and forms of political action in port cities.

This book draws inspiration from three analytical approaches: critical political economy; global history and sociology; and extended and distended ethnographic case study methods. These approaches are important for a critical sociological analysis of post-industrial port cities and the interconnected global legacies of capitalism, empire, casual labour, and radicalism. Critical political economy focuses on the uneven forms, processes, and practices of global capitalism and on sites and strategies of political resistance. This literature is based on the idea that capitalism is constantly expanding to seek new markets, through a process of 'creative destruction' (Harvey 2000; Schumpeter 1965). The uneven geography of capitalism has many implications for patterns of urban development, gentrification, and political resistance, particularly in waterfront areas of cities (cf. Harvey 2012; Peck 2005; Smith 2002). Two notable contributions to a critical political economy of the maritime economy are Allan Sekula (2003) and Neilson and Rossiter (2011). In *Fish Story* (Sekula 2003), an innovative combination of critical realist photography and essays, Sekula argues that the sea is a 'forgotten' space that is largely invisible yet integral to global capitalism, the site

of tremendous profit-making as well as some of the worst labour abuses. He provides stark examples of precarious workers and migrants from ports around the world, pointing to the relationship between industrialization in Asia, deindustrialization in Western countries, and unequal global container routes by sea and land of production, consumption, labour, and migration. Neilson and Rossiter (2011) make a similar argument, showing how maritime logistics and precarious labour operate 'strangely out of time' across the sea as an 'extra-juridical space'.

Global history and sociology also offer important critical perspectives for examining the role of global dynamics and interconnections in shaping port cities. The concepts of 'entangled histories' (Kocka and Haupt 2009; Randeria 2006) and *histoire croisée* (Werner and Zimmermann 2006) highlight the importance of entanglements between the local and the global in the context of studying global history. Similarly, Subrahmanyam's (2005) 'connected histories', Fernando Coronil's (2007) 'relational histories', and Bhambra's (2014) 'connected sociologies' stress ideas of global connections across different times and places, particularly in relation to colonialism. These theories highlight uncomfortable connections between capitalism and empire. As Bhambra (2014) argues, connected sociologies challenge modern and postmodern approaches, which tend to privilege particular Western or Eurocentric 'metanarratives'. Connected histories and sociologies pay attention to the integral connections between hidden and difficult pasts, presents, and geographies. Following these approaches within global history and sociology, this study aims to challenge dominant narratives through examining 'silenced' histories (Trouillot 1995) in the context of contested urban memory and identity. The method relates to Foucault's (1980) idea of 'subjugated knowledges' and to his method of tracing genealogies of knowledge.

Throughout this book, I use historical as well as ethnographic methods, reading legacies of the past not only within documents but also within landscapes, interviews, and ethnographic observations (cf. Benjamin 1996; Davis 1990; Frisby 2001; Lefebvre 1991).[3] My aim is to understand the present through reading traces of the past. My ethnographic approach to study global legacies in port cities draws on 'extended' and 'distended' ethnographic case study methods (Burawoy 1998; Peck and Theodore 2012). Burawoy's (1998) extended case method investigates how the 'global' is itself constituted within the local through ethnographic study. While ethnography traditionally focuses on micro-level studies of communities and subcultures, Burawoy's ethnographic approach straddles both macro-level

and micro-level scales, drawing out relationships between global socio-economic processes and everyday lived experiences. My research also takes inspiration from Peck and Theodore's (2012: 24) related 'distended case study' approach to policy mobility, which

> is not associated with a fixed methodological repertoire, but gives license to an open-ended embrace of methodological experimentation and reflexivity, ranging from policy ethnographies to genealogical analyses and social constructivist diffusion studies.

While my research is not concerned primarily with policy mobility, except in the case of waterfront development policies, Peck and Theodore's outline of an open-ended methodological repertoire provides inspiration for researching networked, embedded, and interconnected histories and sociologies of port cities.

Together, these three approaches inform my analytical concept of global legacies, which aims to show how older global forms and processes endure and adapt over time and space. The notion of 'legacies' is widely used within research in the social sciences and humanities, particularly in relation to empire, colonialism, war, communism, post-socialism, dictatorship, and environmental degradation (cf. Avineri and Sternhell 2003; Biess and Moeller 2010; de L'Estoile 2008; Hargreaves 2005; Tyler 2012). It is often used in a negative sense, to refer to the residual features and collective traumas of less 'progressive' eras. It is also used in a nostalgic sense, of pining for the remainders of former eras, however problematic—the loss of riches, prestige, and security. Finally, it is sometimes used in a positive sense, as a legacy of a worthwhile project or visionary leader. My use of 'legacies' deliberately captures the contradictory and ambivalent meanings of the term. Legacies speak to inheritance and persistence, of what remains through processes of change. They are rooted not only in processes of ruination and decline, but also in processes of resistance and recovery. Legacies denote a sense of continuity amidst disruption and change.

My analysis of global legacies in port cities relates closely to the concept of 'ruination' as a destructive material and embodied legacy of both empire and capitalism. In *Imperialist Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (2013), Stoler distinguishes between the concepts of 'legacy' and 'ruination' in relation to the durable traces of colonialism. Stoler (2013: 12) suggests that the concept of a 'colonial legacy' is deceptive because it deflects rather than clarifies analysis: 'In the case of imperial formations, a "legacy" makes no distinctions between what holds and

what lies dormant, between residue and recomposition, between a weak and a tenacious trace.' She argues that 'ruination' is more powerful because it directs attention to how people live with and in ruins, and 'to the common sense such habitations disturb, to the critiques condensed or disallowed, and to the social relations avidly coalesced or shattered around them' (Stoler 2013: 13). Like Stoler, my research is concerned with 'ruination': examining the processes of destruction, violence, and injustice that persist through the interrelated workings of capitalism, empire, and colonialism. In fact, my approach builds on my previous research on industrial ruination as a lived process in old industrial cities (Mah 2012), further developing my interest in how people live with difficult processes of ruination and recovery. However, I argue that the concept of 'legacies' should not be ousted by the concept of 'ruination'—indeed, it has considerable analytical and critical power.

My research focuses particularly on the global legacies of empire, capitalism, casual labour, and radicalism in the port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. Inherent within these legacies are processes of both ruination and recovery. The twin processes of ruination in each city—of empire and of commerce—are deeply entangled and embedded within collective memories, identities, and forms of political action. Processes of urban recovery in each city have attempted to disentangle positive and negative global legacies, encountering multiple contradictions and limitations along the way. Global legacies are evident throughout the world, across a range of national, regional, urban, and rural contexts. The former 'great' port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans are particularly revealing sites in which to explore these complex and contradictory legacies. Through these case studies of three Western post-industrial port cities, this book traces global legacies in relation to cross-cutting themes of urban identity, waterfront work, and radicalism.

Urban identity, waterfront work, and radicalism

Urban identity is the first theme of this book, encapsulating multiple contradictory global legacies, particularly the legacies of empire and capitalism. Urban identity refers to the collective identity of inhabitants of a city, including shared ideas of belonging, attachment, affiliation, and community. However, urban identity is fragmented and contested rather than unified, reflecting different social groups and interests. My approach to urban identity draws on diverse literatures on place

identity, social and collective memory, and intergenerational memory (cf. Boyer 1994; Cappelletto 2003; Hague and Jenkins 2005; Keith and Pile 1993; Nora 1989; Olick and Robbins 1998; Perkins 2012). As Olick and Robbins (1998: 133) suggest: 'Memory is a central, if not the central, medium through which identities are constituted.' In particular, Nora's (1989) concept of 'sites of memory' ('*lieux de memoire*') is useful for thinking about the relationship between urban space, memory, and identity. For Nora (1989: 12), sites of memory

> originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally.

My research examines port city spaces, narratives, and representations as 'sites of memory', or more precisely 'realms of memory', following many scholars' observations that the term 'site' is too literally spatial to capture the breadth of Nora's meaning (cf. Balderstone et al. 2013: 3). My analysis of memory and identity is primarily concerned with understanding the present through the past—or how the past continues to shape the present within the context of socio-economic change.

Global legacies of empire and capitalism are evident within various realms of urban memory and identity. However, these legacies are complex and difficult to trace empirically. Visible remainders of empire and colonialism can been found within material urban landscapes of architecture, streets, and institutions. They are also evident in multicultural ethnic geographies and in vibrant food and music traditions (cf. Campanella 2008). At the same time, legacies of empire and colonialism persist through forms of racism, injustice, and violence. One can trace these legacies through examining 'silences' of the past that have entered the production of history at various moments, following the lead of post-colonial scholars (cf. Bhambra 2014; Trouillot 1995). These legacies are complicated and do not involve a straightforward transmission through history. As Trouillot (1995: 18–19) provocatively argues, 'The perpetuation of US racism is less a legacy of slavery than a modern phenomenon renewed by generations of white immigrants whose own ancestors were likely engaged in forced labour, at one time or another, in the hinterlands of Europe.' My research investigates uncomfortable global legacies of empire throughout the book, but most explicitly through the example of museums of slavery and colonial history in port cities (Chapter 4).

Tracing legacies of capitalism is perhaps even more difficult, as capitalism is a pervasive global economic system and different theories about the nature, extent, changes, varieties, and inevitability of capitalism abound (cf. Boltanski and Chiapello 2005; Gibson-Graham 1996; Hall and Soskice 2001; Hardt and Negri 2000; Jessop 2001). My analysis investigates capitalism as a varied, uneven, and dynamic system which has evolved and thrived across its long durée (Braudel and Colin 1987), from earlier forms of merchant capitalism to the present. In doing so, it follows critiques of rampant, unmitigated capitalism which argue that capitalism produces inherent inequalities, develops unevenly, and concentrates wealth and privilege in the hands of few, as opposed to the '99 per cent' (Graeber 2013; Harvey 2012; Sennett 2006; Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). Port cities have gone through intensive historical phases of capitalist development, from the early days of mercantilism through to contemporary waterfront regeneration and global super-container ports (see Chapter 3). Even at their height of prosperity, most ports of empire and colonialism were deeply stratified: gentlemen merchants occupied luxurious grand houses, while the poor ordinary masses were crowded in slums in the inner cities and along the docks. The intense inequality of this former era has persisted within port cities, through different waves of capitalist development.

The second theme of the book, waterfront work, intersects with questions of urban identity and relates most explicitly to global legacies of casual labour. Dockworkers are iconic symbols of urban identity within port cities. In many ways, the history of the waterfront represents the backbone of historic port city identities and mythologies. This old form of casual labour is associated with place identity in a similar way that old industrial workers are associated with old industrial cities: the steelworkers in Sheffield, for example, or the autoworkers in Detroit. However, dock labour is also distinct from manufacturing work, characterized by irregularity rather than regularity. Dock labour is a male-dominated, traditional form of waterfront work, associated with militancy, casualism, close-knit communities, and anti-authoritarian politics (cf. Davies 2000; Phillips and Whiteside 1985). Dockers' communities also reflect historical migrant labour patterns in each port city: black and white segregated dockers in New Orleans; Irish dockers in Liverpool; and Mediterranean and North African dockers in Marseille. Yet in the context of shrinking waterfront labour markets and the roll-back of employment protections since the 1970s, each dock labour force has become highly insular, with strong intergenerational traditions of sons following fathers onto the docks.

There have been a number of studies about the organization, politics, and culture of casual dock labour since the late nineteenth century (Arnesen 1994; Davies 2000; Phillips and Whiteside 1985; Pigenet 2001; Rosenberg 1988; Turnbull and Wass 2009; Wilson 1972). Most scholarly work on dockworkers focuses on the period up to the early 1980s, tracing the histories of trade unionism, regularization, and containerization on the docks. The Liverpool Dockers' Strike of 1995–1998 sparked a new wave of research on dockworkers and their struggles, and reflections on the future of dock labour in an era of neoliberal restructuring (cf. Carter et al. 2003; Losada 2010; Saundry and Turnbull 1996). More recently, studies have focused on international dock labour in the context of globalization, highlighting the deterioration in dockworkers' terms and conditions of employment in an international 'race to the bottom' (cf. Turnbull and Wass 2007). My analysis of waterfront work is more ethnographic in focus, examining narratives, memories, and lived experiences of intergenerational working lives in relation to wider urban, regional, and global dynamics.

The third theme of this book addresses global legacies of radicalism within contemporary alternative politics in port cities. As Lefebvre (1991) suggests, the city constitutes not only the 'setting' but also the 'stakes' of political contestation. Thus, cities are political in a double sense: cities are not only locations in which politics take place but also objects of struggle in their own right, both in and over space. 'To think about politics and power', writes Tonkiss (2005: 59), 'is nearly always to invoke a set of spatial relations: from the surface of the body to the distribution of property, the spatial order of the senate chamber or the "theatre" of war'. Urban spaces provide sites for political action and are themselves politicized in struggles over access, control, and representation. Port cities are particularly interesting political sites of struggle, with strong traditions of working-class solidarity and grassroots social movements.

Legacies of radicalism are evident within contemporary forms of alternative politics in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans, as many activists coalesce primarily around traditional labour and social movements. Grassroots radicalism and solidarity are rooted in old working-class and migrant communities in these post-industrial port cities and embedded within collective memory and urban identity. However, just as the maritime economy of each city has declined, so too has the strength of popular political action. Not one of these cities has supported a mass social movement or protest in recent years. Despite their radical self-image, they cannot really be termed 'rebel cities' at the

vanguard of global political resistance, along the lines of Occupy or the Arab Spring (Harvey 2012). Moreover, while these port cities are often portrayed as 'cities of radicals' with 'progressive' working-class social movements and counter-cultures (cf. Belchem and Biggs 2011; Dell'Umbria 2012), they are also productive of and embedded within discriminatory and exclusionary practices.

Legacies of grassroots radicalism are not exempt from the contradictions inherent within the global legacies of capitalism and empire. As Bonnett (2010) suggests, left-wing traditions of radicalism are often nostalgic, marked by a longing for old utopias and a denial of political inconsistencies. The 'Angry Women of Liverpool' anarchist feminist group echo this criticism (interview, 26 November 2013), arguing that the dominant tradition of radicalism within Liverpool is overwhelmingly white and male, and that there are significant barriers to inclusion and equal representation for women and people of colour within this community. In Marseille, there are similar tensions between the interests of French, white working-class communities and North African migrants, who are the most excluded people in the city. In New Orleans, traditions of radicalism are deeply racialized despite histories of cooperation between black and white labourers and activists both during and after segregation.

Global legacies in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans reveal unique insights into dynamics between old and new, continuity and change, and overt and hidden aspects of globalization. These post-industrial port cities have contradictory histories and identities, making it difficult for their residents to work through collective pasts and to move forward into uncertain collective futures. Global legacies of empire, capitalism, casual labour, and radicalism spark questions about what old global ideas and forms are worth keeping, remembering, or rejecting in the new global era.

Researching port cities: Methodology and case studies

The multiple case study research methodology for this book includes qualitative interviews, ethnography, visual and spatial methods, oral histories, and archival documents, as well as analyses of films, novels, and policy and media documents. I conducted more than 75 interviews—approximately 25 interviews in each case—with a range of people including dockworkers, seafarers, grassroots community activists, urban regeneration representatives, city officials, port authority officials, museum workers, trade unionists, artists, and residents. All

research was conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the British Sociological Association with full, informed consent of all research participants. Most names of interviewees have been changed or made anonymous to protect the identities of respondents, but some interviewees who preferred to be recognized by name have been identified.[4]

The multiple case studies are illustrative and exemplary (cf. Flyvbjerg 2001; Yin 2009), revealing dynamics within particular types of port cities rather than claiming to be representative. As outlined above, my methodological approach for researching global legacies in port cities takes inspiration from three different analytical approaches: (1) critical political economy; (2) global history and sociology; and (3) extended and distended ethnographic case study methods. Sometimes these work together as complementary analytical approaches, and sometimes they work separately, focusing on particular questions and issues. Indeed, each part of the book follows a different analytical approach, based on the research themes. Part I, on the theme of urban identity, focuses on representations, narratives, and policies. It draws primarily on the first two analytical approaches, based on evidence from film, literature, urban policy documents, and museum exhibitions, complemented by selected interviews. Part II, on the theme of waterfront work, draws primarily on the third analytical approach, based on extensive in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations with dockworkers in each of three port cities. Part III, on the theme of radicalism, combines the first and third analytical approaches, examining the politics of imagining alternative futures in a range of contexts. It draws on a combination of interviews, ethnographic observations, and city tours.

The book focuses on the three Western post-industrial port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. The aim of this comparison is to examine different contexts of urban identity, waterfront work, and radicalism in these cities, drawing out common and distinctive themes. The three cities are former ports of empire, have suffered significant post-war economic decline, and currently rely on tourism and culture for urban redevelopment. They are 'precarious' cities (Ascaride 2001) existing within uncertain contexts of globalization and post-industrial change. Like many other cities that are struggling to overcome decline, they fall outside of dominant models of post-industrial development within an 'uneven geography of capitalism' (Harvey 2012; Smith 2002). These former global ports have been eclipsed by Asian global hub port cities, no longer competitive yet still harbouring global aspirations. They provide an interesting glimpse into the complex entanglements

of economic and imperial decline, and the uneven geography of urban development.

The three cities have focused on tourism and culture-led redevelopment, following the examples of cities such as Baltimore, Barcelona, and London. Liverpool and Marseille were both European Capitals of Culture in 2008 and 2013, respectively. The European Capital of Culture is a designation that has been awarded to cities by the European Union since 1985, a 12-month funded arts and cultural programme. Between 1985 and 2003, the majority of European Capitals of Culture were capital cities, port cities, or historic cultural cities. Starting in 2004, with the election of both Lille and Genoa, the majority of European Capitals of Culture have been port cities, old industrial cities, or Eastern European cities. This reflects a shift towards using the European Capital of Culture as a catalyst for urban regeneration and development. This fits within a broader policy trajectory of culture-led post-industrial regeneration in European cities that dates to the late 1980s (cf. Andres 2011b; Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004; O'Brien 2011). One of the key challenges for cities that bid for the European Capital of Culture designation is the need to emphasize cultural strengths while also stressing the need for improving cultural offers. European Capital of Culture efforts in both Liverpool and Marseille primarily focused on economic development and city marketing, emphasizing discourses of openness, diversity, and cosmopolitanism, while downplaying legacies of colonialism, racism, and social exclusion. However, despite the focus on tourism and physical urban regeneration, Liverpool and Marseille still have high levels of socio-economic polarization.

New Orleans has followed a different but related path of tourism and culture-led redevelopment. Tourism and culture have been vital to the city for the better part of a century. The 'Big Easy' attracts visitors around the world for Mardi Gras celebrations, the Jazz and Heritage Festival, the Super Bowl, and numerous other cultural activities that occur throughout the year. Even in the absence of specific cultural events, the reputation of New Orleans as a distinctive cultural city within the popular imaginary attracts tourists. While a great deal of money has gone into the economic and infrastructural recovery of New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the city has also focused heavily on culture-led recovery. One of the clearest examples of this trend is the fact that New Orleans has hosted the annual World Cultural Economic Forum since it began in 2008, which is devoted to bringing together leaders from cities around the world to discuss the role of culture in economic development.

There are also key differences between the cases with respect to national, regional, and local contexts. The cases offer significant contrasts: between former ports of empire (Liverpool and Marseille) and of colonialism (New Orleans); between European and North American ports; between different relative sizes of ports within global trade networks; between different migrant communities, workers' organizations, and local socio-political contexts; and between different experiences of economic decline and different forms of culture-led regeneration and recovery. The cities are also important sites for study because they have received little academic attention within comparative urban studies. Liverpool and Marseille have both received some scholarly attention as port cities, but these have been primarily within local history contexts rather than in larger urban studies. By contrast, New Orleans has received a great deal of attention in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (cf. Bullard and Wright 2009; Flaherty 2010; Gotham 2007; Taylor 2010), but this recent focus has overshadowed a wider consideration of the urban history of New Orleans as a port city with longer-term socio-economic challenges.

The comparative research for this book is theoretically and methodologically ambitious, straddling three port cities in different national contexts, contributing to a range of theoretical literatures and combining different analytical approaches. As such, there were some limitations to my research in terms of depth and scope. I was an outsider in each of the cities, and I did not spend extended periods of time doing field research (see the final section of Chapter 2 for ethical reflections on being an outsider). Instead, I visited each city for periods of two to three weeks at a time, with return visits over a period of three years (2010–2013). Thus, there were limitations in terms of depth of ethnographic insights, although there were also advantages in the comparative analysis and the three-year timescale of the research. My analysis was also necessarily selective. I focused my attention on particularly revealing or illustrative narratives, representations, and sites, building on and extending the methodological approach developed during my previous research on industrial ruination (Mah 2012). This book offers only a partial reading of aspects of the three port cities, and there are necessarily many omissions, including areas that are worth further research. The aim is not to represent a holistic, representative, or typological view of these port cities, but rather to open up questions about port cities and global legacies, in relation to the key themes of urban identity, waterfront work, and radicalism.

Liverpool

Writing in 1907 in celebration of the 700th centennial of the city of Liverpool, historian Ramsay Muir expressed great optimism about the future of the city in his book *A History of Liverpool* (Muir and Platt 1907). Muir argued that by the turn of the twentieth century Liverpool had shed its former reputation as the 'black spot on the Mersey'. In particular, he pointed to developments in public services which included among others the securing of a healthy water supply through pipelines from Wales; the foundation of the Liverpool Public Library in 1852; the establishment of trade and science classes for teachers, sailors, and housewives; the replacement of insanitary houses with clean and healthy houses; and the success of electric trams which 'rendered possible the transportation of thousands of poor folk to healthier surroundings on the outskirts of the city' (Muir and Platt 1907: 328).

One hundred years later, the University of Liverpool Press produced another celebratory centennial book, *Liverpool 800* (Belchem 2006b), which begins with a reflection on Muir's history from 1907. The editor, historian John Belchem, argues that Muir's account reflects the idealism of the time, describing the book as 'a product of the city's heyday' that was 'written before history (and geography) turned against Liverpool' (Belchem 2006a: 19). With the advantage of greater hindsight, *Liverpool 800* offers a more balanced assessment of the city's history, addressing the city's successes and failures in municipal governance. It highlights, for example, the history of the transatlantic slave trade until its abolition in 1809; institutional racism following the First World War; and deep social and economic problems related to casual labour, economic decline, housing conditions, and sectarian, political, and racial conflicts. But there is still a proud, nostalgic, and bitter twinge to Belchem's account. Echoing the accounts of many other local historians and intellectuals in Liverpool, Belchem emphasizes the strength of working-class radicalism, the romanticism of casual labour on the docks, and the hard work of Irish migrants and working-class communities who fought for the city in the face of adversity, stigma, and economic decline.

Indeed, Liverpool has suffered from an image problem for much of its history. The author Paul Du Noyer (2002: 6) famously compared Liverpool with Marseille, arguing that: 'This sin-ridden seaport has always been a place apart—a sort of sunless Marseilles that operates on different principles from the rest of Britain.' Infamously called 'Savage

Liverpool' (Macilwee 2011), nineteenth-century Liverpool was associated with high levels of crime, poverty, and prostitution. This negative reputation continued throughout the twentieth century. Liverpool was dubbed 'Britain's wickedest city' by the *Daily Herald* in 1950, and the 'shock city' of Thatcher's Britain. Following the 1981 Toxteth riots, Thatcher urged politicians to 'let Liverpool decline', through a process of 'managed decline' (Belchem 2006a). Liverpool had a bleak atmosphere of high unemployment and marked urban decline during the Thatcher years. However, as a city with a strong working-class identity, Liverpool demonstrated considerable resistance to the neoliberal policies of Thatcherism. One of the most controversial political legacies of this era was the Trotskyist Militant Tendency's brief period of control over the Liverpool City Council in the 1980s under Derek Hatton, which rebelled against budgetary cuts in defiance against the Conservative government. The actions of the Militant leaders in Liverpool resulted in the expulsion of the Militant Tendency from the British Labour Party and the political isolation of Liverpool as a municipality. Some Liverpudlians remember this period as exemplifying the strength of left-wing political resistance, whereas others remember it as a costly failure (cf. Frost and North 2013).

Since the 1980s, the city of Liverpool has attempted to reverse its decline by investing in the service economy, particularly through property-led and culture-led tourist developments along its waterfront. The reclaimed Albert Dock and the Liverpool Tate opened in 1988, and since this time a number of other museums have opened along the Albert Dock, including the Merseyside Maritime Museum, the Beatles Story Museum in the 1990s, and the International Slavery Museum and the Museum of Liverpool in the 2000s. Liverpool's designation as European Capital of Culture in 2008 was an important milestone in advancing an agenda of tourism-led and culture-led development. It also dovetailed with other development initiatives in the city, notably the large-scale retail development 'Liverpool One' which opened in 2008. 'Liverpool One' transformed 42 acres of 'underutilized land' in the city centre into a private open-air shopping centre with high street chains, restaurants, apartments, hotels, and sports and entertainment facilities.

The European Capital of Culture Impacts 08 research consortium (a partnership between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University commissioned by Liverpool City Council) produced a report outlining the major positive impacts of the European Capital of Culture in Liverpool, including improvements in terms of: cultural access and local participation; the economy and tourism; cultural

vibrancy and sustainability; image and perceptions; and governance and the delivery process (cf. Garcia et al. 2008). However, some scholars have challenged the extent of positive impacts of the European Capital of Culture, arguing that it was a top-down approach that focused primarily on physical rather than social regeneration and concentrated only on the city centre rather than the outlying poorer neighbourhoods (cf. Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004; O'Brien 2011). Indeed, according to the English Indices of Deprivation 2010, Liverpool remained the most deprived local authority in England, with its position unchanged from the 2004 and 2007 indices, and the highest concentration of deprivation continued to be in the north of the city (McLennan et al. 2011).

Throughout its year as European Capital of Culture, the official cultural programme emphasized Liverpool's cosmopolitan reputation, with the tagline, 'the world in one city'. However, paradoxically, Liverpool was more cosmopolitan at the turn of the twentieth century than it is today. By 2008, Liverpool was far less multicultural than many other British cities, due to a combination of factors such as economic decline, histories of racism, and changing migration patterns (cf. Belchem 2006a). According to the UK Census of 2011, Liverpool's population of 466,415 was 86.2 per cent White British or Irish and 13.8 per cent Black and Minority Ethnic, as compared with the national population of 81.4 per cent White British or Irish and 18.6 per cent Black and Minority Ethnic. Complex dynamics of urban and economic decline, depopulation, and changing populations have shaped Liverpool's historical and contemporary urban identity.

Despite the transformation of Liverpool from a vibrant port city to a post-industrial city of tourism and culture-led regeneration, many legacies of the former global era linger. The city still suffers from stigmatization as a poor city marked by decline, particularly in the outlying areas such as northern Liverpool. The maritime history of the city remains a key part of the city's urban identity, reflected in residents' nostalgia for the heyday of the 1950s and 1960s waterfront (cf. Balderstone et al. 2013); in the grand mercantile architecture throughout the city; and in the bitter collective memory of the disastrous Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1998).

Marseille

In Walter Benjamin's (1979) poetic collection of essays describing European cities in the early twentieth century, Marseille features alongside Moscow, Berlin, Naples, and Paris. However, Benjamin did not write a postcard description of the city, but rather focused on its darker

edges. He portrayed a multi-ethnic, impoverished city with subhuman residents, set in stark juxtaposition to the 'the splendour of sun and sea':

> Marseilles—the yellow-studded maw of a seal with salt water running out between the teeth. When this gullet opens to catch the black and brown proletarian bodies thrown to it by ships' companies according to their timetables, it exhales a stink of oil, urine, and printer's ink. This comes from the tartar baking hard on the massive jaws: newspaper kiosks, lavatories, and oyster stalls. The harbour people are a bacillus culture, the porters and whores products of decomposition with a resemblance to human beings. But the palate itself is pink, which is the colour of shame here, of poverty. Hunchbacks wear it, and beggarwomen.
>
> (Benjamin 1979)

The French foreign correspondent Albert Londres painted a similar picture of Marseille in his classic reportage *Marseille, Port du Sud* (Londres 1927) depicting a bustling city of Mediterranean migrants, full of contradictions.

These early twentieth-century descriptions are curiously contemporary. Marseille still suffers from a bad image, of poverty, crime, and corruption, especially within France. One of the key aims throughout the Marseille-Provence European Capital of Culture programme in 2013 was to challenge and reverse this negative image. But if anything, the media only highlighted the problems of Marseille in the wake of its re-branded identity as the Capital of Culture, focusing on gang violence, drugs, 'problem' migrant populations, and deprived estates in the north of the city. Newspaper headlines quipped, 'Marseille, Capitale du Crime?' (Deroubaix 2013) and 'Marseille, capitale française du crime ou de la misère? (Libération 2012)'. This was in sharp contrast to 2005, when international newspaper articles celebrated Marseille as tolerant because it escaped the widespread 2005 French riots (Kimmelman 2007; Williams 2005). These latter articles relate to wider arguments that the tolerance of Marseille is rooted in the fact that the 'popular', working-class areas were in the centre of the city, rather than in the suburbs, as in Paris (cf. Ascaride 2001; Témime 1985).

Marseille was once a dominant port of empire in the nineteenth century, the principal French Mediterranean port linking France with North Africa. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the largest migrant populations came from Greece and Italy, and many of the city's inhabitants today can trace their roots to these countries. Migrants often worked as casual dock labourers and lived in conditions of 'slum'

housing, many in the Panier district of Marseille near the Old Port. In the early and mid-twentieth century, many migrants from North Africa also came to work as casual dock labourers. This was intrinsically tied to France's colonization of Algeria, Senegal, and other parts of North Africa. Today Marseille is promoted as a cosmopolitan and multicultural city, and many say that it has more in common with North African and Mediterranean cities than those in the rest of France (cf. Juan and Langevin 2007; Roncayolo 1990). The migrant population of Marseille has continued to expand since decolonization in the 1960s, with key migrant groups including Algerians, Senegalese, Corsicans, Comorians, Turks, Armenians, and Chinese, among many others.

Like Liverpool, Marseille capitalized on its multicultural heritage when it was European Capital of Culture in 2013, by creating narratives about cosmopolitanism, diversity, and interconnections between France, Europe as a whole, and the Mediterranean. Marseille has a long history as a working-class city full of migrants, and the city centre has grown through integrating populations from different social classes and ethnic groups. Ascaride (2001) suggests that Marseille is a city of precarious travellers and itinerants, where the 'little', 'popular' people have always lived in the centre, while the bourgeois have continued to live outside of the city. Marseille prides itself on having a greater degree of diversity and integration than other French cities (Juan and Langevin 2007).

However, the extent of integration and inclusion in Marseille is a topic of considerable disagreement. Many scholars suggest that there was greater multiculturalism before rather than after decolonization in Marseille due to the fact there was no external pressure for cultural integration, there were fewer migrants flowing into Marseille, and the city was more prosperous as a thriving port (Péraldi and Sampson 2005; Pons 2004). Decolonization came alongside steep economic decline, and the main problems in the city since then relate to socio-economic polarization. According to several of the residents I interviewed, tolerance in Marseille is a myth: policies which promote multiculturalism in the city are only superficial, extending to couscous and to music, but not to deeper attitudes and values. Marseille suffers from intense racism and social tensions, and any sense of living together is simply making a virtue out of necessity. Moreover, Marseille has poverty in its inner city as well as in its suburbs and problems with racism in all parts of the city. The far-right Front National party has a strong following in Marseille and rivals the Socialist Party for local political influence.

The port of Marseille is the largest in France, although it has experienced significant economic decline since the 1970s, with efforts at port

redevelopment based around services, IT, and tourism dating from the 1990s. Before the First World War, 70 per cent of the goods that arrived in the port of Marseille were processed by local industry, but by the 1960s, there was a crisis of the port industry, and all the heavy industry related to port activities became practically obsolete by the 1970s (Zalio 2004). In the 1980s, the city seriously questioned the economic viability of the port, and all of the activities of the Port Autonome de Marseille were transferred to Fos, a neighbouring port to the north. The city went into a period of significant decline between the 1970s and 1990s. A number of redevelopment projects funded by the European Commission since then have focused on transforming the old port of Joliette (Euroméditerranée) into an area full of restaurants, offices, IT services, and tourist industries. The European Capital of Culture in 2013 brought some culture-led regeneration into the city, including a number of flagship national and regional projects. However, despite efforts at urban regeneration, Marseille still suffers from high unemployment well over the national average, and problems associated with crime, poverty, and homelessness. The port of Marseille remains economically and culturally important, but there is a wide gap between the prosperity of the port and the poverty within the city.

New Orleans

Throughout its history, New Orleans has captured the popular imagination as a dangerous, disorderly, and exotic city. In *Building the Devil's Empire*, Dawdy (2008: xv) traces the myth of New Orleans as a 'wild, roguish town', or '*une ville sauvage*', to its early French colonial history. Dawdy argues that the character of New Orleans was shaped by a distinctive form of 'rogue colonialism' in the early eighteenth century, where banditry, corruption, and violence complemented forms of rule and legitimacy. According to Dawdy, rogue colonialism flourished in New Orleans due to the 'quintessentially experimental nature of colonial projects' (2008: 4), which encouraged the emergence of self-made men and new institutions. Cohen (2012) makes a similar argument about the roots of urban identity in New Orleans, tracing the history of New Orleans as a 'pirate city' from its foundation by pirates and privateers on the unruly Mississippi River.

The city's reputation for violence, sexual license, and excessive drinking has continued to this day. Post-Katrina discourses of moral failure, material decline, and the abandonment of the city by the nation are echoes of French colonial news reports in the 1720s and 1730s (Dawdy 2008: xiv). However, alongside these are parallel discourses

of reinvention, improvisation, and unique multicultural exchanges. As I argue in this book, such contradictory identities relate to the city's history as a port city.

The foundation of New Orleans by Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville in 1718 was clearly related to its strategic position on the Mississippi River, as a gateway between the interior of the country and the outside world. At the same time, it was always an unstable location, and many geographers and historians have questioned the logic of the original settlement (cf. Campanella 2008; Lewis 1976). Campanella argues that Bienville faced a dilemma between strategic advantage and safety, and that this profound dilemma is echoed today in debates about why people should fight to remain in New Orleans despite 'eroding coasts, sinking soils, and rising seas' (Campanella 2008: 15). Despite the odds, the city has stayed in its original location on a crescent in the Mississippi River. The port continued to be central to the economy and identity of the city throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as a hub for slaves, sugar, tobacco, and migrants.

By the mid nineteenth-century, New Orleans was one of the world's busiest ports, second only to New York in the United States. The significance of the port began to decline with the development of the railroad, the abatement of the sugar and tobacco industries, and increasing competition from other American and international ports. By 1900, New Orleans had dropped from the fourth to the twelfth busiest world port (World Port Source 2014). Like many other Western port cities, the port declined during the 1960s and 1970s due to containerization and deindustrialization. New Orleans became a 'Southern anomaly as it followed the same course as the "rustbelt" cities of the North, rather than the "sunbelt" South' (Azcona 2006: 73). The city population dropped 20.8 per cent in three decades, from 627,525 in 1960 to 496,938 in 1990, due to interrelated processes of deindustrialization, white flight, and suburbanization. Between 1970 and 1980, New Orleans shifted from a white majority to a black majority, with African Americans representing 67 per cent of the population in 2000 (Azcona 2006). With the twin decline of the city's maritime waterfront and its modest manufacturing sector, the urban economy reoriented around tourism and the service sector, echoing patterns in Liverpool and Marseille. Racial and class polarization, poverty, and unemployment intensified during this period, and many scholars have noted that New Orleans had a very high rate of poverty prior to Katrina (cf. Azcona 2006; Flaherty 2010; Gotham 2005).

Today, New Orleans is still an important port within the vast Port of South Louisiana (which comprises five ports) along the Mississippi

River. However, it is only a shadow of its former self. The popular image of New Orleans today is associated with Hurricane Katrina, Mardi Gras, and jazz rather than the maritime economy. Hurricane Katrina sparked a wide range of journalistic and scholarly writing on communities, cities, the economy, disaster, resilience, the state, labour, urban identity, and many related urban sociological issues (cf. Campanella 2008; Flaherty 2010; Gotham 2007). The unique jazz, food, African American, and Mardi Gras histories are the city's famed highlights, emphasized recently in the popular HBO series *Treme* (which premiered in 2010).

New Orleans has been over-researched as a disaster and a spectacle, but relatively little research has focused on its identity as a port city. New Orleans is known as a decadent tourist destination, the 'City that Care Forgot', the 'Big Easy', but also a city marked by disaster, neglected by the state, replete with crime, poverty, and racism. The urban identity of the city has strong discourses of cultural exceptionalism; locals will tell you that this is a city that is unlike anywhere else in the United States, or anywhere else in the world for that matter. It is a cultural melting pot of food, music, cultures, and peoples from all parts of the globe. In fact, these are typical 'port city' narratives, yet the city is oddly detached from its waterfront. Parts of the waterfront have been developed for shopping and leisure, but vast stretches of the crescent-shaped riverfront remain walled off from public sight.

Recently, the city of New Orleans has attempted to reclaim its cultural status as a port city through an initiative launched in 2006 called 'Reinventing the Crescent', a downtown waterfront regeneration programme that aims to reconnect communities with the waterfront through a combination of leisure and commercial spaces. Not long ago, the longshoremen of New Orleans were a significant political, cultural, and economic voice within the city. The longshoremen of New Orleans proudly trace the history of the civil rights movement and the black community to the social activities of the longshoremen's 'black' union hall, one of many important buildings that was destroyed during Katrina. And although the port city identity of New Orleans may be submerged in an explicit sense, it is everywhere evident in the multiculturalism, the exceptionalism, the cultural distinctiveness, the jazz, the food, the social inequality, and the environmental insecurity of a coastal city prone to floods and hurricanes.

The structure of this book

Part I of this book addresses the theme of contested urban identity, which will be examined in relation to different ways of representing,

narrating, and developing the city. Chapter 2 is a critical analysis of port city representations within popular culture, drawing on photography, literature, and film. Port cities are typically represented as iconic cities of fascination, as exotic 'Other' places, but also stigmatized as places of crime, poverty, and disorder. The chapter uses the themes of 'blue' and 'black' to represent dichotomous representations and contradictory urban identities, focusing in particular on local rather than 'outsider' representations. Chapter 3 shows how the port city 'identity' of each city has been deployed in market-driven waterfront and port developments, through drawing on two overlapping narratives: reconnecting the public with the waterfront and re-establishing great port city status. Chapter 4 considers legacies of empire and colonialism in relation to museums of slavery and colonial history in New Orleans, Liverpool, and Marseille. These museums are situated within wider landscapes of tourism, regeneration, and competing politicized narratives about urban identity and history in each city. Together, these chapters highlight different ways in which urban identity operates as a battleground for competing arguments about what constitutes the public good within the city.

Part II of this book focuses on intergenerational changes in dock labour on the waterfront in the three port cities. Chapter 5 examines the aftermath of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1998), one of the longest strikes in British labour history, which offers a painful lesson in international solidarity during neoliberal times. Five hundred Liverpool dockworkers were sacked due to secondary strike action—they refused to cross a picket line in support of five younger dockers who worked for a sub-contractor. The strike gained international support from workers, activists, celebrities, and supporters from around the world, but ultimately after nearly three years, the dockers lost the strike, and the docks were filled with non-unionized, 'scab' labour. The chapter shows efforts since 2012 to bring intergenerational lessons from the sacked dockworkers back onto the docks. Chapter 6 considers the Marseille-Fos dockers, who demonstrate a contrasting view of dock labour. The Marseille-Fos CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail) dockers are a highly organized, unionized dock labour force, with the power to bring about change through strikes in France's largest port. But these dockers—a very tight community, many the sons of dockworkers—have faced reforms instituted under Sarkozy's government from 2008 that have been gradually eroding their protections for the incoming generations, removing their right to regular work on the docks, and introducing a more precarious and flexible system. These dockers have fought to preserve their collective identity and memory of

struggle, based on a strong sense of commitment to older and younger generations. Chapter 7 focuses on black longshoremen in post-Katrina New Orleans. Historically, the longshoremen in New Orleans had a system of separate black and white dock unions, which worked side by side and fought together in solidarity in the early twentieth century (Arnesen 1994; Rosenberg 1988). Today, the New Orleans longshoremen continue to function de facto as racially segregated but cooperative black and white union locals, divided by craft rather than union. But for New Orleans black longshoremen, the history of the union is much more than the history of labour politics; it is deeply embedded in the history of civil rights and the black community in New Orleans as a whole. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the longshoremen have been working hard to recover their unique history.

Part III broadens the scope of analysis to consider different ways of imagining alternative futures both within and beyond traditional working-class radical politics of the waterfront. This is situated within wider historical discourses of radicalism and resistance in port cities. Chapter 8 considers a range of different alternative politics in the three port cities, including anarchists, feminists, and 'working-class culture' activists in Liverpool; environmental and civil rights activists in New Orleans; and alternative arts-and-culture cooperative activists in Marseille. Chapter 9 offers a conclusion, reflecting on how global legacies of empire and colonialism, capitalism, casual labour, and radicalism point to contradictions, limitations, and possibilities for processing difficult pasts and imagining alternative futures in post-industrial port cities.

How can cities deal with uncomfortable legacies of slavery and empire in the context of contemporary urban place-marketing and mythmaking? How have port city identities been deployed in envisioning urban and port developments? Can legacies of solidarity and trade unionism within waterfront communities provide resources and knowledge for future generations? How do legacies of old forms of grassroots radicalism influence the possibilities and limitations of alternative politics in port cities? As this book will show, global legacies of empire, capitalism, casual labour, and radicalism in struggling port cities are contradictory and ambivalent, with important wider implications for the future of cities.

Part I

Urban Identity

2
Out of the Blue, into the Black[1]: Representing, Imagining, and Researching Port Cities

Port cities lie at the edge between black and blue. For centuries, writers have described port cities as exotic places of cosmopolitanism and vibrant cultural exchange, connected to the 'blue' of sea, sky, and dreams. Port cities are surrounded by blue, the blue of water lapping at shores, extending out into distant horizons. They are filled with the blue of longing, of imagining possibilities out at sea and in different lands. But port cities are also represented as 'black' places of crime, violence, poverty, and social exclusion, classic settings for gritty *noir* literature and film. In this chapter, I argue that the themes of blue and black capture ambivalent and contradictory representations of urban identity in port cities, and that these representations provide methodological insights for researching port cities.

The colours black and blue have dichotomous meanings in popular culture, representing contrasts between reality and imagination, death and life, night and day. Black evokes mourning, death, evil, and emptiness, with further connotations of fear, mystery, and sophistication. Cultural associations with black also relate to racial stereotypes, for example connotations of black with uncleanliness, disease, and sin. Within *noir* literature and film, blackness is often associated with a moral 'fall' from whiteness through violence, misogyny, and duplicity, associations that have been challenged by a number of black *noir* authors (cf. Diawara 1993). Blue is the colour of eternity, associated with the sea and the sky. It suggests sadness, loneliness, longing, and dreams. The colour blue has also been used in pragmatist writings on black cultural identity, drawing inspiration from the history of reflective blues music (Gilroy 2011; Glaude 2007). While many of these meanings straddle different cultures, many are culturally specific. In Chinese culture, white is associated with death while black is associated with water and

heaven, and blue is typically folded into the meaning of black in shades of black-blue or blue-black.

Le Noir et le Bleu: Un Rêve Méditerranéen (Blue and Black: A Mediterranean Dream) was the title of an exhibition at the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM) in Marseille, which opened in June 2013 as part of the European Capital of Culture programme (see Chapter 4).[2] The exhibition aimed to unite three centuries of imaginaries and representations of the Mediterranean through the contrasting themes of black and blue. According to the exhibition catalogue (Thierry and Bouayed 2013), the juxtaposition of blue and black evoked light against shadow, civilization against barbarism, and the capacity for collective dreams despite social conflict. While critical of war and violence, the exhibition was underpinned by a Western idea of civilization as a positive and inevitable force of human history and progress. It drew together dispersed and often fraught histories of scientific development, cultural achievement, colonialism, war, and urban transformation in Marseille, Algiers, Athens, Istanbul, Barcelona, and other Mediterranean cities, most of them port cities.

When I visited the exhibition in July 2013, I felt that ultimately it was unsuccessful, creating a haphazard patchwork of geographies and histories with an overstretched narrative thread and a sanitized account of colonialism. It avoided engaging in controversial debates about decolonization, war, and conflict, instead referring to 'different perspectives' about selected historical episodes. Some of the images and objects were emotive and revealing, but the exhibition narrative smoothed over their rawness. The result was a clean showcase of beautiful and historical objects, with an overarching narrative emphasizing the 'blue' of poetry, art, and the sea, set in relief against *noir* subjects such as the mafia and the destruction of the Second World War. The abstraction of the exhibition was typified by its opening image, a painting by Joan Miro entitled *Bleu II*, 1961, a large canvas of atmospheric blue, with a bright red vertical slash to the left of the frame, and ink-like black splotches dotted along a horizontal line in the centre. A museum tour guide agreed with my scepticism, remarking: 'they left out the red from Miro's painting, the human side' (interview, 9 July 2013). But the omissions, elisions, and exaggerations of the exhibition were nonetheless illuminating for my research. Blue and black are powerful and compelling themes which extend beyond the Mediterranean to encompass representations and imaginaries of port cities around the world.

Media portrayals and cultural representations of cities have a crucial impact on how cities are imagined politically as places to live, work, and

visit. The act of imagining places connects deeply with collective memories, identities, meanings, and values. The 'image of the city', as Lynch (1960) suggests, is integral to constructing urban identity. Some cities are iconic, their streets and symbols extending far into the global popular imagination. Through movies, books, and the Internet, if not through corporeal travel, we are presented with representations of global cities such as London, New York City, and Tokyo; mega-cities such as Mexico City and Delhi; and romantic cities such as Paris and Venice. Other cities capture the popular imagination through their infamy, as sites of disaster or trauma: Chernobyl, Detroit, and Sarajevo are notable examples.[3] After all, fascination is 'a force that includes attraction, desire, and mystification, but also terror and fear' (Schmid et al. 2011: 5).

Port cities are distinctive because they fascinate us for both positive and negative reasons, even if most port cities fall short of becoming iconic. A theme that has emerged throughout twentieth-century representations of port cities has been that of decline and loss, of the bygone age of great port cities and their distinctive ways of life. These accounts show nostalgia and pride for the former era of bustling waterfronts, and regret over the poverty and deprivation that have followed in the wake of decline. Since the 1960s, many Western port cities have floundered, their economies entangled with deindustrialization, the loss of manufacturing in their hinterlands, and the flight of manufacturing to Asia facilitated by container shipping. Their fate is thus similar to that of old industrial cities such as Detroit that are struggling to recover, with high unemployment and persistent problems of social and economic deprivation (cf. Mah 2012). But the image of the port city, as compared with the industrial city, is still somehow different. Some writers suggest that this is related to a different sense of time based on 'precarious' rhythms of tides, casual labour, jazz and pop music, and migration (cf. Belchem 2000, 2006a; Higginson and Wailey 2006). The second season of the hit HBO series *The Wire* has brought the theme of the declining Western port city into the popular imagination, offering a grim but gripping portrayal of human trafficking, struggling longshoremen, and organized crime on the Baltimore docks.[4]

This chapter examines cultural representations of the port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. My focus is on local rather than 'outsider' cultural representations of urban identity, including popular literature, film and television, photography, and popular music. I have selected cultural representations by writers, artists, and musicians who deliberately seek to make wider assertions about collective urban identity, who claim each port city as their own, and whose representations

have achieved some popular acclaim. However, it should be kept in mind that despite their claims to represent collective urban identity, these representations are necessarily partial and cannot reflect the multitude of voices within each city. Rather, these local cultural representations reflect wider structures of power, inequality, and voice within each city.

Three narratives of ambivalent urban identity emerged in my analysis of different local cultural representations, and these hinged around ideas related to black and blue. The first narrative is of 'edgy port cities'. The concept of the 'edgy city' is used by residents of port cities who argue for the cultural distinctiveness, creativity, and exceptionalism of port cities, on the edge of nations, oceans, and culture. The city is represented as on the edge between the 'blue' of the sea, the sky, cosmopolitanism, and opportunities, and the 'black' of the social and economic problems onshore. The second narrative is of *noir* port cities, evident within local *noir* literature and film in each city. *Noir* is a quintessentially urban genre, with particular relevance for port cities marked by polarized fascination. The third narrative is of the 'bluesy port city'. Grassroots, political blues music traditions relate to cultural and racial collective identities in each city. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the political and ethical implications of researching port cities with ambivalent urban identities for reflexive sociological urban research.

Edgy port cities

In *A Field Guild to Getting Lost* (Solnit 2006: 29), the cultural historian Rebecca Solnit reflects on blue as the colour of edges:

> The world is blue at its edges and in its depths. This blue is the light that got lost. Light at the blue end of the spectrum does not travel the whole distance from the sun to us. It disperses among the molecules of the air, it scatters in water . . . For many years, I have been moved by the blue at the far edge of what can be seen, that color of horizons, of remote mountain ranges, of anything far away. The color of that distance is the color of an emotion, the color of solitude and of desire, the color of there seen from here, the color of where you are not. And the color of where you can never go.

For port cities, edges mark the transitional zone between black and blue. As efforts of collective urban identification, local port city narratives of

'cities on the edge' highlight the significance of blue more than black, with particular emphasis on the romance of edges. Port cities on the edge claim a common yet unique heritage: distinctive cultures of exceptionalism, cosmopolitanism, and creativity. However, they also mask uncomfortable legacies which form part of that shared heritage, for example legacies of racism and inequality.

The evocative idea of 'cities on the edge' has been used in a diverse range of urban contexts. Edges mark boundaries, borders, margins, and peripheries. Edges suggest wastelands, ruins, sprawl, and liminal spaces. And edges also connote innovation, subversion, and risk. The US journalist Joel Garreau coined the phrase 'Edge City' in his book of the same name (1991), as a way of describing the phenomenon of US suburban business areas. By contrast, the edited book *City Edge* (Charlesworth 2005) describes city edges as 'challenging' places for urban planning and development, including diverse international examples such as Jerusalem, Manchester, Kabul, and Belgrade. In the United Kingdom, the concept of 'Edgelands' (Farley and Roberts 2011) has been used to describe overlooked landscapes of urban peripheries, while Andrew Marr on BBC Radio One (2011) has described the megacities of Tokyo, London, Mexico City, and Dhaka as 'cities on the edge'. At spatial scales beyond the city, the water's edge has also been explored in relation to regional and national identity through a range of international case studies (Cusack 2012).

Liverpool, Marseille, New Orleans, and many other port cities share implicit narratives of 'cities on the edge'—of exceptionalism, being apart from their nations, of cosmopolitanism and unique intermixed cultures, and of being marginalized. The narrative of cities on the edge resonates with the theme of blue, of dreams, travel, and distant shores. But the edge city narrative also resonates with themes of black, through invoking concepts of marginality, periphery, and social exclusion. For example, the classic *noir* film 'The Edge of the City' (1957) takes place on the waterfront in west Manhattan and follows the lives of longshoremen and their labour solidarity across racial lines.

During the Liverpool European Capital of Culture in 2008, European Capital of Culture representatives from the port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, Istanbul, Bremen, Gdansk, and Naples identified their cities collectively as 'Cities on the Edge'. These representatives, including local writers, photographers, and cultural urban policy officials, aimed to create a collective urban narrative as peripheral port cities with common problems and strengths. These European cities on the edge share local pride and rebellious spirits, and exist outside of dominant notions of

time, space, work, and nation. The idea of the six cities on the edge is represented on the project website (Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008) as follows:

> Great port cities are noted for being different, they have their own particular identities, their own notions of: independence, freedom, dissent, and cosmopolitanism. Their own perceptions of: work, justice, politics, and culture.
>
> Liverpool is not England, New York is not America, Naples is not Italy, Marseilles is not France and Hamburg is not Germany. Port cities do not always feel loved or understood by their countrymen, they have an identity with each other rather than with their domestic neighbours. Port cities are riotous—they celebrate leisure and pleasure. The night-time is the right-time. Their passion for 'irregularity' breeds creativity. Their rebelliousness places them on the edge.
>
> But are these cities on the cusp of the wave—has post-industrial change left them marooned and stranded? Instead of looking out to the wide-horizon have they now turned inwards to look nostalgically at their great pasts? Or can their creativity/riotousness be harnessed to produce a permanent renaissance?

The theme of distinctive urban identity runs clearly through this narrative. There are also tensions and insecurities within this identity: port cities are rebellious, creative, fiercely independent, and outward-looking, but they are also marginalized and in danger of being left behind. Echoing this narrative, the European Capital of Culture book *Cities on the Edge* (Davies 2008: 1), which features photographs from each of the six port cities, argues that all six ports are:

> . . . cities with great histories, cities which have battled with their capital cities over many centuries, cities famous for their creativity, humour, distinctiveness, love of football. They are also cities which are sometimes considered by their countrymen to be difficult and unruly.

A further outcome of the European Cities on the Edge collaborative project was the publication of the edited collection *ReBerth: Stories from Cities on the Edge* (Hinks 2009), which includes short stories from each of the six port cities. The stories were chosen to exemplify alternative voices within each city, signalling a 'rebirth' or 'regeneration' of port cities, but in alternative forms. According to the book's introduction,

the authors wrote 'directly against the officially sanctioned, sanitized version of their city's history' (Hinks 2009). The stories also aimed to represent marginalized people and issues of social polarization:

> If anything might be said to characterise the Cities on the Edge, it's perhaps this urge to document social and economic disparity; indeed a palpable spirit of dissent runs through all of the stories in *ReBerth*, by writers who won't shut up and behave themselves, normalise or neuter the city in the face of global economic forces.
>
> (Hinks 2009)

The *ReBerth* collection casts a more critical lens on contested urban identity than other local narratives of cities on the edge. For example, it suggests that in Liverpool, there are 'the dubious ways it made its fortune', and that there are some stories in port cities that people 'might prefer to forget'. However, the book nonetheless echoes positive themes of port city identity that are found in wider local narratives about edgy port cities, and it argues that negative images of port cities are based on misunderstandings:

> Once gateways to the world, bringing wealth and innovation to their respective nations, they've long been maligned and misunderstood by their compatriots, preferring instead to look outwards, towards the sea—to the possibilities of change, of travel and of rebirth.

The *ReBerth* stories explore important sociological issues of social polarization, racism, and deprivation, as well as a sense of nostalgia and regret over the fact that the cities have lost their identity as 'great' ports. These issues are represented through tales of *noir* and realism, but also romanticism and elegy, representing the duality and contradiction of the 'edge' between themes of black and blue.

Another example of the cities on the edge narrative is the book *Edgy Cities* (Higginson and Wailey 2006), written by two Liverpool-based authors, Steve Higginson and Tony Wailey. *Edgy Cities* is a short book, written in an extended essay style. It develops a very similar line of argument to the European Capital of Culture narrative about the connections between port cities, although it is more unabashedly celebratory:

> Port cities are different. On the one hand, reflecting an intense localism of their own land interior but also having the option of a different plane of experience; a motivated movement out across time and

> space towards the endless horizon of sea and sky. The ancient description of Liverpool as a 'settlement' betrays the truth … An insult to the true nature of its people; the restless, the dissatisfied, of a turbulent, angry, narky, raging and roaring, a city like its tides 'a city that knows how to celebrate' and a city that is always on the lookout to make you dance and sing. Little wonder Maxim Gorky called the docks and waterfront of Odessa 'my universities'. These are awkward stories about awkward people. Ask any inhabitants of Marseilles, Naples, Algiers, and they will tell you the same.
>
> (Higginson and Wailey 2006: 13–14)

The authors argue that maritime cultures are defined by movement, irregularity, and flow rather than fixity or stability. Their book also celebrates different forms of casual labour within the city: 'The movement of the boxer, the singer, the guitar player, the D.J., the dancer, the itinerant rigger or hotel worker, continues to loom alongside a culture—that was born out of the maritime economy' (2006: 12). Through *Edgy Cities*, Wailey and Higginson have become self-designated spokesmen for their beloved port city. However, their views are not shared by everyone. One Liverpudlian academic called their thesis 'hagiographic' in its exaggerated celebration of local identity (interview, 13 February 2013). Wailey and Higginson admitted that their views are controversial, particularly their romanticized attitude towards casual labour and against traditional forms of work (they also wrote an essay on the 'Catholic anti-work ethic'; see Chapter 8), which could be seen as an affront to people faced with unemployment and underemployment during difficult times (interview with authors 25 May 2010). Both authors left their traditional working-class jobs years ago, Wailey as a seaman and Higginson as a post office trade union worker, and were now pursuing their creative interests as writers.

The distance from working life might have given Wailey and Higginson a more nostalgic perspective, detached from the everyday realities of work in the city. In my ethnographic observations at seafarers' centres in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans, the seafarers who I met were desperate to make contact with life on land, and their depictions of life at sea were for the most part far from romantic. They worked hard aboard the ships under very basic conditions and struggled with the long periods of separation from their families. By contrast, many of the retired seamen who volunteered at the seafarers' centres were nostalgic for their time on the sea and yearned for maritime tales from the passing seafarers. But this was after all their reason for

volunteering. Another retired seaman told me that he could no longer stand the sight of the sea. He retreated inland when he retired; the sea would always remind him of work.

In contrast with Liverpool and Marseille, New Orleans does not self-consciously identify as a city on the edge. However, the edgy port city identity is implicit in the identity of New Orleans itself. Tourist literature and local residents highlight the city's rich and unique musical and multicultural heritage, its celebratory and festive spirit, and its exceptional character, through its isolation and difference from the rest of the United States. Many interviewees echoed the idea that New Orleans is unlike anywhere else in the United States, and has more in common with Europe, or with the 'Third World'. This discourse of exceptionalism and isolation was also pronounced in the media reports following Hurricane Katrina (cf. Flaherty 2010). The city's various nicknames suggest an edgy city identity, with 'Crescent City' following the shape of the river's edge, and 'The City that Care Forgot' and 'The Big Easy' reflecting its cavalier attitude. The rebellious identity of the city is far from new; during the French colonial era in the eighteenth century, New Orleans was known as a wild, dangerous town and as a city of pirates (Cohen 2012; Dawdy 2008). New Orleans also has less positive epithets including 'Sin City' and 'The Big Sleazy', reflecting its *noir* dimensions (described in the next section). Moreover, New Orleans is included as one of the 'sister' port cities in Higginson and Wailey's (2006: 13) reflections on edgy cities:

> All cities on the SW Atlantic maritime route, from Liverpool to Naples, New York to New Orleans, Kingston to Boca, have always had more in common with each other and have always been 'strangers' to their own nation states.

Overall, the edgy port cities narrative emphasizes great histories, former prosperity, creativity, and devastation in the wake of economic and cultural decline. The edgy port city narrative is proud and celebratory, emphasizing positive collective and individualistic aspects about urban identity in port cities through the use of metaphor and hyperbole. This self-referential narrative emphasizes common issues and struggles of port cities, but it also masks uncomfortable and enduring global legacies of racism and inequality.

The edgy port cities narrative relates to wider debates about collective identity and structures of grand narratives. Myth-making is not limited only to struggling port cities; it is common to nationalism,

regionalism, localism, and other forms of collective identity (cf. Bell 2003; Hosking and Schöpflin 1997). In fact, despite claims to be 'apart' from their nations, many of the omissions at the urban level of port cities reflect omissions at the national level, such as the glossing over histories of colonialism, slavery, and empire in the United Kingdom, France, and the United States, in favour of the celebration of liberal values of individualism and autonomy.

Noir port cities

Originally a French term used to describe British Gothic novels in the eighteenth century, *noir* is more commonly associated with the hard-boiled American detective novel that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, and with the related American genres of dystopian urban film *noir* and *neo-noir* between the 1940s and 1980s. The French definition of *noir* includes a broader range of genres than the American definition, from gritty social realism to crime fiction to Gothic literature. The unifying idea of *noir* is its focus on the modern city and its contradictions and malaise. The city is often the most important 'character' in *noir*, shaping the atmosphere, the mood, and the parameters of human action. As such, *noir* is an excellent lens for examining urban representations of port cities that are renowned for polarized images.

Noir hinges on polarity and extremes within the modern city. Another French term for *noir* is *polar*, an abbreviation and hybrid of 'roman policier' and the suffix 'ard', with the double-entendre of polarity. The *noir* genre necessarily encompasses its opposite, lightness and goodness, as contrasted with darkness and evil. The elision between cultural and racial associations with blackness is a subtext within the literary and film genre *noir*. As Diawara (1993: 525) suggests,

> In *film noir* there is clearly an oppositional discourse between dark and light, underworld and above ground, good and evil, and it is through the blurring of these boundaries that characters partake of the attributes of Blackness. From a formalist perspective, a film is noir if it puts into play light and dark in order to exhibit a people who become 'Black' because of their low moral behavior.

According to the Marseille *noir* writer Gilles Del Pappas (interview, 11 September 2013), there is a key difference between *noir* or *polar* literature and ordinary detective fiction. Del Pappas suggests that detective fiction is apolitical and focuses only on the actions of

individuals, whereas *noir* literature is associated with the political left, with realism, and with exposing injustices, where the city is the main character.

The port city of Los Angeles was the birthplace of the American *noir* genre of literature and film in the early twentieth century, most famously with the hard-boiled crime novels of Raymond Chandler, Nathaniel West, and James Elroy, and more recently in *neo-noir* films such as *Chinatown* (1974), *Bladerunner* (1982), and *Mulholland Drive* (2001). Los Angeles exemplifies polarized public fascination, as the original city of 'sunshine and *noir*' (Davis 1990). On the one hand, Los Angeles embodies the Californian dream, of Hollywood, sunshine, health, and alternative lifestyles. As Davis (1990) argues, Los Angeles was originally a city of utopian dreams, attracting developers, health craze tourists, missionaries, and commune idealists. But Los Angeles is also deeply associated with *noir*, as the archetypal dystopian city of hard-boiled crime novels and apocalyptic science fiction.

The LA city of *noir* conjures nightmarish images of untamed development, endless highways, drugs and gang violence, and urban alienation. The early *noir* writers empathized with the plight of the white middle class, who were disgusted by the apathy and immorality of the idle rich and threatened by the 'dangerous' lower classes. Alongside the more well-known 'white' *noir* genre of Chandler and others, an alternative 'black' *noir* genre also emerged in the 1930s, for example in the novels of Chester Himes, which portrayed intense experiences of racism in the city. *Noir* novel characters were entwined in stories of moral decay, decadence, violence, corruption, and social conflict in the divided city. Los Angeles continues to fascinate popular audiences as well as urban scholars. The Los Angeles School of urban geographers describe Los Angeles as an urban 'laboratory of the future' (Soja 2000), a 'deviant' exemplar of urban excess.

Port cities have generated a number of classic *noir* representations, from American cities such as Los Angeles and New York to the distinctive genre of '*Mediterranean noir*' in Marseille, to cities in Europe, Asia, Africa, and indeed throughout the world. Representations and imaginaries of 'black' and *noir* in port cities hinge on different sensibilities; between, on the one hand, sensationalist fascination with the underworld and, on the other hand, humanist realism concerned with exposing social and economic injustices.

Taking the broad French definition of *noir*, I will now turn to examine *noir* representations of Marseille, Liverpool, and New Orleans. The aim is to map key examples of *noir* representations sociologically in

relation to urban identity, rather than to provide in-depth literary analysis. Through these examples, I argue that different forms of *noir* show the importance of subjective experience in 'reading' a city as an author and as a political act.

Marseille

'Despite the sun, Marseille is a city of darkness', the *noir* writer Gilles Del Pappas told me over morning coffee and croissants on the sunny roof terrace of his fourth floor apartment, located in the heart of the Cours Julien in Marseille's city centre (interview, 11 September 2013). For Del Pappas, *noir* fiction does not represent the dark and violent side of the city in the same sensationalist way that the media does. Before everything, Gilles del Pappas said, *noir* fiction is about the love of the city and its people. *Noir* describes with great fondness the rich cultural traditions of food, warmth, and generosity of ordinary people. Violence and corruption emerge from wider societal forces rather than from ordinary individuals. *Noir* fiction highlights struggles between, on the one hand, corrupt political elites, organized crime networks, and right-wing political parties, and on the other hand, ordinary people who suffer from social exclusion and racism. Del Pappas argued that *noir* is the most significant form of literature in all of France because of its realism and its political engagement. According to this prominent local *noir* author, there were more than 50 contemporary *noir* writers working in Marseille at the time of our meeting in 2013.

Marseille has long figured in literature as a key source of inspiration, for its natural beauty, its streets, its people, and its relationship to the sea, but also for its *noir* atmosphere of poverty, social exclusion, crime, and racial tensions (cf. Jacobi 2013). There are many well-known representations of Marseille within the *noir* genre. The *French Connection* films (1971 and 1975) put the city on the map as a city full of gangsters, drug dealers, and crime, with similar themes in the films *The Marseille Contract* (1974), *Borsalino* (1970), and *Taxi* (1998).

The late novelist Jean-Claude Izzo (1945–2000) is a widely celebrated author in Marseille, and his work is well-known within the French-speaking literary world. In 2005, a public secondary school in the city centre, *Le Collège Jean-Claude Izzo,* was named after him, reflecting his significance within the urban identity of the city. Jean-Claude Izzo's classic Marseille trilogy of novels written in the mid-1990s introduced *Mediterranean noir* as a distinct literary genre, based on the detective Montale and his battle with crime, racism, and social exclusion. The trilogy became famous for embodying the spirit of the city of Marseille,

with its people, its port, its passion, its cuisine, its exiles, and its distinctive culture. The trilogy celebrates the history and identity of Marseille as beautiful yet tragic, with violence threatening to erupt at any moment:

> Marseilles isn't a city for tourists. There's nothing to see. Its beauty can't be photographed. It can only be shared. It's a place where you have to take sides, be passionately for or against. Only then can you see what there is to see. And you realize, too late, that you're in the middle of a tragedy. An ancient tragedy in which the hero is death. In Marseilles, even to lose you have to know how to fight.
>
> (Izzo 2005)

Izzo's trilogy also provides a glimpse of 'blue', with extensive lyrical and nostalgic passages about the beauty of the sea and the simple ways of life for fishermen and sailors. His character Montale frequently escapes from the rigours of daily detective work to an old friend's boat on the sea, where he reflects on his life, his past loves, and his migrant and working-class identity (Hewitt 2006; Saward 2012). This theme is also prevalent in his novel *Les Marins Perdus* (Izzo 2002) about the dreams, memories, and misfortunes of three sailors who live in an abandoned cargo ship in the port of Marseille.

There is relatively little 'noir by noirs' (Diawara 1993) within the Marseille tradition of *noir* fiction, with the exception of the novel *Le Docker Noir* (Sembène 1956) (*The Black Docker*, English translation, 1987) by the Senegalese author Ouseman Sembène. *Le Docker Noir* is much angrier than Izzo's fiction, more akin to the black *noir* of 1930s America. The novel follows the story of Diaw, a Senegalese migrant to Marseille who comes to live and work under terrible conditions on the docks of Marseille. The multi-ethnic migrant identity of Marseille features strongly but ambivalently within the novel. At first, Marseille resembles the narrator's experience of Africa:

> In this little Africa in the south of France, all the countries, all the different ethnic groups were represented. In keeping with the customs of their native land, each territory had its own boundaries: the cafés. Prejudices and origins were often the subject of argument.
>
> (Sembène 1987: 43)

However, as the novel progresses, Marseille takes on a different character, bitterly cold on the docks during the winter, and increasingly

dehumanizing and demoralizing. Diaw is dismissive of dock work, but he is torn between two choices of personalities: 'the docker, who is just an animal being, but who lived and paid his rent, or the intellectual who could only survive in a climate of rest and freedom of thought' (Sembène 1987: 73). Diaw dreams of a life as a writer rather than as a docker, and the drama of the story unfolds when his novel is stolen by a white woman, leading to the death of the woman through a crime of passion, and Diaw's subsequent trial for her murder. In a letter to his uncle, Diaw justifies his crime as motivated by his profound anger at being subjected to humiliation and racism:

> I have learned a language which is not my own. At school, they told me about the goodness of a city and when I came to this country, to live, I had to work. I stumbled under the weight of my load. Every evening I returned home broken, worn out from exhaustion, for days, weeks, and years on end. At night, I wrote. To get this book published, I entrusted it to a woman, she stole from me, and then humiliated me. She made a name for herself from my work. All these facts are simply theories of provocation, neglected by the law. You saw the charge. Why didn't you try to understand what aroused my anger and prompted the crime which I refuse to recognize? I am black!
>
> (Sembene 1987: 117)

Following Del Pappas' vision of *noir* and *polar*, the novel centres on a crime but is ultimately driven by deeper questions of racism, discrimination, exploitation, and migrant identity. Through portraying a black male protagonist who is guilty and unrepentant of a violent crime against a white woman, the novel resists simple dichotomies about morality, character, and racism.

These different forms of *noir* in Marseille address issues of migration and social exclusion and often draw on the authors' personal experiences as the children of migrants. Jean-Claude Izzo was half Italian and half Spanish, Ouseman Sembène was a Senegalese writer who had spent time working in Marseille, and Del Pappas is half Italian and half Greek. Historical and contemporary *noir* fiction in Marseille is heavily male-dominated, following the conventions of classic *noir* and the male protagonist. In a series of online interviews with Marseille *noir* writers by Del Pappas called *l'éclat du noir* (the brilliance of black), nine out of ten of the featured authors were male (Del Pappas 2013). The subjective experiences of each author as migrants, as children of migrants, and as

men have shaped conceptions of urban identity within Marseille *noir* narratives.

Liverpool

The city of Liverpool has been described by a number of important literary figures, including Jonathon Swift, Daniel Defoe, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Charles Dickens, Virginia Woolf, and George Orwell. However, these literary accounts are primarily from the perspective of 'outsiders'. There are relatively few well-known Liverpool novelists. Perhaps the most famous Liverpool author is Beryl Bainbridge (1932–2010), whose psychological fiction often focused on the working classes and sometimes drew on her experience growing up in Liverpool. Another Liverpool author who achieved some fame, although primarily in a local context, is Helen Forrester (1919–2011), who chronicled her childhood growing up in poverty during the Great Depression in Liverpool. These authors obliquely demonstrate *noir* themes: Bainbridge has been described as a Gothic author, and Forrester's autobiographical work focuses on poverty and realism.

In fact, despite having a fitting atmosphere for *noir*, Liverpool does not have a distinctive literary tradition of conventional *noir* crime fiction. One recent exception is Martin Edwards' Harry Devlin series of the 1990s and 2000s, which uses the seedy side of Liverpool as an urban *noir* setting. This series has received generally positive reviews from crime fiction fans, but it does not resonate widely in terms of local urban identity in the way that Jean-Claude Izzo and *Mediterranean noir* fiction have in Marseille. Whereas Izzo has the status of a household name in Marseille, Devlin does not feature prominently in local fiction sections of Liverpool bookshops, perhaps because he is not actually a Liverpudlian himself.

The ethos of *noir*, in the broader French sense of the word, is nonetheless evident in Liverpool in the form of gritty social realism. Social realism, like *noir*, often takes the city as its main character, and explores issues related to *noir* themes: poverty, social exclusion, racism, crime, and violence, but with less of an explicit focus on crime than conventional *noir* genres. Two of Liverpool's most famous social realist literary figures are the award-winning playwrights Alan Bleasdale and Jimmy McGovern. Both authors are 'Scousers' (slang for Liverpudlians) with Irish Catholic heritage, and much of their work focuses explicitly on Liverpool and 'Scouser' identity. According to Free (2011), Irish 'Scouser' identity is a key theme for both Bleasdale and McGovern. However, Bleasdale's representations are more stereotypical, in which

the Scouser is depicted as economically parasitic and outdated in having strong religious views, while McGovern's representations are more subtle and autobiographical, used as a means of exploring masculine Catholic identity and morality (Free 2011).

Bleasdale's classic 1980s BBC TV series *Boys from the Blackstuff* was an unflinching depiction of five unemployed tarmac gang workers struggling to find work in Liverpool. The BAFTA-award-winning TV series resonated with many people in Liverpool but also in 1980s Britain more generally, in the context of economic recession and Thatcherism. Bleasdale's black comedy was influenced by the distinctive port city identity of Liverpool, particularly the history of migration and casual dock labour. In a 1985 interview with Melvyn Bragg, Bleasdale described this urban influence as follows:

> Without claiming to be a sociologist, the massive influx of Irish during the 19th century famines resulted in people who had a thrill for words, lyricism and the rhythm of words. Plus the fact that this city was built on slave labour. When you've got casual work, you become casual, and become a casualty, and your only way to hide the pain is this deadpan humour. It's a hard city—it stems from the days when 20,000 men would go down to the docks after 6,000 jobs. And the ones who lost out would say, 'Sod that, it doesn't bother me. I'm off down the pub', when really they're thinking 'how am I going to feed the wife and kids?' The only way to hide the pain is this peculiar comedy.
>
> (Bleasdale interview with Melvyn Bragg, *The South Bank Show*, London Weekend TV, 13 January 1985)

Jimmy McGovern's screenplays also address social realist 'Scouser' themes, including unemployment, crime, police brutality, and Catholic identity. Some of Jimmy McGovern's best-known works, among several other successful screenplays, include: the realist drama *Lakes* (1997), about a troubled young Liverpudlian man who finds misadventure in the Lakes District; the docu-drama *Hillsborough* (1996), which countered sensationalist anti-Liverpool media stories about the 1989 football stadium tragedy; and the crime drama *Cracker* (1993–1995), set in Manchester. Jimmy McGovern also co-wrote *Dockers* (1996), along with Irvine Welsh and several sacked Liverpool dockers and their wives (see Chapter 5), a docu-drama about the Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1998) that emerged from a creative writing adult education class. Like Bleasdale, McGovern has won a BAFTA and several other awards for his writing.

Bleasdale and McGovern are both important Liverpool authors who explore themes of *noir* in their writing, drawing on their own working-class Irish experience and identity. Their writing carries national as well as local significance. In my interviews with local residents, dockworkers, and trade unionists, both Bleasdale and McGovern were celebrated as local working-class visionaries. In fact, my research participants directed my attention to the work of Bleasdale and McGovern, rather than the other way around. The documentary film *Love Lane Lives: Boys and Girls from the White Stuff* (2008) by Ron Noon (who I interviewed in April 2010) and Leon Seth pays homage to Bleasdale. The film follows the lives of unemployed workers in Liverpool after the closure of the Tate & Lyle flagship sugar factory on Love Lane in Liverpool.

The *noir* genre is typically male dominated, as noted in the case of Marseille, and the dramas of Bleasdale and McGovern are no exception. They are clearly rooted in masculine identity. However, the boundaries of *noir* and gender have been challenged recently by one of the most celebrated twenty-first-century Liverpool authors, Helen Walsh. According to a review of Walsh's first novel *Brass* (2005) in *Publishers Weekly*: 'Along with recent noteworthy debuts from Bella Bathurst (*Special*) and Jardine Libaire (*Here Kitty Kitty*), this novel is part of an emerging subgenre that might be called chick-lit noir. Its antiheroines are motivated—if you can call it that—by a creeping anomie and low-grade nihilism.' *Brass* is a brutally explicit story about a young woman's experience with prostitution, drugs, and alcohol in the underbelly of Liverpool. Walsh's novel has strong elements of *noir*, but it revolves around a strong female protagonist with unconventional motivations, rather than the typical hard-boiled male detective. Nonetheless, like classic *noir*, the novel is rooted in the character of the city itself:

> Back on Upper Duke Street, I feel the rush of the urban glow once more. It's still early and there's a whiff of excitement in the air as taxis bundle life into the core of the city. I *love* Fridays. There's an infectious delirium that Saturday nights fail to deliver. Come 8 o'clock, the streets of Liverpool are heaving with studes, schoolies and nine to fivers, all drunk on the freedom of the weekend, trying to stretch the night out forever.
>
> (Walsh 2004: 4)

While most Liverpudlian literature is not conventionally *noir* in terms of genre, there are clear themes of *noir* throughout many well-known Liverpudlian writings. Drawing on the working-class identity and Irish heritage of the city, Liverpudlian literature explores *noir* themes of

unemployment, social exclusion, social conflict, and crime. The voices represented within Liverpudlian literature include male and female authors who draw on their own experiences to give realism and a sense of place to their narratives.

New Orleans

New Orleans has long attracted tourism through its reputation of sin and excess. New Orleans is akin to Los Angeles as an iconic city of extreme contrasts, for outsiders as well as insiders, and this has become more evident since Hurricane Katrina. As Yousaf (2010: 553–554) argues,

> New Orleans has been traditionally celebrated as the nation's most European city and for its cultural richness as a racially diverse city on the Caribbean rim, its vulnerability to hurricane and storm damage, the basis for its reputation for living life for today and for '*laisser le bons temps rouler*'. Now New Orleans has superseded LA as the nation's exceptional city.

New Orleans has produced a wide range of literature, with famous examples including William Faulkner's *New Orleans Sketches* (1925), Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), and John Kennedy O'Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces* (1980). These works contain elements of *noir* through focusing on stark contrasts between social classes and migrant groups in the atmospheric setting of dirty and chaotic New Orleans. New Orleans has also inspired Gothic *noir* themes, most famously in Anne Rice's *Vampire Chronicles* series (1976–2003). The live oak trees with their rippling roots underneath streets and sidewalks, the eerie above-ground cemeteries, the aging colonial architecture, and the sickly sweet smell of wet tropical plants make a perfect setting for vampires. In *Interview with the Vampire* (Rice 1976), the 200-year old vampire Louis describes this tropical Gothic atmosphere:

> In the spring of 1988, I returned to New Orleans, and as soon as I smelled the air, I knew I was home. It was rich, almost sweet, like the scent of jasmine and roses around our old courtyard. I walked the streets, savoring that long lost perfume.

As a tourist in New Orleans, one of the top visitor tours is the 'vampire' tour of cemeteries and Anne Rice locales. The historical background of slavery, colonialism, and racial conflict in New Orleans also lends itself to themes of post-colonial Gothic.

In recent years, *noir* fiction has become a trend within New Orleans literature and film, particularly in the aftermath of Katrina. Perhaps the most well-known example is *The Tin Roof Blowdown* (2007) by James Lee Burke, part of the Dave Robicheaux detective series. The novel uses the backdrop of Hurricane Katrina as the setting for a crime story about rape, murder, racism, and robbery. The following passage describes the detective's feelings towards the city, echoing the 'edgy' port city narrative of exceptionalism:

> Perhaps I carried too many memories of the way the city used to be. Maybe I should not have returned. Maybe I expected to see the streets clean, the power back on, crews of carpenters repairing ruined homes. But the sense of loss I felt while driving down St. Charles was worse than I had experienced right after the storm. New Orleans had been a song, not a city. Like San Francisco, it didn't belong to a state; it belonged to a people.
>
> (Burke 2007: 195)

The novel was praised by many critics for the way it captured the inner turmoil of characters and the sense of loss in the city after Katrina. However, it was also criticized for resorting to clichés, particularly in its depictions of destruction (cf. Yousaf 2010).

Other examples of post-Katrina *noir* fiction include Bob Adamov's *Promised Land* (2006), Erica Spindler's *Last Known Victim* (2007), and Davis Temple's *Voodoo Storm: Hurricane Katrina, Death and Mystery in New Orleans* (2008). Yousaf (2010) is critical of this development, arguing that even the best crime fiction sensationalizes disaster and recovery, particularly crime drama series set in post-Katrina New Orleans, including *K-Ville*, *Without a Trace*, and *Bones*. According to Yousaf, these series rely on sensationalist and formulaic cop show plots and characters. However, he is less critical of the popular HBO Series *Treme*, which addresses issues of crime but does not fall into the traps of the cop show genre. By contrast, Taylor (2010: 483) situates the rise of crime fiction in New Orleans within a more positive trend in local arts and culture towards recovery and renewal:

> Music, film, television programmes, the visual arts, literature and many forms of published testimony and oral history have reminded the world of this city's unique multicultural postcolonial history, drawing back tourists and visitors to celebrate one of America's most extraordinary melting pots.

The short story collection *New Orleans Noir* edited by Julie Smith (2007) fits within this positive and collaborative spirit. The collection features short stories by local authors from different New Orleans neighbourhoods and ethnic backgrounds, including six residents who 'rode out' the storm. The authors' key motivation for creating the collection was as a means to express personal and collective stories about the traumatic aftermath of Hurricane Katrina:

> Everyone is struggling to find a way to tell his or her story, to tell it in such a way that those who didn't go through this particular bewildering and disorienting loss can understand how it relates to the larger picture, how universal a thing it really is, this destruction and this potential for destruction, this aching misery, this indifference on the part of the rest of the country. Never have so many writers in such a small area become so passionate, yet so desperate, all at the same time. We are at once immobilized by the task and inflamed by it.
>
> (Smith 2007: 14)

For each of the authors in this collection, the *noir* genre was used as a vehicle of expression to deal with trauma. The genre provided a versatile literary form for addressing difficult subjects of gambling, prostitution, racism, poverty, looting, and policing in different New Orleans neighbourhoods. After all, *noir* is the most 'local' of genres, with its emphasis on place. The role of trauma was key to the inspiration for the emergence of post-Katrina *noir*, a theme which Hinrichsen (2013) explores in an article about the relationship between trauma studies and the literature of the US South. According to Hinrichsen (2013: 609), post-Katrina New Orleans literature can be situated within a much wider tradition of US southern literature:

> The US South has long been seen as a terrain of trauma, a space where American violence is projected and 'contained', and its history is marked by removals and diasporas, including Native American genocide and dispossession; the slavery, migration, and displacement of African Americans; legacies of forced, unpaid labor; and brutal deeds of violent institutions. The sense that lost histories still linger is vividly felt in the sense of inherited historical consciousness in contemporary southern writing.

Noir fiction in New Orleans captures some of the new artistic and cultural energy in dealing with the aftermath of the storm. On the one

hand, *noir* fiction runs the risk of sensationalizing violence, creating stereotypical characters, and failing to capture the trauma of post-Katrina New Orleans in a sensitive way. On the other hand, *noir* fiction resonates with many important social issues in New Orleans and offers a vehicle for expression and reflection about local identity and recovery. As in Marseille and Liverpool, some voices are represented more strongly than others in these literary accounts. African American voices are represented within poetry and literature in New Orleans (such as poets Brenda Marie Osbey, Quo Vadas Gex-Breaux, and Sybil Klein), but more typically as specifically African American writers rather than writers who speak for New Orleans as a whole. The 'great' modernist New Orleans writers were male and white, echoing the literary 'greats' throughout Western modernity. However, more recent local contributions to *noir* fiction, such as the edited collection by Julie Smith, have included a greater diversity of voices in the city.

Bluesy port cities

> The Blues tell the story of life's difficulties, and if you think for a moment, you will realize that they take the hardest realities of life and put them into music, only to come out with some new hope or sense of triumph. This is triumphant music. And now, Jazz is exported to the world. For in the particular struggle of the Negro in America there is something akin to the universal struggle of modern man. Everybody has the Blues. Everybody longs for meaning. Everybody needs to love and be loved. Everybody needs to clap hands and be happy. Everybody longs for faith. In music, especially this broad category called Jazz, there is a stepping stone towards all of these.
>
> (Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Opening Speech at the 1964 Berlin Jazz Festival)

In *Shade of Blue: Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America*, Gaude (2007: 65) describes the wider cultural and political significance of the 'blues' in relation to black cultural identity:

> . . . the sound of America's darker souls struggling to create themselves and to sing America always has at its root a blue note reflective of the limited conditions of the world of action and of an insistence, building on the words of Baby Suggs, to act and create anyway.
>
> (Glaude 2007: 65)

New Orleans, Liverpool, and Marseille each have strong and distinctive musical traditions and cultures, which have similar 'blue note' roots. The music that defines each city—jazz and blues in New Orleans, rock and pop in Liverpool, and rap and hip-hop in Marseille—relate to different cultural identities of local populations. In terms of collective urban identity and politics, these 'bluesy' popular music cultures contribute actively to African American identity in New Orleans, white working-class identity in Liverpool, and post-colonial North African migrant identity in Marseille.

New Orleans is the birthplace of blues and jazz, and its distinctive local musical culture has continued to thrive and develop since the 1910s. Woods (2005: 1005) argues that Hurricane Katrina was a 'blues moment':

> The picture of twenty thousand slowly dying African Americans chanting 'we want help' outside of New Orleans's Convention Center was a blues moment. It disrupted the molecular structure of a wide array of carefully constructed social relations and narratives on race, class, progress, competency, and humanity. In the blink of an eye, African Americans, an identity fraught with ambiguity, were transformed back into black people, a highly politicized identity. Mass suffering simultaneously killed the dream and 'learnt' the blues to the hip-hop generation.

For Woods (2005), a 'blues moment' is a political moment rather than a musical one, a crisis that opens up a space to revive the politicized African American blues tradition of investigation, interpretation, and resistance to racism and exploitation. Woods traces the blues tradition from its early evolution within African American communities as a challenge to plantation power. He argues that the political blues tradition has always been concerned with breaking the bonds of dependency, including 'racialized impoverishment, enclosure and displacement, neoplantation politics, the arbitrariness of daily life, the denial of human rights, cultural imposition, the manufacture of savages, regionally distinct traps, and the desecration of sacred places' (Woods 2005: 1009).

The blues theme of New Orleans recovery is central to the HBO series *Treme* (2010–2013) set in the poor, black neighbourhood of Treme in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The series portrays distinctive aspects of the different communities in New Orleans, particularly in relation to musical traditions of second lines (brass band parades), Mardi Gras Indians, and different forms of jazz and blues.

However, some media scholars have raised criticisms of *Treme*, highlighting: its emphasis on jazz and heritage music at the expense of in-depth focus on histories of racial conflict and social exclusion; and its own implication within the problems of the disaster-struck neighbourhood throughout its film and production process (cf. Mayer 2012; Thomas 2012).

Katrina was significant as a blues moment because it 'not only revealed ongoing racial projects and practices; it revealed them at the pinnacle of a long half-century march against the New Deal, the Freedom Movement, the War on Poverty, and the Poor People's Campaign' (Woods 2005: 1007–1008). It inspired a number of blues and jazz musicians to write new songs, but more importantly, it also inspired disadvantaged African Americans to fight campaigns against racial discrimination and human rights abuses. In other words, the 'blues moment' is primarily about the politics and motivation for action, rather than production of music itself. While jazz and blues clearly have roots in racial identity and politics, a celebration of this music through *Treme* and music festivals, offers only a partial perspective about racial discrimination and the possibilities of transformation.

Beyond New Orleans and America, 'blue notes' went on to influence the spread of rock and roll, pop music, and a range of other modern popular music styles in America and internationally. Across the Atlantic, Liverpool became famous in the 1960s for the Beatles and the Merseybeat. According to Wagner (2003), much of the Beatles' originality came from the way that they handled 'blue notes' in their music, by 'domesticating' them into softer sounds. Although very few of the Beatles' popular songs are purely blues, the Beatles' music originated in the blues. The Beatles produced a number of classic blues cover songs in the 1950s which were faithful to the 'founding fathers' of jazz, blues, and rock n' rock. Their originality came with the introduction of deviations to blues schematics including enrichment, expansion, and integration of these schemata with non-blues elements (Wagner 2003: 353).

The Beatles drew on a range of influences, including American rhythm and blues, rock n' rock, and UK skiffle music of the mid-1950s, a combination of US blues, folk, and jazz traditions. Although some music scholars argue that the Beatles and the Merseybeat had a distinctive Liverpool sound, others suggest that their sound was in fact primarily American in origin (Leigh 2010):

> Why music making in Liverpool rather than Manchester, Sheffield, Newcastle, Birmingham, Leeds or Glasgow should have been so

> susceptible to the impact and influence of American sounds was explained by the city's status as Britain's principal transatlantic port – a point of first contact with America.
>
> (Leigh 2010: 18)

This explanation echoes the Liverpudlian 'edgy cities' narrative (Higginson and Wailey 2006) that claims Liverpool has more in common with New York and New Orleans than with the rest of England. Another author emphasizes the port city affinity between Liverpool and New York to explain the influence of American music:

> The city also had a more colorful ethnic make-up than many other English cities at the time. There was a large Irish population, as well as sizeable Jamaican, Indian, Chinese, Slavic and Jewish communities, making Liverpool the kind of cultural melting-pot that New York was and London was not.
>
> (Kozinn 1996: 16)

According to Inglis (2010: 11), the emergence of Merseybeat is significant because it was 'the first time in the history of British popular music when a sound and a city were bracketed together in this way.' The Beatles, who were the catalyst for the Merseyside, were ambassadors for Liverpool, 'talking up' the city in interviews and press conferences (Leigh 2010). The Merseybeat resonated with collective identity and memory in Liverpool by drawing on narratives of celebration and loss in the context of post-war working-class Liverpool (Leonard and Strachen 2010).

However, some scholars are more critical of celebratory accounts of popular music in Liverpool in the context of economic decline and social exclusion, where the Beatles are promoted as a resource for local identity and city branding, while the diversity of other forms of musical culture are side-lined (cf. Leonard and Strachen 2010). Liverpool has a rich history of black musicians including the Real Thing in the 1970s and the Christians in the 1980s, but this history tends to be eclipsed within dominant representations of Liverpool's musical identity (cf. Strachan 2010). Similarly, Cohen (2007: 3) argues that popular music in Liverpool has the potential to be subversive, but in the context of global capitalism it also risks co-option by corporate interests: 'So what happens to the musical life of a city once the economic infrastructure that the city was built on collapses, and how has popular music been implicated in the regeneration process?'

In contrast with New Orleans and Liverpool, Marseille is less well-known within the context of global Anglophone popular music. However, Marseille is arguably one of the most 'happening' places for contemporary popular music. Since the 1990s, Marseille has been famous for its distinctive style of hip-hop, less violent and more reflective than the 'gangsta' rap in the United States and in Paris. This music is also highly political and connected to urban identity, inspired by the experiences of disadvantaged North African migrant communities in Marseille (cf. Qaasim 2011).

IAM is one of the most famous bands and represents a style that Prévos (1996) describes as embodying an 'ideology' of Pharaohism. IAM uses imagery of ancient Egypt and the Pharaohs, highlights the Arabic origins and cultural distinctiveness of Marseille, portrays a positive view of the Mediterranean as a whole, and criticizes Western colonialism. The band's first album is entitled '*de la planète Mars*' (1993), where 'Mars' connotes Marseille as a place 'apart' from the rest of France and Paris (Prévos 1996: 721). The IAM song 'J'aurais pu croire' IAM (1993) provides a critique of Western colonialism:

> J'aurais pu croire en l'Occident si,
> Tous ces pays n'avaient pas eu de colonies
> Et lors de l'indépendance ne les avaient découpées comme des tartes
> Aujourd'hui, il y a des guerres à cause des problèmes de cartes.
> (I could have believed in the West if,
> All these countries didn't have colonies
> And if independence had not cut them like pies
> Today, there are wars because of problems of maps).

Other well-known hip-hop artists include Bouga, Psy4 de la Rime, and M'Roumbaba Saïd, among many others. All of these musicians share a commitment to local communities, migrant identities, and the city of Marseille. As Kimmelman (2007) observes:

> Melancholy is the word often used to describe the local rap style: melancholy as a reflective state of mind. In contrast to the city's sun-and-sea context, melancholy actually suits lots of its culture . . . Rappers in Marseille, some of the most original and distinctive ones anyway, compose sad odes to their local neighborhoods and hymns to the whole melting-pot city. The sound of Paris hip-hop slicker and more aggressive [sic], adopts much from American gangsta

> rap, as Marseille hip-hop does too, but Marseille boasts a groovier style. It mixes in blues, flamenco, Jamaican ragga.

Popular music traditions in all three cities draw on themes of the 'blues', of blue notes, blues traditions of resistance, and melancholy. These traditions connect to themes of both black and blue, as combined identities, including blue elements of reflection and aspiration and *noir* elements of realism and racial identity. The bluesy music traditions in each city also relate to distinctive port city identities, emerging out of the struggles for voice and representation of migrant and working-class populations.

Researching cities on the edge

Blue and black themes in local representations of port cities show common narratives of urban identity—of exceptionalism, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and creativity, and of racism, social exclusion, poverty, and crime. Outsider accounts of marginalized places are more typically associated with sensationalism and 'Othering'. However, as this chapter has shown, 'insider' representations and imaginaries of port cities also have the capacity to wax romantic and to exaggerate. Some local narratives of edgy, *noir*, and bluesy cities are more sentimental and sensationalist, while other narratives are more angry and political. Most narratives, whether black or blue, have some degree of ambivalence in reconciling repertoires of myth-making with different realities.

Sociologically, the diversity of representations relates to the different subject positions of the authors in terms of race, class, gender, and age. The 'edgy, '*noir*', and 'bluesy' narratives of port cities highlight local voices who attempt to speak for collective urban identity. Many of these voices are found among educated elites and intellectuals, often with working-class or migrant origins. They resemble the working-class writers in Rancière's (2012) *Proletarian Nights*, an historical study of nineteenth-century French working-class artisans who burn the midnight oil working on poetry, letters, and journals, with the aim of being free of labour (see Chapter 8 for further analysis of 'alternative' cultural politics). However, the selection of different cultural representations of local urban identity can only ever give a partial, non-representative, and complex view. Not all inhabitants would identify with these narratives, and many would reject the romance, the realism, or the exaggeration of these claims.

Methodologically, the themes of black and blue are echoed throughout the diverse narratives about urban identity and politics that feature in the rest of this book. The book explores contradictory and ambivalent narratives and port cities and global legacies produced by urban planners, developers, trade unionists, dockworkers, seafarers, community organizers, and environmental activists.

The findings in this chapter highlight the importance of paying attention to propensities towards exaggeration, nostalgia, and sensationalism in my own representations of port cities and global legacies as a researcher, particularly as an 'outsider' rather than an 'insider'. Indeed, the perspective of the researcher as an outsider is an interesting methodological and ethical starting point for thinking about how we can understand 'Other' places such as global port cities. To some extent, the outsider is an inevitable starting point for any social researcher, and all of us are outsiders in some context. We are all born somewhere and as soon as we leave our front doors, or our home towns, we enter the outside world as visitors, tourists, travellers, or migrants. It is profoundly human to want to learn more about other cultures, societies, cities, places, and people, to seek to understand the differences and the commonalities. At the same time, it is important to recognize that research on struggling cities has parallels with Western research in 'developing' countries, which have been criticized for neocolonialism and exploitation both in terms of research theory and in terms of practice (cf. Rakowski 1993). Indeed, the wider ethical problem of the 'philosopher and his poor' (Rancière 2004) has been criticized throughout the history of social research, yet it remains a critical challenge for ethically sensitive research in contexts of poverty and deprivation.

During the course of my research on port cities, a historian from Liverpool told me about the importance of having 'working-class credentials' to be able to do 'legitimate' working-class public history in the city. Following traditions within standpoint theory, many qualitative researchers argue that it is important to share the 'subject' position of a research participant, particularly when researching vulnerable social groups, in order to 'give voice', to balance power relations, and to aspire towards more ethical and empowering accounts. I have lived in the port cities of Vancouver, Montreal, and London, but I have spent most of my life inland, and I cannot claim to have the sea 'in my blood'. I have only ever been a visitor to the three port cities examined in this book, and I do not have any direct family or personal connections to maritime work or life. Although there were many ways in which I identified

and empathized with research participants and their multiple experiences and identities, I was ultimately and unavoidably an 'outsider' in my research.

In my ethnographic research in the over-researched post-Katrina context of New Orleans, I was mindful from the outset that I didn't want to be just another 'disaster tourist' who had arrived in the city too late. But at the same time, I had to overcome these reservations and accept my status as an 'outsider'. I was also sceptical about the ethics of aspiring towards 'authenticity' or 'insider credentials' in a voyeuristic ethnographic sense, particularly as my focus was on linking macro and micro issues rather than only focusing on the micro. Ethically, I aimed to approach my research in all three cases, as far as possible, with sensitivity and humility, inspired by the sociological 'art of listening' (Back 2007).

While there are clearly ethical sensitivities and dilemmas which come with researching port cities 'on the ground', the perspective of the outsider does have some advantages in terms of critically engaging with port cities historically, sociologically, and politically. 'Insider' representations of cities often highlight celebratory, proud, cultural, and uncritical features of urban life, evident in the narratives of 'edgy', '*noir*', and 'bluesy' port cities. Yet entangled with romanticized representations, port cities also have troubling global legacies of empire, colonialism, war, discrimination, labour exploitation, and social inequality.

One of my research participants, a Liverpool resident, expressed surprise that I had chosen to study New Orleans alongside Liverpool and Marseille. She wrinkled her nose and said, 'Why? Because of the slave trade?' She thought that another, more prosperous US port would have been a more appropriate choice. She found this comparison between Liverpool and New Orleans disconcerting; she didn't like the idea that I would be engaged in digging up uncomfortable pasts. While it is important to consider how researchers might contribute to the 'Othering' of places, another important consideration is how local narratives about urban identity with places are themselves implicated in 'Othering', and in the wider production of global inequalities and injustices. Places are both active and passive, and there is considerable work to be done to disrupt and challenge uncritical urban representations, past and present.

3

Reconstructing Port Identities: The Urban Politics of Waterfront Development

New mega-projects along the waterfronts of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans feature massive deep-water container ports, towering iconic architecture, maritime sculptures (Figure 3.1), and pristine landscaped parks. Rather than competing with each other over different economic visions, as in the past, port and city authorities in each case have been working together to carve out new, competitive port city identities in the twenty-first century. This chapter investigates these new developments within the wider context of different phases, models, geographies, and scales of waterfront development in post-industrial cities. It critically examines the relationship between the city and the port as a complex political space in which entangled cultural and economic policies are produced.

Many global Western port cities declined in the 1960s and 1970s, leaving derelict waterfronts as port activities retreated away from urban areas. The diminution of these former 'great' port cities was due to interrelated processes of containerization and deindustrialization. Containerization rapidly changed the technological and spatial demands of ports to accommodate large ships and containers. In their efforts to modernize, urban ports shifted their operations to the outskirts of cities. However, many urban ports failed to retain their global competitive advantage. Manufacturing and port activities moved from the industrialized West to 'developing' countries in search of cheaper labour and resources, facilitated by cheap and efficient shipping. New global hub ports developed in countries throughout Asia, while only a handful of the older ports, such as Rotterdam and Hamburg, managed to retain their global status.

In the wake of decline, waterfront redevelopment projects emerged in a number of post-industrial port cities. These projects were concerned

Figure 3.1 'It Takes Two to Tango', Sumo Sculpture by David Mach, Place Jean Mireur, Marseille, September 2013

with transforming derelict waterfronts into non-maritime uses to kick-start urban and economic recovery. According to Shaw (2001), there have been four generations of post-industrial waterfront development since the 1960s. The first generation was exemplified by the 'festival market' renewal of Baltimore's Inner Harbour in the 1960s, which was emulated throughout North American cities in the 1960s and 1970s. The second generation included cities where organizations were set up to plan, manage, and implement the redevelopment of redundant waterfront sites, following either market-driven or plan-led approaches. The corporate office-led development of London Docklands in the 1980s was an example of a market-driven approach, while the urban regeneration of Barcelona was an example of a plan-led approach (Shaw 2001). The third generation included cities such as Vancouver, Sydney, and Liverpool which followed variations on the models of the first and second generations. The fourth generation emerged in the 1990s in the wake of recession and was characterized by hybrid models which combined old and innovative planning strategies (Galland and Hansen 2012; Shaw 2001).

Other scholars have situated different models of waterfront development in relation to different phases of history and regions of the globe, with North American planning ideas taking the lead in the 1960s and 1970s, European developments coming to the fore in the 1980s, and Asian port cities becoming prominent players in the 1990s and 2000s (cf. Jones 1998; Lee et al. 2008; Schubert 2008). According to Schubert (2008), throughout history there have been six phases of port city development, including five stages that were initially identified by Hoyle (1989) followed by a sixth phase: (1) medieval to nineteenth century: primitive port/city; (2) nineteenth–early twentieth century: expanding port/city; (3) mid-twentieth century: modern industrial port/city; (4) 1960s–1980s: retreat from the waterfront; (5) 1970s–1990s: redeveloping of waterfront; and (6) 1980s–2000s: renewal of port/city links. Schubert (2008) contrasts recent North American, European, and Asian approaches to waterfront development, arguing that Western port cities are typically concerned with overcoming decline, while Asian port cities are concerned with adapting to the challenges of globalization and transforming former colonial port cities into global hubs. These comparative analyses of port city development are helpful guides for thinking about the historical development and variation of port cities around the world.

Waterfront development is a highly contested topic, reflecting different political and ideological visions of urban, social, and economic change. According to Hoyle (2000: 395), ‘waterfront revitalization occurs at the problematic and controversial interface between port function and the broader urban environment’. A number of scholars and policy-makers have critically examined waterfront developments policies and projects in different international urban contexts (cf. Desfor et al. 2011; Hoyle, et al. 1988; Malone 1996; Marshall 2001; Schubert 2008). Some urban planners and academics view waterfront development as a relatively neutral economic opportunity within an inevitable, evolutionary process of port city development (cf. Giovinazzi and Moretti 2010; Merk and Comtois 2012). By contrast, critics of waterfront development (cf. Desfor et al. 2011; Harvey 2001; Zukin 1991) argue that dominant development models are embedded in an uneven geography of capitalist development and result in the gentrification and cultural homogenization of urban landscapes. These scholars are particularly critical of market-driven approaches, which tend to be top-down, non-democratic, and to prioritize private over public interests.

The policy transfer literature offers an interesting global and comparative perspective on waterfront development policies. This literature

traces policy ideas and practices through different spatial, political, and temporal contexts. Liberal policy transfer scholars argue that planning and development policies travel between international port cities as part of a 'rational' process of cross-national learning and the pursuit of good practice (cf. Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; Hall 1993). More critical policy transfer scholars stress the ideological and socially constructed nature of policy mobility (cf. McCann and Ward 2011; Peck and Theodore 2012). For example, Peck and Theodore (2012) propose the 'distended case study' as a critical method for analysing how policies move and mutate globally across different local contexts, drawing on traditions of multi-site ethnography and the 'extended case method' (Burawoy 1998).[1] The authors contrast their approach with the orthodox policy transfer literature, arguing that it is important to examine the social and ideological contexts of policy-making processes. Ward (2011: 72) rejects this dichotomy, arguing that waterfront development policies travel in both ways, as 'rational' processes of cross-national learning, but also as a 'more culturally and ideologically conditioned process of imagining, reflecting the images and stereotypes of the "source" country of city prevailing more widely within the "receiving" country or city'.

My analytical approach is situated within the critical literatures on waterfront development, urban studies, and policy transfer studies (cf. Desfor et al. 2011; Harvey 2001; Peck and Theodore 2012; Zukin 1991). It is also situated within the literature on port studies, offering a critical and qualitative sociological perspective within a field that is primarily economic and quantitative. Ducruet and Lee (2006) suggest that there is a significant gap in the literature between port and urban studies, and that it is important to consider port functions as embedded within urban systems. I aim to bridge this gap by examining the role of the port in relation to the wider context of waterfront development and urban identity. Alongside post-industrial waterfront developments, ports have continued to develop on the edges of post-industrial cities, responding to rapidly changing economic dynamics and shipping logistics in the context of globalization. While Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans can no longer boast the same status as 'great' ports at the height of the age of empire, they nonetheless remain important ports. In fact, after years of restructuring and adapting to the dynamics of containerization and global trade, their economic and political ambitions as ports have grown significantly.

Despite having a shared focus on the importance of competition and place-making for urban and economic development, most obviously within port cities, port and urban studies have rarely been considered

together. Within Western urban regeneration policies since the 1980s and 1990s, cities have been encouraged by business elites and governments to become 'competitive cities', 'creative cities', or 'entrepreneurial cities', through using place-marketing and tourism-led regeneration to promote economic transformation (cf. Duffy 1995; Florida 2005; Hall and Hubbard 1998; Musterd 2010; Ward 2003). In fact, this aim intersects with competitive port policies, or strategies where ports struggle to gain, retain, or rebuild competitiveness at a variety of geographical and economic scales (cf. Merk and Comtois 2012; Wang et al. 2007; Warsewa 2006).

Two key research findings emerged from comparative analysis of the relationship between port and urban waterfront development schemes in the three different contexts. Firstly, waterfront development projects in all three post-industrial Western port cities share aspirations to become 'competitive' port cities, based on two different but complementary models of market-driven capitalist development: (1) post-industrial renewal, based on tourism-led, culture-led, and property-led development, and (2) deep-water maritime expansion, embedded within the global maritime economy. Secondly, these private-led models of development prioritize private over public interests—resulting in social polarization—yet they are justified through appealing to narratives about reconstructing port city identity for the public good.

Reconstructing port identities

Waterfront developers in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans have adopted market-driven leisure and tourism-led development strategies since the 1980s and 1990s. Liverpool redeveloped its redundant docklands through the Merseyside Development Corporation (MDC) in the 1980s; Marseille regenerated its derelict docks following Liverpool's model in the mid-1990s; and New Orleans undertook corporate-led riverfront redevelopment in the mid-1980s. While these early waterfront revitalization efforts included implicit narratives about reclaiming the waterfront, they drew more closely on narratives about private rather than public interests, reflecting a political and ideological shift in priorities between the 1960s–1970s and the 1980s–1990s (cf. Azcona 2006; Lauria 1994; Parkinson 1988).[2]

Since the early 2000s, more explicit narratives about reconstructing port identity for the public good have emerged in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. Waterfront developers have become more focused on *active* rather than *passive* uses of heritage and collective identity. Instead

of referencing the port as a nostalgic relic of the past, they draw on material and cultural aspirations to reconstruct strong port identities. This chapter will examine two narratives in each city that have been used to justify recent waterfront developments: (1) reconnecting the public to the waterfront, and (2) re-establishing 'great' port city status. These narratives are closely intertwined because the notion of 'greatness' is one of the key ways that the 'public'—conceived in rather partial ways— is being reconnected to the waterfront.

The idea of reconnecting the public with the waterfront has been a common feature of many port city development policies. The narrative has a public-spirited dimension, with its aim of making a formerly private and underutilized space accessible to the public. Waterfront development plans often include boardwalks and public parks, in keeping with this ethos. The narrative of reconnecting the public with the waterfront draws on the collective memory and identity of port cities to remind people, in case they have forgotten, that their cities were founded as ports. Often, waterfront development projects attempt to preserve aspects of maritime history through physical symbolic markers: a maritime museum, a public monument with a nautical theme, or a preserved architectural feature of old docks.

However, most of these development projects only reconnect the public with waterfront spaces in very specific ways that are constrained by commercial interests. They also benefit only particular types of 'public', while excluding others. After all, the primary purpose of capitalist development projects is development: to attract private developers to transform disused maritime spaces into a range of profitable commercial, residential, leisure, and touristic facilities. The narrative of the public benefit thus also serves to mask the profit-driven imperative of waterfront development.

One of the earliest examples of this narrative was evident in Baltimore's Inner Harbour renewal plan in the mid-1960s. The Baltimore developers used the notion of 'returning the shoreline to the people' as a key justification for the project (cf. Schubert 2008: 34). However, the developers' vision of the 'shoreline' was very different from that of the local population. Instead of returning maritime jobs—or any significant form of employment—to the people, it produced a Disnified amusement space that did not fit with the local environment. Despite its failure to bring employment and long-term recovery to the city, Baltimore's Inner Harbour was held up internationally as a successful model of waterfront development. It was explicitly copied throughout major cities in North America and Europe in subsequent decades (Schubert 2008; Ward 2011).

Over the past decade, the narrative of reconnecting the public with the waterfront has been taken up explicitly in waterfront development projects in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. The narrative has been used not only as a justification for tourism and property-led waterfront development, as in the case of Baltimore. It has also been used as a way of bolstering urban maritime identity to facilitate port expansion. This relates to the second narrative, of re-establishing 'great' port city status.

The narrative of re-establishing 'great' port city status can be seen in the rolling out of mega-port city projects, particularly Peel Ports' 'Liverpool Two' mega-port development, the Euroméditerranée development project in Marseille, and the Master Plan 2020 of the Port of New Orleans. While the port authorities recognize that they are unlikely to become global hub ports, they nonetheless aspire to achieve greater global competitiveness through increased capacity, efficiency, and market share in relation to competitor ports. Port authorities have sought to gain public approval for port expansion by engaging in public and community engagement activities and by promising jobs and economic growth to local people. However, the wider benefits to local people have yet to be seen. Historically, the interests of port development link to the ideology of merchant capital, with roots in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which is characterized by 'a belief in the concept of the "night-watchman" state, adherence to *laissez-faire* and liberal economic principles, and an underlying commitment to avoid any unnecessary disruption to trade and commerce' (Lee 1998: 168). While ports no longer operate along the classic principles of merchant capitalism, legacies of this older form and practice of capitalism persist. These legacies are particularly evident in the stark gap between the economic successes of competitive port development and what Megerle (2008: 371) calls the 'downside of upgrading': the urban exclusion of vulnerable population groups.

The aspiration of re-establishing 'great' port city status is also evident in the development of iconic transnational architecture along urban waterfronts (cf. Jones 2011; Sklair 2006), including Peel Ports' 'Liverpool Waters', New Orleans' 'Reinventing the Crescent', and the flagship museums of the Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture. Sklair (2006) argues that iconic architecture is a material expression of elite power. This has implications for different kinds of 'publics': for some people, iconic architecture reflects positive associations with global prestige and high culture, while for others, it is profoundly impersonal and alienating. To understand the relationship

between architectural icons and contemporary capitalist globalization, Sklair (2006: 33) suggests that is important to ask three questions: 'Iconic for whom? Iconic for where? Iconic for what?' As Jones (2011: 117–118) elaborates:

> These fundamental questions sensitize us to related-but-distinct sociological concerns about the role of icons in entrepreneurial place-marketing strategies (iconic for where?); the differential reception of architectural aesthetics and meanings by different publics ... (iconic for whom?); and the capacity of such buildings to capture a zeitgeist or major social change with an appropriate aesthetic (iconic for what?).

Sklair's three questions could usefully be extended to think critically about the idea of re-establishing 'greatness' in port cities: great for whom, for where, and for what?

In all three cities, waterfront developers have built on wider narratives about port city heritage and identity, referencing the prestige of former ports of empire, and aspirations to re-establish 'great' port city status in the era of globalization. Port authorities have worked in collaboration with corporate and city partners to strengthen the commercial basis of the ports and to tie these economic benefits with other property-led developments in each city. Each of these waterfront developments are based on market-driven rather than public-led models. The narratives of reconnecting the public with the waterfront and of re-establishing 'great' port city status link to ambitious interconnected mega-growth strategies of tourism-led, property-led, and port-led development.

Liverpool

Liverpool's historic identity as a 'great' port city is widely known and celebrated within the city. It is present in narratives of urban identity in the Maritime Museum and the Museum of Liverpool, it is evident in local history sections of bookshops, and it is visible in the grand architecture of empire throughout the urban landscape. However, there is a mismatch between Liverpool's proud maritime identity and its protracted history of imperial and economic decline. Only recently has the idea of 'greatness' re-emerged in local narratives about urban identity and development, following the 2004 UNESCO designation of Liverpool as a world heritage site and the 2008 European Capital of Culture. This has dovetailed with development narratives about reconnecting the people with the 'great' maritime legacy and identity of the waterfront.

The port of Liverpool reached its peak as the second port of empire after London in the early twentieth century, and it fell into decline in the late 1960s. This was related to two main factors: (1) containerization, which rendered the traditional impounded docks system at Liverpool and Birkenhead obsolete, and (2) the reorientation of UK cargo trade towards Europe, resulting in the growth of southern rather than northern ports (Lauria 1994: 2). The post-war economy was buoyed by the arrival of manufacturers including Ford and British Leyland in the 1960s, but these soon retreated with the onset of deindustrialization during the 1970s (Murden 2006). Indeed, the 1970s marked the beginning of a period of significant urban and economic decline in the city. The South Dock system in central Liverpool was closed in 1972, and port operations shifted to the Royal Seaforth container docks northwest of the city, where port activities remain today. The old docks quickly fell into disrepair.

The first major docklands redevelopment in Liverpool was initiated by the Merseyside Development Corporation (MDC), established in 1980 as a government-mandated Urban Development Corporation (alongside London) to facilitate privatized urban redevelopment (cf. Lauria 1994; Parkinson 1988). Despite its lack of local accountability, there was very little local opposition to the MDC: other strategies had failed to reverse the economic downturn in Liverpool, and the MDC promised central government funding to kick-start private development, even if it came with strings attached. Initially, the MDC focused on a strategy based on commercial and industrial development. However, in 1984, following the success of the Albert Dock renovation, the International Garden Festival held on a reclaimed industrial riverside site, and the Tall Ships Race, the MDC decided to focus instead on a leisure and tourism-based strategy of urban regeneration. This echoed a general trend in the re-orientation in urban regeneration strategies in the United Kingdom and Europe (cf. Lorente 1996). MDC tourism-led developments on the reclaimed Albert Dock included the 1986 expansion of the Merseyside Maritime Museum in warehouse block D at the Albert Dock and the opening of the Tate Liverpool in 1988, alongside a variety of shops and restaurants.[3]

Towards the late 1980s, the MDC also started to recognize the importance of promoting a positive image of Merseyside and marketing its regeneration. Since this time, waterfront developments in Liverpool have increasingly emphasized the benefit for the public in terms of impacts, access, participation, and identity. The strategy of tourism-led and property-led development has continued in Liverpool, featuring

new museums, galleries, shops, hotels, flats, and leisure facilities. Urban regeneration efforts over the past decade in Liverpool have also led to many physical improvements in the city centre and the waterfront. Liverpool's designation as European Capital of Culture in 2008 was particularly important for attracting further cultural and tourist developments in the city (Garcia et al. 2008). For example, it attracted large-scale developments such as the controversial £500 million 'Liverpool One', a private leisure, shopping, and retail redevelopment in the city centre adjacent to the Albert Dock, which opened in 2008. However, the European Capital of Culture was heavily criticized for its top-down vision of culture and for benefiting only the city centre, while ignoring the poor outlying areas of the city (Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004; O'Brien 2011).

However, perhaps even more significant for rekindling collective pride in Liverpool's identity was its designation as a UNESCO world heritage site in 2004. The UNESCO designation recognized Liverpool's 'greatness' in terms of its imperial and mercantile past, evident within the physical landscape of grand imperial architecture exemplified in the city's 'Three Graces' along the waterfront: The Royal Liver Building, The Cunard Building, and the Port of Liverpool Building. It explicitly recognized and celebrated Liverpool's historic role as 'the supreme example of a commercial port at the time of Britain's greatest global influence' (Liverpool World Heritage 2014).

In this bolstered context of urban and economic revival following the UNESCO designation and the European Capital of Culture, interrelated narratives about reconstructing port identity have emerged in Liverpool. At the centre of these narratives is Peel Ports. In September 2005, Peel Ports took over management of the Port of Liverpool when it acquired the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (Liverpool port authority since 1865, established as a company in 1972 to facilitate the Royal Seaforth container dock development). This was in the aftermath of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1998), when collective feelings over the strike were still very bitter and raw (see Chapter 5). Since this time, Peel Ports has been generally reluctant to engage with the public, due to enduring and widespread negative perceptions of the port within the city. According to a representative in the maritime industry (interview 26 November 2013):

> Until quite recently there was quite a negative perception of the port in the media, in the press, certainly in the local media and press. I think that's to do with the historical legacy of things like the strikes and people losing their jobs.

As a researcher, I experienced this wariness from Peel Ports and found it very difficult to gain access to anyone who was willing to speak officially about the port.

Nonetheless, the narrative of 'reconnecting the public to the waterfront' has recently emerged in relation to two major Peel Ports developments along the Liverpool waterfront: Liverpool Waters, a massive extension of office, residential, and commercial properties along the stretch of waterfront northwest of the city (which received planning permission in 2013), and Liverpool Two, a new £300 million deep-water container port further northwest of the city (which received planning permission in 2012). With the introduction of Liverpool Waters and Liverpool Two, Peel Ports has slowly started to engage in public relations activities. For example, it has done public engagement consultations for both projects and run positive media stories about job opportunities and community benefits related to port and waterfront developments. According to a maritime industry representative (interview, 26 November 2013), these media stories

> ...help to shift that perception of Liverpool being a city that's gone through a period of decline, is now basically a good time girl that is about tourism, entertainment and not really got any substance. It's not, it's still a city that has industry, has a port and does all the heavy lift stuff as well as all the frilly bits.

Given the negative perception of Peel Ports within Liverpool, and given the ambitious scale of these two development projects, it is not surprising that the port has started to engage in public relations.

The related narrative of re-establishing 'great' port city status is also being developed through Peel Ports' Ocean Gateway vision, a 50-year vision which aims to 'deliver an unprecedented scale of co-ordinated private sector investment' to the redevelopment of a strategic corridor encompassing waterways within Liverpool, Manchester, Cheshire, and Warrington. Liverpool Two and Liverpool Waters are both flagship projects within the Ocean Gateway vision.

Liverpool Waters received planning permission from the Liverpool City Council Planning Committee in March 2012 to develop 60 hectares of former dock land, with a timeline extending to 2040. It proposes a mixed use development including residential, business, hotel and conference, commercial, and leisure facilities, although the primary focus is on 42 high rise residential buildings (Liverpool City Council 2012). The urban design plan for Liverpool highlights the importance of 'making connections: this provides the vital means of reintegrating the Liverpool

Waters site within the city structure' (Bailey 2011: 17). It also stresses the importance of improving public access to the waterfront and having a high-quality public realm that is well-integrated with the surroundings. According to the project website:

> The Liverpool Waters vision involves regenerating a 60 hectare historic dockland site to create a world-class, high-quality, mixed use waterfront quarter in central Liverpool. The scheme will create a unique sense of place, taking advantage of the site's cultural heritage and integrating it with exciting and sustainable new development. Liverpool Waters will contribute substantially to the growth and development of the city, allowing ease of movement and strong connections between Northshore, its hinterland, and the city centre. It will accommodate new and existing residents, attract national and international businesses and encourage a significant increase in the number of visitors to the city, adding to Liverpool's cultural offer and providing a new and complementary destination.
>
> (Peel Ports 2014)

This description highlights the way that Liverpool Waters will connect physically and culturally with the rest of the city, citing the unique cultural heritage of the waterfront location, the surrounding neighbourhoods and wider urban context, and the importance of accommodating both new and existing residents. The narrative stresses the preservation of the old alongside the new, careful to avoid associations with gentrification. This initiative also bridges the idea of reconnection at the local scale with global ambitions to become world-class and to attract international businesses and visitors.

Some scholars have raised concerns about the extent to which Liverpool Waters will fit with the local culture and economy. For example, Jones (2013) argues that Liverpool Waters is an example of how architecture constructs narratives about the world, specifically a transnational middle-class vision, placing itself alongside global waterfronts such as Hong Kong, Singapore, and Vancouver. Beyond these aesthetic and class-based considerations, another worrying aspect of the plan is its focus on high-end housing developments, which would not meet the needs of the local population (Bickerton 2009; Jones 2013). In terms of local opposition, however, the strongest opponents of Liverpool Waters' plans were not 'typical' anti-capitalist protesters who were opposed to gentrification (at least, not in the Liverpool City Council meetings). Rather, the main voices of opposition came from

preservationists: defenders of the UNESCO World Heritage designation, who worried that Liverpool Waters would threaten this unique heritage status (Liverpool City Council 2012).[4] This raises questions about the extent of community consultation undertaken by Peel Ports, which reports overwhelmingly positive local responses to the project.

Liverpool Two is the other flagship 'Ocean Gateway' project, a £300 million deep-water container port which began construction in 2013 and is projected to open in 2015, at the same time as the opening of the new deep-water Panama Canal. Despite its image of decline, Liverpool remains a significant, diversified port that ships containers, automobiles, metals, forest products, liquid bulks, dry bulks, and energy products around the world. Liverpool Two will be located north of Liverpool on the River Mersey, beyond the existing operational Liverpool docks at Seaforth. The project was named after the large-scale outdoor shopping development, Liverpool One, to suggest that it would offer an extension of the urban revitalization brought to Liverpool through Liverpool One and the European Capital of Culture. The new deep-water port would be a significant development for Liverpool, as there are relatively few deep sea container ports in the world, and this would have considerable impacts on cargo trade. However, as in the old days of merchant shipping, it remains to be seen how far the profits will reach beyond the port to the city.

According to a maritime industry representative (interview, 26 November 2013), the main rationale behind Liverpool Two was to take advantage of a business opportunity: 90 per cent of containers coming into the United Kingdom come in through southern ports, but 50 per cent of that 90 per cent end up much closer to Liverpool than Felixstowe or Southampton. The idea would be to provide enough capacity for large container ships to enter the United Kingdom via Liverpool. With the opening of the new deep-water Panama Canal in 2015, Liverpool would become the first natural stop in Europe coming from the Atlantic. The Port of Liverpool would also be able to handle container trade travelling from Ireland and Scotland, which currently (at the time of our interview in 2013) needed to stop in European hub ports before heading back to the Far East.

Although Peel Ports has ambitions to reclaim some of the Port of Liverpool's former glory, it is nonetheless realistic about its global place (interview, maritime industry representative, 26 November 2013). In the short to medium term, the Port of Liverpool (Figure 3.2) aspires to offer a competitive alternative to the UK ports of Southampton and Felixstowe, rather than aiming to become a global hub port like Antwerp

Figure 3.2 Port of Liverpool from Crosby, photographer: Graham Maddrell (Fotalia: http://en.fotolia.com/id/26889041)

or Rotterdam. At the same time, it is clearly developing an agenda of growth, evident in its considerable investment in mega-port and urban waterfront developments.

Peel Ports has received recognition for its business achievements in Liverpool. In 2012, Peel Ports Mersey was named 'International Port Authority of the Year' by the global industry journal *Containerisation International*. According to the Seaforth dockworkers who work for Peel, this award was undeserved:

> Peel are ruthless and they are meant to be the Port Authority setting the standard across the whole of this complex. They were awarded the world port of the year 2012. It just beggars belief. How much money did they pay for that? You can't even get a hard hat off them. It just beggars belief that they got that ... you look at the conditions of the plants, the infrastructure, the conditions of the way they treat the labour force. The remuneration, the pay, pensions, sickness, and all of this, it's far, far worse—you compare it in the world.
>
> (Seaforth docker, interview, 8 February 2013)

The other Seaforth dockworkers echoed this sentiment, arguing that one of the main reasons for Peel Ports' profitability in Liverpool was the

abysmally low labour standards on the docks and the lack of unionization since the end of the dockers' strike in 1998. Their only leverage with Peel Ports came during the approval stages of Liverpool Two, when Peel Ports wanted to retain the impression that it had a peaceful and compliant labour force.

When I asked a maritime industry representative about the 'ruthlessness' of Peel Ports, in terms of whether it would put the interests of its business over those of the community, I received the following response:

> Yes. I mean obviously it's a business. At the end of the day they're going to make decisions which are the best decisions for the business. But I think it isn't a business that thinks it can operate without people. It's not a business that operates with robots or remotely with one guy in an ivory tower pressing buttons.
>
> (interview, 26 November 2013)

In fact, Liverpool Two engages with the 'public' in different ways than Liverpool Waters, reflecting its maritime industry focus. One of its main examples of public engagement is a project that aims to reconnect the city with its waterfront, but in terms of employment and identity rather than shopping, housing, and leisure. With the construction of the new deep-water port, Peel Ports envisions a need for more than 20,000 new jobs around the 'super-port' (which refers to port and associated industries, including the haulage companies, the rail connections, the inland water connections, and other transport connections). Its flagship project for reconnecting people with the employment on the riverfront is the University Technical College (UTC), a partnership between Peel Ports, John Moores University, and the City of Liverpool College. The UTC is going to be a training academy aimed at 14–19-year olds which will specialize in low carbon and super port qualifications. It will be based in North Liverpool, close to the new port, which is an area of significant social deprivation. As a maritime industry representative explained:

> I think what's unique about it is that it's actually a school that will educate children, teenagers, young people. At the end of it they actually are skilled up and work-ready for a sector that is growing in their region where they live . . . I think it's about creating a sense of identity associated with the port again that will be really beneficial for the city and also for North Liverpool, because North Liverpool has been a very sad part of the city for a very long time . . . Ever since the port stopped being the major employer for North Liverpool, I think there's

> been a lot of unemployment and associated problems there for quite a long time. I think that's a very positive thing for North Liverpool.
> (interview, 26 November 2013)

In terms of labour, the new port would also threaten the jobs of the few remaining dockworkers at Seaforth in northwest Liverpool, as the port would rely primarily on computer technologies and non-traditional docker skill sets. The Seaforth dockworkers who I interviewed all expressed their concerns over this threat to their jobs (various interviews, February 2013).

Liverpool Waters and Liverpool Two have used different but complementary narratives of reconnecting people with the waterfront and re-establishing 'great' port city status. The two projects are targeted at different 'publics' and different visions of 'greatness'. Liverpool Waters follows a fairly conventional pathway of property-led development, focusing on residential and consumption spaces that cater primarily to middle-class, tourist, and international business elite populations. By contrast, Liverpool Two aims to rekindle a maritime economy, labour market, and identity within the city for the purposes of port expansion and business growth.

The combined port and city authorities' vision is to transform the image and reality of Liverpool to become an important maritime city once again, with international and national as well as regional significance, a 'destination'. This is a considerable ambition, given the long history of economic and urban decline in Liverpool over the past half century. It has also been met with considerable local scepticism, given the history of conflict on the docks and the perception of Peel's monopolistic power in the city.

Marseille

In a report on port city competitiveness, Merk and Comtois (2012: 43) argue that there is a lack of local pride in the port of Marseille-Fos: 'The local sentiment of pride in its port, noticeable in the largest European port cities such as Hamburg, Antwerp, and Rotterdam, is strikingly absent in the city-region with the fifth largest European port [Marseille-Fos].' The authors attribute this lack of pride to a history of mistrust and social conflict in the eastern port of Marseille (in the city centre), and to a history of environmental contamination and invisibility from the urban population in the western port of Marseille (at Fos, roughly 30 miles north of Marseille). However, findings from several interviews with residents (2010–2013) belie this assertion of a lack of local pride: in

fact, many people expressed local pride and attachment to the maritime identity of the city, although they also lamented its perceived deterioration.

The decline of the port city of Marseille began after the Second World War. As a major colonial and industrial port before the war, its diminution was linked to a combination of deindustrialization, containerization, and decolonization. Marseille was a relative late-comer to waterfront redevelopment, lagging behind other European port cities due to a combination of historical factors and planning policies (Megerle 2008). By the early 1990s, the city was still struggling to overcome its stigma as a *ville en crise*. It was '. . . apparently the only European city of this size where there no signs of gentrification, no property speculation and no private economic investment in the inner urban areas: they were simply not seen as profitable' (Megerle 2008: 361).

The first significant waterfront redevelopment project in Marseille in the mid-to-late 1990s focused on the commercial and leisure-based redevelopment of the old docks at La Joliette, following Liverpool's model of the Albert Dock (cf. Meynard 1999). This was part of the large-scale Euroméditerranée development project which was initiated by French government in 1995 as 'shock therapy' to kick-start urban transformation. The Euroméditerranée project was part of a wider plan within the European Union to create a free trade zone in the Mediterranean region and to develop a dynamic regional Mediterranean economic area. The port authority of Marseille initially opposed this redevelopment because it would involve relocating the last remaining port functions away from the city. The port district was only integrated into the project in 1997, after a major crisis between the city and the port authorities (Dubois and Olive 2001: 425).

The Euroméditerranée project initially comprised 310 hectares including derelict port, industrial, and residential areas, and in 2007 it was extended to span 480 hectares. During the time of my research in 2010–2013, it was the largest urban renewal project in Europe, with strong public sector and private sector support at national, regional, and municipal levels. The proposed development focuses on investment in housing units, office space, public facilities, and green spaces, and it anticipates attracting 40,000 new residents and creating 35,000 jobs (Paoli 2010).

The theme of 'greatness' is evident in the political ambitions of the Euroméditerranée urban renewal project, which seeks to establish Marseille as the central regional economic hub between Europe and the Mediterranean. This parallels the ambitions of Peel Ports in Liverpool,

but it has a wider geographic and political range, with strong national as well as regional backing, and a longer history dating from the mid-1990s. It is an intensely political economic project, with funding by the European Union, the French State, the Regional Council, the Departmental Council, and the City of Marseille, and an overall budget of approximately €7 billion. The Euroméditerranée project was also a significant factor in the successful bid of Marseille-Provence for the European Capital of Culture in 2013 (Andres 2011b). Moreover, its economic aims were integrally linked to the European Capital of Culture cultural programme.

The city of Marseille developed a narrative of 'reconnecting the public to the waterfront' throughout the €7 billion European Capital of Culture, officially called 'Marseille-Provence 2013' (MP 2013) because it included the region of Provence as well as the city of Marseille, together comprising 130 communes. The port authority was one of the key partners in the bid for MP 2013, alongside the Marseille Chamber of Commerce, which houses a significant maritime archive and gallery devoted to the history of the port. The cultural programme also received €60 million in private investment, a significant amount of private investment compared with other European Capitals of Culture. The Deputy International Relations Coordinator for MP 2013 emphasized the significance of the year for economic development, describing the importance of bringing investment into the area, raising private investment from international companies, and revitalizing the economy of Marseille (interview, 10 July 2013). The rationale for this level of investment was that it dovetailed with the Euroméditerranée urban economic development project. Given this economic background, it is not surprising that the cultural programme of MP 2013 focused heavily on the role of the port, far more so than in the case of Liverpool in 2008.

According to the Deputy International Relations Coordinator for MP 2013 (interview, 10 July 2013), one of the key challenges of the Capital of Culture was:

> ...to create a new relationship to the sea because the relationship between the people from Marseille and the sea was very hard. The sea brought the financial and the economic crises in the city, with the end of the industrial era of Marseille. So we are now giving a new vision of the sea to the people of Marseille. The sea is also immigration, so we wanted to show that cultural difference is something positive.

In other words, one of the key aims of the project was to connect people to the sea. This narrative differs from other examples, such as Baltimore's Inner Harbour and Peel Ports' Liverpool Waters, because it is primarily about reconnecting people to the sea in terms of imaginary and identity rather than giving them physical access to the waterfront.

The main method of reconnecting people to the sea in Marseille was through the development of museums with 'port' themes located along the waterfront (see Figure 3.3). The new national Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM), the flagship of MP 2013, tells a story of 'greatness' as well as 'reconnection' through its iconic architecture. The €191 million museum, which opened in June 2013, was designed by the Algerian-born French 'Starchitect' Rudy Riciotti, who also designed the Louvre Lens, the Villa Navarra in Le May, the International Centre for Art and Culture in Belgium, and several other major museums and buildings in Europe. The main new building of the MuCEM is a rectangular glass building covered in black lattice stone, situated on the waterfront near the Old Port, across the road from the historic migrant working-class Panier district and next to the historic

Figure 3.3 Marseille waterfront with Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations, July 2013

Fort St. Jean, a formerly disused fortification built in 1660 that has now been incorporated into the new museum. The museum creatively connects to the city and to the fort through two long narrow cantilevered bridges, offering a passageway from the city over the road to the museum, and by extension to the sea. However, like many iconic buildings reflecting elite power (cf. Jones 2011; Sklair 2006), the MuCEM has been criticized for failing to actually connect with the local people and culture in Marseille (see Chapter 4).

The Villa Méditerraneé, an international centre for discussion in the Mediterranean, is another new museum on the waterfront near the old port of the city, adjacent to the MuCEM. It addresses the theme of cooperation in the Mediterranean through the lens of the port. Designed by the Milan architect Stefano Boeri, it also represents a form of iconic architecture. The Villa Méditerraneé showcases a dazzling array of port structures built into its cantilevered modernist design, with spaces both above and below the sea. Visitors can look down through glass into a pool of water below, or out to a panoramic city view from the rooftop. It is more accessible to the public than the MuCEM as an intimate space, including some free exhibitions.[5] However, its function is very different than the MuCEM: Villa Méditerraneé is a space dedicated to promoting the political and economic ideas of the Euroméditerranée. In this sense, it performs an ideological function in its narrative of regional connection and cooperation.

One of the most interesting links between the port and the city during Marseille-Provence 2013 was promoted through the J1 Hanger. The Marseille-Fos port authority (Grand Port Maritime de Marseille) opened the J1 Hanger to the public as an arts and cultural events space in early 2013, a vast 6,000 m^2 platform with an exhibition space of 2,500 m^2 situated alongside the working docks. Unlike other cases of 'reconnecting the public with the waterfront' which seek to replace port and industrial heritage with landscapes of leisure and consumption, the J1 Hanger showcased the connection to a working port. J1 was a popular attraction, although it had to close in the summer months due to the expenditure of air-conditioning for such a large space (interview, MP 2013 representative, 8 July 2013).

However, apart from the official representatives of MP 2013, I could not find anyone who was particularly positive about the overall European Capital of Culture narrative of 'reconnection' to the waterfront or to the life of the city. I spoke with several different residents who commented on how disconnected they felt from the vision of culture that was presented to them through the events. One resident,

a woman who worked in the tourist industry, said: 'The type of "culture" and the values that this culture represents is far removed from the ordinary inhabitants of the city, and too inaccessible, both in financial terms and in terms of ideas' (interview, 13 September 2013). Another resident, the Marseille *noir* writer Gilles Des Pappas, was similarly dismissive:

> The European Capital of Culture has only focused on a particular vision of culture that is homogenous, like that of New York or Paris, and not the underground culture that defines Marseille. Instead, the Capital of Culture has hidden the real culture of Marseille and presented only a particular vision. It directs all visitors just to the MuCEM, which does not represent the city. Violence, crime, and social realities of exclusion continue, and the city is more corrupt than ever.

A Marseille dockworker echoed these views: 'The European Capital of Culture does not connect with local people. It is too high brow, literary, and artistic, and it does not reflect the culture of the people' (interview, 9 July 2013). Other residents pointed out that apart from being inaccessible and expensive, the Capital of Culture failed to provide local employment even within the cultural sector, as many of the people who worked on the projects had come from Paris and other places outside of the city. Some of the MP 2013 representatives also voiced their concerns. For example, some locals had 'burned their connections' in order to get involved in what seemed like an exciting project, but then they realized too late that there were no further opportunities beyond 2013 in the Marseille cultural sector. It was 'like a circus coming to town and then leaving' (interview, MP 2013 representative, 8 July 2013).

The dynamics of the port itself have played an interesting role in the re-positioning of Marseille as a 'great' port city. Despite its decline since the 1970s, the port of Marseille-Fos remains the largest in France and the fifth largest in Europe. Its decline can be explained in part by the fact that French ports have suffered from relative decline in relation to other European ports (Slack 2005). No major shipping lines or international handling companies have established themselves in French ports, which Slack (2005) attributes to the very particular organization of handling operations in French ports.

Marseille-Fos is highly specialized in liquid bulk crude oil and refined oil, which represents approximately 70 per cent of its cargo volume, and this distinguishes Marseille-Fos from its competitors (Merk and Comtois 2012: 8).[6] Marseille-Fos continues to have strong aspirations to

be a leading container port, which have been bolstered since Sarkozy's port reforms in 2008. These reforms restructured French ports: port authorities were renamed under a single authority (the port authority of Marseille became the 'Grand Port Maritime de Marseille'), and operations became managed under the sole authority of the port operators. As implied by its name, the port of Marseille-Fos is a multi-site port. The western port of Fos, approximately 30 miles northwest of Marseille, is the site of the main container port and over two-thirds of the cargo volume, part of a wider port-industrial complex including refineries, storage, and manufacturing. The eastern port of Marseille is located near to the city centre and concentrates on cruise traffic and diverse cargo (such as dry bulk).

Since the 2008 reforms, port activities in France have become concentrated in particular hubs. The western port of Marseille (Fos) has benefited from this shift, witnessing a steady increase in cargo volume (interview, Marseille-Fos dockworker, 9 July 2013). However, since 2008, container traffic at the eastern (city centre) port of Marseille has dwindled practically to a halt, instead focusing on cruise traffic. This has created tensions between the western and eastern ports of Marseille. The dockers at the eastern port of Marseille have taken industrial action, burning tyres and striking to protest for their right to be able to unload cruise ships as part of protected dock work. By contrast, the western port of Marseille-Fos has had steady employment on the docks due to increased cargo volume. The shift in port dynamics in Marseille reflects similar shifts in global ports, away from having numerous small ports and towards having a few concentrated hub ports. The port has ambitions to increase cargo volume fivefold by 2030 to five million containers annually (Merk and Comtois 2012: 6).

While many residents expressed pride in the maritime history and identity of the city, many residents were also puzzled by the port's claims to renewed economic vitality (various interviews, 2010–2013). The confusion could be explained by the physical separation between the two ports, where the smaller eastern port next to the city centre is visible, but the larger and busier western port is hidden from view. Seafarers who enter the eastern port of Marseille often express surprise at the small size of the port (interview, Director, Seafarers' Centre Marseille, 11 July 2013). Moreover, the conflicts between the dockworkers and the port authorities have a long and enduring presence in Marseille, and these add to a sense of insecurity about the future of the port (cf. Domenichino and Guillon 1999; Hislaire 1993; Pons 2004). There is also a sense of detachment between the port and the urban labour

market more generally: the liquid bulk cargo industry is associated with low job intensity, meaning that relatively few jobs have been created with the expansion of cargo volume (Merk and Comtois 2012: 27).

Until recently, the port has been poor at communication and public relations, with a history of conflict between the interests of the port and the city authorities. According to the Strategy and Finance Deputy Director for the Marseille-Fos Port Authority (interview, 19 January 2010), the historical management of the port has been opposed by dockers, and there have been long-standing tensions between the port and the city. However, he was optimistic that the European Capital of Culture in 2013 would be 'an opportunity for economic development and cooperation, a chance to showcase the assets of Marseille'. He was also aware that the image and identity of the city was important for economic development. Indeed, the prospects for global competitiveness of Marseille-Fos as a port city rely heavily on positive economic and symbolic interconnections between the port and the city:

> The on-going transformation of the port-city interface, as well Marseille's status as European Cultural Capital in 2013 provide possibilities to increase the positive visibility of the port. As part of the Euroméditerranée urban redevelopment project, the connection of the city of Marseille with the port and the waterfront will be restored ... In addition, former port buildings are transformed for public use, finding new urban uses reconnecting the city with its maritime heritage. The events related to Marseille being the European Cultural Capital in 2013 also provide new possibilities to project an image of the city that is proud of its maritime heritage. These events should be powerful vehicles to catalyse a new expansive external communications strategy of both the port and the city-region of Marseille.
>
> (Merk and Comtois 2012: 44)

Despite attempts to reconnect the public with the sea and to re-establish a 'great' port city identity, the interconnected Marseille-Provence 2013, Euroméditerranée renewal, and port development initiatives have been criticized for their lack of engagement with local culture and residents. The new museums are expensive, designed and staffed primarily by non-locals, and they do not represent the richness of local forms of culture in Marseille. Some of the smaller projects, such as organized social heritage walking tours around the old port and other parts of the city (see Chapter 8), alternative arts and cultural events

scattered at locations around the city, and the J1 Hanger, were more effective in engaging the public. The port, while increasingly prosperous, remains detached from the contemporary urban identity of the city because of its physical separation, its relatively low impact on local jobs, and enduring conflicts between the dockworkers and the port authority. It remains to be seen whether the long term economic effects of the museums, coupled with the Euroméditerranée urban renewal and the economic development of the port, will work to overcome the negative image, as well as reality, of social and economic deprivation in Marseille.

New Orleans

In contrast with Liverpool and Marseille, the port city heritage of New Orleans is not very embedded within collective urban identity. This is not because of a lack of pride or trust, but rather due to the relative eclipsing of the port within the wider contemporary identity of the city. The heyday of the port was over 150 years ago, in the mid-nineteenth century. This period is cited as one of the near-mythical 'foundational' histories of the city, connected to the wider history of the Mississippi River. In the late nineteenth century, the port of New Orleans began to fall behind other American ports, with the development of the railroad, larger ships, and the gradual decline of plantation economies. By 1900, New Orleans had dropped in world status from the fourth to the twelfth busiest port (World Port Source 2014). Although the port remained regionally significant throughout its subsequent history, it never regained its mid-nineteenth-century world status. However, the enduring economic importance of the port remains disconnected from the explicit cultural identity of the city. Implicitly, the urban identity of New Orleans draws on strong narratives about port cities: its jazz and blues music, vibrant cultural and party life in the French Quarter, its long history of multiculturalism, and, its coastal vulnerability. Although the connections between the port and the city may be diffuse in terms of collective identity, the port of New Orleans remains a significant and highly diversified port in the Gulf with a strong economic and cultural impact on the city.

Since the late nineteenth-century, the port of New Orleans has been governed by a non-elected Dock Board comprising prominent business elites (Azcona 2006). According to Azcona (2006), the Dock Board has remade the built environment of the city and the port throughout the twentieth century, privileging business interests at the expense of local communities. The development of the Industrial Canal in the 1920s and the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet in the 1940s are two historical

examples of how the Dock Board operated as a capitalist 'growth coalition', an 'alliance of interlocking private and public actors who act in concert to promote urban development' (Azcona 2006: 76). Azcona argues that these developments were justified by the ideologies of 'privatism' (privileging the private sector and undermining the public sector) and 'growth' (prioritizing capitalist growth and development above all other interests), effectively using public funds for private developments. The ideologies of 'privatism' and 'growth' of the New Orleans Dock Board continued in the post-war era of waterfront development.

The history of waterfront redevelopment in New Orleans dates to the 1960s, with the onset of decline due to containerization and deindustrialization paralleling the examples of Liverpool and Marseille. One of the first key struggles over different visions of waterfront development was the riverfront expressway controversy, a 12-year battle between citizens and developers over a proposal to develop an Interstate highway along the riverfront by the French Quarter (Baumbach et al. 1981; Mumphrey 1970). The proposal was defeated in 1969, with important implications for the preservation of the French Quarter and the character of subsequent tourist and leisure riverfront developments.

However, significant waterfront developments in New Orleans only began in the 1970s. Throughout the 1960s, the New Orleans Dock Board had resisted the use of riverfront land for maritime uses. This echoed the tension between the city and the port authority of Marseille in undertaking waterfront development in traditional port areas. In the 1970s, the New Orleans Dock Board finally decided to allow waterfront development, adopting the strategy of using the increasing land values of riverfront land to capitalize port development elsewhere (Lauria 1994: 25). The first non-maritime use of the waterfront was the 'Moonwalk' riverfront boardwalk, developed in the mid-1970s under the administration of Mayor Moon Landrieu. This was followed by hotel and leisure developments including the Hilton Complex, the Spanish Plaza renovation, and the 1984 World's Fair. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a tourism and leisure-based strategy was pursued by developers, who followed a corporate-led public-private partnership approach (cf. Azcona 2006; Lauria 1994).

According to Lauria (1994: 27), the 1984 World's Fair represented the consolidation of riverfront redevelopment in New Orleans:

> [I]t was not until the opening of the New Orleans' World's Fair in May 1984 that the city truly reunited with the river. For the first time since the covering of the wharves in 1905, the city was physically, visually,

> and psychologically linked with its riverfront. The 1984 World's Fair dramatized the vast potential of the river's edge.

It is interesting to note the strong parallels between this narrative of reuniting the city with the river and the more recent 'Reinventing the Crescent' waterfront development project in New Orleans. It seems that the idea of reconnecting the public with the waterfront in New Orleans is not as new as proponents of the latter project suggest, reflecting institutional amnesia in waterfront development policies.

In 2006, the city of New Orleans, in partnership with the Port of New Orleans, rolled out 'Reinventing the Crescent', a $294 million recovery project along a six-mile strip of post-industrial waterfront land that aims to develop park and public space in place of disused flood walls, rail lines, and old industrial sites, to reconnect the people of New Orleans to the waterfront (Reinventing the Crescent 2013). Reinventing the Crescent (ongoing at the time of my field research in 2013) is a partnership between the Port of New Orleans and the City Council. It was designed by the landscape architecture firm Hargreaves Associates, and it includes a business case for local economic growth alongside its public-oriented ideas about connecting communities, sustainability, environmental stewardship, and creating local jobs and housing. The first phase is the establishment of 'Crescent Park' near the city centre, providing public access to an area that has long been blocked by a large flood wall (Figure 3.4).

One of the key ideas behind 'Reinventing the Crescent' is that the citizens have forgotten about the port history and identity of the city. As the Director for External Affairs (interview, 12 December 2013) explained:

> Everybody knows where the port sits and everybody knows we are on the river. They understand that. Our challenge has been to try to get our message out there about what the impact is to the city, the region and the state, as a whole. On the Mississippi River, you have levees and flood walls. When you drive down Tchoupitoulas [Street], you have a neighbourhood. Then, there is Tchoupitoulas and there is a flood wall. Nobody really knows what goes on on the other side of that flood wall. It is a secured zone. People have lived there for years, and they never see what is on the other side. It is a challenge to continue to educate and try to let as many people know as you can what goes on. Everybody knows we are a port city, but we have a large segment of the population that does not understand the industry.

Figure 3.4 Crescent Park flood wall, near the French Market, New Orleans, April 2013

Reinventing the Crescent is explicitly framed in terms of a gift of reconnection, bestowed by the port and the city to the residents. The President and CEO of the Port of New Orleans (interview, 12 December 2013) explained the project as follows:

> Basically, that is giving the river back to the people, like many other good old port cities have done, to make it pedestrian-friendly along the waterway for a five-mile stretch for joggers, bikers, dog parks, and multi-use type facilities like vendors with their little carts and, hopefully, restaurants and things of that nature where the old port used to be, which, in essence, is right here.

The President and CEO of the Port of New Orleans had been an urban planner before he became a port director, and he has used his background in urban planning to tackle port and waterfront development challenges. He told me that he was constantly going back to urban planning principles and thinking about the examples from different port cities for efficient land uses, particularly to manage the complex

relationship between the port and the city. He outlined a number of ideas that the port and the city were working on for expanding and integrating maritime and non-maritime uses along the waterfront. One of these ideas was to connect the public with existing rather than remembered maritime activities, offering them an 'education':

> We do things that, I think, are really good, healthy, wholesome, and interesting for people to learn. That is right next to the Phase One area that is going to open. It is a dock called 'Governor Nicholls' in Esplanade. We still carry on traditional port activities with the movement of containers being stuffed with resins and pellets from the chemical industry, inrailed from a truck from that site over to our container terminal uptown. If the tourists are sitting in Woldenberg Park, which does exist now in the heart of the 'Reinventing the Crescent', and are sitting on a bench just watching the ships go by, they may actually be watching a ship offload. We stop and think that nobody understands and gets ports and what really goes on behind the magical, mystical flood walls, and so what it will help us is to do is provide an education to the people, and it will be part of our new community outreach programme that we just began about a year ago.
>
> (interview, 12 December 2013)

Despite the stated public-oriented aims of the project, many local residents, scholars, and activists have criticized Reinventing the Crescent, particularly in the post-Katrina context. For example, Berger et al. (2010: 12) argue that the fact that this project has the most momentum of any major development project in post-Katrina New Orleans 'is a troubling indicator of the redevelopment priorities of the city'. A number of local citizen groups have also campaigned against Reinventing the Crescent, with concerns about blight and noise pollution in their neighbourhoods. Notably, most of these neighbourhoods are middle-class neighbourhoods, as the project is aimed at the 'higher ground', rather than more vulnerable areas of the city. The project focuses only on economic development and attracting new populations through a flashy architectural project on some of the highest ground in the city, while ignoring issues of real recovery and flood protection in post-Katrina New Orleans. They also argue that it is based on an unrealistic idea of growth, and since the 2008 recession, the project has stalled and moved way behind schedule.

While the focus of Reinventing the Crescent is primarily on public green spaces, it also has a strong cultural dimension. For example, one

of the main plans is to retrofit an old wharf into a large-scale event space, arguably a rather mainstream version of culture. Drawing on Richard Florida's popular idea of the 'creative class' as an engine for urban growth (Florida 2002, 2005), the project planners use the distinctive cultural heritage of New Orleans as a foundation for attracting the creative class to the city:

> New Orleans is renowned for being a unique city conducive to creativity, but it has still failed to attract and retain the Creative Class, a class of workers characterized by transformative endeavors in their respective fields, from engineering and the sciences to the creative arts, media, and technology. Fundamentally, [Richard] Florida is referring to individuals on the cusp of advancement, whether it is in art or technology.
>
> (Reinventing the Crescent 2006: 14)

The irony is that the 'creative class' is one of the most-copied concepts in urban planning history, and its deployment nearly always spells a threat to real creativity. David Harvey points out an important contradiction within the logic of culture-led urban renewal in *Rebel Cities* (2012): while uniqueness and particularity enhance market value, the process of marketization undermines unique and special qualities. As soon as you start to capitalize on 'distinctive culture', however defined, the distinctiveness of that culture is undermined. The strategy of building on a heritage of cultural diversity, or 'capitalizing on culture' (Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004), is one of the key dynamics of the post-industrial model of arts-and-culture led development underpinned by property-led development (a theme that will be explored further in the next chapter).

The aim of Reinventing the Crescent is nothing less than to 'transform the city's edge into an internationally prominent waterfront and create the greatest riverfront in North America' (Reinventing the Crescent 2006). The plan harkens back to the golden years when the port and the city were connected, more than 150 years previously. In fact, the assessment is historically accurate: New Orleans was a 'great' port in the mid-nineteenth century, competing with New York and London, and it began its gradual decline with the expansion of the railway and other modern industrial technologies. The grand international aspirations of this waterfront development echo the plans of Liverpool Waters and the Euroméditerranée.

The Port of New Orleans also echoes the ambitions of the ports of Liverpool and Marseille. According to the President and CEO of the Port

of New Orleans, the port recovered very well after Hurricane Katrina. The re-opening of the port was the number one priority for the city, and the port received funding to help its recovery. Since Katrina, the port has had three record revenue years (interview, 12 December 2013). New Orleans works in cooperation with four other ports in South Louisiana, which together claim to be the largest tonnage port district in the western hemisphere (Port of South Louisiana 2014). Each port has its own niche. New Orleans is a diversified port with some distinguishing features as: (1) the only container port in the Port of South Louisiana; (2) the largest breakbulk (non-container goods on pallets) port in the United States specializing in steel, natural rubber, and coffee; (3) a significant reefer port (refrigerated containers), with the largest blast freezing facility in the northern hemisphere (opened in 2012), specializing in poultry; (4) a cruise port; (5) a big industrial port, with industrial real estate; and (6) a project cargo port, meaning that that can bring ships in from Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Shanghai, Singapore, Santos in Brazil, or any international location, with huge heavy-lift equipment built for refineries or manufacturing plants that are too heavy to get on the highways or the bridges (interview, President and CEO, Port of New Orleans, 12 December 2013).

The Port of New Orleans is in a strong regional economic position, and it is striving to benefit from the opening of the expanded Panama Canal in 2015, which is expected to radically increase the volume of cargo trade in the southern United States. The Gulf ports work in cooperation with one another, but they are also competitors in the rapidly changing dynamics of port economies. On the one hand, New Orleans is at a disadvantage in relation to other ports due to its location upriver along the Mississippi about 100 miles from the sea, which is windy, foggy, and difficult to navigate, particularly for large vessels. However, New Orleans has an advantage in its access to the hinterland, as a nodal point up the Mississippi with rail and truck links throughout the country. It also has infrastructural advantages as the only container port within the Port of South Louisiana. The Port of New Orleans is pushing to secure the necessary investment and approval to become a deep-water container port itself.

However, the global ambitions of the Port of New Orleans, like in Liverpool and Marseille, are limited. It may be a significant regional player, but it is nowhere near becoming a global hub city. The President and CEO of the Port of New Orleans pointed to differences between Asian and North American ports in terms of the capacity to achieve efficiency:

> I would like and hope to see the day come when we do become efficient. It has nothing to do with a lack of work integrity or anything philosophical. It has to do with the unions . . . with some of the things that the Asians don't have to deal with, we have to deal with in this country, like hours of operations. It makes all the sense in the world to operate 24 hours around the clock. If you do that, your space utilisation and your efficiency of operation, much like in the Asian countries, are going to be much better. In the United States, we have neighbourhoods, we have people who complain if they hear a loud noise like the clanking of a box hitting the concrete in a terminal after 10 o'clock at night. We have union contracts to abide by between the ILWU [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union] on the West Coast and the ILA [International Longshoremen's Association] on the Gulf Coast and the East Coast.
>
> (interview, 12 December 2013)

This statement shows a tension between the economic aims of the port, expressed in terms of greater 'efficiency', and the rights of workers, expressed in terms of issues that the port has to 'deal with'. This tension is particularly interesting given Louisiana's reputation for poor labour regulations and trade union protections.

New Orleans, like Liverpool and Marseille, has been trying to reassert its 'greatness' as a port through mega-projects that claim to create benefits for the 'public'. However, the connection between the economic benefits of the port and the benefits for the city are less than clear.

Conclusion

Recent waterfront development projects in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans represent both a continuation of and a departure from previous models of waterfront development. There are some important continuities with previous generations of waterfront development. For example, all three port cities have followed a market-driven approach, drawing on complementary forms of well-established tourism-led (including arts and culture, leisure, and services), property-led, and port-led development. In this sense, the waterfront development strategies fit broadly within Shaw's (2001) flexible hybrid 'fourth' generation of planning strategies since the 1990s, with a combination of different logics, interests, and repertoires. Waterfront development ideas and plans in practice tend to be different variations on the same theme, emphasizing

flagship icons of transformation, physical change, and landscapes of tourism, leisure, and consumption in the place of old port activities. As one critic in New Orleans put it:

> What's being called Reinventing the Crescent in New Orleans is known as the Inner Harbor project in Baltimore, Riverfront Park in Passaic, N.J., the Renaissance Center and International Riverfront in Detroit, Waterfront Greening in Manhattan. In each case, an industrial waterfront, abandoned as American manufacturing has faded, gets reinvented as a way of drawing the creative class back into the central city.
>
> (Wolff 2013)

This criticism points to the problem of repeating failures through the policy transfer of dominant planning models. The waterfront development projects in Baltimore, New Jersey, Detroit, and Manhattan may have brought physical renewal and gentrification to waterfronts, but they failed in their ability to reconnect people to the waterfronts, to create local jobs, or to revive locate culture.

While there are a number of continuities between past and present waterfront developments in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans, there are also some departures. Recent waterfront development strategies are more ambitious and confident, focused on global and regional competitiveness rather than on overcoming decline. Moreover, port and city authorities are pursuing integrated development strategies combining port and non-port waterfront uses, by and large setting aside historic differences in economic priorities. Waterfront developers in each city have gravitated towards mega-projects with significant material and symbolic implications for their waterfronts. These large projects are underpinned by an active cultural push towards reconstructing port city identities, drawing on narratives of reconnecting the public to the waterfront and of re-establishing 'great' port city status to justify development. While reconnecting the public with the waterfront is an old refrain within waterfront development policies dating to the 1960s, the link to 'greatness' is relatively new. The reference to 'greatness' looks both to the past and to the future of port cities. It invokes the nineteenth century heyday of empire and colonialism in each port, but it also signals global economic and cultural aspirations as competitive ports and cities.

One of the common narratives of different waterfront development projects is that cities neglect their ports by failing to recognize their

economic contributions. However, historically, the relationship between the port and the city has been precisely the opposite: the great imperial ports neglected their cities. While merchants and shipping companies prospered on the backs of casual labourers and poor migrants, the cities suffered from poor housing and sanitation and from intense social exclusion. Today, these three port cities have focused on market-driven waterfront development with aspirations of global competitiveness. Despite some efforts to reconnect the public with the waterfront, the exclusionary tradition of the old merchant ports has continued.

What does this analysis of waterfront development add to our understanding of urban identities in port cities? As we discussed in Chapter 2, port cities have ambivalent and contradictory urban identities, which are evident in a wide range of local cultural representations in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. Recently, waterfront developers in each city have drawn on narratives about reconstructing positive port city identities—proud of past 'greatness' and aspiring towards future 'greatness' as port cities—to gain public support for mega-developments along the waterfront. They have smoothed over negative and ambivalent port city identities, including legacies of empire, colonialism, and capitalism, evident in social polarization and marginalization of vulnerable population groups (cf. Moulaert et al. 2003; Megerle 2008). In the next chapter, I will consider sites which address more negative urban identities in port cities: museums of slavery and colonial history.

4

From Ports of Empire to Capitals of Culture: Museums of Slavery and Colonial History

Former port cities of empire and colonialism are steeped in material vestiges of their past. From old maritime waterfronts to grand mercantile architecture, from street names to statues, and from monuments to museums: there are reminders at every step; one only has to look. These sites are what the historian Pierre Nora (1989) calls 'sites of memory' (*lieux de memoire*)—sites which evoke collective memory, when there has been an incomplete break with the past, where continuities, or legacies, remain. This chapter focuses on museums of slavery and colonial history as sites of ambivalent memory and identity in the port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. As Aldrich (2005: 8) argues in *Vestiges of Colonial Empire in France*:

> Perhaps ambivalence is the best way to describe attitudes to the colonies—a mixture of nostalgia, residual pride, misgivings about the worth of the effort, sometimes shame about what was done, occasional outrage. Examining monuments, museums and other markers of the colonial patrimony is a way of charting and understanding that ambivalence.

Indeed, museums are particularly revealing sites of memory for understanding ambivalent perceptions and narratives of colonial legacies, which are integral to urban identities in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. In each city, this ambivalence is complicated by the historical entanglement of imperial and economic decline, and by tourism-led and culture-led urban renewal projects that tend to emphasize positive rather than negative global maritime legacies.

Museums are contested sites of collective memory and identity. While much academic attention has focused on the significance of museums

for national and cultural identities (cf. Aldrich 2005; Aronsson and Elgenius 2011; Crane 2000; Fladmark 2000; Macdonald 2006), relatively few scholars have considered the role of museums in relation to urban identities (cf. Brigstocke 2014; Till 2005). Cities have often been compared to museums, as places layered with historical fragments, collective memories, symbols, and material cultures (Benjamin 1979; Boyer 1994). One can read the city like a museum or an archive. But one can also read the city within the museum, and the museum in relation to the city. Indeed, museums are important spaces for negotiation and interpretation of urban identities. Museums of slavery and colonial history in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans reveal how uncomfortable legacies are framed within competing narratives about urban identity.

In recent decades, museums have played a key role in culture-led urban regeneration in Europe and North America, as catalysts for redesigning, rebranding, and reimagining cities (cf. Bristow 2010; Hamnett and Shoval 2008; Lorente 1996; Plaza and Haarich 2009). Flagship museums that have been used for regeneration include the Guggenheim in Bilbao and the Tate Modern in London. Other cities have tried to emulate these flagship museums in a trend dubbed the 'Bilbao effect' (cf. González 2011). I visited one such museum, the Rock n' Pop Museum, shortly after it opened in 2004, inserted into the old textile town of Gronau, Germany, just over the border of the Netherlands: a Tate-style transformation of a textile factory into a cultural museum, with a few hand-me-down rock n' pop cast-offs such as old T-shirts, instruments, audiovisual materials, and paraphernalia, yet with very tenuous cultural connections to the town of Gronau itself. A number of museums-for-regeneration have opened in cities around the world, following the post-industrial orthodoxy which promotes 'creative cities' as the panacea for urban decline (cf. Bianchini and Parkinson 1993; Evans 2001; Florida 2005; Miles and Paddison 2005). However, the 'creative cities' post-industrial model has serious limitations: it often has the effect of stifling organic creativity, and not every city can compete as a viable creative city within an uneven geography of urban development (cf. Harvey 2012; Mah 2012; Peck 2005; Pratt 2008). Despite these shortcomings, new museums are emerging constantly within the 'creative cities' context, catering to a wide range of publics in an era of mass consumption, city breaks, and tourism-based urban economies. The Tate and Bilbao Guggenheim, and more recently, Louvre-Lens and other Louvre and Centre de Pompidou spin-offs, have been the most successful museums within culture-led regeneration. However, these museums-for-regeneration are more accurately described

as art galleries rather than museums. Museums which deal with history and cultural identity are more varied and controversial.

Some of the most revealing contested spaces within contemporary museum landscapes deal with colonial histories. The British Museum, the Louvre, the Met, and all the classic ethnographic and civilization museums emerged within projects of empire (cf. Bennett 2005). This chapter addresses museums of slavery and colonial history in Liverpool, New Orleans, and Marseille. Over the past decade, pressure to address more controversial identities related to multiculturalism and colonialism have led to new museum developments within the culture-led tourism offerings in each city. However, the more difficult legacies of slavery, exploitation, and violence are presented much more selectively, and they remain spatially and discursively disconnected from the more positive narratives, rather than as two sides of the same coin. Museums of slavery and colonial history in these cities are particularly revealing of contradictory urban identities. They sit alongside more celebratory narratives of proud urban identity found in maritime and city history museums. Narratives of colonialism are uncomfortable—they jar with dominant positive narratives promoted by city marketers. As De L'Estoile suggests (2008: 277), 'Colonial legacies are not univocal but contradictory, reflecting the complex and contradictory character of colonial relations themselves. They are not passively received, and their meaning is actively reinterpreted and renegotiated.'

In this chapter, I examine three different museum types that deal with contradictory colonial legacies, one in each city: an international museum of slavery in Liverpool, the historic plantation home in New Orleans, and a new museum of civilization based on existing colonial history museum collections in Marseille. By focusing on different museum types, I aim to analyse museum narratives that are embedded in different post-industrial waterfront landscapes, and that tell different politicized stories about uncomfortable legacies of empire and colonialism, bound up with their histories as ports. Building on the work of Trouillot (1995) on the role of 'silences' in the production of history, this chapter analyses museums of slavery and colonial history in port cities as sites of ambivalent and contested memory and identity.

Reading museum landscapes: Productive silences?

> Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact

> retrieval (the making of *narratives*); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance).
>
> (Trouillot, Michelle-Rolph 1995, *Silencing the Past*, p. 26)

Trouillot's 'crucial moments' in which silences enter the process of historical production are highly relevant for analysing museum narratives. My research revealed that these silences are evident in museums of slavery and colonial history in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans through processes of selection, argumentation, and positioning. These processes relate very closely to three of Trouillot's 'crucial moments'.

Selection is key to the 'making of archives', which for Trouillot includes museums, involving the selection to include or exclude different producers, evidence, themes, and procedures (Trouillot 1995: 53). Indeed, the museum studies scholar Macdonald (2006: 4) suggests that

> ... the museum is an institution of recognition and identity par excellence. It selects certain cultural products for official safe-keeping, for posterity and public display—a process which recognizes and affirms some identities, and omits to recognize and affirm others.

Argumentation is the framing of the selection, choosing not only which identities to represent, but how they are represented. This relates to Trouillot's crucial moment of the 'making of narratives', an unequal process of retrieval and recollection. Similarly, Fehr (2000: 35) argues that 'the basic operation of museums has almost nothing to do with science, but rather more or less exclusively to do with rhetorical forms of argumentation'. Each museum has a story to tell, in other words, one that is far from neutral. Finally, positioning is instrumental to the 'making of *history*' in relation to broader retrospective significance. Positioning is symbolic, in terms of establishing political, cultural, and historical significance, but it is also material, in terms of manoeuvring within geographical landscapes. How do museum narratives engage with and influence local communities? And how are museum narratives influenced by their urban social, political, and geographical contexts? These wider questions are overlooked within the museum studies literature, which primarily represents museums as self-contained subjects, focusing on specific museums and their collections. However, I argue that it is important to examine the question of positioning: of how museum narratives are embedded within wider social and political systems, ideas, and landscapes.

The notion of silences of the past is negative in Trouillot's analysis, pointing in particular to the silencing of marginal, excluded, and vulnerable histories within the production of authoritative narratives about history and collective memory. Indeed, much of the literature on colonial history is devoted to rectifying this imbalance by giving voice to the silences and gaps in the official record. Yet epistemologically, silences are inherent with the production of all historical and sociological research and 'knowledge' production. Researchers may aspire for a holistic view that takes equal account of all perspectives, sources, and forms of evidence and argumentation, but despite these efforts, they will only ever achieve a partial view (as discussed in Chapter 2).

My analysis of silences takes a more sociological view, showing how different manifestations of silence can reveal positive, negative, or ambivalent dimensions of urban identity. For example, some museums are more reflexive than others about their complex role in the production of history and emphasize some narratives over others to advance political causes, such as anti-racism and social justice, in the case of the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, or the advancement of regional cultural and economic hegemony, in the case of the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM) in Marseille. Others, such as the plantation historic homes near New Orleans, are less reflexive about their role within the wider landscape, invested primarily in attracting tourism and selling plantation histories as exotic, dramatic, and historic, avoiding political charge.

Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans prospered until the mid-twentieth century as ports of empire and colonialism. Liverpool was a major slave-trading port at the centre of the transatlantic slave trade from 1730 until the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807. Liverpool remained proud of its status as a port city of empire well into the twentieth century. By 1910, Liverpool was the second largest port in the world after London, known as the 'second city of empire' and the 'gateway of empire'. It hosted the Colonial Products Exhibition in 1904, which promoted the economic advantages of a 'self-contained, self-supporting and independent Empire', and the Liverpool Exhibition in 1913 (Milne 2006). Marseille was also a major port of empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the principal French Mediterranean port, or 'porte de l'Orient' (gateway to the East), linking France with North Africa. Marseille held colonial exhibitions showcasing its status as a port of empire in 1906 and 1922. New Orleans was a key colonial port in the transatlantic slave trade, with historical

links at different periods of time to the French Empire, the Spanish Empire, the American 'empire', and the Caribbean. The histories of slavery and colonialism in New Orleans are complex, with overlapping colonial legacies across different eras, as well as the historical mixing of indigenous, colonial, migrant, 'free people of colour', and enslaved populations (Campanella 2006, 2008).

Tourist literatures on Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans describe each city as cultural 'melting pots'; as original and unique within their nations; and as rich in culture, musical heritage, and history. Both Liverpool and Marseille used their port city heritage as cosmopolitan cities to their advantage in their European Capital Culture (ECoC) programmes (in 2008 and 2013 respectively). Liverpool was described as a 'modern, cosmopolitan, forward-thinking city' with a proud maritime heritage on the Liverpool ECoC website (Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008). The slogan for Liverpool's European Capital of Culture was 'the world in one city', with sub-themes of 'support', 'participate', and 'regeneration'. However, as Jones and Wilks-Heeg (2004) argue, the 'world in one city' operated as a brand for a particular top-down vision of culture-led economic development, which used an artificially constructed vision of culture that eclipsed alternative approaches. Specifically, the slogan mobilized positive associations of cosmopolitanism and diversity based on the history of the city as a world port. At the same time, the slogan masked social inequalities, such as intense segregation, racism, and social exclusion in Liverpool. It also neglected the demographic reality that Liverpool had transformed from being one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the United Kingdom in the early twentieth century to one of the least ethnically diverse cities by 2008 (cf. Belchem 2006a).

Marseille followed Liverpool's lead by emphasizing its cosmopolitan and multicultural heritage in its bid for the European Capital of Culture and omitting its history of racism and social conflict (Andres 2011b). Marseille also made an interesting move towards creating a new grand narrative about its place within cosmopolitan history, as the hub of the Mediterranean peoples and cultures. The European Capital of Culture events in 2013 (Marseille-Provence 2013) focused heavily on making strong links with diverse Mediterranean cultures across Southern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, with the €191m creation of the dazzling national Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM) on the waterfront as the flagship project by the celebrated Algerian-born French architect Rudy Ricciotti.

The regeneration project Euroméditerranée was launched in 1995 (discussed in Chapter 3) to respond to severe urban decline, with the aim 'to re-position Marseille within the French, European and Mediterranean cities and make the city, as in the past, a metropolitan area of the first rank' (Andres 2011b: 66). The Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture incorporated and extended the multicultural vision of the Euroméditerranée. Marseille was described on its 2013 official tourist website as 'a city open to the world' with a 26-century-old history, a distinctive Mediterranean culture, and a unique location as a port city between land and sea (Marseille-Provence 2013).

Culture-led development has traditionally played a strong role for New Orleans as a whole, drawing on multicultural traditions including the annual Mardi Gras festival and the celebration of blues and jazz music through various annual festivals and events. Since Hurricane Katrina, culture has been at the forefront of economic recovery plans for the city. New Orleans has hosted the annual World Cultural Economic Forum since it began in 2008, which is devoted to bringing together leaders from cities around the world to discuss the role of culture in economic development. The official New Orleans tourist website promotes the city as 'steeped in a history of influences from Europe, the Caribbean, Africa and beyond . . . home to a truly unique melting pot of culture, food and music'. New Orleans is marketed as a place of entertainment, consumption, and play, while social problems of white flight, racial segregation, poverty, and crime are 'neutralized' through the use of romanticism and nostalgia (Gotham 2002).

Legacies of empire and colonialism persist within each city, evident not only in material and symbolic sites of colonial memory, but in enduring social, economic, and racial inequalities in each city. Museums of slavery and colonial history include silences of selection, of which voices to represent. These range from the stories of white plantation owners in Louisiana, to the Mediterranean assemblage of colonial history collections in Marseille, to the voices of slaves in Liverpool. The museums also include silences of argumentation that relate to ambivalent local narratives, from across a continuum of nostalgia, pride, and denial at one extreme, to regret, shame, and recognition of past injustices at the other. Silences of positioning are evident in the relationship between the museums and tourism in each city. Official tourist literatures in each city have, perhaps unsurprisingly, promoted positive place images. They draw on more positive legacies of colonialism, such as cultural diversity and cosmopolitanism, and avoid addressing negative colonial legacies of racism and social inequality.

Liverpool: International Slavery Museum

The International Slavery Museum in Liverpool has been heralded by scholars, curators, and critics as an ethically sensitive and well-researched museum. The museum opened on 23 August 2007, the 200th-year anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in Britain. It distinguishes itself as being 'the only museum of its kind to look at aspects of historical and contemporary slavery as well as being an international hub for resources on human rights issues' (National Museums Liverpool 2014a). The roots of the International Slavery Museum can be traced to the exhibition *Transatlantic Slavery Against Human Dignity* which opened at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in 1994. The exhibition was created in response to criticism of the 1987 opening exhibition at the maritime museum about the history of the port (Leffler 2006). The temporary exhibition on transatlantic slavery was later developed and expanded into a permanent exhibition, which formed the basis for the creation of the International Slavery Museum in 2007. The museum's location in Liverpool was symbolically significant, as a form of recognition of the city's infamous past. The museum received a great deal of scholarly attention in the 2007 bicentennial anniversary commemorations of the end of slavery, alongside a number of other UK museums and institutions which marked this anniversary (Eichstedt and Small 2002; Franklin 2008; Leffler 2006; Paton 2009; Paton and Webster 2009). Most of the other UK museums and institutions devoted to the bicentennial anniversary commemorations and the subject of slavery have since closed.

The International Slavery Museum was developed explicitly to address omissions within the representation of the maritime history of the city: following Trouillot's analysis (1995), the silences of selection and of argumentation. The museum takes a directly political stance in its process of selection and argumentation (which, even as it addresses certain silences of history, necessarily produces different ones). It has three main galleries. The first is on the theme of 'Life in West Africa', which explores the story and culture of Africa and its peoples and includes masks, musical instruments, and sculpted figures. The second is on the theme of 'Enslavement and the Middle Passage', which focuses on the trauma, brutality, and oppression suffered by enslaved Africans on their journeys across the Atlantic and on slave plantations in the Americas. It features paintings, masks, weapons, shackles, and chains, and includes a walk-in graphic interactive audio-visual recreation of the journey through the Middle Passage, the second leg of the triangular slave trade. The third

gallery is devoted to the theme of 'Legacy', which focuses on legacies of transatlantic slavery including racism and discrimination, the continuing global struggle for freedom and equality, and the achievements of the African Diaspora.

Although the focus of the museum is international rather than local, the museum engages with locally specific issues. For example, an educational room in the museum was named after Anthony Walker, a Liverpool boy who was murdered in 2006 for being black. The museum also addresses racism as a legacy of slavery and includes the example of the Toxteth riots in 1981. Dr Richard Benjamin, Director of the International Slavery Museum, emphasized the central importance of community engagement and activism for the museum:

> I would say to you, all the things and all the achievements we've got, having people embrace us as a part of the community, as a useful part of the community, I think is our biggest achievement, we are seen to be relevant, not just to the black community in Liverpool, to Liverpool as a city. But for me, we are very important in that sense. We are an active museum. We get involved in things. We get involved in campaigns. We don't just show you or represent racism and discrimination, we fight it actively. Not every museum would do that.
>
> (interview, 26 November 2013)

The International Slavery Museum is clearly important within the museum landscape of the city, as one of the most significant museums in terms of originality, research facilities, and tourist numbers. It is housed on the third floor of the Merseyside Maritime Museum on the regenerated Albert Dock, near the Tate Gallery Liverpool and across from the newest addition to the museum docks, the Museum of Liverpool (which opened in July 2011). When Liverpool opened the International Slavery Museum in 2007, some critics argued that this form of 'memory hype' had less to do with slavery and related more to tourism and the celebration of 'British values' like liberalism (Eckert 2008). In terms of regeneration and tourism, the timing of the new museum's opening coincided well with the events of the following year, when Liverpool was to become European Capital of Culture. The museum has been a great touristic success in attracting visitors, welcoming its millionth visitor in March 2010. Spatially, the location of the museum along the regenerated docks fits with the significance of the port as a hub of slavery and trade, but it also fits within the landscape of tourism-led

regeneration—waterfronts are typical sites for urban regeneration in post-industrial and port cities (as discussed in Chapter 3).

It is important to consider the spatial and narrative relationships between the International Slavery Museum and the wider landscape of museums in Liverpool. Here, following Trouillot (1995), I argue that there are some important silences of positioning. Despite its central location on the Albert Dock and within the Merseyside Maritime Museum, the International Slavery Museum is physically separated from other museum spaces, through its third floor location and the discontinuity between its own narrative and the museum narratives that surround it. The museum provides a moral and reflective discourse on the legacies of slavery, which are spatially juxtaposed with wider urban museum narratives of pride and nostalgia for working-class culture, a vibrant maritime economy, and urban prosperity. For example, the Merseyside Maritime Museum provides a stark contrast with the slavery museum, following dominant maritime museum narrative trends by presenting a proud, nostalgic, and very imperial picture of merchant shipping in its heyday (cf. Leffler 2006). The Merseyside Maritime Museum displays grandiose, sleek, and noble ships, tales and memorabilia of British triumphs and tragedies on the sea, and photographs and stories of sailors, navy men, and captains dating from the times of empire and war. This collection remains disconnected from the narrative of the third floor International Slavery Museum, cut off in terms of representation and narrative, but also spatially. This cutting off of the space abstracts it from the everyday, as a journey into a different time, with a different set of problems, mostly in the past or in other parts of the globe. The basement of the Merseyside Maritime Museum houses yet another narrative counterpoint, the UK Border Force National Museum. This features the exhibition 'Seized! The Border and Customers unveiled', which invites the visitor to enter 'the world of the Customs officer—the dark and unseen world of smuggling, intrigue and danger, where things are not always what they seem' (National Museums Liverpool 2014b). The stated aim of this exhibition is 'anti-smuggling', but it also promotes sensationalist and stereotypical representations of the 'Other' threatening the UK border, it glorifies the activities of UK border guards in the vein of 'cop' TV shows, and its underlying message could potentially fuel anti-immigration and nationalistic attitudes.

The narrative of slavery is also absent, or minimally present, in the other museums of the city. Notably, the new Museum of Liverpool with its stated focus on the social and cultural history of the city largely ignores the issue of slavery. According to interviews with local trade

unionists (2010–2013), the new Museum of Liverpool faced considerable controversy over which narratives it included and excluded in its collections. The trade unionists and labour activists wanted their own museum of working-class history, a dream that dates to the 1980s, but short of their own museum, they wanted significant representation in the new museum. They felt it was unjust that 'slavery got its own museum', but the working-class people of Liverpool didn't (interview, trade unionist, 26 February 2013). This idea of having one's own museum for a particular narrative or identity is interesting, particularly the contrast between working-class history and slavery as competitors in representing marginal voices.

The fact that there is an international, high profile museum dedicated to the issue of slavery within the tourist landscape of Liverpool has undoubtedly raised public awareness of international slavery in the past and the present. It is a dedicated space for critical reflection about the legacy of slavery in Liverpool, the United Kingdom, and the world. Dr Benjamin argues that Liverpool is more reflexive than other cities in thinking about its difficult past:

> Liverpool is a city, people must understand. It's actually looked at itself a lot closer than any other cities have. It's looked at itself a lot closer than London, or Hull, or Bristol, or Lancaster or Glasgow, Newcastle, the list goes on. It isn't perfect, nowhere is. But as a city I know that there is at least that discussion on a civic level where the city needs to realise how it was built. I think it looks at that head on.
> (interview, 26 November 2013)

However, the relative separation from other museum narratives has also limited the scope and extent of its message, particularly in relation to overarching narratives about urban identity in Liverpool. After all, the museum is called the International Slavery Museum rather than the Liverpool Slavery Museum and therefore positions itself far beyond the local context. One could argue that its existence could serve as a small form of recognition within a sea of problems, which are exemplified by the surrounding architecture of empire and museum narratives which glorify the city's past. The existence of the museum achieves three key things for the image of Liverpool. Firstly, it shows that Liverpool has faced up to its historical connection with slavery and is now at the forefront of critical thinking and research about slavery. Secondly, it functions as a popular tourist attraction within the cultural regeneration economy. Thirdly, its sensitive subject matter can be viewed very

differently by a range of audiences, including human rights activists, scholars, and students, but also mass audiences with a taste for the spectacle and uniqueness of 'dark tourism': glimpses of atrocities, disaster, war, and violence, such as former concentration camps and prisons (cf. Lennon and Foley 2000; Sharpley and Stone 2009).

Set alongside competing narratives of Liverpool that featured in the European Capital of Culture, of Liverpool as the 'world in one city', as cosmopolitan and diverse, the theme of slavery is positioned in peaceful co-existence with the others. Each narrative has its place, its story, and its audience, but they do not encroach on one another's terrain. The International Slavery Museum is situated within a wider UK narrative context about the legacies of slavery and empire, including pride regarding the abolition of the slave trade, moral condemnation of slavery in the past and present, and collective British and European responsibility for past injustices. The narrative includes recognition of the continuing legacies of slavery, including forms of racism, labour exploitation, and social exclusion, although the local examples focus primarily on extreme cases of racial injustice, rather than everyday realities of racism and discrimination. However, the International Slavery Museum is working on strengthening its social justice agenda and its level of local public engagement. Dr Benjamin outlined plans for a new Doctor Martin Luther King Junior building (adjacent to the main Merseyside Maritime Museum) devoted explicitly to issues of social justice and community education, with a media centre, a family history centre, and an open collection centre to enable greater interaction with the public. On the whole, most of the 'silences' of the International Slavery Museum are productive, demonstrating reflexive processes of selection, argumentation, and positioning. However, the museum is nonetheless constrained by its positioning within competing narratives and geographies in the city.

New Orleans: Plantation historic homes

In general, museums in the United States have been slow to address the controversial topic of slavery, and US exhibitions on the topic have focused primarily on the economic motivations for slavery rather than the moral implications (Leffler 2006: 65). There are a number of historical museums in the southern United States that represent slavery in a very different way from slavery exhibitions in the United Kingdom, more from a historical preservationist perspective. In New Orleans, there are many historic colonial homes, including former colonial mansions

throughout the wealthier neighbourhoods of the city and plantation homes that span the length of the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. These historic plantation homes present revealing narratives about slavery and colonialism with marked silences of selection, argumentation, and positioning (Trouillot 1995): as rooted in the distinctive local cultures of New Orleans and Louisiana; as connected to adventurous, dramatic, and mysterious historic sites; and as relatively benign and culturally specific, related for example to Creole French Catholic traditions.

The museum landscape in New Orleans includes a range of different museum types, representing national, regional, and local histories and cultures. Popular history museums are the National World War II Museum and the Louisiana Civil War Museum, and popular art museums include the New Orleans Museum of Art and the African American Art Museum. New Orleans also has several museums devoted to particular cultural identities, including the New Orleans African American Museum in the historic neighbourhood Tremé, which claims to be the 'oldest surviving black community in the United States', the African American Art Museum, the Backstreet Cultural Museum, various Mardi Gras museums, and research centres devoted to African and Italian cultural histories. The multicultural museums portray different cultures in primarily positive ways, celebrating diverse cultures and traditions rather than revealing tensions and adversity.

Historic homes are a distinctive feature of the museums landscape, and as specific sites of history and memory, or *lieux de memoire* (Nora 1984), they present layered and often contradictory narratives about history, architecture, cultural identity, colonialism, and memory. Tourists are invited to visit these historic homes as part of the 'authentic' New Orleans experience; to be able to 'read' different forms of colonial architecture within the city and differentiate between Spanish, French, and American styles across three centuries of urban development and change; and to be able to 'travel' back in time to different historic periods within restored, recreated, and re-enacted domestic settings. The allure of many of these homes is the splendour, the opulence, the decadence of wealthy colonial families, and the drama and intrigue of different personalities, as adventurers, misfits, profiteers, adulterers, gamblers, and dreamers.

The plantation historic homes are among the most interesting manifestations of the historic homes. Although the plantations are geographically separate from New Orleans, located on the outskirts of the city lining the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, they

are an important part of the museum economy within New Orleans. Signs plastered around New Orleans include 'plantation tours' as one of the key sites for tourist consumption, along with city and cemetery tours, Katrina tours, and swamp tours. Moreover, much of the colonial wealth within New Orleans was created through the plantation economies, and a number of the plantation owners became well-known residents of New Orleans. Plantation homes are part of a wider historical museum house tradition across the southern states, and there have been several critical reviews of these homes and tours, in the context of museum studies, tourist studies, and representations of slavery and colonialism (Alderman and Modlin 2008; Butler 2001; Eichstedt and Small 2002; Modlin et al. 2011). In an insightful study of the closest plantation historic home to New Orleans, the Destrehan Plantation, Modlin et al. (2011) argue that plantation tours represent a form of 'affective inequality' by encouraging tourists to empathize with the colonial slave-owners rather than slaves through narratives based on the personal life stories and dramas of the plantation owners.

During the course of my research in New Orleans in 2013, I went on organized bus tours of Laura Plantation and Oak Valley Plantation, two of the most popular plantations for guided tours. At Oak Alley Plantation, the tour involved the grand colonial plantation home but not the slave quarters. The focus of the tour was entirely on the dramatic family history of the Creole owners and their cultural distinctiveness in terms of business and domestic rituals, as compared with American Protestants. The plantation home was in the process of building recreated slave cabins to improve the 'slavery dimension', but as far as I understood it, this was more as a new angle to sell to visitors rather than a critical reflection of past injustices. By contrast, Laura Plantation provided a more detailed narrative drawing on the memoir of a former plantation owner's daughter. In addition to the tour of the plantation home, the guided tour included reflections on the system of slavery and a tour of a slave cabin. However, slavery in Louisiana was represented as relatively benign in relation to other forms of slavery, echoing much of the literature on the French slave trade (Geggus 2001). For example, the tour guide emphasized that under the French Catholic Creole system, slaves were able to buy their freedom, and slaves did not have to work on Sundays. The historical exploitation of slaves on the plantation was represented as a matter of individual personality and economic motivation, with some plantation owners represented as 'mean' and others as 'nice'. The narratives in both plantation tours were examples of 'affective inequality' (Modlin et al. 2011), with their narrative aim of creating

empathy with members of white Creole families, while the slaves only appeared as minor characters, in the background. In contrast with the International Slavery Museum, tour guide narratives of these plantation historic homes demonstrated little or no moral condemnation of slavery.

However, there is an important difference between plantation historic homes and museums devoted to slavery—they are different types of museum, embedded within different social and political landscapes. Plantation historic homes on the outskirts of post-colonial New Orleans exist within a stretch of land along the Mississippi River area known as 'plantation country'. For former empires such as Britain and France, the former slave plantations in the old colonies are geographically and psychologically removed from their countries. Viewed from afar, the overseas slave plantations can be brushed aside as a scar within international historical memory, something to be condemned and forgotten as contemporary spaces. But many of the old plantation homes in Louisiana are still standing, and the descendants of former slave-owners and slaves still inhabit these lands. The legacies of slavery and colonialism are visible within the wider landscape in plantation country. In this sense, historic-homes-as-museums can be read within this landscape as artefacts of colonial legacies, whether abandoned, preserved, or reconstructed.

The more commercially successful plantation historic homes have opened their doors to tour buses, wedding events, and film production crews, and they have restored or recreated period furniture and interior decorations, recruited costumed tour guides, and undertaken local historic research through a patchwork of sources and methods. Smaller plantation historic homes are operated independently by owners, open their doors only occasionally for tours or film crews, and focus more on preservation than on telling stories. But not all plantation homes are open for tourism; many owners keep their doors and their land closed to outsiders, choosing to live in their homes rather than marketing their histories. A number of the former plantations have been sold to petrochemical companies. As the plantation economies gradually declined, a number of petrochemical factories opened after the Second World War, taking advantage of Louisiana's favourable business climate of lax labour rights, corporate tax, and environmental regulations (cf. Bullard and Wright 2009). Many tourists remain unaware that the plantation country is also known as the 'Chemical Corridor' or 'Cancer Alley', and tourist buses take 'scenic routes' to carefully avoid the surreal apocalyptic stretches of towering petrochemical factories spewing toxic smoke. Some scholars have argued that one of the

enduring legacies of slavery is evident in environmental racism: descendants of slaves in plantation country now live in poor, predominantly black residential neighbourhoods in close proximity to the toxic chemical factories of 'Cancer Alley' (Allen 2003; Billings 2005; Bullard and Wright 2009; Pezzullo 2007). This subject will be further explored in Chapter 8.

Situated in relation to broader museum narratives about New Orleans, plantation historic homes offer interesting and revealing glimpses into contradictory aspects of urban, rural, and cultural identity. They are so culturally, geographically, and historically specific that they seem rather strange and backwards for foreign tourists who are unaccustomed to such representations of slavery, as compared with standard 'liberal' understandings of slavery which fit more into the International Slavery Museum's narrative, of universal moral condemnation. As historical sites of memory, plantation historic homes communicate a great deal about the past and the present. They show that colonial legacies of slavery are embedded within lived experiences and places, and thus they are more complex and contradictory than blanket statements of moral condemnation might suggest. Plantation homes also trouble the relation between the urban and the rural; the core and the periphery. Slave plantations in the rural periphery of New Orleans contributed to the staggering wealth of New Orleans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and to the wealth of overseas empires. However, with the end of the slave trade and the fading of colonial prestige, negative legacies of slavery and colonialism remain conveniently 'outside' the city, as areas of spectacle, consumption, and devastation—while the more positive legacies of multiculturalism define dominant urban identities of New Orleans.

Marseille: Musée des civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée (MuCEM)

National museums in France have long been recognized by politicians as key platforms for ideological battles, as political institutions, and as sites of collective memory. Prominent national museums are clustered within the capital of Paris, with relatively few national museums in other cities and regions. Recent debates about multiculturalism, history, and memory in France have challenged traditional museums in France, particularly ethnographic museums with strong links to the colonial past (cf. Aldrich 2005; de l'Estoile 2003). Interpretations of the past have been hotly contested, particularly in relation to legacies of colonialism and conflict in North Africa, with scholars pointing to

the contradiction between the French ideal of 'liberty, equality, and fraternity' and many immigrants' experiences of intense social exclusion. Museums devoted to colonial histories throughout France have been particularly controversial in what have been described as the 'memory wars'. The Quai Branly Museum in Paris has been the subject of much criticism and debate for its representation of 'primitive art' and colonial 'Others', which many argue continue rather than subvert colonial legacies (cf. Aldrich 2005; Blasselle and Guarneri 2006; De l'Estoile 2003; Lebovics 2006). Similarly, 'Le Mémorial National de la France d'Outre-Mer' in Marseille, a museum that would tell the history of colonization in collaboration with repatriated French settlers from Algiers, was agreed upon by the city government in 2000 and set to open in 2007, but this sparked considerable opposition, and the project was eventually abandoned in 2006.

The museum landscape in Marseille provides an interesting contrast to Liverpool and New Orleans. Like Liverpool, Marseille used its designation as European Capital of Culture 2013 as a catalyst for culture-led regeneration. Debates around the European Capital of Culture in Marseille-Provence focused on regional tensions, particularly the gaps in prosperity, resources, and social inequality between Marseille and Provence. The Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM) was the flagship new national museum of the European Capital of Culture (see also Chapters 2 and 3). The MuCEM includes important silences of selection, argumentation, and positioning (Trouillot 1995). Its selection is a re-packaging of colonial ethnographic collections; its argumentation centres on a grand narrative of European and Mediterranean 'civilizations' which downplays the injustices inherent within colonialism; and it is positioned within a highly politicized museums landscape of strategic regional development. It is situated within the regional discourse of the Mediterranean, the national discourse of France, and the urban discourse of Marseille as a port city. Like New Orleans, Marseille's ethnic geography includes significant African and Caribbean populations and cultural influences. However, unlike Liverpool and New Orleans, Marseille was not a major slave-trading port, and many of its more traumatic and contentious colonial legacies date from the more recent historical period of decolonization and the Algerian War. Like Liverpool, museum narratives of colonial legacies contribute to national debates and tourist and culture-led visions of development.

The new MuCEM officially opened in June 2013 as part of the European Capital of Culture celebration, a 'hybrid' museum type that

seeks to break down the distinction between traditional national museums and regional or local museums, through acting more as a space and a forum for debate than a museum (Bodenstein and Poulot 2012). The MuCEM is promoted as the first museum that is dedicated to the cultures of the Mediterranean, and it is deliberately situated by the sea, facing North Africa. The €191 million impressive glass structure is enveloped by a dark gray lattice, so that the light reflects the dazzling blue of the ocean below the sun and sky above. Long, almost impossibly thin footbridges connect the new museum to the historic city centre on one side, and the historic and previously underutilized Fort St Jean on the other. The museum was designed by the architect Rudy Riciotti, an Algerian-born French architect, which might be interpreted as a move towards recognizing multicultural artists, if not for the fact that Riciotti is the Norman Foster of France, with a long list of flagship cultural regeneration museums to his oeuvre already.

But despite the MuCEM's narrative of straddling national, international, and regional cultures, and its innovative outlook, the majority of the museum's collections come from the Musée de l'Homme (Paris), a museum of colonial history established in 1937 and the subject of much controversy for its implication within colonialism through the colonial 'science' of ethnographic collection. Other collections come from the Islamic art collection of the Louvre and the Musée du Quai Branly. The collection strategy of the MuCEM parallels that of the Musée du Quai Branly, which also emerged as a repackaging of ethnographic collections from the Musée de l'Homme. The Musée du Quai Branly was also promoted as a new type of museum which sought to break with traditions. It aims to exhibit 'primitive' objects on the same level as Western art, to confer status onto them according to aesthetic criteria, and thus it attempts to challenge stereotypes about indigenous objects as 'art'. The collection is organized according to location, the whole floor a map. However, the collection has been heavily criticized for its portrayal of colonial ethnography as a Western science and its 'Othering' of non-Western art and culture (Aldrich 2005; Bennett 2005; Blasselle and Guarneri 2006; de l'Estoile 2003; Lebovics 2006).

The MuCEM, on the other hand, opened without too much controversy, widely celebrated as a flagship museum within the European Capital of Culture landscape. However, some critics have commented that the innovative potential of the MuCEM is limited by its status as a high-profile political project based on inherited collections from controversial colonial history museums (cf. Bodenstein and Poulot 2012; Eilertsen and Amundsen 2012). The development of the MuCEM was

initially promoted under Sarkozy as an important national museum, and it aligned with his economic and political development project proposal for the creation of a 'Union of the Mediterranean' in 2008. The MuCEM also fits well with the urban regeneration vision of Euroméditerranée, developed in 1995 by a partnership of national, regional, and municipal governments to promote a united economic and political development vision of a united French Mediterranean (see also Chapter 3). The idea of a distinctive Mediterranean focus for the new museum is very top-down, a vision that combines national political visions for flagship projects with local urban regeneration visions for a renewed 'Euro-Mediterranean'.

I visited the MuCEM in July 2013, a month after its official opening. I was impressed by the beauty of the architecture, the dazzling light from all directions, and its jewel-like quality. But the collections were less than impressive, some stitched together under an artificially constructed new narrative for the city and region about a common Mediterranean civilization, based on monotheistic religions, common agricultural products, and ancient and modern cultural diversity. The MuCEM boasts a collection of 250,000 objects, including paintings, prints, photographs, sculptures, furniture, tools, vehicles, jewellery, and a range of other items, although only a fraction of its collection is on display. The ground floor houses a semi-permanent exhibition called the 'Gallery of the Mediterranean', which displays four civilizations of the Mediterranean spanning from the Neolithic period to the present day, including drawings, prints, paintings, framed icons, and sculptures, reflecting different sites, peoples, and journeys. Like the temporary exhibition *Le Noir et Le Blue: Un rêve méditerranéen* (Blue and Black: A Mediterranean Dream), discussed in Chapter 2, the 'Gallery of the Mediterranean' straddles a vast array of Mediterranean histories, peoples, and geographies, with an overstretched narrative attempting to unite the disparate threads. The various objects are pristinely yet incongruously placed within the vast 1,500 m^2 ground floor area. The overall effect is of gloss, with a shiny, flashy exterior, and jewel-like art objects devoid of context and unity within.

Julie, one of the MuCEM tour guides, had led the tour of the 'Gallery of the Mediterranean' several times and admitted that she still had no sense of the coherence of the narrative she was 'supposed' to tell (interview, 9 July 2013). During the summer of 2013, MuCEM tour guides were very carefully instructed on the official narratives that they should tell on their tours, and they underwent long days of training. Julie had a difficult time understanding the connections between the different time periods, countries, 'civilizations', and mishmash of cultural and

economic themes, all meant to be framed within one grand but vague civilizational story about the Mediterranean, emanating from the seaport of Marseille. As a museum reviewer of the MuCEM (Moore 2013: 27) observed:

> Its theme is vast, the millennia of beauties and horrors of the sea that stretches from Beirut to Gibraltar, and there are noble promises to create 'an exchange of perspectives', but it also contains a trap. It could be a melange of everything and nothing, a case of mixing all the colours and ending up with mud, of serving vague political ideals at the expense of curatorial direction . . . There is a note of colonial regret – to call it 'guilt' would be overstating – and some wish to show that, when it comes to both destruction and creation, everyone is as good and bad as one another . . . but if the aim is to make you reflect on these horrors, the effect is to trivialise them.

Conclusion

In Liverpool, New Orleans, and Marseille, colonial legacies are important political arenas for reinterpretation, renegotiation, and management, and museums of slavery and colonial history are important to these debates. Cultural diversity and cosmopolitanism have been promoted within overarching urban development museum narratives in each city, while legacies of slavery, colonialism, and social exclusion have tended to be glossed or hidden, either discursively or spatially. Museums of slavery and colonial history in each city reflect silences of selection, of which voices and objects to include; of argumentation, of which stories to tell; and of positioning, in symbolic, spatial, and historical terms. Silences are inherent within any process of historical production. The aim of the chapter has not been to resolve these silences, but rather to think critically and reflexively about what silences can reveal about urban identity in post-industrial port cities. As sites of memory, the museums expose contradictory and ambivalent narratives of urban identity in Liverpool, New Orleans, and Marseille: pride about multicultural heritage; nostalgia and regret about economic decline; and a combination of shame, recognition, and denial about uncomfortable histories of slavery and colonialism.

The International Museum of Slavery in Liverpool explicitly addresses the history of slavery, with unequivocal moral condemnation, recognition of injustices at the hands of Britain and Europe, and symbolic acknowledgment of the pivotal role of Liverpool within the slave trade through the location of the museum. The museum's narrative situates

Liverpool's culpability: (1) within the wider context of Britain, Europe and the rest of the world, both in terms of the history of slavery and in terms of enduring legacies of racism, which to some extent deflects attention from the local context, and (2) primarily in the past, with the exception of prominent local cases of racial injustice, such as the Toxteth riots in 1981 and the murder of Anthony Walker in 2006, although the museum is working on extending its work on social justice issues and local community engagement. The narrative of slavery is spatially and discursively contained within the confines of the museum, and it operates in peaceful co-existence rather than overt opposition with other, more positive narratives about Liverpool's urban identity.

By contrast, the plantation historic homes in New Orleans offer a very different picture of slavery, which many scholars have criticized for 'whitewashing', glossing over the injustices of slavery, and representing the narratives of plantation owners rather than slaves. While this may be the case, the narratives of plantation historic homes are more complicated and should be read in relation to their socio-economic and political geographies. They are located within a vast and largely stigmatized landscape still based on extractive and exploitative industries, arguably including tourism; they are still populated by descendants of plantation owners, of slaves, and of free people of colour; and they are still marked by deep social inequalities as enduring legacies of slavery. As sites of historical memory, regardless of their lack of reflexivity, they provide insights into contradictory identities in urban New Orleans and its rural periphery.

In Marseille, museums of colonial history have been received with greater political controversy than in Liverpool and New Orleans, in part because they relate to a more recent history of decolonization, particularly the bitter and violent memory of the Algerian war. The example of the MuCEM in Marseille shows how national, regional, and local governments collaborate in political museum developments linked to regeneration, how the colonial past and colonial collections have been re-packaged and re-branded in different but similar ways, and how narratives straddle national and urban identities in shaping museum visions and critics' expectations and perceptions.

The three museums each have 'silences' (Trouillot 1995) of selection, argumentation, and positioning, but with considerable differences in their respective levels of reflexivity and political engagement. Regardless of their intentions, however, each museum offers sociological insights as a 'site of memory' (Nora 1989), sparking different public responses and reflecting wider issues of contested urban identity in each city.

On the one hand, museums of slavery and colonial history challenge positive place narratives simply through addressing uncomfortable histories. But on the other hand, these museums are situated within dominant museum narratives, and they remain constrained by their social, economic, and spatial contexts. In particular, these museums operate within the context of tourism-led regeneration in post-industrial port cities emerging from decline. The museums are embedded within powerful political and economic landscapes, and thus there are considerable constraints to the capacity of these museums as meaningful sites of political contestation. There are key tensions between (1) the overall logic of tourism-led place-marketing of positive urban identities, and (2) the challenge of how to represent negative urban identities within a politically and economically viable context, as in the case of museums of slavery and colonial history. These tensions reveal distinctive and contradictory urban identities in each city, in terms of how each city deals with the uncomfortable and enduring global legacies of empire and colonialism.

Part II

Waterfront Work

5

Intergenerational Lessons from the Liverpool Dockers' Strike: Rebuilding Solidarity in the Port

The CASA bar is located in a nineteenth-century red brick terraced building on Hope Street in Liverpool, with a bright red star as its emblem. On first glance, it looks like an ordinary bar, with a menu for food and beer on a signboard at the entrance, and a notice advertising weekly entertainment features (Figure 5.1). However, the CASA (an acronym for the Community Advice Service Association) is no ordinary bar. It is a living museum of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1998), a charity and bar set up by sacked dockworkers after the strike to offer support to sacked dockworkers and their families. Posters, plaques, letters, banners, and other mementos of support from the days of the strike cover the walls of the bar. A faded wooden placard from the strike with the phrase 'One of 500 Sacked Liverpool Dockers—Never Cross a Picket Line' is mounted on the ceiling above the entrance to the cellar bar (Figure 5.2). The back room has an entire wall covered in plaques, each one from a different supporter during the strike, including several prominent figures. The upstairs offices also include photographs of important labour leaders, letters of support, as well as more recent pamphlets and notices about trade union issues. The whole of the CASA is imbued with the collective memory of the strike, as a 'site of memory' (Nora 1989).

The Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1998) was one of the longest labour disputes in British industrial relations history. Five hundred dockworkers refused to cross a picket line in support of their fellow dockworkers, who worked for a sub-contractor under notoriously poor work conditions. All 500 dockworkers were sacked. It was a very public campaign, with widespread international support from a range of people including politicians, celebrities, artists, writers, the women's movement, trade unionists, dockers, and other workers from around the

Figure 5.1 The CASA, Liverpool, February 2013

world, activist organizations, and perhaps most famously the Liverpool footballer Robbie Fowler, who flashed a T-shirt showing support for the dockers during a football match. Despite tremendous support for their campaign, the Liverpool Dockers' Strike was ultimately defeated. Since the dispute, none of the sacked dockworkers, apart from 'strike-breakers', ever worked on the docks again. After generations of passing the dockworker vocation from fathers to sons in Liverpool, the sacked dockworkers deeply lamented the break in ties between their families and the docks. The collective memory of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike lives on in the social space and the community work of the CASA.

The CASA takes on a community activist role, offering support for sacked dockworkers and their families, within the trade union movement, and in the local community more generally. The bar downstairs is the 'cash cow', operating as a drinking and meeting place for the sacked dockworkers, their many supporters, and the wider community. The charity is located in the small offices upstairs, run primarily by two of its founding members on a volunteer basis (due to funding cuts since the 2008 recession). The CASA helps local people with struggles over bullying at work, welfare rights, discrimination, local refugee

Figure 5.2 'One of 500 Sacked Dockworkers- Never Cross A Picket Line', CASA, April 2012

and asylum seeker support, unemployment and benefits claims, general employment and legal advice, and community capacity building. It also offers workers' training and education. One of the most remarkable early achievements of the CASA was the product of a workers' adult education class: the co-writing and co-production, along with the well-known

screenwriters, Liverpool-born Jimmy McGovern and Irvine Welsh, of the 1999 film *Dockers* about the Liverpool Dockers' Strike.

My research with the Liverpool dockers began in the CASA in 2010 and continued until 2013, based on ten in-depth qualitative interviews and several ethnographic observations.[1] By the time of my research, the strike had already attracted a good deal of academic attention, with scholars highlighting the political significance of the strike as a last stand against Thatcherism and decasualization (cf. Lavalette and Kennedy 1996; Losada 2010; Saundry and Turnbull 1996), as well as the distinctive 'Internet age' features of the dockers' international solidarity campaign (Carter et al. 2003; Castree 2000). My primary interest was not so much in revisiting the details of the strike, but rather in the wider legacy of the Liverpool dockers' struggle in terms of collective memory, community identity, and solidarity. Despite the passage of time, the bitterness of the strike was still fresh during the time of my research. The 'scab' contracting company Drake International, which replaced the dock labour force during the strike, continued to operate on the docks. Many of the sacked dockworkers claimed in 2010 that the only 'real' dockers to be found in Liverpool were the sacked dockworkers. As Tony, one of the co-founders of the CASA, expressed it:

> All the history of the Liverpool docks belongs with us, it's our history. We are the Liverpool dockers, they're not dockers. We are the Liverpool dockers, the headquarters here [at the CASA]. Unfortunately we'll have nothing to do with the docks again.
>
> (interview, 27 May 2010)

However, was the CASA really the end of the line, representing the last generation of 'real' Liverpool dockworkers? And what had been happening on the Liverpool docks since 1998?

Yet as I began my research, I sensed weariness in the recounting of the strike among interviewees. By this time, the strike had lost its immediacy and even some of its bitterness. In fact, contrary to the sacked dockworkers' narratives and expectations of loss and decline, the story of the dockers' struggle had not come to an end. In early 2012, new intergenerational ties of dockworker solidarity in Liverpool were rekindled. Len McCluskey, General Secretary of Unite the Union[2] and a former Liverpool dockworker, invited the sacked dockworkers of the CASA to return to the Liverpool docks for the first time since the strike. They were asked to help bring unionization back to the docks, to share their trade union experience and knowledge with the 280 dockworkers

in the Seaforth docks of Liverpool. The sacked dockworkers accepted this challenge, and since this time, trade union organization has slowly grown on the docks.

This chapter situates the Liverpool Dockers' Strike within the wider context of decasualization and recasualization of the Liverpool docks over the past century. Drawing on ethnography and interviews with sacked dockworkers and newly unionized dockworkers in Liverpool, the chapter then reflects on intergenerational lessons from the strike and on new forms of solidarity in the port. What lessons can be learned from 'failed' battles? Is the endurance of dockers' politics and collective memory in the twenty-first century anachronistic, representing a form of 'radical nostalgia' (Bonnett 2010), or do 'old' forms of worker solidarity, self-education, and activism have resonance and value for workers and communities today?

Dock labour in Liverpool (1900–1995): Decasualization and recasualization

At the turn of the twentieth century, dock work in Liverpool was morally condemned by the social reformer Eleanor Rathbone as a 'pauperizing' trade (cf. Phillips and Whiteside 1985). In the casual dock labour system in early twentieth-century Liverpool, workers had to report to employers' stands every morning at 6:50 am to see if they would be hired for a day's work. On average, dockers would work between one and three days a week, sometimes more and sometimes less, depending on the fluctuating demands of shipping companies, and sometimes for periods of over 24 hours at a time to ensure that ships were unloaded quickly. Dockers were required to live in close proximity to the docks to report daily to the 'call' to work. Dock work was considered unskilled and offered little advancement or opportunity for social mobility. A large proportion of the Liverpool dockers were Irish Catholic migrants, who suffered from considerable discrimination in distinctly racialized terms (Nelson 2000; Taplin 2000). Casual dock labour was associated with particular work cultures, including heavy drinking and gambling during downtime, work-sharing practices, worker militancy, cooperation across sectarian boundaries, restrictions on output, and high levels of absenteeism (Nelson 2000; Phillips and Whiteside 1985; Wilson 1972). Government authorities were increasingly concerned about the 'demoralizing' effects of casual dock labour, and there were a number of initiatives to decasualize the docks throughout the twentieth century.

The first wide-scale attempt at decasualization on the Liverpool docks was with the Liverpool Dock Scheme in 1912, which aimed to increase labour mobility between different port employers and sections of the port (Phillips and Whiteside 1985; Taplin 1986). However, on the scheme's introduction, the dockers came out on unofficial strike. They disliked paying insurance contributions, believed that employers would use clearing house labour to break strikes, and feared that they would be squeezed out by the scheme. Employers also disliked the scheme because it was inefficient, causing delays and raising costs. Both the dockers and the employers undermined the scheme by ignoring its terms, and the scheme ultimately failed.

The second attempt at decasualization was through the introduction of the National Dock Labour Scheme in 1947, a compromise between trade unions and employers meant to mitigate the hardships associated with highly fluctuating labour demand and supply (Phillips and Whiteside 1985). The scheme was administrated by the National Dock Labour Board, which required dockers to register with employers, limited the number of dockers employed at any time, and was responsible for the provision of welfare services, wage payments, recruitment, and other workforce practices (Stoney 1999). However, in practice, the introduction of the National Dock Labour Scheme in 1947 did not do away with casual labour on the docks. Rather, following the introduction of this scheme, the 'next 20 years saw radical changes in shipping, trade patterns, the methods of handling goods, social attitudes and expectations, but employment in the docks remained essentially casual, with too many employers and too many dockers' (Rayner 2000: 5).

The 1967 National Dock Labour Scheme was the initiative which finally brought decasualization to the Liverpool docks. For many dockers today, the 22-year period of the National Dock Labour Scheme represents a 'golden era' of good jobs, wages, and security. Indeed, Turnbull and Wass (2009) endorse the dockers' view that dock work during this period was 'the greatest game in the world', which was undermined with the abolition of the scheme in 1989 and ultimately destroyed, in Liverpool, with the 1990s strike. However, fissures were already emerging throughout this 'golden era'. The National Dock Labour Scheme was jointly managed by the dockers' employer, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and the dockers' trade union, the Transport and General Workers' Union. The dockers distrusted both the union and the employer, and tended to put greater trust in unofficial shop steward leaders, rather than official trade union officials (cf. Losada 2010; Phillips and Whiteside 1985). The dockers' prosperity

during the early years of the scheme was short-lived. The advent of containerization in the 1970s greatly reduced the need for dock labour, and the numbers of dockworkers employed in Liverpool began to decline steadily. Coupled with the effects of deindustrialization on port trade and the inefficiencies of labour market regulation, containerization set the port of Liverpool into serious crisis in the mid-1970s (cf. Lauria 1994; Parkinson 1988).

Throughout the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher's government launched a series of attacks on trade unions and labour protections throughout the United Kingdom. The Conservative Government's Employment Act of 1980 made 'secondary action', or the support of a strike initiated by workers from a different enterprise, illegal, except in very limited circumstances. During the Miner's Strike in 1984, the dockers were not legally allowed to go out on strike in solidarity with the miners, as this would have counted as secondary action. Instead, they went out on parallel strikes for their own cause, the protection of the National Dock Labour Scheme (Losada 2010: 69). The Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) was relatively weak and powerless in this context, facing a declining membership, significant anti-union hostility, and the threat that their union funds could be sequestered for endorsing 'illegal' strike actions.

The National Dock Labour Scheme was abolished in 1989. The dockers went out on national strike, supported by the TGWU, but their strike was crushed. Despite the dockers' nostalgia for the 'greatest game in the world' of good jobs on the pre-1989 docks, the period of the National Dock Labour Scheme was not a static heyday of prosperity and stability; it was a tumultuous period of conflict and economic change. However, 'solidaristic social relations on the docks were still underwritten by the Scheme', and after 1989, 'through redundancy, management were able to sever completely the solidaristic bonds that dockers held both with their occupation and their work mates' (Turnbull and Wass 2009: 488). The 'regular' dock labour market only lasted for 22 years, supporting the argument that the security afforded by Fordism and the Keynesian welfare state were in fact the exception within a longer history of capitalism, while 'precarity' is the norm (Neilson and Rossiter 2008). At the same time, 22 years is a long time within the living memory of post-war generations of dockworkers.

With the end of the National Dock Labour Scheme, flexible labour practices were re-introduced in the 'scheme' docks, including redundancies, increased hours of work, compulsory overtime, availability at any time of day on short notice, de-recognition of unions, and

increased disciplinary charges for non-compliant workers. The Torside docks, where the Liverpool Dock Strike began in 1995, exemplified these flexible labour practices.

Intergenerational lessons from the Liverpool Dockers' Strike

The Liverpool Dockers' Strike started on 25 September 1995, sparked by a dispute about overtime of five young dockworkers who were employed by Torside in Liverpool (cf. Carter et al. 2003; Castree 2000; Lavalette and Kennedy 1996; Losada 2010; Saundry and Turnbull 1996). Torside was a new private sub-contractor on the docks that was legally separate from the principal dock employer, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MDHC), and it employed 80 dockworkers on a casual basis. Torside was the first employer to hire 'new' labour onto the docks since the 1970s, and it was seen by some of the regular dockworkers as an opportunity for dockers' sons to finally join the docks. Approximately half of the Torside dockers were sons or grandsons of MHDC dockworkers. However, Torside dockers were paid half the rate of the MDHC for equivalent work, had to wait by the telephone to be called in to work, often worked overtime for several days in a row, and were not entitled to either sick or holiday pay. This led many dockers to regard Torside as 'a Trojan horse for casualization of the docks' (Carter et al. 2003). Family connections between the older generation of regular MHDC dockers and the younger generation of unprotected dockers at Torside played into the politics of the dispute, including differences between the regular dockers in support for the Torside dockers. The dockers' collective refusal to cross the Torside picket line led to the sacking of all 80 casual Torside dockworkers and all 500 MDHC dockworkers.

Initially, the Liverpool dockers faced hurdles in organizing their solidarity campaign. They lacked official support from the Transport and General Workers' Union because this was an 'illegal' strike involving secondary action (the Employment Act of 1990 had made all secondary action illegal), so they had to seek support elsewhere within the labour movement. The 'Women of the Waterfront', a group of dockworkers' wives who actively campaigned in support of the strike, were particularly instrumental in raising broader public support for the strike. They brought the wider issues of family and community into the debate, and they proved to be very effective at fund-raising. On the international solidarity front, the dockers faced a perception of being too white (most dockers were of Irish decent) within the context of a multicultural and

diverse society, which made it difficult to appeal to workers around the world. They highlighted their anti-racist credentials through emphasizing their solidarity actions against apartheid in South Africa during the 1980s (Losada 2010: 187). Gradually, the strike gained support from a wide range of people and groups, many frustrated by the Thatcher government's crackdown on labour protections. Left-wing political parties, organizations, and activists offered their support, but they fought among themselves about the meaning and direction of the strike. International and European trade unions also offered their support, notably the International Transport Workers Federation, which complicated the dockers' tense relationship with their own union. Dockers around the world organized 'flying pickets'. On 8 September 1997, almost 50,000 dockworkers in 16 countries acted in solidarity with a 24-hour action affecting big ships around the world (Mukul 1998: 1612). Finally, celebrities including artists, musicians, and footballers got behind the dockers' cause. The dockers' methods of grassroots organizing were in many ways ahead of their time, making use of new and old international networks and the Internet, but well before the age of social media.

The MDHC had difficulty finding a pool of labour to work during the strike because of solidarity within the docker community and the specialized skill sets of modern dockers, which made non-dockers difficult to train (Saundry and Turnbull 1996). Nonetheless, the dockers faced considerable financial hardships, and some dockers did eventually cross the picket lines, branded as 'scabs' (Losada 2010). The dockers refused to accept any of the three offers that were put forward by their employer: the first in October 1995; the second in January 1996; or the third in November 1996. The dockers were holding out for reinstatement on the docks, but they only received offers of partial reinstatement and cash buyouts. The fourth offer came in October 1997, with no budging on the issue of reinstatement, and some of the dockers took the cash buyout. At this point, the TGWU withdrew all support for the strike, and the shop stewards recommended the end of the dispute at a dockers' mass meeting in January 1998. The sacked dockworkers had been struggling to raise the £35,000 per week to sustain the strike, and financial hardship was hitting families hard. The end of the dispute was a clear defeat, with a collective settlement providing £28,000 severance for those employed by the MDHC, but no offer of job reinstatement for any of the dockers.

The Liverpool Dockers' Strike has had a lasting legacy for future generations of Liverpool dockworkers, for the people of Liverpool, and dockworkers around the world. The strike was held up as an example of a 'worst case scenario' within the international dockworkers' community

and a disaster for the future of trade union politics. It was the inspiration for the creation of the International Dockworkers' Council (IDC) in 2000 to prevent such catastrophic outcomes for dockers from ever happening again (interview, Tony, 25 May 2010). For Liverpool, the memory of the strike became part of its urban identity: a story of incredible solidarity and creativity, a valiant effort in the face of neoliberalism. A number of local bookshops carry books about the dockworkers. The Museum of Liverpool, which opened in 2011, tells the story of the dockers' strike in its history of the port. A maritime representative expressed her frustration at the museum's port narrative: 'I think it's very sad that it ends on such a deflated note, mid-90s, lots of people walking out, lots of bad feeling, antagonism, negativity. I would like to bring it forward, up to date' (interview, 26 November 2013).

For the Liverpool dockers, the CASA preserves the memory of the strike through the memorabilia on its walls and the stories and community activism of its owners and patrons. The dockworkers have also preserved the memory of the strike through an online archive from the strike (LabourNet UK 2014 [1997]), including interviews with the strikers and the 'Women on the Waterfront', documents reflecting international, national, and local support, and news items from the period. Very few of the sacked dockworkers ever returned to the docks, and many of the sacked dockworkers never worked again. The Liverpool docks were blacklisted as a 'scab port' by trade unions and other dockworkers around the United Kingdom. However, the story of the dockers' struggle has not come to an end. Drawing on interviews and ethnographic observations with dockworkers, this chapter will examine two key themes about the legacy of the strike: the impact of the strike on relationships between generations, family, and community on the docks, and new forms of intergenerational solidarity on the docks since 2012.

Generations, family, and community

According to the sacked dockworkers, one of the most lamentable costs of the strike, apart from their own jobs, was the disruption of several generations of family tradition: their sons would no longer have the opportunity to follow them onto the docks. Tony, a sacked dockworker and co-founder of the CASA, discussed the importance of generations on the docks through recounting his family's history:

> I was born like most people on the docks, down by the docks itself. All of my family were dockers, my father, my grandfather, and my mother has five sisters and they were married to five dockers, and

> my dad had six brothers, five sisters, and every one of his brothers were dockers, so they were all dockworkers, after the Second World War, most of them. So it was just in the blood, in the family, it was something that you did.
>
> (interview, 25 May 2010)

Tony described his memories of intense friendship and camaraderie on the docks, and how being a dockworker was more than just work, it was an extended family and community. This echoes many accounts about the close-knit nature of dockworkers' communities since the early twentieth century (cf. Davies 2000; Miller 1969; Wilson 1972). Even though Tony had primarily experienced the more impersonal working spaces of container shipping, he had fond memories of starting out in cargo shipping, which had a more intimate atmosphere. Whereas dockers in other ports such as New Orleans and Marseille saw the early 1980s as a significant point of rupture, related to containerization, for the sacked dockworkers in Liverpool, the main point of rupture was in 1995: even the era of containerization had acquired the tint of nostalgia.

The feeling of community and solidarity on the docks was something that Tony wanted to share with his son. Talking about the future for the next generation of Liverpool dockworkers' sons, Tony said:

> It's cut off now, the docks are not for them. Most of them are interested in construction, a few of them have become lawyers and things like that, so they've done well, you know. What the docks were, they provided security for your family . . . Because see, when someone like Thatcher, she sacks 500 people, she thinks well, you know, economics and all the rest of it, but she doesn't understand she's cutting off generations, the children, the grandchildren and all the rest of it. What the docks did, it could provide stability in the home, a good wage, a stable family environment. When you sack 500 people, sacking 500 dockworkers, the wife, the kids, the grandkids, everyone gets affected, so then instability comes in.
>
> (interview, 25 May 2010)

Several other sacked dockworkers described similar family histories, having followed their fathers or grandfathers onto the docks. The docks, despite their irregular work patterns, were seen as a form of security for generations of dockworkers' families.

The tradition of passing the dockers' vocation from fathers to sons exists in ports around the world, both in the past and in the present day (cf. Barzman 2000; Davies 2000). Liverpool was no exception. However,

the cherished patterns of intergenerational family ties on the docks are also less consistent historically than sacked dockworkers' narratives today would suggest. The system of dockers' sons following their fathers into the vocation became widespread in the early twentieth century in Liverpool, and it increased as hard-fought-for working conditions improved. By 1960, the intake of father's sons was around 53 per cent. The 1960s then saw a drop in the father-to-son kinship links at the docks, with the proportion of intake of dockers' sons decreasing to 13 per cent in 1968. However, by 1971, the proportion of intake of dockers' sons had increased to 62 per cent, and it was around 40 per cent for the following three years (Turnbull and Wass 2009: 492). In other words, there were high levels of dockers' sons working in Liverpool, but the percentage varied over the years.

Moreover, interviews with the Seaforth (North Liverpool) dockworkers in 2013 showed that, contrary to the sacked dockworkers' narratives, there had not been a complete rupture with the past following the Liverpool Dockers' Strike: in fact, the tradition of kinship on the docks continues (interview, Seaforth dockers, 8 February 2013). The majority of the 235 dockworkers employed at Seaforth at the time of my research still came from the same kind of traditional, male, family or friendship-related local workforce. Indeed, many of the dockers still had strong family and friendship connections on the docks, accounting for around 45 to 50 per cent of the workforce, according to the dockers' estimates. Thus, the familial aspect of dock work had not really been severed in the way that it had been represented by the sacked dockers. One of the dockers had actually crossed the original picket line of the dockers' strike and had only since changed his mind about the importance of unions, collective effort, and picket lines. He said that his uncle, also a docker, was the one who encouraged him to stay. Another docker had worked for another port during the time of the strike and came from a Liverpool dockers' family, and he waited until 18 months after the strike before he felt that it would be politically acceptable to work on the docks.

The case of the Liverpool dockworkers demonstrates the importance of generations in sustaining not only modes of employment but also a range of values and attitudes associated with this type of employment, including ideas about community and social life. Many sacked dockworkers described the strong sense of community amongst fellow dockworkers, particularly during times of struggle. As Tony argues:

> Because the docks was not just a job, it was a way of life, social, you're down there. So you leave the house 7 in the morning, you finish at

> 5, then you go for a drink, then you get involved... everything you do is associated with your workplace, you know, your days out, your friends, your friends worked down there. So it was just like basically, not just mine, everybody's life when you worked down there which was the tragedy when we all got the sack in 95.
>
> (interview, 25 May 2012)

Although proud of the strong sense of community on the docks, the Liverpool dockers have faced criticism for their exclusivity and insularity. Throughout their history, they have been male and predominantly white, although many were poor migrants from Ireland (cf. Carter et al. 2003; Losada 2010). In their account of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike, Carter et al. (2003: 296) describe a shift in the identity of the dockworker:

> Dockers imagine that they once knew who they were, what they were, where they were. They were workers, exploited but militant, supporters of the union and the party, breadwinners and men. They were a class, a band of brothers, and hard-working members of an occupational community, one with great traditions, songs, flags and rituals. They were almost a tribe. Class solidarity was their creed. Today, times have changed: class solidarity, for instance, is an argument that is seen as more and more anachronistic; not of use anymore, simply irrelevant in an age of globalisation.
>
> (Carter et al. 2003: 296)

The Liverpool Dockers' Strike brought out some tensions between traditional and contemporary struggles in relation to identity. Notably, many of the wives of the sacked Liverpool dockworkers gained a strong voice during the strike. A number of interviews with the 'Women on the Waterfront' who supported their husbands on the picket lines during the Liverpool Dock Strike were conducted by 'LabourNet' activists (LabourNet UK 2014 [1997]). These interviews reveal that the women had never met previously before the strike, which suggests that while the dockers had a strong community, this was primarily a masculine space, and wives were not well-integrated into this community. The interviews also clearly show that the women's political participation in the strike gave them a new sense of confidence, but that this was also limited by the fact that they occupied traditional gendered roles as wives and supporters of their husbands. The 1999 documentary film *Dockers* (by Jimmy McGovern, Irvine Welsh and the CASA adult education class)

explores the central role of the 'Women on the Waterfront' in the Liverpool Dockers' Strike and the challenges that they faced in reconciling their new political voices with the patriarchal attitudes within a tradition, male-dominated working-class community. Strong parallels can be drawn between these women's stories and the accounts of women who were involved in the UK Miners' Strike of 1984–1985 (cf. Rowbotham and McCrindle 1986; Stead 1987).

The male-dominated nature of dock work in Liverpool is perhaps unsurprising, as this is consistent with dock labour forces around the world. However, while the primary role of women in Liverpool dockers' families was as a docker's wife, women also worked in a range of occupations on the waterfront and in the city. A history of women's work on the Liverpool waterfront (Kelly et al. 1987) shows that women worked on the waterfront as canteen workers, ships' cleaners, and even on the docks during the First World War. Other women in dockers' families worked in tobacco factories, as cleaners, as sweepers, and in other working-class manual jobs (interview, sacked dockworker, 25 May 2010). The role of women's work in waterfront communities, both in the home and in paid work, has been under-researched and would be worth further exploration.

The ethnic background of the dockworkers is perhaps more difficult to explain on the basis of labour market norms, given that Liverpool has one of the oldest African communities within the United Kingdom, and dock labour has traditionally been a route into the labour market for migrants. The whiteness of the Liverpool dockers is explained in part by the prevalence of Irish working-class people on the docks, one of the largest migrant groups to Liverpool after the Irish famine of 1845–1852, and a group that was very much treated as 'alien' and 'Other' well into the twentieth century (cf. Belchem and MacRaild 2006; Nelson 2000).

Terrey addressed some of the criticisms of the exclusive composition of the traditional dockers' workforce (without any prompting), saying:

> People might look back and say you know, it was a backwards system in terms of, there was no women involved in the movement of dockers, there was very, very few ethic groups, it was like all, it was male, it was white. But in saying that, that was not of our choosing, that was the history of the movement you see. So from that background, people in today's society would point fingers and say, well you know, you're an elitist group, you're all male, you're all white. But that as I say that was because of the history. Fathers followed

> grandfathers and sons followed their dads. So, that was the way the docks was.
>
> (interview, 18 April 2012)

Terrey's statement openly acknowledges that the historical identity of the Liverpool dockers can be perceived as 'backwards' and 'elitist' within contemporary society. He offers a justification based on the structural history of the docks. Terrey's account captures very well the ambivalent legacies of dock work as an identity and a tradition; something that was positive, based on solidarity, camaraderie, community, family, and generations, but something that was culturally insular and which appears outmoded in the present era. He might have added, by way of further explanation, that recruitment was severely limited with the dramatic post-war decline of dock labour.

One of the impacts of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike was to change some of the old ways of thinking. The strike gathered considerable creative momentum from a range of activists in Liverpool, including not only the sacked dockers and their wives, but a number of people in the diverse activist community in Liverpool more generally. The original aims of the CASA were to carry on the momentum of the strike, and to carry forward the values and principles of solidarity and trade unionism within Liverpool, particularly for vulnerable and working-class people including women, migrants, unemployed people, and asylum seekers. Since 2012, the CASA has built on these aims through attempting to rebuild intergenerational solidarity and trade unionism on the docks.

Rebuilding solidarity in the port

The idea of 'solidarity' is a defining feature of dockworkers' identities around the world, and it was a particularly powerful mobilizing force for sustaining the Liverpool Dockers' Strike. Hyman (1999) argues that 'solidarity', like Anderson's (1991) concept of the nation as an 'imagined community', is also imagined: it is a 'mobilising myth' for the labour movement, based on Fordist trade union values associated with manufacturing. This definition points to some important similarities and differences between dockworkers and manufacturing workers in the meaning and use of the term. Both groups of workers have faced job losses since the 1970s, and both represent part of the traditional, male-dominated working class. However, unlike manufacturing workers, dockworkers are irregular rather than regular workers, and they have a reputation for militancy, rebellion, and uneasy relationships with trade union leadership. 'Solidarity' continues to have a great deal of resonance

for dockworkers even when it has lost traction for other traditional labour groups. When Liverpool dockers use the term 'solidarity', it is primarily in relation to the dockworkers' international community rather than to other workers of the world, part of the conception of dockers as one big united family.

The narrative of solidarity in Liverpool has historical roots in the early twentieth century, based on ideas of trade unionism and collective action within the British labour movement. Taplin (2000) argues that docks were free of the deep sectarian and ethnic divisions that characterized Liverpool during this period. Other historians have shown that there were in fact some religious conflicts among the Liverpool dockworkers (Lane 1987; Nelson 2000). However, in general, the Liverpool waterfront throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was characterized by the absence of ethnic and sectarian cleavages, united by solidarity based on work identity and politics (Nelson 2000: 665).

Solidarity is still a 'mobilising myth' for the sacked Liverpool dockers. Indeed, solidarity has inspired new alliances to be formed on the docks. Terrey and Tony, both founding members of the CASA, are the key figures in the effort to rebuild solidarity on the docks. When I first visited them at the CASA in 2010, they both seemed resigned to the situation of severed material ties with employment on the docks and nostalgic for the better days on the docks (interviews, 25 May 2010). They admitted that dock work had been difficult and that they felt exploited by their employer even during the era of more secure, 'registered' dock work. However, overall their accounts were nostalgic and filled with regret at the loss of a job that was 'not just a job'. In 2010, at the start of my field research, they had few hopes for ever reconnecting with the docks. The story might have ended there, and indeed, I began to write up my research findings with the theme of the 'last generation' of dockers in Liverpool.

However, when I visited the CASA again for follow-up interviews in 2012, Tony's and Terrey's sense of permanent disconnection with the docks had changed. In February 2012, Tony and Terrey made contact with some of the Liverpool dockers working at the main port of Seaforth for the first time since the strike. This was at the request of the new General Secretary of the British and Irish trade union Unite the Union, Len McCluskey, a former Liverpool dockworker. Unite the Union formed in 2007, a merger of the Transport and General Workers' Union and Amicus, which were both already the result of previous trade union mergers in the context of declining trade unionism in the United Kingdom. It claims to be 'the union for the 21st century meeting

the great challenges facing working people in the 21st century' (Unite the Union 2014). Len McCluskey wanted the sacked dockworkers to meet with the unorganized dockers at Seaforth, to recruit them into the union, and to teach them the principles and values of unionized labour. Although Tony and Terrey recognized that this would not mend their own broken patrilineal ties to the docks, they realized that it could be an important a step towards a new form of intergenerational exchange.

Tony and Terrey justified their return to the 'scab' port in terms of their political commitment to trade union solidarity and in terms of temporal distance from the strike. Although there were some 'strike-breakers' left on the Seaforth docks (and in fact, I interviewed one of them), Terrey said that most of the dockers were too young to have remembered the strike, so they were no longer tarnished with the strike-breaker reputation. He described their decision to go back to the docks as follows:

> So they've been crying out for organization, and so that's what we're going back for, we're going to work with the younger people in the ports, we're going to teach them the merits of belonging to trade union, and we're going to hopefully learn them about solidarity and working together and the way that can better their lives both within their own employment but also to help other people out as well. And try and build up the structures that were there when we were in the ports, have a vibrant shop stewards' movement, you work towards having 100 per cent trade union membership, fighting for better pay and conditions, better health and safety, and also having a say in, you know, your working conditions, who comes into the industry when there's new jobs coming about. It's a hard task . . . it's like starting from scratch, it's liking going back when my granddad was on the docks where the employer just hired and fired at will.
>
> (interview, Terrey, 18 April 2012)

Terrey's explanation was not only about supporting the values of solidarity within the labour movement, but it was also about the importance of carrying on these values in an era where they are under threat. The idea of teaching the dockers the merits of trade unionism highlighted the importance of workers' self-education. Terrey elaborated on the idea of self-education in an account of his 'awakening' as a young man straight out of school on the docks of Liverpool:

> It was 1966 I started, and by 1971 I'd most probably become educated in many things because we had no political education in school.

> And all my political education and trade union education came from working on the docks. South Africa, Nelson Mandela, apartheid, things that you never learned in school. South America, Chilean workers, Cuba, I missed all of this in my education. I would like to know more about these strikes. It's like a self-education. The more you found out the more you wanted to know.
>
> (interview, Terrey, 18 April 2012)

For Tony and Terrey, the invitation from Unite the Union was also a chance to reconnect with the docks and with the international dockers' movement. In April 2012, they were invited to speak at an international dockers' meeting in Sweden to discuss their new contacts with the next generation of dockworkers in Liverpool.

In February 2013, I met with five of the 'young' dockers who worked for Drake International, the sub-contractor for Peel Ports, at the Seaforth docks of Liverpool. These five dockworkers were not really 'young' as the sacked dockworkers had described them—they were middle and upper-middle-aged men, shop stewards who were actively involved in the new union leadership on the docks. We met in the office of Unite the Union and later again at a port solidarity event at the CASA (interview, 8 February 2013).

According to the Seaforth dockers, union activity was still very new on the docks, and the union was not recognized by Peel Ports. They described differences in levels of union support among the workers. Of the 235 dockworkers at Seaforth there were five shop stewards (themselves) and approximately 25 'hard-core' active members; 70 'moderate' members who needed convincing to take action; 100 'passive' members who were reluctant to get involved if it meant being noticed or giving up wages; and 20 younger, 'apolitical' workers who wanted nothing to do with the union at all. All of the dockworkers were male, and the majority of workers were white Liverpool locals, with around ten non-locals, including a few people from London and some Eastern Europeans, some who had come up after the strike. Approximately 25 of the original 'scabs' who had crossed the picket line were still working at Drake, but many of the dockworkers had been in school during the strike and had no memory or connection to this history.

The Seaforth dockers described how their port and employer had been vilified and ostracized by other dockers' organizations ever since the strike, which was demoralizing, particularly given their terrible working conditions (interview, Seaforth dockers, 8 February 2013). This difficulty of being isolated and stigmatized for many years by both their employer

and the trade union movement was one of their key frustrations. The dockers expressed deep gratitude to Tony and Terrey at the CASA for taking on their cause and 'forgiving' them, reaching out to work with them despite the strike. They said that there had been no union activity at all for the first ten years after the end of the dockers' strike, and that progress had only really been made in recruiting union members in the past year since working with Tony and Terrey. But they all also emphasized their personal histories of labour activism, in some cases working for other related types of job in shop steward capacities.

The Seaforth dockers' accounts offered different insights into life on the docks from what I'd heard from the sacked dockers, such as the continued kinship networks on the docks, the internal divisions between the dockers, and their concern with overcoming their negative identity as a scab port. Some of them had originally been drawn to dock work because of the pay, and some because of family connections. The main difference that I noticed between the Seaforth dockers' accounts and the sacked dockworkers' accounts was their lack of positivity about the actual work. The Seaforth dockers spoke at length about their workplace grievances, of the employer's drive to make workers part-time, casual workers with no benefits, frustration at being 'ping-ponged' between the sub-contractor and Peel Ports, and outrage at working conditions, including exposure to asbestos in their canteen. By contrast, the Liverpool sacked dockworkers highlighted the solidarity and community of the workers rather than everyday workplace grievances; containerization and the end of the National Dock Labour Scheme were minor blips as compared with the trauma and injustice of the strike. The sacked dockworkers narratives were tinged with nostalgia, rather than connected to the immediacy of day-to-day work.

The Seaforth dockers argued that the port of Liverpool was probably the worst in the country in terms of poor working conditions and lack of labour protections, due to the legacy of the broken strike and the disorganized workforce since the strike. The dockers all agreed that Peel Ports was a 'ruthless' employer, even worse than the sub-contractor Drake. As mentioned in Chapter 3, they felt strongly that Peel Ports did not deserve to be awarded the 'Port Authority of the Year' at the global containerization international awards in 2012. They had only recently broken down the 'triangle' of being 'ping-ponged' between Drake and Peel Ports and started to talk directly with Peel Ports over the issue of 25 compulsory redundancies, which they saw as a back door to casualization, to get rid of full-time contracts and then take people back on temporarily without any security or guarantee of continued

employment. The dockers thought that the only reason Peel Ports was willing to talk to them was because of the potential bad press with the new £350 million planned development of 'Liverpool Two', the massive new deep-water container terminal for large ships (see Chapter 3). Apparently when Peel Ports bid for the new development, they were asked about their relations with workers, and they pointed to the lack of strikes and conflicts in the port.

The dockers invited me to a social and solidarity evening at the CASA in February 2013. According to them, this was the first ever coordinated meeting of port workers in Liverpool, including seafarers, dockers, tug pilots, and a range of other workers in the port. Representatives from Unite the Union, the CASA, and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) trade union (for seafarers and dockworkers) were there. They had come together to supporting a new campaign of solidarity between port workers.

Tommy Molloy, the ITF Inspector for Liverpool, gave a presentation at the meeting about the appalling conditions of seafarers that he had discovered in the port of Liverpool. He said that most modern-day seafarers face working conditions similar to slavery, with chronic fatigue, overwork, poor working and living conditions, frequent wage arrears, high suicide rates, and high incidents of starvation diets, rape, and beatings. These seafarers typically came from Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe, and racism played a large part in justifying 'sea blindness' to the injustices of the sea (cf. Sekula 2003). Although seafarers and dockworkers have very different labour concerns, one of their points of solidarity was over the issue of 'lashing', or securing cargo, on ships. To cut costs, many shipowners were demanding that seafarers do this work, traditionally the paid work of dockers. However, the seafarers were not paid extra for this work, and they did not have the skills or equipment to do the work safely. In the context of ever-shrinking labour demands, the dockers wanted to keep the work as their own.[2]

This was the first event in what the union representatives called a 'road show', which would travel between different ports to strengthen port workers' solidarity and campaigns. The campaign primarily focused on trying to get agreement from employers about terms and conditions regarding work regulations, rights, and protections. The broader ambition was to address the need for solidarity between different port workers on a range of port-related issues, to counter fragmentation within the interconnected industries. The specific concerns about the port of Liverpool related to fears about Peel Ports' plans for Liverpool Two. One of the main concerns of the dockworkers was that the port

would employ only foreign labour for the new jobs that would be created. The evening began with presentations from the union representations and the CASA, followed by questions from the floor. Some of the newly unionized Seaforth dockers made impassioned comments and rallying calls for change and action; for example, going to the press with their stories, and insisting on recognition of their trade union within Peel Ports. However, the Seaforth dockers were disappointed that more of their members did not turn up. They said that this was in part due to a ship being in the port and many people working late. Others in the crowd suggested that most Seaforth dockers were avoiding the union because the shop stewards were too militant and had already faced disciplinary measures from their employer. The rhetoric of activism was strong among the few voices of the CASA, Unite, and the ITF, but the basis of grassroots support and capacity for change was rather more precarious.

The new solidarity on the port of Liverpool seems promising but fragile. As Turnbull and Wass (2007) argue, the situation of the Liverpool dockers is not unique: in the context of globalization, there has been a marked deterioration in dockworkers' terms and conditions of employment in an international 'race to the bottom'. As such, the form of 'outreach' solidarity offered by the sacked dockworkers is important as a political and symbolic resource for new generations of exploited workers in the global era. This vision of renewed solidarity is situated in the context of twenty-first century trade unionism and incorporates expansive views that were shaped not only by years of dock work but by the political experience of the strike and the CASA. It builds on broad-based trade union principles of solidarity, collective action, and self-education, and it attempts to unite different unions and workers. However, the language and politics of solidarity are still framed within old repertoires (cf. Carter et al. 2003; Hyman 1999), and the traditional culture of the docks (male, white, familial) remains for the most part unchallenged.

Conclusion

The collective memory of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike lives on in the CASA as a living museum. The work of the CASA, with its commitment to workers' training and education, solidarity, and support for the community, is one of the enduring legacies of the strike. The Liverpool sacked dockworkers represent an old form of work identity (Strangleman 2004) which fuses forms of security and insecurity, regularity and irregularity, and radicalism and traditionalism. Their vocation

celebrates aspects of irregularity and casual rhythms, with a strong anti-authoritarian work ethic (cf. Miller 1969; Phillips and Whiteside 1985; Wilson 1972). However, their work identity also reflects traditional social values, including: a nuclear family with a male breadwinner; the patrilineal inheritance of their vocation; and a distinctively male and white working culture based around the docks. Despite the lack of women and ethnic minorities within the dockers' ranks both in the past and in the present, the sacked dockworkers at the CASA connect with struggles of women and ethnic minorities and a wide range of other people through their charitable work.

The sacked dockworkers Terrey and Tony spoke proudly of the working-class values that they would like to maintain through the work of the CASA, including the promotion of human rights, international solidarity, and community support for the most marginalized people within society. Fifteen years after the end of the strike, Tony's and Terrey's ability to see beyond the trauma of their defeat and to reach out to younger 'scab' workers, showed the depth of their commitment to 'solidarity' as a political practice as well as a form of knowledge. At the time of my field research in 2013, the CASA was operating as a trade union branch of Unite the Union, officially accredited through Unite to offer community and employment advice. This fits with the 'community membership scheme' of Unite the Union, which seeks to go beyond traditional labour-based trade union membership, in an effort to adapt to the twenty-first century (Unite the Union 2014).

The case of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike is interesting within the context of global legacies of the relationship between capitalism, labour, and labour activism. On the one hand, the dockers represent an anachronistic labour force, shrinking to smaller and more fragmented workforces with each passing decade, eclipsed from tens of thousands of workers to hundreds in containerized ports around the world. But on the other hand, the Liverpool dockers' story of tenacity and commitment is inspiring, and it has influenced dockers and workers around the world. Their 'last stand' against Thatcherism endured incredibly against the odds, and led to the founding of the International Dockers Council, with its resolution to never let such a disaster for dock labour happen again. There was an element of martyrdom in the narrative of the Liverpool dockers' defeat. The CASA's collaboration with Unite highlights the importance of moving beyond the traditional worker base of the labour movement, and of extending membership and activism within the wider community. But will trade unions really be able to adapt to the challenges of declining trade union membership in the

twenty-first century? And how expansive is the vision of the Liverpool dockers?

One of the regulars at the CASA, the son of a seafarer and a friend of the dockworkers, said to me:

> There is a big Liverpool, one that is cosmopolitan and outward-looking, which has more in common with New York and other port cities than with the rest of England, and then there is a small Liverpool, one that is racist and inward-looking.
>
> (interview, 19 May 2010)

This statement stuck with me as a metaphor for the contradictory identities and legacies associated with both the city of Liverpool and the dockers. I also wondered if this statement could be inverted. Could 'big Liverpool' instead represent the commercial take-over of the city and the ports by mega-development projects; and could 'small Liverpool' instead represent the communities and workers that form the backbone of local identity? At the very least, the Liverpool dockers invite us to reflect on the possibility of alternatives in an era where Thatcher's idea that 'there is no alternative' (TINA) still reigns, through creative combinations of 'new' and 'old' forms of knowledge, education, and activism.

6

Precarious Reforms and the Legacy of Struggle: The Dockers of Marseille-Fos

If you go to the Bar Phocéen in the commune of Port de Bouc near Marseille at 7:30 am on a weekday morning, you'd find a group of dockers having coffee and chatting (Figure 6.1). The Bar Phocéen is the western Marseille-Fos[1] dockers' favourite café, just across the street from their hiring hall (Figure 6.2). The hiring hall at Port de Bouc is one of two main hiring halls in the western port of Marseille-Fos, and according to the dockers, it is one of the last old casual hiring halls in France (interview, 22 June 2010). This is a source of pride for the dockers, for it is a relic of the old union-controlled labour pool system in France, which was introduced in 1947 and then slowly phased out after the national port reforms of 1992 and 2008. Dockers report to this hiring hall at eight o'clock each morning to find out where, and if, they will be working that day.

When I first arrived in Marseille in January 2010, I encountered some interesting local impressions of dockworkers. Many Marseille residents, including several academics, had quite negative views of the dockworkers as being militant, strike-prone, over-paid, and operating like the mafia, similar to narratives about the Liverpool dockworkers in the 1960s and 1970s during their heyday of regularized working conditions and high pay.[2] However, not all residents had negative opinions of the dockworkers. In July 2013, the dockers in the eastern, cruise traffic-oriented port of Marseille burned tyres by the entrance to the port in an effort to hold onto diminishing employment. This was seen by many as a losing battle in the face of port economic costs, despite the traditional power of the unionized Marseille dockers (interview, International Transport Workers' Federation Coordinator, 8 July 2013). Reflecting on the July protests, one resident told me that the dockers were important as a symbol of people who were prepared to fight for

Figure 6.1 Bar Phocéen, Marseille-Fos dockers' bar, Port-de-Bouc, June 2010

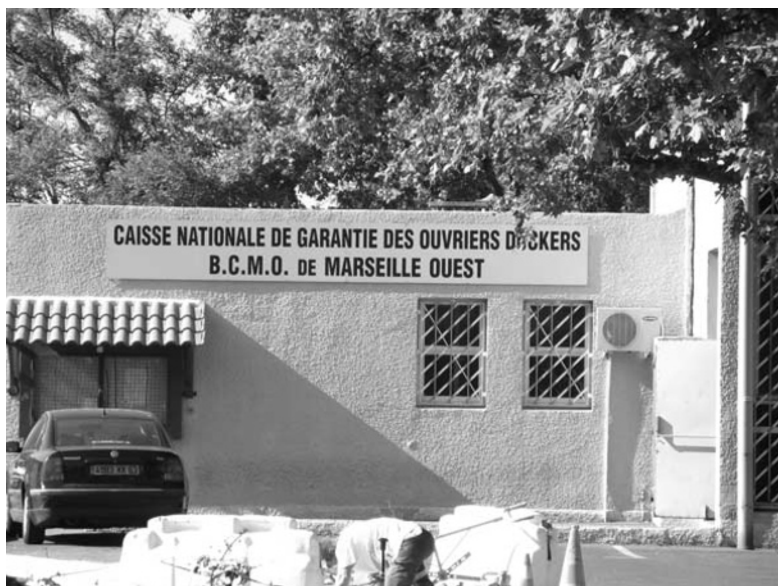

Figure 6.2 Dockers' casual hiring hall, Western Port of Marseille-Fos, Port-de-Bouc, June 2010

their hard-won security in an era where this was increasingly difficult to achieve, even in the French context of strong trade unions and frequent strike action (interview, 9 July 2013).

The Marseille dockers have received some scholarly attention within France, particularly among local academics. However, they have not featured within much international research, with the exception of general comparative studies of dock labour (cf. Jensen 1964; Notteboom 2010; TELEMME 1999; Turnbull 2000). This contrasts with the Liverpool dockers, who were thrust into the international spotlight because of the political significance of their protracted strike between 1995 and 1998 (see Chapter 5), and with the New Orleans longshoremen at the turn of the twentieth century, who had an unusually cooperative system of biracial unionism for the time (see Chapter 7). The academic literature on Marseille dockers focuses primarily on the local context of port and labour transformation. This literature includes historical studies of Marseille dockers in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century (Loew 1945; Sewell 1988) and sociological research on the changing nature of dockers' conflicts and modes of organization between the 1970s and 1990s (Cornu 1974; Douzan 1995; Tomasi 1992). Since the mid-1990s, there has been relatively little research on the Marseille dockers, apart from comparative studies of dock labour (mentioned above) and more general local history books focusing on the Marseille dockers (Domenichino and Guillon 1999; Pons 2004).

The research for this chapter draws on ten in-depth interviews with four older and six younger unionized CGT dockworkers at the western port of Marseille-Fos, conducted between January 2010 and September 2013. I chose to focus on older dockworkers, who were aged 50 or older, and younger dockworkers, who were in their twenties, to examine contrasting generational narratives about dock labour.[3] My research also included ethnographic observations in the dockers' café, the trade union office, and the hiring hall at the western port, and analysis of documents, secondary sources, and the dockers' online archive (CGT Dockers Fos 2014).

The port of Marseille-Fos comprises two ports: the eastern port of Marseille, which is closest to the city centre; and the western port of Fos, which is about 30 miles outside of Marseille, straddling the small communes of Fos-sur-Mer, Port de Bouc, and Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône. The eastern port specializes in cruise traffic and diverse bulk cargo, while the western port is the primary container port. Dockworkers at both ports are organized by the CGT (General Confederation of Labour)—indeed, 90 per cent of dockworkers in France belong to the CGT—and both have

a long history of conflict with port management (interview, International Transport Federation Coordinator, Marseille, 8 July 2013). The eastern port is more iconic within the urban labour history of Marseille, given its proximity to the city centre, while the western port is more economically and politically significant, as the main container port in the country.

I decided to focus on dockers in the western port of Marseille-Fos for both theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically, the western port was interesting as a large container port which had an old casual hiring hall, and focusing on one site rather than two led to richer ethnographic material. Practically, it was difficult to gain access to any of the Marseille-Fos dockers as an outsider, particularly given their negative representation within the media. I was able to get access through a local gatekeeper who had previously done research with the dockworkers at Fos and wrote a Master's thesis on the topic (Douzan 1995). The western dockers at Fos have a distinct identity from the eastern dockers at Marseille, and the two sets of dockers cooperate on the level of solidarity, but there are nonetheless tensions between them in different priorities and styles of unionism. As my research progressed, I found that my outsider status gradually became useful in gaining the trust of the dockers, particularly because of my research with the Liverpool dockers. The Marseille-Fos dockers had been strong supporters of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike, and they remembered it as a cataclysmic event in the collective memory of dockers around the world (interview, older CGT dockworker, 20 January 2010).

My research aimed to examine what the Marseille-Fos dockers' narratives revealed about intergenerational work identity, memory, and politics in the context of increasingly precarious conditions and dramatic port restructuring. I focused on both distinctive and common themes of the Marseille-Fos dockers in relation to the dockers of Liverpool and New Orleans. My research revealed that the dockers of Marseille-Fos had experienced the steady erosion of their hard-won protections, with increasingly precarious work conditions since Sarkozy's port reforms of 2008, despite being a strongly unionized workforce. In the context of precarious reforms, both younger and older generations of dockers had adopted defensive strategies to continue their legacy of struggle. For the younger dockers, the continuation of the dockers' political culture of solidarity and struggle was based on the notion of an inherited obligation to continue the dockers' struggle by stemming the tide of rolled-back protections. The older dockers had preserved the cultural as well as political legacy of struggle through training younger dockers and

through keeping an online archive of dockers' memories. This act of preserving collective memory and heritage anticipates future loss, a virtual 'site of memory' (Nora 1989) that echoes similar collections housed in the CASA (Community Advice Service Agency) sacked dockworkers' pub in Liverpool and in the International Longshoremen's Association union hall in New Orleans. The Marseille-Fos dockers were fighting to hold onto the last remains of an outmoded system of labour organization, a unique combination of permanence and casualism that had prevailed on the docks since 1947. This semi-permanent, semi-casual labour pool system was defined by trade union power and high levels of occupational inheritance, the basis for intergenerational collective identity and struggle.

Dock labour in Marseille: Precarious reforms

The dockers in Marseille in the first half of the twentieth century were known as 'chiens des quais' ('dogs of the quays') because of the difficulty, danger, and long hours of dock labour (Domenichino and Guillon 1999). Dockers were hired on a casual basis, reporting to the docks daily to see if they would be hired, and the work was physically very demanding, dangerous, and irregular. Many migrants from Greece, Italy, and North Africa worked as casual dock labourers when they first arrived in the city, living in slum housing conditions near the docks. However, Marseille did not conform to the mythology of inter-ethnic solidarity on the docks; indeed, there were intense conflicts between French and migrant dockers (De Vries 2000; Sewell 1988). These conflicts are explored in Ousmane Sembène's novel *Le Docker Noir* (1956), which recounts the difficult experiences of a Senegalese migrant docker in Marseille in the 1950s, who faced poverty, insecurity, and racial discrimination (discussed in Chapter 2).

For most of its history, dock work in Marseille has been characterized by male-dominated casual labour (Davies 2000). Like in many other port cities such as Liverpool, port employers in Marseille made a number of attempts throughout the twentieth century to regularize dock labour. A law was passed in France in 1947 which ensured that dock work would be arranged through a labour pool system, where port operators hired casual dock workers through labour pools. However, it practice, the French system of hiring dockworkers remained predominantly casual in nature (Turnbull 2000: 373). The labour pool system that was introduced in 1947 divided workers into two categories: 'professional' dockers who were guaranteed a minimal level of regular employment, and occasional

dockers who received no such guarantees. In this system, dock work in French ports was in principle managed by the BCMO (Bureau Centre de la Main d'Oeuvre), the statutory employment office for dockers in each port, but in practice it was managed by the trade unions (Notteboom 2010: 66).

The vocation of a docker in Marseille was traditionally passed down from father to son. Similar occupational inheritance practices have been echoed on the docks in other port cities around the world, including in other French port cities such as Le Havre (Barzman 2000). For the Marseille dockers, occupational inheritance dates back to the early 1800s, but it has changed over time, fluctuating between formal and informal practices.[4] With the passing of the French labour pool law in 1947, the system of vocational inheritance effectively became institutionalized, through the introduction of a license card (une carte de garantie de docker or 'G carte') for the professionalized dockers' vocation. The dockers' protected 'professional' status became restricted to those who could earn or inherit a card licensing them to work as a docker (Notteboom 2010). In the context of a shrinking dock labour market, this meant that the occupation became almost completely closed to outsiders, including migrants and also women, as the cards were passed from father to son, or from uncle to nephew.

By the 1960s, the hiring of permanent dockworkers in Marseille had become unattractive to employers because they were required by the government to finance the wage guarantee of the 'professional' dockers and the administration costs of the BCMO, and the employers abandoned this system (Jensen 1964: 270). However, with the onset of containerization, the employers tried once again to introduce a system of permanent employment. After several major disputes, the employers negotiated a new system of hiring professional permanent dockers for up to six months before being returned to the BMCO (Turnbull 2000: 373).

Permanent employment of dockers continued to be a major objective for French port employers, culminating in the abolition of the BCMO in 1989, which paved the way for subsequent port reforms. However, paradoxically, this objective was in fact linked to the promotion of greater labour flexibility in the context of globalization. As Turnbull (2000: 378–379) explains:

> Although dock labor schemes and conditions of employment vary substantially from one port to another, the demands of international shipping lines and the new global port operators are almost

> everywhere uniform: employment is increasingly based on a functionally flexible 'core' and a numerically flexible 'periphery', with all dockers expected to accept greater temporal flexibility.
>
> (Turnbull 2000: 378–379)

Attempts to reform port employment after 1989 were met with considerable resistance from dockers. In 1992, the French government passed new legislation which aimed to abolish the 1947 system of labour pools and to decasualize port labour by making dockers become regular employees in dock enterprises. Although the port employers recognized that this move would reduce numerical flexibility of occasional dockers, their main concern was 'to finally rid the ports of *professional* casual dockers and break the unions' control over labor supply and the daily allocation of dockers to specific jobs' (Turnbull 2000: 385). The dockers were very unhappy with the reforms: they wanted to retain their historic status as professional casual dockers and insisted that they should be recognized as industry rather than company employees. A number of national and local dockers' strikes over these reforms were organized in French ports between 1992 and 1994. Marseille was particularly resistant, organizing over 100 strike days during this period (Turnbull 2000: 389). Despite the aims of the 1992 reforms to fully abolish the casual labour pools, some pools still remain for pre-1992 casual dock workers with the G card, including Marseille (Notteboom 2010). However, since 1992, new dockworkers have no longer been granted the coveted status of 'G card', and it is expected that the status will fully disappear by 2020 (Notteboom 2010).

In 2008, Sarkozy introduced significant port reforms in aimed at further restructuring the ports, whereby port authorities were renamed under a single authority (the port authority of Marseille became the 'Grand Port Maritime de Marseille') and operations would be managed under the sole authority of the port operators. Dockers in the major port cities of Marseille and Le Havre went on strike numerous times in 2008 and 2009 to protest against the 2008 reforms. Since 2008, the docks have continued to be a major site of struggle and conflict in Marseille, with regular strikes over wages, status, health and safety issues, and recognition for the 'pénibilité au travail', or the pain and physical hardship associated with dock labour (interview, Marseille-Fos dockworker, 20 January 2010).

According to a report on European dock labour in 2010 (Notteboom 2010), the port of Marseille-Fos had approximately 1000 'professional' dockers and 500 'occasional' dockers. Approximately 25 per cent of

these professional dockers received a regular wage and were recorded on the pay list of a single operator (Notteboom 2010: 68). The remaining 75 per cent of professional dockers and all of the casual dockers were in the labour pools (one labour pool for 'G card dockers' and another for 'new dockers'), were recruited on a daily basis, and could work for more than one operator. The casual labour pools are organized through the CGT (General Confederation of Labour) trade union, which represents 90 per cent of dockworkers in France. These labour pools are among the last in France. The Marseille-Fos dockworkers expressed contradictory narratives about the casual labour pools: on the one hand, it was seen as a point of pride to have one of the last casual hiring halls in France that was still run by the trade union, but on the other hand, dockers complained about the increasingly casual nature of their employment and the inequalities between different categories of workers. The restoration and preservation of the historical professional dockers' status is one of the key issues that the dockers of Marseille-Fos have been fighting for.

Sarkozy's port reforms have differentially impacted the two main sets of dockworkers at Marseille-Fos. Before the 2008 reforms, the western and eastern ports already had different specialisms, with more cruise traffic and bulk cargo at the western port, and the majority of container traffic at the eastern port (Merk and Comtois 2012). However, the reforms accentuated the differences between the ports. The western port of Marseille-Fos was designated the premier container cargo port in France, while the eastern port of Marseille became primarily devoted to cruise ship traffic. Throughout 2013, the dockers in the eastern port of Marseille were involved in a series of industrial actions, where they burned tyres and caused blockages, protesting, without any success, for their 'right' to load and unload cruise ships as part of their professional dockers' remit. While the dockers in the western port benefited from increased demand for dock labour, they supported their eastern port 'brothers' in this struggle because they were interested in the well-being and equality of work and protections for all dockers (interview, Marseille-Fos CGT dockworker, 9 July 2013).

The legacy of struggle

Alfred Pacini, the son of Italian immigrants, worked as a docker between 1948 and the 1980s in Marseille. His memoir *Docker à Marseille* (Pacini and Pons 1996) is a vivid first-hand account of working life on the docks in Marseille. Pacini recounts the daily grind of arriving at 6:30 am at the docks on Place de la Joliette to try to be recruited by the dock

employers, the hard labour of dock work, and the drastic changes in his working environment with the advent of containerization. The epilogue to Pacini's memoir is written by his son, who began working as a docker in his father's footsteps in the 1980s. Pacini's son describes the ritual of passing a dockers' vocation from father to son through the card as not only a right but an honour, carrying on the tradition of solidarity and struggle that previous generations had fought for. This narrative was echoed in my interviews with old and young generations of dockers between 2010 and 2013, showing a strong sense of intergenerational collective memory, even in the context of change.

I interviewed six of the younger dockworkers at Marseille-Fos, all in their mid-twenties, and all who had fathers and grandfathers who had been dockers. They claimed that 100 per cent of the dockers in Marseille-Fos were the sons of dockers, although perhaps this was exaggerated, as in the case of the Liverpool sacked dockworkers' claims (interview, 22 June 2010). Like the Liverpool dockers, they spoke with great passion about their pride in their vocation and their strong sense of camaraderie on the docks, as a community and an extended family. Older dockworkers echoed these sentiments, but also worried about how to continue to teach increasingly depoliticized younger generations about the history and values of trade unionism.

However, although the Marseille-Fos dockers were positive about the sense of fellowship on the docks, they were less positive about their actual work than the sacked dockworkers of Liverpool, and their accounts related far more to those of the disgruntled Seaforth dockers. This is unsurprising, given that they were also active workers, although it is also telling. The perception within the media is that the Marseille dockers are over-paid and have too many protections, including informal benefits such as the 'G' card and monthly bonuses (Seznec 2006). However, the dockers spelled out a different reality of their working experiences. They stressed the tremendous physical difficulty of the work, the high risk of accidents, and the lack of security: having to report each day for the 'call', having to work very long hours, and relying on overtime and times of overwork because of fluctuations in demand for labour. To some extent, these fluctuations would even out over the course of a year because the trade union would oversee allocations and try to balance out work levels between the semi-regular dockers. They highlighted, in other words, the insecurity and casual nature of the job, despite its regularization through the trade union. Their accounts showed the lived experiences of the structural reforms in French dock labour since Sarkozy's reforms in 2008.

The family tradition of dockworkers was a very strong part of the work identity of dock work in Marseille. However, this cherished tradition and sense of familial community was not only seen in a positive light: it was seen as directly under threat. In this way, the Marseille-Fos dockers' narratives paralleled those of the Liverpool sacked dockers, with a sense of impending loss. In fact, one of the CGT union leaders, Serge, told me several times during our discussions between 2010 and 2013 that the example of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike had really hit home for them, as a worst case example of what could happen. The Marseille dockers were among the many supporters of the Liverpool dockers. A declaration of support for the strike, written in French, as well as a plaque, are displayed on the walls of the CASA sacked dockworkers pub in Liverpool. The Liverpool dockers received similar declarations of support from dockers around the world, but the Marseille dockers were among the strongest supporters.[5]

Several of the younger Marseille-Fos dockworkers described an acute sense of inherited obligation to previous generations of dockworkers to carry on their struggle. As one of the dockworkers reflected:

> There is a sentimental aspect in which you want to do as your ancestors did because they have left us difficult working conditions, but a high level of social conditions that are not found elsewhere. They have salaries above the national average. They have social advantages, social security that that have won through big struggles in history that we are proud of today. All the dockers care because it's for us, but it's also for the future, and it's for our ancestors. There is a link . . . it's a great family.
>
> (interview, 22 June 2010)

Another younger dockworker echoed this view, saying: 'It's a family thing. You see, my grandfather struggled, my father struggled, and now I struggle for my children and the future generations to defend our profession as dockers' (interview, 22 June 2010). The dockers' narratives of family and inheritance relate to the idea within social memory studies of 'second-hand memory' or 'long-term memory' (Cappelletto 2003; Popov 2012) passed on through generations rather than through direct experience. The narratives also resonate with Olick and Robbins' (1998: 129) 'instrumental persistence' ideal type of social memory, whereby 'actors intentionally seek to maintain a particular version of the past, as in orthodoxy or movements to maintain or recover a past.' However, for the younger dockers, social memory related as much to changing

the politics of the present and the future as it did to the persistence of the past: they were carrying on the practice of 'struggle' as an inherited family tradition and as a form of social memory, but the parameters of struggle had changed to a defensive political strategy against the threat of loss.

Pierre, one of the older dockers, expressed a similar view, arguing that the history and culture of solidarity and 'battle' was the most important unifying aspect of dockers' identity, something that was shared among people who were isolated as a profession, and also shared because of family ties which passed down unofficially from father to son (interview, 9 July 2013). However, Pierre also suggested that there were divisions between the generations. He said that by and large, the younger generation was less political than the older generation, and that they were increasingly distracted by their mobile phones and Internet devices. Like the Liverpool sacked dockers, he viewed it as his job to teach the younger generation about the history of trade unionism. Pierre mentioned that there is a training institute to pass on knowledge, skills, and experience from the older to the younger generations in Fos, as well as the union website.

Indeed, the threat of loss of the dockers' long-cherished traditions accounts for the establishment of an online collection of 'dockers' memories' on the CGT Fos Dockers' website (CGT Dockers Fos 2014). The website includes up-to-date information about events and other regular activities of the union. However, it also includes an interesting section devoted to 'mémoires ouvrières' (memories of workers), which features eight online photo albums between 1902 and 2012. These photo albums were assembled to preserve the long history and memory of the Marseille-Fos dockers, following the centennial celebrations of the union in 2002. In many ways, the dockers' online photo albums resemble ordinary family photo albums, strengthening the common narrative of the CGT dockers as one big family. The earlier albums between 1902 and 1980 include black and white photographs of men at work by the ships and the docks throughout different technological phases; dockworkers' meetings and delegations; family and community events; union membership lists; newspaper clippings of strikes and other industrial action; and collective bargaining agreements. The albums between 1981 and 2012 mark a shift, featuring colour photographs of containerized and mechanized dock labour, as well as some photographs of strikes and meetings. A special web album is decided to the dockers' centennial exhibition in 2002, which includes panels from the exhibition featuring old photographs of dockers, paintings and drawings of dockers, old

posters of dockers' campaigns, and material exhibitions of dockers' tools and equipment.

Finally, there a separate section of the website entitled 'archives' which includes several newspaper articles about recent dockers' strikes, and union documents, divided into the different levels of local, national, and international. The archive contains cultural as well as political documents, including an article about an exhibition of photographs of dockworkers at the Dockers' Museum in the city of Rennes, France, and a poster for an exhibition on the art and culture of work at Port de Bouc in 2012, which was co-produced with the Marseille-Provence European Capital of Culture 2013. This recent engagement with culture was particularly interesting, despite the fact that the older dockworkers, when asked about the Capital of Culture, dismissed it as disconnected from the culture of the dockers and ordinary workers (group interview, 9 July 2013). The online dockers' photo albums and archives, like the CASA sacked dockworkers' pub in Liverpool (see Chapter 5) and the local history projects of the International Longshoremen's Association in New Orleans (see Chapter 7), represents a 'site of memory' (Nora 1989). For Nora, sites of memory are created in moments of loss, when a community begins the process of recovering its collective memory. In this case, the moment of loss is anticipated, rather than complete.

Dock work in Marseille, like in many other port cities around the world including Liverpool and New Orleans, is strongly connected to intergenerational family traditions that are passed down from father to son. Both younger and older dockworkers have fought to keep the memory and legacy of collective struggle alive. Their strategies are defensive, working hard to stop further encroachments on their working conditions, their historical status, and their intergenerational memory. Their defensive strategies have encouraged insularity and protectionism within the dockers' community.

At the time of my research, there was no equivalent to the 'Women on the Waterfront' of Liverpool. Indeed, such a movement might only emerge in such a specific moment of crisis, like the women in the UK Miners' Strike of 1984. One of the older dockworkers told me in an interview, without prompting, that there were no female dockworkers because of the long-standing masculine work culture, although he said that the union would welcome female members in principle (interview, 20 January 2010).[6] He also pointed out that the CGT Dockers employ a number of women in their trade union in administrative and advocacy roles, and he highlighted the wider values and principles of

the CGT in campaigning against discrimination and protecting workers from all backgrounds. In terms of ethnic diversity, he said that the dockworkers welcomed people of all backgrounds and were anti-racist, although given the high level of occupational inheritance, many were the descendants of previous generations of French and Mediterranean migrant dockers. This account closely parallels the Liverpool sacked dockworkers' justifications for the lack of diversity on the docks, as a product of structure rather than design.

The younger dockworkers spoke about their working environment in relation to male camaraderie, solidarity, and family ties. They also spoke about the impact of the work on their family lives, as work-life balance was one of the key challenges of their jobs. When asked how they balance their private lives with their work, the dockworkers all stressed that their family lives were disrupted by the necessity to be available at all times, on call, for work. For example, one dockworker in his late twenties replied:

> It's very difficult to have a balance between work and life with work schedules. My partner tells me often, 'you are not out of work after you sleep'. Well it takes effort, when you're tired in the afternoon you take time for yourself, you go out with your family, and you rest another day. I think that it's difficult to balance the two.
>
> (interview, 22 June 2010)

Another young dockworker similarly complained: 'At our house there is no weekend, it doesn't exist. Seven days out of seven. We work all the time' (interview, 22 June 2010). A further young dockworker echoed this view: 'Work in the morning and night and sleep in the afternoon; our partners don't see us during the day' (interview, 22 June 2010). These complaints about work-life balance were shared by all six of the young dockworkers who I interviewed.

The younger dockworkers' accounts highlight the persistence of casual employment on the docks in Marseille-Fos, despite the move towards permanent employment of regular professional dockers since the port reforms of 2008. They also point to an interesting contradiction within their collective narrative about security. The dockworkers were upset about their irregular working conditions, which were all the more evident given divisions between the different types of status among dockers. However, these younger dockworkers were part of the traditional (since 1947) labour pool system of casual workers organized through the CGT. Since the port reforms of 1992, the dockers

had been fighting to keep the quasi-permanent, quasi-casual status of the old labour pools, despite the insecurity and irregularity inherent within this system. Part of the heritage of the Marseille-Fos dockers, in other words, included the casual nature of the work, but they wanted to have it on their own, unionized terms rather than on the terms of their employers.

Conclusion

In my last interview at the hiring hall in Marseille-Fos in July 2013, Serge, an older dockworker, asked me what I was going to write about them. I asked if he was worried about being represented in a negative way, like the typical media portrayals of dockworkers. He laughed and said, 'We are not the mafia. Do we look like the mafia?' I responded, naturally, that they didn't. However, one could say that they did look just a bit like one might *imagine* the mafia to look like, from the American movies: big guys, some with gold chains around their necks, many of Greek or Italian descent. Indeed, the connections between the dockers and the mafia—perpetuated in media accounts and cultural representations—lingered as an underlying question in each of the dockers' communities that I researched, particularly in Marseille and New Orleans. Why were such assertions made, and where did they come from? Was it simply a case of anti-unionism, or was there any evidence of such connections?

It was beyond the methodological scope of my research to find out whether the docks were linked to any violent organized crime and corruption networks, like the shady characters on the Baltimore docks of *The Wire*. In any event, I was interested in the dockers' narratives about political struggle, collective identity, and experiences of changes in dock labour, not in the mafia. However, the theme of the mafia nonetheless emerged with my research. In Marseille, it was used more as an analogy than an explicit allegation, a way of making sense of the informal networks of patronage, benefits, family connections, and forms of power within an exclusive community like the dockers, operating slightly outside of the traditional rules and boundaries of capital and the state. One could describe such a community as the mafia, in a pejorative sense, like the media's accounts, or one could describe it as a last bastion of working-class solidarity and radicalism, in a hagiographic sense, like the dockers' own accounts. However, my analysis showed that the dockers' community was more complicated than such a dichotomy would suggest, both politically radical and socially conservative.

The dockworkers at the western port of Marseille-Fos presented strong narratives about the importance of continuing the intergenerational legacy of the dockers' struggle. They represented this as a struggle to reclaim and to preserve the hard-won protections and status of previous generations, but also as a continuation of the long-standing tradition of struggle itself, as part of the dockers' collective history and identity. Yet at the same time, there was a sense that an era was coming to a close. The Marseille-Fos dockers belonged to a powerful union that was in the process of slowly but steadily losing its power and authority. The dockers were holding their ground, but their strategy was increasingly defensive, fighting to stem the tide of losses. With the phasing out of the G-card and the old labour pools, it seemed that the historical dockers' status in Marseille, like the continuity between generations after the Liverpool Dockers' Strike, was in the process of passing into the realm of collective memory.

7

Ruination and Recovery: Keeping the Longshoremen's History in Post-Katrina New Orleans

In 2005, the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) 'black' union hall in New Orleans was destroyed during Hurricane Katrina.[1] Elderly longshoremen wept as they dismantled the ruins of the building. Why was this demolished building so important to them? The black local union hall was built in 1959 during segregation (Figure 7.1). Historically, longshoremen in New Orleans were divided into two unions, one black and one white, from the late nineteenth century until 1980, when there was a court-ordered merger between the two formerly segregated longshoremen's locals. The merged union became ILA Local 3000[2] and remained in the 1959 hall, in practice carrying on the history and the core membership of the black union. According to the ILA 3000 longshoremen, who I interviewed in April and December 2013, the union hall was very significant within the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at the hall shortly after its opening in 1959. The hall also hosted Reverend Joseph Lowery and other leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). As one of the largest halls in the city, the ILA union hall was one of the only places for the black community and other marginalized social groups to gather, a place for gay balls, Mardi Gras Indian events, funerals, second lines (brass band parades), and jazz and blues concerts. The destruction of the former hall in 2005 severed long-standing links between the docks and the community.

Economic recovery on the docks after Hurricane Katrina occurred relatively quickly. The longshoremen were among the first to return to the city of New Orleans after Katrina, given the importance of restoring trade within the port. Without a union hall, the ILA Local 3000 had to operate out of a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailer

Figure 7.1 Black International Longshoreman's Association Union Hall, 1959, framed photograph in the ILA union hall on Tchoupitoulas Street, New Orleans, April 2013

for years following the storm. In an effort to reclaim something tangible from their history, they tried to purchase their original black union hall, which had preceded the modernist 1959 hall. It was then a vacant property owned by a lawyer's family, but the owner refused to sell it (interview, Kenneth, President, ILA 3000, 10 December 2013). In January 2012, the ILA Local 3000 was finally able to move into a new building, an impersonal concrete office immediately facing the docks. However, at the time of my research in 2013, the cultural and symbolic recovery of the docks was still far from being complete. Since securing the new ILA building, the leaders of the ILA had been actively involved in trying to recover their local history, through collecting photographs and oral history narratives of elderly longshoremen, ordering documents from various sources, and storing local history records on their computers. This initiative resembled the online strike archive of the Liverpool dockers (Chapter 5) and the online CGT trade union archive of the Marseille-Fos dockers (Chapter 6) as a 'site of memory' (Nora 1989). However, it was at a different phase: Liverpool's was an old record of

a past history, Marseille's was an ongoing record of an active but threatened history, and New Orleans was an attempt to recover a record of a history that had been physically and symbolically devastated during Hurricane Katrina.

For many people, dockworkers are symbols of port cities, having represented the labour backbone of port economies for centuries, and some of the strongest campaigns for labour protections and solidarity (see Chapters 2, 5, and 6). New Orleans is no different, except that its port city identity has faded from collective urban memory in recent decades. Despite the prosperity of the port and the high volume of cargo passing through New Orleans, the docks are no longer a dominant presence in the contemporary urban imagination. Warehouses, roads, railway lines, tall flood walls, and gates block connections between the city and its river (see Chapter 3). Indeed, among other competing urban identities of the Crescent City—as the birthplace of jazz and Mardi Gras, as a hedonistic 'city that care forgot', and as a city still reeling from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina—the docks are far from many residents' everyday lives.

When I conducted my research in New Orleans in 2013, residents were intrigued by my topic: the docks seemed a foreign and mysterious place to them, disconnected from the everyday life of locals. 'In all my time living in New Orleans', one resident commented, 'I have never been down to the docks. I have never met a longshoreman' (interview, 15 April 2013). Others described seeing containers and cranes when they drove along Tchoupitoulas, the street which passes alongside the docks, to the west of the city. Some residents spoke about meeting elderly longshoremen who were involved in the Mardi Gras parades and the floats; one person knew a Mardi Gras Indian Chief who had been a longshoreman (interview, 12 April 2013). But in general, in contemporary New Orleans, the longshoremen were associated more with the past than the present.

In contrast with Liverpool and Marseille, which have relatively recent scholarship on the dockers, including extended local histories showcasing the port identities of each city, the majority of scholarship on the New Orleans longshoremen focuses on the decades around the turn of the twentieth century. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, dock labour in New Orleans was a distinctive example of 'biracial unionism' (Arnesen 1994), where black and white unions worked together to campaign for labour rights. This was a relative exception within the US South during the time of segregation, and several

historians have researched the dynamics of race, labour, and unionism in New Orleans and the American South in this time period (Arnesen 1994; Nelson 1988; Rosenberg 1988; Stokes and Halpern 1994).

Relatively little has been written specifically about the New Orleans longshoremen in the post-war era, with the exception of some unpublished M.A. and PhD theses (Ambrose 1998; Miller 1962; Wells 1979). Between the 1950s and the 1980s, research on longshoremen has focused more broadly on the politics of the ILA (the umbrella trade union of the New Orleans longshoremen), including examples from a number of ILA ports, including New Orleans. The key labour issues during the post-war period related to trade union struggles in the context of containerization, heavy job losses, and corruption scandals (cf. Herod 1997, 1998; Kimeldorf 1988; Nelson 1988; Weinhauer 1997). One of the most significant changes for trade unions in New Orleans and Louisiana during the post-war period was the passage of anti-union 'right-to-work' legislation in 1976, which make it illegal for unions to insist that employees join their unions as a condition of employment (cf. Canak and Miller 1990). This had a considerable impact on the ILA in New Orleans, as it weakened the strength and solidarity of the union, and it forced them to work alongside non-unionized companies and workers (ILA interviews, April 2013).

Since the 1980s, very little research has focused on longshoremen's labour struggles, in New Orleans or elsewhere in the United States. Periodic disputes, stoppages, and scandals have been reported in the media but, by and large, attention has shifted away from the docks and, arguably, away from labour history more generally. Containerization reduced waterfront workforces in ports throughout the United States from tens of thousands to hundreds within a decade, and trade unionism in the United States weakened in the anti-union post-New Deal era of the 1980s (cf. Herod 1998; Nelson 1988; Weinhauer 1997). The iconic, rough yet romantic image of longshoremen from the days of Marlon Brando in the 1954 film *On the Waterfront* is a far cry from the images today of longshoremen driving trucks and lifting containers in securitized, computerized, and labour-efficient docks.

One of the few contemporary resources about the longshoremen of New Orleans is a ten minute video compilation of student interviews with elderly retired longshoremen in New Orleans, conducted by a history class of students in 2012 and produced by Loyola University Documentary and Oral History Studio (available online: see Loyola DOHS 2012). These videos offer an insight into the collective

memory and identity of New Orleans longshoremen, through their recollections of how working life used to be on the docks, and of the changes that took place over the years. However, these stories also reproduce a sense of the 'past', as oral histories of the way that things used to be, rather than tracing continuities, disruptions, and labour politics into the present. The longshoremen told me about this resource, and they recalled their efforts to gather together some of the elderly longshoremen for the students. They offered to do the same for me, as they felt that the perspectives of elderly longshoremen gave the richest historical information about their community.

My research with the longshoremen of New Orleans in April and December 2013 included informal interviews with six middle-aged ILA longshoremen and six elderly retired longshoremen, as well as ethnographic observations of daily activities at the longshoremen's ILA office, the daily hiring centre, and the docks.[3] In comparison with previous studies of New Orleans longshoremen, my research was somewhat unusual. I was not motivated by a particular labour struggle or conflict, nor was I concerned to capture 'the way things used to be'. Rather, I was interested in tracing the collective memory, identity, and experiences of longshoremen in New Orleans, and what they revealed about the wider politics of labour and urban identity in the city. How did they compare with the militant dockers, strong working-class identities, and politics of labour struggle in Liverpool and Marseille? Despite their apparent marginality, how significant were the docks for communities and for collective memory?

My research revealed that the wider regional contexts of the east coast ILA and of right-to-work anti-union legislation in Louisiana had fostered a pragmatic concern for the New Orleans longshoremen with security and strategic cooperation with employers, non-unionized longshoremen, and different craft unions (as explained further below, the ILA in New Orleans was divided along racial lines into different craft unions following official desegregation), rather than with principles of trade union solidarity. Interviews with the longshoremen suggested that interracial cooperation between black and white workers had continued, despite continued racial divisions of labour, since the 1970s and 1980s, rather than ending in the early twentieth century. Finally, despite the conservative reputation of the ILA, the ILA local unions in New Orleans have in fact had a strong relationship with civil rights history. The longshoremen of New Orleans were equally concerned with economic and cultural preservation of their unique African-American labour and community history.

Dock labour in New Orleans: Race, unionism, and the right to work

At the turn of the twentieth century, thousands of black and white men worked on the docks in New Orleans, moving cotton, sugar, tobacco, and other goods up and down the Mississippi River. New Orleans had prospered as one of the largest ports in the world in the mid-nineteenth century, but by the end of the century, the port had lost national significance due to competition from railroad lines and other regional ports. The most dangerous, monotonous, and low paid waterfront jobs were done by black workers, as roustabouts, coal wheelers, teamsters, and loaders, while both white and black workers worked in the higher paid jobs as longshoremen, cotton yardmen, and cotton screwmen. Despite these divisions, all dock labour was inherently casual, even for the most well-paid and skilled class of waterfront workers, the cotton screwmen, who were considered the 'aristocrats of the levee' (Arnesen 1994: 42).

Between 1880 and the early 1890s and between 1901 and 1923, New Orleans dockworkers created a biracial labour movement that was exceptional, particularly in the context of the racially segregated South.[4] This system was born out of economic necessity and strategic cooperation rather than principles of interracial solidarity, and it did not achieve racial equality, but rather a pragmatic system of work-sharing and unified collective action (Arnesen 1994; Rosenberg 1988). However, following a major dockworkers' strike in 1923, there was a significant decline in union power which lasted throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and seriously undermined biracial unionism on the docks. Different phases of interracial cooperation and conflict on the docks continued following this early 'golden era'. These dynamics have received little attention within the literature, except for passing mention in broader studies of race and the American labour movement (cf. Brown and Allen 2001; Nelson 2002).

The complex histories of the ILA and the ILWU (International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union) are important for understanding the specific union history of the New Orleans longshoremen. The ILA and the ILWU represent the two main longshoremen's trade unions in the United States. The ILA traces its roots to the 1870s, officially named the International Longshoremen's Association in 1895 to reflect its growing Canadian membership. The ILWU was founded as a splinter union from the original ILA in 1937, led by the San Franciscan dockworker 'Red' Harry Bridges and emerging out of an

ideological split between conservative unionism and radical leftist unionism (cf. Kimeldorf 1988; Nelson 1988; Weinhauer 1997). The east coast ILA was dominated by New York, and was known not only for conservatism but for its links with organized crime, while the west coast ILWU was known for its militant syndicalism and associations with communism. *Strong in the Struggle* (Brown 2001), a biography of the black labour activist Lee Brown, details how the ILA and the ILWU competed to gain black support in New Orleans following the emergence of the ILWU in 1937. The Louisiana legislature expressed deep concern over the ILWU's appeal to thousands of black workers, denouncing 'communism' and the 'organization of negroes' that 'endanger(ed) white supremacy' (Brown 2001: 54). Although the ILA ultimately won the 1938 vote to represent the majority of the longshoremen in New Orleans, a small ILWU unit nonetheless remained active, which campaigned not only for workers' rights but also for civil rights, until its local decline in the 1950s.

The two unions represented opposing but also revealing political dynamics within America. Following the Second World War, both unions were expelled from their respective labour federations, the ILWU for its links to communism and the ILA for its corruption and gangsterism (cf. Kimeldorf 1988). In the era of containerization, the two unions adopted different strategies of political action: the ILA fiercely resisted containerization as a threat to job security, while the ILWU accepted containerization and fought for job quality (Waters 1993). The New Orleans longshoremen followed the path of the ILA, although as a Southern Gulf port, they remained physically and socioeconomically distant from the core concerns of the east coast North Atlantic ports.

Prior to the 1950s, ILA union contracts were negotiated on a port to port basis. However, this presented challenges, due to the ability for ships to bypass ports with different wages and conditions. In the 1950s, the ILA negotiated a regional 'master contract' across its member ports. This move faced considerable resistance from southern employers, particularly in New Orleans and Mobile. They did not want to pay the higher wages and felt that the terms favoured New York rather than southern port conditions, for example the concern about containerization of industrial goods rather than bulk agricultural cargo (cf. Herod 1997). The negotiation of master contracts was useful for meeting some of the challenges of collective bargaining on waterfronts in the global age. However, this system was undermined in the 1980s, when several

of the trade union locals in the Gulf broke with the master contracts to accept lower pay, in order to compete with non-union labour. This represented a deep schism within the ILA, and it was only partially remedied through the stipulation of exceptions to the master contract for specific issues affecting Gulf ports, for example lower wages for non-containerized cargo (Herod 1997).

Although the New Orleans longshoremen felt pressure to compete with non-unions, they continued to campaign for their own protections. For example, they went on strike in 1986 over the issues of overtime pay and the size of work crews. An interesting contrast with radical leftist unions, however, was the longshoremen's equal distrust of capitalism and communism. As one striking worker commented during a strike in 1986 in New Orleans, 'The steamship companies are greedy—just like the Communists. They want everything' (Houston Chronicle 1986).

The problem of non-union labour in Gulf ports was in fact very significant for the longshoremen in New Orleans. It came up in all of my interviews with longshoremen as a traumatic event in their history: the introduction of anti-union right-to-work legislation in Louisiana in 1976 (cf. Canak and Miller 1990). Right-to-work laws make it illegal to include union security provisions in collective bargaining agreements. This legislation enabled the growth of non-union workers and non-union companies throughout Louisiana, driving down working conditions and pay. I asked Robert, the Vice President of the New Orleans ILA Local 3,000, what he thought was their greatest challenge, and he responded: 'Right to work. Right to work, where now when this work used to be 100 per cent of ours, now it might be 60–40, with us being 40 and non-union being 60' (interview, 10 December 2013). Chris, the Secretary Treasurer of the ILA 3000, expressed a similar view: 'So we've been a part of the community, a linchpin, we've been, you know, closely involved in the community for quite some time, until of course, right to work came about, that's when we started to recognize our decline' (interview, 12 April 2013).

The historical record of the New Orleans longshoremen is far from complete, as most of the explicit scholarly research has concentrated on the turn of the twentieth century, and later dynamics of the ILA and right-to-work legislation only suggest the broader context. Rather than seeking to fill the complex historical record, however, my ethnographic research with the New Orleans longshoremen at ILA Local 3000 focused on contemporary narratives about labour memory, history, identity, and politics which reveal wider historical and urban dynamics.

Security and cooperation

At the time of my field research, the ILA in New Orleans remained racially divided by craft, with approximately 80 per cent black dockers and stevedores in the largest local, ILA 3000, and 95 per cent white workers in both the clerk and maintenance locals, with 567, 77, and 23 members, respectively, as of April 2013 (interview, Kenneth, President of the ILA Local 3000, 12 April 2013). Furthermore, there were racial divisions between union and non-union workers. The non-union longshoremen, who had approximately 60 per cent of available work on the docks, were predominantly white, while the unionized, predominantly black workers had only 40 per cent of available work (interview, Robert, Vice President of the ILA 3000, 10 December 2013). My interviews with longshoremen suggested that the primary problem on the docks was the issue of union versus non-union labour. However, the longshoremen framed the problem as relating to the impact of right-to-work (anti-union legislation) since the late 1970s, rather than in terms of race. In fact, despite fairly stark racial divisions of labour, the longshoremen downplayed any suggestion of racial conflict. They encouraged me to speak with the white longshoremen's craft unions for their perspective, and they said that they worked in harmony, albeit separately, with white union and non-union workers. Above all, they emphasized the importance of cooperation, which they saw as the most pragmatic strategy in the interests of maintaining job security. This strategy has historical roots in the early history of interracial cooperation at the turn of the twentieth century (cf. Arnesen 1994; Rosenberg 1988).

The longshoremen had inherited a complex casual hiring system, with a system of seniority based on years spent on the docks, with, in descending order, A1s, A2s, A3s, Bs, and casuals. With the exception of a few regular 'house' longshoremen who bypassed the hiring centre and went straight to the companies, each longshoreman, regardless of union affiliation, had to call at the dock first thing in the morning. Like docks in ports around the world since the earliest days of shipping, the work comes and goes with the volume of shipping, ranging from ten to hundreds of workers employed on a given day. I visited the outdoor hiring centre just up the street from the ILA Office one afternoon and talked to some of the people who were hanging around slouched around a table, chatting. They hadn't been hired that day but were waiting around on the off-chance of work coming in during the afternoon. One longshoreman was off on long-term disability and had sought out the company of the others, to pass the time. The hiring

centre was half-disused, built to hold many more longshoremen, with faded signs listing the different categories of workers.

The ILA longshoremen in New Orleans had experienced a significant decline in their numbers since the 1970s and 1980s, not only due to right-to-work, but also due to containerization and mechanization. The issue of job security in increasingly difficult economic times was the primarily concern for the longshoremen. It was both historic and contemporary, part of the heritage of the longshoremen but also very much part of the present, particularly for the ILA longshoremen who had worked their way up through the seniority system. I interviewed six elderly longshoremen, three black and three white, who had joined the docks between the 1950s and the 1980s and retired in the late 1990s and early 2000s (group interview, 11 December 2013). All of the elderly longshoremen had a nostalgic view about the security that had been offered to them by the docks. They felt that this had been threatened by the introduction of right-to-work, which they associated with the timing of Reagan's quashing of the air traffic controller's strike in 1981. Throughout their accounts, they frequently emphasized that being a unionized longshoreman was 'the best thing' for people of their education and social background:

Longshoreman 1: This was the best job that anybody could ever have, a young man, without an education. You know, I mean it was a labour job. I think my pay, when I started, I think was $2.50 an hour...

Longshoreman 2: It elevated all of us. We could work and buy a car, or buy this, buy a house, buy—so this was the best thing could happen to us. Ain't no better than that. (Group interview, 11 December 2013)

In fact, the elderly longshoremen kept returning to this narrative, particularly after revealing negative stories about the docks. For example, during a discussion about right-to-work and strikes, they started to list several longshoremen who had died suddenly after the end of a major strike in the 1970s. They had all been involved in labour protests in the 1970s, and one of the longshoremen said that he was afraid to leave his home for a week after the strike ended 'because I figured they'd kill me down there on the waterfront with all that baloney'. I asked who they thought was responsible for these deaths, and this is the conversation that followed:

Longshoreman 3: Oh, I have no idea. They ain't gonna come out and tell you. No, you just disappear. Back in them days, them people, everybody—in other words nobody knew what was happening. Certain people was you know, it was the union men. I mean, these people—we're all together but we—things we ain't supposed to be doing, like we wasn't supposed to do this with this royalty thing and all this thing. We were interrupting the good runnings of the union.

Mah: So you think it was the union itself that was –?

Longshoreman 3: Well, I can't say that, you see? If I say that, I don't know who it was. I would be lying to you. You know, but it has to do with trouble; with you creating problems on the waterfront, and it . . . They were powerful leaders, you know, in the South. I mean, you don't get crazy.

Longshoreman 4: Out of all the chaos and everything, God in heaven knows that I was glad to be a part of this waterfront.

Longshoreman 3: Oh yes, that was—

Longshoreman 4: I didn't have anything happen to me.

Longshoreman 3: Look, that was the best thing we could have ever belonged to.

Longshoreman 4: Best thing ever happened to me. The waterfront is something. (Group interview, 11 December 2013)

This conversation showed that the longshoremen were willing to overlook some rather serious suggestions of high level corruption in the interests of their own security. It represented a strong case of what Strangleman (2007) calls 'nostalgia for permanence at work'. It also suggests nostalgia for an outmoded form of trade union politics, akin to Bonnett's (2010) idea of left-wing 'radical nostalgia', but within a conservative union context.

Prompted by this exchange, I asked the elderly longshoremen directly about allegations of corruption on the New Orleans waterfront. One of them replied that they didn't have corruption on the docks anymore due to being 'watched too closely', but 'In the past, I would say back, yes, the mafia ran them, more or less' (interview, 11 December 2013). However, for these elderly longshoremen, the terms 'mafia' and 'corruption' did not seem to carry negative connotations. One longshoreman described the mafia power of the trade union as being about control, power, and protection. He described some of the leading 'powerful union men' as follows: 'Two good people. They really believed in their

men: they took care of their men. You know, I don't know what they did for themselves, but they took care of their men.' In other words, the benefits of security and protection outweighed the costs. These nostalgic narratives echoed the accounts in my previous research (Mah 2012) on former workers in chemical factories in Niagara Falls, who were willing to overlook the negative health consequences of pollution because of their intense nostalgia for the bygone days of full employment and workplace camaraderie.

The values of security were also reflected in several of the ILA longshoremen's accounts. Robert, a third generation longshoreman, described what he had most enjoyed about his job:

> I guess the biggest highlight was just belonging to this organization. As you relate it to present time belonging to this organization was the thing that every morning you woke up you knew you had a job. What it was, even if they didn't have any work you knew that when the work came in it was yours, so we had job security. We had that security knowing that this is our work and in the morning there won't be anybody else out there that will be able to take these jobs away from us.
>
> (interview, 10 December 2013)

His account was also nostalgic in tone, indicating that the ILA could no longer offer the same kind of job security as in the past. However, as contrasted with the retired longshoremen, he also situated the issue of job security firmly within the present and the future, as one of the key objectives of the union:

> As long as we are able to provide our guys with a job, job security, decent wage, healthcare, it helps them to fight all – it helps them to live above the poverty level. It allows them to educate their kids, and then our job provides our members with health benefits which is a marvellous plan.
>
> (interview, 10 December 2013)

Indeed, all of the working longshoremen highlighted the continuing job security offered on the docks. The longshoremen's work has remained highly casual to this day, with longshoremen reporting early every morning to the daily hiring centre. However, there was relative job security and very good wages for longshoremen who had worked their way up the seniority system. One longshoreman who had worked on the

docks for more than 20 years described his initial decision to enter the docks:

> I have worked now with the longshoremen for about twenty years. I'm a third generation longshoreman. I was in college, my father was a longshoreman, uh, he took sick, rheumatoid arthritis, so he had to retire early in my freshman year of college. I started working on the docks, put myself through college, and uh, I ended up here. So I finished college, I went to grad school, and the entire time put myself through school using the docks to finance my education. The time came along when it was time for me to make a decision. Life came into play. I got married, kids, and the docks were providing a comfortable living for my family and myself. And because of economics here, I made a comparable salary to my degree, so I ended up staying on the docks, and I now it's 20 years.
>
> (interview, longshoreman, 12 April 2013)

Many longshoremen began their narratives in this way, by stating that they were a second or third generation longshoreman. Indeed, like in Liverpool and Marseille, the longshoremen of New Orleans could trace long intergenerational male family histories on the docks, with their fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and cousins all working on the docks. They, too, used the language of family, generations, and community on the docks. However, their narratives of family history were framed primarily in relation to security for their families and work community, rather than a radicalized expansive narrative about the principles of solidarity or struggle. Outside of the American ILA union, they had relatively little engagement with international dockworkers' solidarity networks.

Consistent with their roots in the conservative ILA union family, New Orleans longshoremen were not particularly radical, as compared with the dockers in Liverpool and Marseille. Their primary modes of political action were cooperation and negotiation, using trade union tools of strikes and industrial action as necessary, in concert with other ILA Gulf ports, but as a last resort and with the ultimate aim of protecting their own security. They opposed the right-to-work anti-union legislation that had brought about deep mistrust of unions and curbed their powers of organizing. They also strongly believed in and promoted the benefits of being in a union, and they lamented the bad press that unions have received within the city and state. However, the New Orleans longshoremen were not militant, left-leading, or anti-establishment

like their counterparts in Liverpool and Marseille. For example, they worked closely with municipal politicians, police, and judicial authorities. According to Kenneth, ILA President, the longshoremen still have significant clout in municipal politics, despite their reduced numbers, evident in the fact that politicians would frequently turn up at the hiring hall in the early hours of the day near election times. I accompanied Kenneth for breakfast at the Trolley Stop Cafe on St. Charles Avenue, a favourite diner for police and FBI agents, with big trucks in the parking lot and groups of uniformed men around tables with guns. Kenneth greeted most of these men by name, and he told me that this was the safest place in the city.

The longshoremen also worked closely with the companies on the docks, including non-union companies, and emphasized a culture of cooperation rather than confrontation. Kenneth explained this perspective as follows:

> Just because we have non-unions working in the same building with us, we're not going to hold it against them. That's another person trying to take care of his family. So why would we try to hurt them, or do anything to mess with their income, or them taking care of their family? No, we'll talk to you, train you, and see if we can get you to become union. Then again, no, we're not a violent union, in no way and no form . . . I do the same with the non-union companies. It's just; we don't want to hurt you or your company because everybody's out to make a living. We just want to make it better for everybody.
>
> (interview, 12 April 2013)

Kenneth's narrative of cooperation was underpinned by the idea that every person has a family they have to feed. This method of trade union cooperation rather than conflict was consistent with the political context in the city of New Orleans, of years of cooperation between trade unions, churches, and municipal politicians, and years of right-to-work legislation as an everyday working reality (Canak and Miller 1990). This echoed narratives of the other working longshoremen and retired longshoremen. On one level, this view differed sharply with the militant solidarity of dockers in Liverpool and Marseille (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6). However, the cooperation with non-union employees also resonated with the work of the sacked Liverpool dockers, through the idea of trade union teaching through example, rather than conflict. This notion of teaching through example emerged when I pressed Kenneth further on the cooperative ethos of the longshoremen:

Mah: Do you think that's the way everyone thinks?
Kenneth: Should, should, I'm not saying they do, they should.
Mah: So some people would have other views then?
Kenneth: [Imitating other longshoremen] 'I'm not going to help them, I'm not going to show them nothing, I'm not going to train them . . . ' I took over, yes we will. I mean, they're out there to make a living, just like you're making your living. If that's the best they can do for now, good. Show them, train them, teach them what you're doing, and show them how to do it. Maybe one day they'll come over here and do that too. They see you have a better life, they'll try it. If they see you wanting to be violent with them, they're not even going to want to be around you.

Kenneth's account of cooperation was echoed by several other longshoremen, particularly the elderly black and white longshoremen who reminisced about the good old days working together on the docks. It was also supported by the President and CEO of the Port of New Orleans, who told me that the level of union and non-union cooperation on the port was unprecedented, from his experience. He recounted a story about how remarkable it was that the union and non-union longshoremen worked very closely together in the aftermath of Katrina to get the port back up and running (interview, 12 December 2013).

I also had a chance to observe some of the cooperative atmosphere on the docks during a half-day tour with Kenneth in April 2013 (see Figure 7.2). I accompanied him in his big black truck past the port security gates into the various working spaces of the port. He showed me warehouses stacked with metal and plastic; rows of dangerous chemicals from the petrochemical factories up the river that would 'take out four to five city blocks' (see Chapter 8); containers being loaded on trucks, ships, and trains; the different union and non-union companies located along the docks; the casual hiring hall where the longshoremen reported each day; and even the longshoremen dressed in Hawaiian T-shirts at the cruise terminal, loading and unloading passenger luggage. The only other important place that he did not have time to show me, he said, was the massive refrigerated chicken warehouse further along the river. Throughout the tour, Kenneth took pride in showing me the sense of community and networks along the docks, calling each longshoreman by his nickname ('Squirrel', 'Buttercup', 'Doc'), and greeting customs officers, security personnel, port managers, and union and non-union workers alike by name.

Figure 7.2 Container ship, Napoleon Street terminal docks, New Orleans, April 2013

However, for another longshoreman, the history of black and white cooperation on the docks was more complicated and limited in scope:

> Well, for a long time in New Orleans there were two unions, and there was [local] 1418 and [local] 1419. And one was a black union and one was a white union, and they worked on the docks side by side for years until roughly 1982. And that's not a long time, because remember the civil rights' movement was in the 60s. 82. It continued all that time, and then merged, and that's how we became local 3000. Those unions merged, and, back and forth. We enjoyed a brief period where it was great and then not long after, right to work came in.
>
> (interview, 10 April 2013)

For this longshoreman, the history of interracial collaboration between the black and white unions had resumed following the civil rights movement in the 1960s, but then it had declined again with the introduction of right-to-work legislation (introduced in 1976, but which he dates to 1982, following the merger of the two unions). In some ways, this account is counter-intuitive: he suggests that black and white workers

cooperated better as separate unions and that the merger of the two unions undermined this. However, in practice the merged union became the black union rather than the real union of the two former unions. Most of the white workers either went into separate craft unions (the clerk and maintenance unions) or became non-union workers. This reveals that the black and white unionism declined with the introduction of right-to-work, and that the issue of right-to-work was a racial one. At the same time, like Kenneth, he stressed the importance of cooperation in practice.

For the New Orleans longshoremen, at least within the senior ranks of the ILA, the docks continue to offer job security for themselves and their members. They view the system as a ladder, starting with the casual hard jobs at the bottom, and working the way up to greater security and pay through experience. While they recognize that there are obstacles to security, including right-to-work legislation which limits their share of unionized labour, they nonetheless see security as a crucial part of the present and the future, rather than as something that has been irrevocably lost, as in Liverpool, or in danger of imminent loss, as in Marseille. Thus, they have adapted pragmatic strategies to engage with employers and non-union workers, based on negotiation and cooperation, rather than confrontation.

While the longshoremen's focus on security and cooperation may appear to be consistent with conservatism, they nonetheless demonstrated wider commitments and values beyond the workplace. These related to the local history, culture, and identity of the black community and civil rights movement in New Orleans, the topic of the next section.

Ruination and recovery on the waterfront

Beyond day-to-day concerns with economic security and cooperation in their working lives, the ILA longshoremen were also concerned with recovering and preserving their cultural history. I interviewed six middle-aged African-American longshoremen in the ILA union hall in April and December 2013 (individual interviews). They described their economic recovery following Katrina as relatively quick; it was an obstacle, but it did not significantly alter the long-term work flow on the docks. Containerization and right-to-work had been much greater blows to the industry. However, they said that a number of older longshoremen, who had been close to retirement age, never returned to the docks, and that for many of the older black longshoremen,

both working and retired, the destruction of the former union hall during Hurricane Katrina had been devastating. During the course of my research, I learned that two of the ILA longshoremen—Kenneth, the President, and Chris, the Secretary Treasurer—were actively trying to reassemble and recover what was lost during the storm in terms of family and community history through their own local history projects. They were in the process of compiling old photographs, newspaper articles, union records, and other historical documents from a range of sources: local libraries, family homes, and even eBay, as the physical records had been destroyed during Hurricane Katrina. This was something that they felt they owed to their fathers and grandfathers, and it resonated with stories throughout the city of New Orleans post-Katrina.

Chris, a third generation African-American longshoreman, told me that one of his jobs as the Secretary Treasurer of the ILA was 'keeping the history' (interview, 10 April 2013):

Mah: So, tell me a little bit about this history side of the union, what you mean by that, keeping the history?

Chris: Well, the ILA has a rich history here in New Orleans. New Orleans at one time was one of the largest ports in the United States. And until containerization came along, this was probably one of your premier ports, and we boasted 10,000 members. It was also deeply rooted in the civil rights movement because we had one of the first large union halls which was a huge, 40,000 square foot hall, and there were no other places for blacks to go to, so it was key first of all in Martin Luther King speaking there, it was one of his first, when he started the civil rights movement. And it's been deeply rooted in the community there. It also has had quite a bit of effect on other things that go on in New Orleans. The hall, because it was the only place for African Americans to go to and a voting centre, it was also the first place where a lot of your gay balls came about. So it was a place of diversity where you couldn't get your foothold anywhere else, you could always get a place at the ILA in any given year.

This account of 'history' suggests that, in fact, economic and racial issues of labour history were closely entangled. The heyday of large numbers of longshoremen employed on the docks coincided temporally with the civil rights movement, and although separate, they were nonetheless linked in the longshoremen's collective memory.

Chris went on to describe in greater detail the significance of the 'rich history' for the longshoremen, and what it meant in the aftermath of Katrina to lose such a history:

> We have a rich history here. Our families have been here a long time, so it helps us to understand where we're going as well, and what are the really important things. So I think it's good that it's generational. And we don't by any way exclude someone because they don't have a history, it just has become that way because you know, we, I guess, I didn't just come in and someone said 'OK go to work', I had someone teaching me, hands on, the craft and the job.
>
> When Katrina came, we also lost a lot of our rich history unfortunately, under 11 feet of water in that building. It destroyed a lot of that history. Books, archives, pictures, everything was gone . . . so we were lost. We're trying to get older things now, go back, but the only real source we have are the older guys. There are about 2500 [retired longshoremen]. It's hard to get them to open up and talk to you. Or their memory fades and they talk about the same thing over and over again. Or if you do not have a relationship with them or they know someone in common with you, they are reluctant to really open up and explain things.
>
> (interview, 10 April 2013)

Like the Liverpool and Marseille dockers, Chris offered an explanation for intergenerational dynamics of dock work, but in terms of values and hands-on experience rather than a structural problem of exclusion. The destruction of the former ILA hall during Katrina had washed away their history, and much of it was beyond recovery. This loss was more than just physical, as the material objects had been imbued with collective memory and history. Chris emphasized the importance of the great number of elderly longshoremen as oral history resources for this rich history, and he gave several examples: he listed a range of old technical terms, tools and techniques that older longshoremen had used, and admired their ingenuity and craftsmanship. In this way, he enacted a form of 'second-hand memory' (cf. Cappelletto 2003; Popov 2012) through recounting these techniques, which he himself had never used.

Indeed, in my interviews with the elderly black longshoremen, I heard stories about many of these techniques and tools from the 'good old days'. However, I noticed that the black elderly longshoremen who I spoke to did not appear particularly nostalgic about the union hall

or the relationship between the ILA and the civil rights movement. They were somewhat aware of it, but they were far more interested in reminiscing about the good old days of working on the waterfront (interviews, elderly longshoremen, 10 December 2013). In my interviews, the significance of the former ILA union hall as a ruined 'site of memory' (Nora 1989) in fact emerged most strongly for Chris and Kenneth, of the 'middle generation', who were active in the process of recovering social memory.

Kenneth, the ILA President, was an African-American second generation longshoreman. He followed his father, eight uncles, and 30 cousins onto the docks, and he confirmed that like the Liverpool and Marseille dockers, dock work 'stays in the family'. He didn't mention local history during our first interview (12 April 2013). However, after I had returned a few times and gone on the half-day tour of the docks with him, he revealed had his own local ILA history project that he was working on, in the interest of preserving the memory and history of the organization. He showed me some files that he kept on his computer, one a document entitled 'ILA History To Do List', including a list of newspaper articles and books to scan, read, or obtain. Among the titles listed were the 'Longshoremen's Social and Pleasure Club', 'End of the New Orleans Strike- New York Times', *The Negro and Organized Labor* (Marshall 1965), and *Black New Orleans 1860–1880* (Blassingame 1973). In a computer folder dedicated to ILA History, Kenneth showed me a series of scanned photographs and newspaper clippings. These included: photos from the first gay ball in 1973; photos of the two old black union halls, including the destruction of the 1959 hall after Katrina; black and white photos of old ships and longshoremen from the early twentieth century; the poster for the speech at the hall in 1959 by Martin Luther King; and a list of past names of presidents and various versions of the organization.

Kenneth pursued his local history project in his spare time, outside of his day-to-day work as a longshoremen and union president. He made use of the Internet in his efforts to reclaim lost material reminders of his union and family history, through eBay and also through email queries to local libraries. He was deeply committed to this process of digital and archival recovery, as part of his identity and as a second generation African-American longshoreman. Out of his collection, Kenneth's most prized document was an original copy of an article written in 1894 about the Mississippi Roustabouts, which described the early days of the roustabouts, one of the unskilled, low-paid waterfront occupations that was only done by black workers. The article was wrapped in plastic and enclosed in a protective case. He had ordered it on eBay two years

previously for $52.00, out of respect for his father, and he was planning to frame it. He had made a copy for me.

None of the longshoremen spoke about the absence of women on the waterfront, or about their role within families and communities, other than as wives and daughters of longshoremen. However, I gained some insight into a female perspective of the longshoremen's history from Bridget, the receptionist at the ILA office. At first, she was reluctant to speak with me because she was 'just' a receptionist. However, once we starting talking, she gave the most vivid account of the impacts of Katrina out of all of my interviewees, both personally, for her own family, and for the ILA. Bridget had worked for the ILA since the early 1980s. Previously, she had been employed for a non-union company, and she expressed gratitude for the greater security and sense of community offered within the union. Bridget had been responsible for all of the bookings of the gospel concerts, local jazz and blues concerts, weddings, funerals, and other social and cultural events at the former union hall. She brought out the diary for 2005 from her desk, which had somehow survived the storm, and she showed all the bookings on weekends, and then the refunded booking pages after August of that year, when Katrina hit. She emphasized the strong role of the longshoremen in taking care of their families, how the former president of the union had called her at home before the storm and told her to leave the city; and how he had called to check up on her for months until she was able to return to the city.

Bridget also discussed what it was like returning to work after Katrina, how the ILA office was in a single trailer on Napoleon Street by the docks, then in a double trailer on South Claiborne, and had opened at the current location the previous year. She spoke about how the elderly longshoremen really felt that the former hall had been their home, built on their labour, what they had worked for, and although they liked the new hall it wasn't their home. She said that the younger generation, the younger workers, didn't care about this history and didn't share the sense of community with the other workers. Bridget saw herself as between the two generations, having heard stories from the past and started with the workers in the older hall and union collective, but also seeing that the new place was good with lots of space, and closer to the docks, which workers liked because they could go there on their lunch breaks.

In different ways, Chris, Kenneth, and Bridget represented a 'middle' generation, who situated their perspectives between the nostalgic elderly longshoremen and the more detached younger generations

(as they perceived them). Chris and Kenneth were second and third generation longshoremen. They could vividly recall tales of outmoded work practices passed down from their fathers. As such, they had a form of second-hand or long-term memory (cf. Cappelletto 2013; Popov 2012) inherited from previous generations, echoing the younger generations of dockers in Liverpool and Marseille. In particular, they focused their attention on recovering the history and memory that had been invested in the former black ILA union hall that was destroyed during Katrina. While Chris focused his local history efforts on talking with the elderly longshoremen to gain oral history narratives of the past, Kenneth focused his efforts on recovering original and digital historical documents and photographs. Their acts of recovering intergenerational memory were pragmatic, like their work strategy of cooperation, operating out of respect for continuing family traditions and history, but also with a vision of moving ahead and changing with the times. Bridget had been adopted into the longshoremen's family and had come to a similar pragmatic perspective through her daily interactions and observations, as a partial insider and outsider.

Conclusion

Across the generations, New Orleans longshoremen were deeply connected to complex legacies of trade union politics in the city, and to black and white community histories. My research showed that the politics of dock labour in New Orleans was based on narratives of family, community, camaraderie, and trade unionism, as in Liverpool and Marseille, but it was also more conservative, based on pragmatic cooperation rather than conflict, including cooperation between black and white workers, union and non-union workers, between port employers and unions, and between ports. The driving politics of their trade unionism emphasized security rather than solidarity, and operated pragmatically within the constraints of a strongly anti-union state and country. The process of post-Katrina recovery on the docks in New Orleans had not been only economic but also cultural and symbolic, motivated by the intergenerational preservation of black community and family heritage. The former black ILA union hall represented an important ruined 'site of memory' (Nora 1989) for recovering the rich history of generations of African-American longshoremen.

The legacies of ruination and recovery of the New Orleans longshoremen contrasts with the legacies of solidarity and struggle of the Liverpool and Marseille dockers. This example challenges

assumptions about international dockers' trade union politics (cf. Davies 2000) through the unique combination of conservatism, pragmatism, and civil rights activism. Yet all three cases share themes of recovering lost or threatened labour histories connected with particular values—trade union solidarity in Liverpool and Marseille, civil rights activism in New Orleans, and close family and community ties in all three cases—for the sake of future generations. As a diminishing but significant workforce within port cities, dockworkers have rich histories and narratives with important implications for understanding wider dynamics of community, race, family, generations, politics, identity, and memory.

Part III

Radicalism

8

Radicalism on the Waterfront: Imagining Alternative Futures in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans

Post-industrial port cities are commonly portrayed as radical cities 'on the edge': rebellious, anti-authoritarian, and fiercely independent.[1] Liverpool is described as a 'rebel city', a 'militant city', and a 'city of radicals' (cf. Belchem and Biggs 2011; Frost and North 2013). Marseille is 'widely seen as the last great working class city in the country; a fact which recently acquired positive connotations, but has more commonly been noted with nose held' (Dell'Umbria 2012: 69). New Orleans has a long history of activist racial politics, which some scholars have traced to the history of free people of colour before the Civil War and to long-standing traditions of black community activism (cf. O'Reilly and Crutcher 2006; Regis 2001). These claims to radicalism in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans relate to histories of casual dock labour, rooted in traditions of working-class solidarity and struggle, and to histories of grassroots resistance in excluded migrant communities. These traditions have been reflected in post-war municipal politics, which have been dominated by left-of-centre parties in each city.[2]

Yet any extreme tendency suggests its opposite: where there is radicalism, there is also reaction. At the height of their imperial and colonial prosperity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans were controlled by mercantile interests and conservative governments. Far-right racist groups such as the British National Party, the Front National, and the Ku Klux Klan, while marginal, continue to attract support among a sizable minority of urban and suburban populations. Despite discourses of multiculturalism and inter-ethnic harmony in each city, racism and social polarization have continued to be major problems.

Moreover, these 'radical' port cities have not sustained alternative political movements as vanguard 'rebel cities' (Harvey 2012) in the face of global capitalism. Their 'rebellious' populations—or what remains of them—are still struggling to overcome deep legacies of decline, and to resist incorporation of their identities into redeveloped capitalist landscapes. More appropriate 'rebel cities' advancing new visions of alternative politics would include cities at the forefront of the 'Arab Spring', the 'Turkish Dawn', the 'Occupy Movement', and other recent urban-based social movements around the world.

This chapter analyses contemporary alternative politics, or the politics of imagining different futures and fighting for political change, in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans. Different forms of alternative politics in each city draw primarily on old repertoires of radicalism. These old repertoires represent radical legacies, based on labour and anarchist politics of the early twentieth century, or on the early 'new social movements' of the 1960s–1980s. To some extent, newer repertoires have been adapted alongside the old, for example with renewed visions of trade unionism, feminism, and civil rights activism in the twenty-first century. On the one hand, the older political values, organizational skills, and forms of knowledge can provide important resources for present and future generations. Radical heritage is also important for collective memory and identity, to remember from lessons of the past, warts and all. On the other hand, some legacies of radicalism are stale and outdated, and require rethinking. The radical inflections within each of these forms of alternative politics reveal contradictions, possibilities, and limitations for political action both within and beyond the traditional waterfront.

Imagining alternative futures

In port cities, traditions of radicalism are symbolized by struggles on the waterfront. As a diminishing workforce with protections eroding under their feet, dockers represent something of a 'last stand' against the demise of welfare capitalism. The 40-day strike in 2013 of 500 dockers in Hong Kong attracted mass popular support and international solidarity, affirming the global nature of these struggles (Friedman 2013). Unlike the Liverpool dockers, the Hong Kong dockers won their battle, at least this time around. Should others follow the example of the dockers in some form of collective last stand against capitalist globalization, or is this simply utopian thinking in the context of too-powerful hegemonic forces?

Utopian thinking has been widely discounted since the 1980s, viewed by many scholars and activists as linked to totalitarianism, communism, and modernist assumptions of 'progress' (cf. Bann 1993; Jacoby 1999; Sandercock 1998). However, many urban scholars have argued that utopian perspectives are important for developing political and economic alternatives to neoliberalism and capitalism (cf. Harvey 2000; Levitas 2010; Pinder 2002). In *Spaces of Hope* (Harvey 2000), David Harvey argues that there is a need for political activists to overcome the barrier of Gramsci's famously invoked 'pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will', to recognize the contingent nature of the comment:

> We are not in prison cells. Why, then, might we willingly choose a metaphor drawn from incarceration as a guiding light for our own thinking? Did not Gramsci also bitterly complain before his incarceration, at the pessimism which produced then the same political passivity, intellectual torpor and scepticism towards the future as it does now in ours? Do we not also owe it to him, out of respect for the kind of fortitude and political passion he exhibited, to transform that phrase in such a way as to seek an optimism of the intellect that, properly coupled with an optimism of the will, might produce a better future?
>
> (Harvey 2000: 17)

The idea of imagining alternative futures, with optimism rather than pessimism, continues to have resonance today. Since the time of Harvey's writing, radical forms of alternative politics have experienced resurgence, particularly since the 2008 recession, with the momentum of the Arab Spring, the Occupy Movement, and large-scale protest movements around the world organized through social media.

Alternative politics expand our notion of the political, allowing us to ask seriously, 'is another world possible?' If we stretch our political imaginations beyond the limits of the electoral politics of the state, beyond the limits of capitalist liberal democracy, and beyond traditional forms of political action such as political parties and social movements, how far could we go, and where would we find ourselves? Should we go very far without looking back? After all, perhaps the gulf would be too wide between old forms of radicalism and new possibilities for alternative politics. Or perhaps there would be some mileage in looking to older traditions of radicalism for new possibilities within alternative politics.

Alternative politics, in other words, constitute what Nash (2010: 2) calls 'cultural politics' or the 'politics of politics':

> .... from this perspective, what events mean to those who interpret and act on them is what matters. What counts as 'political' in terms of content and style must first be made political; it must be made visible and relevant to visions of how social relations are and could be organized ... what is made political is not simply confined to what takes place within government, political parties and the state.

Despite the possibilities inherent within alternative politics, utopian thinking still evokes old traditions of radical thinking which are difficult to shake, particularly legacies of socialism and Marxism (Levitas 2010). The feminist scholars Gibson-Graham (1996) have proposed a radical alternative to traditional left-wing politics: the provocative idea of 'post-capitalist politics'. They argue that there are limiting political effects of representing economies as dominantly capitalist:

> .... it is the way capitalism has been 'thought' that makes it difficult to imagine its supersession. It is therefore the existing knowledge of capitalism that we hope to delegitimize and displace.
>
> (Gibson-Graham 1996: 3)

Their research suggests that there are many diverse economies, particularly at the community level, that provide alternatives to regular modes of capitalist organization and production. Their idea of post-capitalist politics has been taken forward by the Community Economies Research Network (CERN) and Community Economies Collective (CEC), a group of researchers and activists who are interested in new imaginaries or visions of the economy (Community Economies Project 2014). Post-colonial and anti-racist scholars (Gilroy 2011; Glaude 2007) have also challenged the limitations of traditional left-wing political action, advancing the idea of pragmatism as a form of black cultural politics and identity, based on the political African American blues tradition of resistance to racism and exploitation (discussed in Chapter 2).

The philosopher Jacques Rancière has criticized Marxist labour politics from the perspective of cultural politics. He argues that alternative politics could be based on 'dissensus', which he defines as 'a perturbation of the normal relation between sense and sense (whereby) the normal relation, in Platonic terms, is the domination of the better over the worse' (Rancière 2009: 3). Dissensus amounts to 'neutralizing'

the opposition, but not 'pacifying it', to enable a 'more radical way of seeing the conflict' (2009: 3).[3] Rancière's notion of 'dissensus' and his rejection of traditional ideas of class builds on his previous works, notably *Proletarian Nights* (Rancière 2012), originally published as *Nights of Labour* in 1981. This historical study of nineteenth-century French working-class artisans who burn the midnight oil working on poetry, letters, and journals, with the aim of being free of labour, presents a powerful counter-narrative to Marxist labour history. As I will go on to argue, Rancière's ideas have particular relevance for thinking about alternative politics both within and beyond traditional forms of radical politics.

Different ways of imagining political futures have been articulated across a wide range of perspectives, including anarchism, socialism, feminism, anti-racism, queer politics, communitarianism, and environmentalism, amongst others. Contemporary alternative politics in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans reflect both new and both forms of political action across this spectrum. This chapter focuses on contrasting examples that reflect different forms of alternative politics within each city: hubs of anarchistic feminism and working-class cultural production in Liverpool; an alternative urban heritage cooperative movement in Marseille; and environmental and racial justice activism in New Orleans. Rather than aiming to map the full diversity of grassroots political action in each city, this chapter aims to show how each example reveals contradictions, limitations, and possibilities of alternative politics in these struggling post-industrial port cities.

Liverpool

Liverpool has a long tradition of working-class politics, with a strong narrative of the autonomous, anti-authoritarian, anti-establishment, 'truculent' worker that relates to the history of casual labour on the docks (cf. Belchem 2000; Belchem and Biggs 2011; Frost and North 2013). This relationship between cultures of work and political attitudes is illustrated by the fact that when the Ford motor industry came to Liverpool in the 1960s, the hiring of former dockers and people who were accustomed to the nature of casual labour had implications for the work culture at the factory. As Murden (2006: 410) argues:

> The dominance of a casual work ethos had ... so conditioned outlook and behaviour that casually constructed culture remained a force, even among those who had not worked within the system. Recruits

> to the new industries brought with them . . . an innate suspicion of employers, formal politics and national trade union leadership.

This culture of political resistance was also evident across the city as a whole. Liverpool workers, residents, activists, and politicians were among the strongest voices against the neoliberal policies of Thatcherism. In 1983, the Militant Tendency, a Trotskyist group that was part of the British Labour Party (until it was expelled from the party in 1983), briefly took control of the Liverpool City Council. Militant's power within Liverpool was only suppressed through the expulsion under Labour leader Neil Kinnock of prominent Militant City Councillors and supporters over the next few years. However, the political legacies of the Militant Tendency and traditional trade union politics are divided, particularly in relation to questions of viable political alternatives within the city (cf. Frost and North 2013).

In this section, I will examine two significant sites of alternative politics in Liverpool. The first one, *News from Nowhere*, is a radical and community bookshop on Bold Street which houses *Next to Nowhere,* an anarchist social club, in its basement. The second one—already introduced in Chapter 5—is the CASA (Community Advice Service Agency) pub and charity on Hope Street, which has built on the momentum of the Liverpool sacked dockers and now serves as a hub of working-class politics, identity, and culture. Both of these sites are highly gendered and embedded within long histories of radical politics across the city, particularly anarchism, feminism, socialism, and trade unionism. While these sites represent very different visions of alternative politics, they nonetheless share radical traditions associated with Liverpool in the late twentieth century. Indeed, as small and declining bastions of radicalism in Liverpool, their practices also suggest a form of 'radical nostalgia', including a longing for old utopias and a denial of inconsistencies in their politics (Bonnett 2010).

I first heard about *News from Nowhere* during my early ethnographic interviews with locals at the CASA sacked dockworkers pub in 2010. They told me that this bookshop was *the* place to find out about Liverpool's maritime history, culture, and politics. Indeed, I bought several books about the dockers' strike and Liverpool's distinctive port city identity in *News from Nowhere*'s local history section during my field research. Each time that I returned to the bookshop, I noticed its distinctive atmosphere, particularly the intimate interactions of its staff and patrons, and its unusually diverse array of community and activist literature. I began to wonder about its role within the urban identity of

Liverpool: why were local people so committed to it? What connection, if any, did it have to the dockers?

News from Nowhere was established as a radical and community bookshop in 1974, named after the utopian novel by William Morris. Since 1984, the bookshop has been run as a women's cooperative at various locations in the city and is one of the few remaining old radical bookshops in the United Kingdom. It is a member of the UK 'Alliance of Radical Bookshops', which includes 27 radical bookshops, a fraction of the number of UK radical bookshops as compared with the 1980s (Alliance of Radical Booksellers 2014). *News from Nowhere* has acted as diverse hub of political activism within the city throughout its history, and its radical collections have varied with changing political and intellectual currents. The women's cooperative is broadly libertarian, anarchist, and feminist in its principles, and it has been critical of the traditional male-dominated trade union movement in Liverpool, particularly during the years of the Militant Tendency. However, officially, it has remained non-aligned and non-sectarian as a shop, and its shelves include books and pamphlets from socialist, anarchist, LGBT, women's, feminist, black minority and ethnic, green, cooperative, religious, and other social and political identities within Liverpool (see Figure 8.1). It also has a significant local history section, humorous sections such as 'books the Daily Mail hates', and a new age section, which has been a top seller for alternative bookshops since the 1990s (Vere 2012).

Mandy Vere, the 'matriarch' of the women's cooperative, has been there since 1976. Vere wrote an interesting history of *News from Nowhere* that was published in an edited collection about alternative politics, *Utopia* (Bradshaw 2012). Vere's history (2012) is a tale of perseverance, survival, and community support. Throughout its history, the bookshop has engaged in a number of solidarity efforts across the city and has widespread grassroots support, including anti-apartheid campaigns, solidarity with the Liverpool Dockers' Strike, and campaigns against domestic violence and racism. However, it has also faced some significant obstacles. During the years of the Toxteth riots in the 1980s, the bookshop was targeted by 'gangs of fascist men'—who identified with the National Socialist Party of the United Kingdom—in a series of arson attacks (Vere 2012). This echoed similar campaigns of violence and intimidation against radical bookshops throughout the United Kingdom during this time. In 1994, the shop was threatened with closure due to financial and tenancy problems, and it only managed to stay open and secure its permanent 'home' on Hope Street in 1995 through appeals for financial support within the community.

Figure 8.1 Activist magazines, *News from Nowhere* radical and community bookshop, November 2013

Next to Nowhere runs as a women's cooperative with a non-hierarchical work structure. There are only five members of the cooperative, with a very slow staff turnover: the newest member joined in the early 2000s. I interviewed Maria, a member who has worked there since 1996, who said that she has stayed there for all these years because it is a collective, part of a tiny cooperative movement with empowering working practices (interview, 26 November 2013). She said that each of the women participates equally, and each takes a turn on the cash register and doing other duties, although each also specializes according to her strengths.

Maria also belongs to *Next to Nowhere*, also known as the Liverpool Social Centre, which was set up in 2007 in the basement of the bookshop, but she says that the two organizations are in fact separate. According to its website, *Next to Nowhere* is a 'volunteer-run, radical, do-it-yourself space for meetings and events' (http://www.liverpoolsocialcentre.org/) The social centre has roots in the Liverpool Social Forum, which emerged out of the World Social Forum, paralleling similar social forums that emerged during this period in other cities

around the world. Indeed, the language, principles, ideas, and activities of the centre are not at all unique or locally specific; rather, they echo widely circulating contemporary discourses of 'anarchism reloaded' in the global era (Gordon 2007). Like the bookshop, *Next to Nowhere* is organized loosely around anarchist non-hierarchical principles, and it is strongly influenced by radical feminism. The club runs a vegan café on Saturdays and hosts regular meetings for two main organizations, the Angry Women of Liverpool, and an animal rights group. Maria is involved with the Angry Women of Liverpool, a feminist group that primarily centres around discussions and debates that draw attention to issues, for example the issue of sexism within the activist movement, particularly the traditional left-wing trade unionist movement.

Despite the deep commitments to political activism expressed by members of both *News from Nowhere* and *Next to Nowhere* (in interviews and in their promotional material), the scope of their political action within the wider Liverpool community is actually quite small, with only five members of the bookshop cooperative and a handful of participants in the social club. Because of the responsibility of the day-to-day running of the shop and the small staff, the bookshop is limited in terms of political activism. Its main function is to serve as a hub for diverse activism within the community, with a noticeboard, activist magazines and pamphlets, and local activists passing through often, circulating ideas. Some of the cooperative members are involved in political activism beyond the shop and beyond the social centre. For example, Maria works closely with the Merseyside Women's Movement, a network of women which has existed since 2007 which primarily focuses on International Women's Day, although it also runs anti-rape and anti-domestic violence campaigns, women's poetry events, and cultural events (interview, 26 November 2013).

News from Nowhere has had very little engagement with black and minority ethnic (BME) communities in Liverpool, despite representing this subject within its book collection. According to Maria, the activists and anarchists who are associated with the bookshop and the social centre are primarily white, and the only exceptions are individual people of colour rather than unified communities (interview, 26 November 2013). The 'Matriarch' Mandy Vere (2012) accounts for this gap, describing how, since the 1990s, the *News from Nowhere* collective has attempted to positively discriminate to bring in more black members and volunteers. This aim was never achieved, which Vere explained as relating to low staff turnover rather than a wider gap of identity or

communication. However, Maria accounted for the cooperative's limited engagement with BME communities rather differently. Firstly, she argued that the black community in Liverpool is spatially far-removed from the rest of Liverpool, situated in the Liverpool 8 (Toxteth) area, and tends to organize through community organizations only within the local context of Liverpool 8 rather than more widely throughout the city. Secondly, she suggested that there are barriers to political activism across many differences. Some barriers exist for women, which the Angry Women of Liverpool are fighting against, but they also exist for ethnic minorities. Unfortunately, she said, there are few people who are working on that particular struggle (interview, 26 November 2013).

News from Nowhere and *Next to Nowhere* both represent a form of alternative politics that draws on a patchwork of long-standing radical traditions in Liverpool. This politics is interesting in its eclecticism, on the one hand internally guided by a set of fairly well-trodden discourses of anarchism (Gordon 2007), but on the other hand adopting a broad-based non-unified and non-sectarian universalistic embrace of all things 'radical' or 'alternative' in Liverpool. This latter impulse has earned the bookshop a strong basis of local attachment and support, including from local academics at the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University. For example, many academics exclusively order books for their classes through *News from Nowhere* instead of the university bookshops. It also relates, on a more mundane level, to everyday politics of survival and local belonging. The bookshop and its membership are a part of the city, which has been their lifeline, keeping them afloat. As such, its alternative function is largely symbolic, related to a strong sense of urban and community identity, and to its status as the last of a dying breed: the radical community bookshop, like the last video store in the age of the Internet.

The CASA (Community Advice Service Agency) sacked dockworkers' pub and charity, like *News from Nowhere*, is as much a symbolic site of alternative politics as it is a site of strong political activism. The CASA was established in the aftermath of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike (1995–1995), and it has since provided a hub within the city for working-class solidarity, activism, community outreach, and cultural activities (see Chapter 5). It has a strong role within traditional trade union politics, formalized through its 2012 designation as a 'community' trade union branch of Unite the Union, and as a host to a number of solidarity and commemorative events within the labour movement. However, the CASA also has a strong cultural role as a hub for working-class cultural production: several former workers and working-class

intellectuals and artists associated with the CASA produce art, photographs, documentaries, and poetry as forms of political resistance. I will focus on three illustrative examples: the artist David Jacques, the writer Steve Higginson, and the film-maker Dave Cotterill.

David Jacques is a Liverpudlian artist who produced political banners and posters in support of the Liverpool dockers' strike. His artwork features on the walls of the CASA, including posters from the strike and a large collaborative mural painting 'Viva la Casa!' (with artist John Potter) in the back room (Figure 8.2). I interviewed David in his studio on Hope Street, across the road from the CASA, in May 2010. David explained that he aligned his art explicitly with labour activist causes. He had declined to participate in the European Capital of Culture in 2008 because of its business and economic development focus and its lack of a 'progressive' agenda. Since the dockers' strike, he had focused on a range of different political issues, including environmental causes. David had struggled as an artist trying to making a living through his work without giving up on his principles and values. Like many other people who I interviewed about their working lives in Liverpool, he talked about needing to come up with 'survival strategies' to continue to work as an artist in the city. However, despite his deep commitment to working-class political struggles in Liverpool, David Jacques described a

Figure 8.2 'Viva la CASA!' mural painting by David Jacques and John Potter, CASA Bar, Liverpool, April 2012

feeling of inadequacy as an artist in his capacity to engage in meaningful political struggle:

> We were kind of useful, but I can't claim to have been a big influence in the area, you know I was a painter then, working by myself, if there was anything you could do, you know, it's one of those things, I supported them. I think, if I could have been have been of use to them I suppose it's been more since they set up across the road [at the CASA], and you can see a few examples on the walls of my work. You feel quite inadequate as an artist at times.
>
> (interview, 25 May 2010)

This quote resonates with Sennett and Cobb's (1973) classic study *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, where people from working-class backgrounds felt a sense of unease and anxiety about their movement away from manual work into less 'material' work in the knowledge, information, and service sectors. His account also reflects pragmatism, or modesty, in relation to the limits of the role of the artist within a politics of resistance. This connects to the wider theoretical question that will be explored throughout this chapter: how far can alternative cultural politics really contest dominant narratives and structures within society?

Steve Higginson, a former postal worker and trade union official, is an example of a former trade unionist who decided to move into the cultural sector (interview, 22 May 2010). Steve was active in the postal workers' fight in 1996 in Liverpool to keep their office open, and he supported the dockworkers' struggle between 1995 and 1998. Steve decided to quit his trade union work to become a writer. He worked together with the former seafarer Tony Wailey, who did a PhD on seafarers and their trade union in Liverpool, on a book about 'edgy cities' (Higginson and Wailey 2006) that focuses on the alternative, outward-looking, musical, and 'edgy' cultures which define port cities (discussed in Chapter 2). Steve also worked with a photographer on a text-and-image exhibition about the loss of community identity and the role of collective memory in a deprived industrial housing estate on the periphery of Liverpool, Kirkby, and I attended the opening of the exhibition at the World Museum in Liverpool in May 2010. This exhibition represented a strong critique of the historical and present-day neglect of the suburbs of Liverpool, and the failed industrial promises of jobs and security. Through his collaborative writings on culture and socio-economic change, Steve continues to engage with themes about

working-class identity, but he has moved beyond the idea of 'work' as the defining aspect of this class.

Steve explained his shift from being a postal worker to being a writer as follows: 'So I tried to work in a creative, cultural way. On the basis that the working class are always more than the job titles, you know'. He also noted that he had held these views about the creativity of the working class for a long time before he decided to make this change:

> One particular area always interested me when I was a trade union official, and that was the sheer, wonderfully creative ways that people found to evade work, which I always found remarkable . . . Any excuses to get out of work, so for instance what would be called excessive toilet blows, going to the toilet all the time, seeking out little cubby-holes in different parts of the building to go and hide.
>
> (interview, 25 May 2010)

Steve celebrated creative ways of avoiding work, and he extended this point further to advocate 'anti-work' rather than work. He had co-written, with Wailey, an article that offered a counter-argument to Weber's Protestant work ethic thesis, proposing the idea of a 'Catholic anti-work ethic' (a reference to Irish Catholic 'Scouser' identity) which promoted the abolition of work altogether because of its associations with slavery and hierarchy. Steve's account of an 'anti-work ethic' resonates with the worker-poets described in Jacques Rancière's study *Proletarian Nights* (2012). Despite his convictions, he also recognized that it would have a limited appeal within working-class communities, particularly in the context of recession and high unemployment.

Another CASA cultural producer, Dave Cotterill, was a documentary film-maker and a former Militant Organizer for Liverpool. He recounted his years of involvement within the Militant Tendency, and his subsequent disillusionment with the fragmentation of the movement and its ideological dilemmas about the end of the Soviet Union (interview, 28 May 2010). Dave was now working as a documentary filmmaker about working-class maritime identity in Liverpool; he produced the BBC documentaries 'Pathway to Liverpool' about the maritime history of Liverpool, and 'Cunard Yanks' about the role of Liverpool seafarers in introducing the Merseybeat sound to Liverpool. His career shift was an interesting biographical journey. His politics had changed over time, still supporting 'progressive' political causes but moving away from the complex political and ideological entanglements of Trotskyism.[4] In addition, Dave described his background

as 'white collar' rather than 'blue collar', so in many ways his route to working-class identity and politics was through education and vanguard left-wing politics rather than personal experience. This shift away from Trotskyism is reflected in the type of films that Dave makes, which are critical and analytical, but which are not so subversive that they do not fit within the relative 'mainstream' of BBC documentary film-making.

Despite its roots in 'traditional' trade unionism, the CASA functions as a space for a diverse and innovative range of alternative politics. It operates as a hub of working-class politics, identity, and culture. Its forms of cultural production reflect these politics, working against the top-down vision of tourism as economic development that was promoted by the European Capital of Culture in Liverpool in 2008, and against the prevailing notion in urban development that creative cities and the creative class come primarily from the middle classes (cf. Florida 2005). Rather than elite 'disinterested' expressions of 'art for art's sake', 'bourgeois art' tied to cultural and economic capital, or 'disreputable' 'popular' art, as Bourdieu (1983) characterizes different forms of cultural production, working-class cultural production in Liverpool is inherently political, linked more to the British social realist tradition of documentary film-making. Working-class cultural production is a means for people to challenge and to come to terms with radical changes in working-class identities, occupations, communities, and ways of life.

News from Nowhere and the CASA represent contrasting but related spaces of alternative politics in Liverpool. The contrasting forms of alternative politics are highly gendered. The CASA is almost exclusively male, and *News from Nowhere* is almost exclusively female, although only the latter campaigns on the basis of gender awareness. Despite differences, both spaces have drawn on the history of radical politics in the city, as well as a common discourse of resistance against the rolling back of protections that were fought for by previous generations. In both spaces, the past is used as a reference point for the present and the future, drawing on the legacy of labour and feminist movements. Activists in both the CASA and *News from Nowhere* showed a combination of pessimism about past failures and optimism about the future, a sense that there were new possibilities for solidarity and action, an idea that continuing to fight is necessary, and nevertheless, a sense of diminished capacity. In the midst of an era of recession, austerity, and cuts, they are both fighting for survival, *News from Nowhere* run by a small cooperative and the CASA run by volunteers—to continue their legacy for future generations.

Marseille

Marseille is known as a precarious city of migrants and itinerants, and as a working-class city that has resisted gentrification (Ascaride 2001; Dell'Umbria 2012; Megerle 2008). Throughout the past century, its politics have been left-of-centre, supporting communist and socialist municipal politicians (Péraldi and Samson 2005). However, it has also had reactionary voices, with its dark history during Vichy France, and strong support for the right-wing Front National. Some urban literature portrays the city as unusually tolerant, embracing the diversity of migrants from North Africa and throughout the Mediterranean (Ascaride 2001; Juan and Langevin 2007; Williams 2005). Other authors suggest that tolerance is a myth about Marseille, as racism and social marginalization are deep urban problems (cf. Pons 1997; Péraldi and Sampson 2005).

There is a strong alternative arts and culture scene in Marseille. One of the most well-known, pioneering examples of this is the artists' commune La Friche, which developed in a derelict old tobacco factory starting in 1991 (cf. Andres 2011a). It has significantly expanded beyond its organic beginnings. It was promoted as an example of authentic alternative culture in the bid for the Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture (MP 2013), and it featured heavily within the official MP 2013 programme (Andres 2011a, 2011b). One of the hubs of community activism and alternative arts is the community radio station Radio Grenouille (founded in 1981 and now located in La Friche), which aims to give a voice to local artists, musicians, and writers. There are numerous community activist organizations in the city, including, for example: 'A City Centre for All' ('Un Centre Ville Pour Tous'), which opposed the redevelopment and gentrification of an old working-class street, Rue de la Republique; the Marseille-Provence 'OFF' collective of local artists who didn't make it into the official MP 2013 programme and organized their own alternative, parallel series of arts and cultural events; and the 'OFF OFF', who protested the absorption—or selling out—of the Marseille-Provence 'OFF' into the main MP 2013 programme. Indeed, within the context of a rich alternative arts, culture, and community activist scene within Marseille, Marseille-Provence 2013 posed a risk of co-option and depoliticization through incorporation.

I conducted research in Marseille between 2010 and 2013, and I participated in many of the MP 2013 cultural events and activities. I was interested in articulations of alternative politics, or alternative imaginings of the future, within the context of MP 2013. Many of the events

were disappointing in this regard, with grand narratives about migration and inequality, but detached from everyday life (see Chapter 4). However, one initiative caught my attention as offering a different perspective: the Hôtel du Nord cooperative and its alternative social heritage walks. Drawing on participant observation, this section focuses on the alternative politics of the Hôtel du Nord cooperative and its innovative social heritage walks. I also discuss the way in which these initiatives were incorporated within MP 2013, showcased at the Marseille-Forum in September 2013, a European Commission-funded conference about the social heritage walk 'model' and its implementation across different European urban contexts.

The Hôtel du Nord is a cooperative of residents in the northern districts of Marseille who offer guest rooms to paying city visitors (Hôtel du Nord 2014). In this way, they are similar to Airbnb, offering a cheaper and less regulated alternative to traditional tourist accommodation. However, they also have other guiding values based on alternative ideas of tourism. Through inviting guests to stay in stigmatized northern areas of the city, they aim to overcome negative images of the northern parts of Marseille, which have received particularly bad press with media attention focusing on drugs, gang shootings, and 'problem' youth populations (cf. Deroubaix 2013; Libération 2012). The hosts also create and organize social heritage walks in their neighbourhoods. They have worked with locally employed guides (sponsored in partnership with MP 2013), taking inspiration from similar community-led social heritage initiatives in other European countries, sponsored through the European Commission. The walks typically include small groups of people—ideally around six, according to the guides—through different parts of the city, offering an alternative perspective on social heritage, rooted in industrial history, the history of migration, and local community initiatives. The groups need to be small to remain sensitive and relatively non-obtrusive to the local environment. Although small-scale, the idea is based on deep, embodied learning through the practice of walking (informal interview, Hôtel du Nord host, 12 September 2013).

A review of the 50 different hosts spread across 12 northern quarters revealed that the cooperative included a very selective demographic. The hosts were mostly white, French, and middle class, and they lived in nice homes in some of the more affluent neighbourhoods of the north. This paralleled the white anarchist, feminist, and trade union activists in Liverpool, but it was far less representative of the urban population. The northern quarters of Marseille, particularly the most

poor, disadvantaged, and stigmatized areas with an 'image problem', had predominantly North African migrant populations.

I stayed with Louise, a host in the neighbourhood of Belle de Mai, which is the closest northern area to the city centre, and the only area within the Hôtel du Nord that was relatively easy to access without a car. The Hôtel du Nord offers bespoke informal walks around the different neighbourhoods to guests, and Louise spent several hours showing me around the streets of Belle de Mai, describing the local history. This was a poor neighbourhood in contrast with the other areas in the Hôtel du Nord, and the majority of the residents were Corsican migrants. The only sign of gentrification in the neighbourhood that I saw was La Friche, the arts and cultural centre based in the old tobacco factory, which sits at the edge of the neighbourhood. However, my host said that most people just go to La Friche and then immediately return to other neighbourhoods, avoiding the rest of Belle de Mai. Louise was a 'defender' of the neighbourhood of Belle de Mai and of Marseille more generally, committed to combating negative stereotypes and representations, while recognizing and trying to change social problems. Louise said that the most significant problems included corrupt and indifferent politicians who didn't care about their inhabitants, very high levels of poverty and unemployment, prostitution, and problems of racism. In Belle de Mai, she said that there were deep tensions between nationalist French who don't like outsiders, and in Belle de Mai with Corsicans who have become radicalized Muslims. She also said that one the key problems in Belle de Mai was a lack of public and social infrastructure: there was no public library or social associations in an area of 30,000 people, with very few amenities or collective events like neighbourhood fetes. Nonetheless, Belle de Mai was my host's 'quarter of choice', echoing what the local *noir* writer del Pappas observed about place attachment among residents of Marseille. She had moved away from Cours Julien in the city centre because of the prostitution and also its busy atmosphere full of noisy bars and cafés, then went for a brief time to a quarter that wasn't very lively which she didn't like, and then she chose Belle de Mai because it was a lively quarter with lots of interesting people and discussions in the streets, but not as busy or disturbing as Cours Julien.

Louise said that she enjoyed being a host at the Hôtel du Nord and participating in the walks. She felt that it was like a school for her as well as for others; she learned through her encounters with people and places, and each person was able to find and follow their own paths and interests, with freedom rather than instruction. Despite the partnership

between the Hôtel du Nord and MP 2013, Louise was very critical of the European Capital of Culture in general because said she it was primarily focused on physical rather than social change. Reflecting many other residents' criticisms, she said that nothing had really changed since MP 2013. There were some new museums, but the type of 'culture' and the values that they represented were far removed from the ordinary inhabitants of the city, and too inaccessible, both in financial terms and in terms of ideas. However, Louise strongly felt that the social heritage walks were different because they didn't have the pretension to be for everyone. Rather, they were very intimate, for each individual who participated would be touched in a human and particular way. She told me that the acts of walking with others, sharing an apartment and handing over keys and trust in strangers, and sharing stories to see different perspectives, were better ways of learning and exchanging culture, more rooted in the body and in movement. Over a shared dinner on the first night of my stay, she told me:

> The Hôtel du Nord was created within a context of difficult social and economic times. Perhaps the Hôtel du Nord collective would not work in a different economy. But then again, in another more prosperous economy, we might not have such utopian thinkers and dreamers who aspire to create something different.
>
> (12 September 2013)

Louise clearly identified with these dreamers and alternative thinkers, and she felt that they had a strong collective identity within Marseille. This resonates with Rancière's description of worker-poets in *Proletarian Nights* (2012), and with radical and communitarian utopian thinking (Bradshaw 2012; Harvey 2000). Louise also linked this perspective to informal networks of exchange between residents, exchanging services, resources, materials, and contacts, as a way of getting by in difficult times. Indeed, this sentiment was echoed by many other residents, particularly tour guides who struggled to make ends meet in the city (various interviews and observations, 2010–2013).

While I was staying with Louise, I attended the Marseille Forum, a formal two-day conference on 12–13 September 2013 which showcased the social heritage walks and the work of the Hôtel du Nord within the framework of the European Commission's sponsorship and endorsement of this model. Officially, the forum was open to the public, but the audience was an elite group including European Commission delegates, European and municipal politicians, MP 2013 coordinators, and a few academics. The only 'ordinary' people were 12 local tour guides of the

social heritage tours. The guides had been trained and offered one-year contracts for this project, and this was framed in the forum as providing training and opportunities for local young people. Overall, the discussion was congratulatory and celebratory about these community-led initiatives. However, there were a few sceptical voices. For example, one audience member noted the 'conspicuous absence of civil society voices in this forum' (13 September 2013).

As part of the Marseille Forum programme, I went on one of the social heritage walks to La Viste, one of the furthest northern quarters in the 15th arrondissement of Marseille, which is among the most stigmatized areas of Marseille. The tour was led by two locally employed guides (none of the Hôtel du Nord hosts lived in La Viste), both women in their twenties; one guide was a resident and the other came from Belgium. There were only five participants including myself. The guides seemed to be well known and liked within the community – a number of inhabitants along the way stopped to greet them and chat, and the guides said that sometimes the inhabitants liked to participate and chat with visitors. We went through a wide range of places, climbing into the hills to have a view over the city – the northern quarters rise into the hills so there are views over the city, the sea, and the autoroute into Marseille. We walked past modernist apartment blocks built in L-shapes by an architect similar to Le Corbusier in terms of vision, and with similar problems of this design – small living spaces, and physical deterioration over time. We went past social housing blocks of apartments along the hills and fences overlooking a river and an autoroute beyond. One of the key narratives of the walk was the division between the two northern quarters of La Viste and Les Aycalaces, which had once shared a common history and routes between the areas, with a bourgeois cemetery and nice houses. When the autoroute was built after the Second World War (or around that time), the idea was to completely bypass the northern districts, with a direct route to the city centre and the Vieux Port, without any routes leading into the northern districts. This effectively divided the two formerly connected quarters geographically from one another. One of the art and community projects that we saw in the area was devoted to remembering this history, marking footpaths that had once connected the two quarters (Figure 8.3).

Overall, the guides demonstrated an impressive amount of knowledge and sensitivity to the local context, and a passion for sharing their knowledge and stories, inviting people to join them. I could see what Louise meant about the value of sharing heritage in this way – it certainly did provide a very striking contrast from the image of the northern quarters full of drugs, crime, and violence that is portrayed

Figure 8.3 'Il faut que les habitants sachent qu'ils ont des trésors cachés dans leur quartier', La Viste social heritage walk, 15th arrondissement, Marseille, September 2013

in the media. However, I wondered about the 'public' that they were aiming to reach: the walks might attract tourists who were interested in 'alternative tourism', but they probably would not attract ordinary people who had prejudiced views about the north, or about Marseille in general. This walk in the farthest northern quarter out of the selection of social heritage walks offered through the Forum, was one of the least-subscribed. On the bus journey back to the city, I noticed that all of the passengers on the bus, apart from the walk participants, were black. I learned from another participant on the tour, a French researcher, that the Hôtel du Nord had been criticized for failing to address local housing problems with its focus on tourists. Moreover, while the walk was meant to be locally sensitive, it still had an uncomfortable sense of 'poverty tourism' (Rolfes 2010; Scheyvens 2001). This was only emphasized by the incorporation of this 'alternative' type of community engagement within the official programme of the European Capital of Culture. While the utopian dreamers of the cooperative aimed to tackle dominant ways of imagining alternative futures of place, ultimately they offered very limited possibilities for realizing change.

New Orleans

New Orleans has a long history of progressive politics, related to the civil rights movement, left-of-centre municipal politics, and grassroots community activism, particularly within the African-American community (cf. Flaherty 2010; O'Reilly and Crutcher 2006; Regis 2001). However, the city also has a tradition of conservative politics, whereby decisions about municipal land use, resources, and governance have been monopolized by an 'established social aristocracy' of business elites since the late nineteenth-century (Azcona 2006; Whelan et al. 1994). The politics of New Orleans remains fraught, with state-local conflicts over finances and control over local politics, and widespread mistrust of government (Burns and Thomas 2008; Azcona 2006). Since Hurricane Katrina, a number of community organizations and activist groups have emerged, far too many to list here.[5] Indeed, some commentators have observed that the strength of community participation has been a positive development during the recovery process in New Orleans, despite—and because of—the failure of government (cf. Irazábal and Neville 2007; Nossiter 2006). Other scholars have pointed to some of the limitations of civic participation in the process of recovery (Aldrich and Crook 2008; Flaherty 2010). For example, Flaherty (2010: 60–61) argues that organized labour failed to use the storm and the recovery process to improve voice and influence in a highly precarious labour market.

In this section, I focus on a distinctive form of alternative politics that emerged in New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina: community-based racial and environmental justice organizations. These organizations have roots in the US environmental justice movement in the 1980s, which grew up in response to toxic pollution in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor in Louisiana. This form of politics brings together important issues of race, environment, and place, and it has also had particular resonance in post-Katrina New Orleans, when issues of toxic pollution, coastal wetland erosion, and environmental racism all came to the surface (cf. Bullard and Wright 2009). Their grassroots mobilization of different forms of scientific and legal expertise relates to environmental scholars' calls for the democratization of science and expertise (Bäckstrand 2004; Carolan 2006; Ottinger 2013).

The Mississippi River Chemical Corridor is an eighty-five mile stretch between New Orleans and Orleans, with 136 petrochemical factories and seven oil refineries.[6] It is infamously termed 'Cancer Alley' because of the high reports of health problems among the residents in 'fenceline'

communities. Slave plantations once lined this stretch of river, and tourists can still visit former plantation homes on bus tours from New Orleans (see Chapter 4). Many of these plantations were sold to petrochemical companies in the mid-twentieth century, which were attracted by low taxes and lax labour and environmental regulations. The predominantly poor, African American rural communities in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor are descended from slaves who worked on the plantations. In the 1980s, concerned residents and environmental activists started to campaign to raise awareness of the acute problems of toxic pollution in 'Cancer Alley'. They adopted tactics and strategies allied with the civil rights movement. One of their first public protests was the 'Great Louisiana Toxic March', an 11-day march in 1988 from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. Darek Malek-Wiley, a Sierra Club organizer who helped coin the term 'Cancer Alley' and co-organize the toxic march, described the unique combination of activists that it brought together as follows:

> The organizing committee was a mix of one labour union, the OCAW (Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union), a number of environmental groups, and civil rights groups. It was stylized as a more civil rights march, like the Selma to Montgomery, but it was talking about environmental issues . . . The local organizing committees really took us here and there. We slept on church floors. There was one church we slept in. It was a small African-American church, but their choir was practicing amazing gospel music. It was a real mix of cultures and different perspectives from the labour union, the environmental movement, and civil rights. It all came together.
>
> (interview, Sierra Club Organizer, 9 December 2013)

Despite raising public awareness of issues of toxic pollution along the Mississippi River, the 'Great Louisiana Toxic March' was only a first step in an upward battle to fight very powerful corporations in a state that considers the petrochemical industry to be its lifeblood.

The community-led environmental justice movement won two notable victories: the 1998 blocking of a proposed new polyvinyl chloride (PVC) facility in Convent, Louisiana; and the 2002 relocation of the Norco community, which had been dangerously exposed to toxic chemicals. In New Orleans, one of the most well-known cases is the Agricultural Street Landfill Community, which Bullard and Wright (2009: 23) term 'a black Love Canal' after the infamous 1978 toxic chemical disaster in Niagara Falls, New York (cf. Gibbs and Levine 1982).

Two predominantly black New Orleans subdivisions, Gordon Plaza and Press Park, were built on top of a toxic dump in the 1970s and 1980s, an area covering 190 acres in the Ninth Ward known as the Agriculture Street Landfill. In 1994, the site was placed on the Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants (Bullard and Wright: 23). The grassroots Concerned Citizens of Agriculture Street Landfill filed a class-action lawsuit against the city of New Orleans that was stalled by Hurricane Katrina but eventually settled in the residents' favour in 2008.

Grassroots environmental organizations have also put pressure on corporations and the Environmental Protection Agency to report on toxic emissions, which has resulted in some reduction in overall pollution. However, 80 per cent of African-Americans in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor continue to live within three miles of a toxic polluting facility with known health impacts; toxic emissions are notoriously underreported; and the petrochemical industry only shows signs of expanding.

In fact, the issue of environmental toxic pollution along the Mississippi River is intimately tied to the port city economy of New Orleans. Petrochemicals are one of the most lucrative commodities that travel up and down the Mississippi, with very little regulation and incredible state-backing. In my interviews with the longshoremen in New Orleans, I learned that dealing with chemicals was considered to be the most dangerous part of their job:

> It's a dangerous job. You're working with all kinds of chemicals every day. You work with every kind of chemical there is out there. Yellow phosphorous, it explodes when it hits air. You have to watch it real close. They put it in a 55,000 gallon drum, it will take out four to five city blocks . . . Monsanto, the minute any spill happens with them, you have to call them first, our own fire department can't put the fires out, they're not trained for it . . . It's unique to the Port of New Orleans with all the chemical factories up the river, and we keep them all in one area, and if ever one of them goes . . . (sigh), I don't even want to think of it.
>
> (Kenneth, President of the ILA 3,000, longshoreman, interview, 12 April 2013)

Indeed, one of the key tensions within environmental politics in New Orleans and the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor was over the issue of jobs versus health. While there were risks to both workers and

Figure 8.4 Chemicals on the docks, New Orleans, April 2013

residents, in the factories, in the transport industry, and in the fenceline communities, many workers had an interest in overlooking the negative health consequences by prioritizing their job security (Figure 8.4). This issue was explored in the documentary film *Fenceline: A Community Town Divided* (Grünberg 2002), which contrasted the different narratives of black and white residents of the company town Norco, Louisiana (which was relocated in 2002 due to dangerous levels of toxic pollution) in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor. The white residents, who worked in the factories, were positive about the company and their experiences living in the town, while the black residents, who did not work at the factories, reported terrible health problems that they associated with living in the town.

I interviewed several key grassroots community activists, including representatives from: the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ) at Dillard University in New Orleans; the Louisiana Bucket Brigade in New Orleans; the Sierra Club New Orleans branch; and Subra Company in New Iberia, Louisiana. They work in partnership with a number of other local community organizations and partners. The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ) was founded in 1992 by

concerned residents living in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor, who set up a Community Advisory Board to tackle environmental justice issues in the area, particularly around issues of environmental racism. Together with the support of environmental activists including Sierra Club organizers and the pioneering environmental scientist Wilma Subra (who developed some of the first community health and odour event logs), they put pressure on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to require reporting and measurement of toxic chemical releases. The Louisiana Bucket Brigade is a grassroots campaigning organization that has borrowed some of the tools developed by the DSCEJ and Wilma Subra to develop publicly accessible technologies for community residents and workers to test, monitor, and understand pollution problems in their areas.

These environmental activists have worked together with scientists, lawyers, and residents to do their own research, developing resources for residents in fence-line communities next to petrochemical factories to use in their campaigns, including: the online Toxic Release Inventory, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) database for residents to identify and track chemicals in their neighbourhoods (DSCEJ); community training and education workshops (DSCEJ); an EPA-approved 'bucket' for residents to sample air quality (Louisiana Bucket Brigade); and a crowd-sourced online eyewitness pollution map for residents to report smells and health problems (Louisiana Bucket Brigade).

While these organizations had started their campaigns in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor, they had since expanded their focus to key issues in post-Katrina New Orleans. As a representative from the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice remarked:

> What's interesting about the work that we do is that it's always been somebody else's community. After Katrina it became our community. After Hurricane Katrina there was contamination from the flood waters of Katrina, and of course it sat for like two weeks, there were elevated levels of arsenic.
>
> (interview, 12 December 2013)

Indeed, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the organizations have expanded their focus to include a wider range of environmental issues affecting both urban and rural populations. Although these community environmental organizations do 'grassroots' work in rural communities, most are primarily based in the city. This reflects gaps in knowledge and expertise between rural and urban communities.

According to Nance (2009), the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice is an example of a new strategy of 'community-based laboratories', based on principles of participatory development and appropriate (low-cost) technology. This contrasts with the traditional environmental justice movements of the 1980s, which drew on the tools of the civil rights movement by focusing on lobbying, media campaigns, alternative reporting, and litigation. While Nance argues that the environmental justice movement has been important, he points to some limitations. For example, he notes that the movement tends to focus only on extreme worst-case scenarios of injustice, in a reactive rather than proactive mode, and that there are significant barriers to mobilizing the resources to win these battles.

In fact, the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the Louisiana Bucket Brigade have attributes of both of the approaches that Nance outlined; the traditional environmental justice movement and the community-based laboratories approach. They clearly have roots in the 1980s environmental justice movement, and they each refer to the same selection of grassroots victories, which were based on civil rights-oriented campaigns. However, they have also adapted accessible public technologies for dealing with everyday issues of ongoing pollution and health risks in vulnerable communities.

Despite their efforts, the community-based environmental justice organizations in New Orleans also have some significant limitations. They have very limited financial resources or capacity to scale-up their campaigns and initiatives. According to Darek Malek-Wiley, the Sierra Club organizer, they have one part-time environmental lobbyist at the US Legislature plus some volunteers, as opposed to more than 140 paid lobbyists for the petrochemical industry (interview, 9 December 2013). Moreover, even in the case of victories, the environmental justice movement has faced considerable backlash from corporations, in the form of well-financed public relations campaigns attempting to discredit the environmental movement. In this context, it was very important for the community organizations to have 'good data':

> If you give out one thing that is wrong, you lose all your credibility, but you have to have that data and it has to be in a form the community can understand and deal with. Then you teach them how to watch the new data as it comes, and then when they see something they call up and say, 'Guess what?' Then we talk about it and we deal with it. But yes, without the data you could have 3,000 people show

> up at a hearing and say, 'We don't want it,' and it's going to happen. If you have 15 or 20 people show up at a hearing with substantive comments, you will get a denial and that's just the basis of it.
>
> (interview, Wilma Subra, environmental scientist, Louisiana, 14 December 2013)

In other words, the community organizations faced an uphill battle against strong corporate and governmental support for the petrochemical industry. The organizations recognized this as an intractable problem; they recognized that the polluting factories were there to stay given the economics of the city-region, but they also said that the local communities were there to stay. For most, living below the poverty line, it was not a matter of choice. It was also difficult to sustain momentum: 'Cancer Alley' dropped off of the radar as a priority in the early 2000s and was overshadowed by the more immediate environmental priorities following Hurricane Katrina and the BP Oil Spill. According to Wilma Subra, it has only recently returned to the Environmental Protection Agency's attention since 2011 (interview, 14 December 2013).

These community-based environmental justice organizations offer interesting possibilities in terms of alternative politics. They have used resources from the civil rights movement and the environmental movement, making strong alliances across a range of activists in the region, including trade unionists, environmentalists, church organizations, and grassroots community organizations (cf. Bullard and Wright 2009; Nance 2009). Through these strategies, they have succeeded in some notable victories for communities in litigation, in raising public awareness, and in pressuring corporations and government to improve environmental regulations. The community-led organizations have also worked towards the democratization of science and expertise in relation to the environment and health (Bäckstrand 2004; Carolan 2006; Ottinger 2013). While their approaches relate to deeply rooted traditions of activism within New Orleans, Louisiana, and the United States, they have also proved to be innovative. They have actively created different types of community resources of scientific and legal expertise, drawing on different repertoires and techniques that have adapted to the Internet age. While they remain seriously constrained by their lack of financial and local power, their strategies of alternative politics offer interesting ideas, resources, and possibilities for other vulnerable communities struggling with toxic pollution.

Conclusion

Despite having long histories of radicalism, the post-industrial port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans cannot claim to be 'rebel cities' (Harvey 2012) at the forefront of new social movements and political change. Although they have distinctive and continuing radical traditions, they also have strong legacies of social and political polarization. They do not have the groundswell of popular support for a unified vision of alternative politics. Nonetheless, there are some interesting examples of alternative politics which carry on old traditions of radicalism but also offer new perspectives.

This chapter has explored three different examples of 'alternative politics': sites of anarchistic feminism and working-class cultural production in Liverpool; an alternative urban heritage cooperative movement in Marseille; and environmental and racial justice community organizations in New Orleans. These forms of alternative politics draws on old repertoires of radicalism in each port city, including anarchism, trade unionism, feminism, socialism, cooperative movements, environmentalism, civil rights, and anti-racism. Each example demonstrates both limitations and possibilities for political action. Each movement is limited by its peripheral nature, set apart from mainstream politics, with limited financial capacity, representing only a minority of activist voices within each the city. However, each movement also opens up possibilities through different ways of imagining political alternatives and futures, and through different strategies of mobilizing for change.

9
Conclusion

Port cities harbour the collective inheritance of old global ages. Dockers unload sugar, tobacco, crude oil, and chicken around the world, carrying on the collective memory and traditions of past generations in a new global era of super-containers and weak trade unions. Western countries ship coal to China, petrochemical factories spew smoke along industrial waterfronts, and seafarers are abandoned by negligent shipowners. Grand merchant buildings and colonial plantation homes line waterfronts, weather-worn but still standing tall. New developments take root on derelict docks: museums, casinos, shopping malls. Deep-water container ports extend beyond urban edges. Vast container ships set sail for distant shores, floating factories on the sea.

Port cities are fascinating and multilayered, evoking contradictory images of opportunity and constraint, inclusion and exclusion, radicalism and conservatism. Different theoretical and empirical studies of port cities have focused on a range of interconnected themes: global networks, maritime history, waterfront development politics, comparative global case studies, and dock labour (cf. Gandelsman-Trier et al. 2009; Graf and Huat 2008; Hein 2011; Miller 2012; Schubert 2008; Wang et al. 2007). This book has advanced a new analytical lens for understanding port cities—global legacies—enduring forms, processes, or ideas of the 'global' that shape urban identities and politics. My methodological approach to tracing these global legacies has drawn on critical political economy (cf. Harvey 2000; Sekula 2003), global history and sociology (cf. Bhambra 2014; Trouillot 1995), and ethnographic case study methods (Burawoy 1998; Peck and Theodore 2012). These three analytical approaches have been combined in an interdisciplinary and diverse methodological repertoire which encompasses both micro and macro perspectives. In particular, this book

has developed an in-depth analysis of three Western post-industrial port cities that have difficult pasts, as former 'great' ports of empire and colonialism, which are grappling with post-war histories of economic decline. These cities have contradictory histories and identities, and they have struggled to face their complicated pasts and uncertain futures. The research has examined global legacies in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans across three cross-cutting themes: urban identity, waterfront work, and radicalism.

Part I explored the theme of urban identity in relation to cultural, economic, and political narratives, which emphasized positive, negative, and ambivalent aspects of global legacies of capitalism, empire, and colonialism. My focus was primarily on official local narratives that have a wide influence in shaping collective urban imaginaries within cities, through port city representations within popular culture, waterfront development projects, and city museums. First, I examined local urban representations of port cities within literature, film, and music. On one level, urban identity in port cities appeared dichotomous, with stark juxtapositions between 'blue' themes of cosmopolitanism, horizons, and possibilities, and 'black' themes of crime, poverty, and social exclusion. However, on closer investigation, my analysis showed that blue and black themes were in fact overlapping and entangled, reflecting contradictory and ambivalent urban identities. These findings provided methodological insights for researching post-industrial port cities both as an 'insider' and an 'outsider', particularly in relation to collective forms of myth-making, claims about authenticity, and ethical sensitivity in contexts of urban decline. Next, I examined narratives of mega-waterfront developments in each city, which drew selectively on positive port city identities to promote new large-scale market-driven urban and port developments. The waterfront development projects in each city reflected cooperation rather than competition between port and city authorities, towards a common vision of global port city competitiveness. The waterfront development projects used the narratives of 'reconnecting the public with the waterfront' and 're-establishing "great" port city status' to justify their projects, tapping into collective nostalgia for the prosperity of former colonial eras. Despite their appeal to narratives about the 'public good', my research revealed that the developers had carried on exclusionary traditions of the old merchant ports, by prioritizing profits and neglecting vulnerable urban populations. Finally, I explored how the three port cities have engaged with uncomfortable legacies of empire through the example of museums of slavery and colonial history in each city. Following Trouillot's (1995) concept of 'silences' in the production of history, I showed how different

museums have produced silences of selection, argumentation, and positioning, but they have also opened up public dialogue about difficult subjects. The research showed that the museum narratives were embedded in different post-industrial waterfront landscapes with political and economic constraints. I argued that it is important to think critically and reflexively about what silences can reveal about urban identity in the three port cities.

Part II examined the theme of waterfront work, tracing global legacies of casual labour through generations of dockworkers in the three cases. The example of dock work as an old form of casual labour challenged the assumption that precarious employment is a new phenomenon rather than a form of employment with a long historical tradition that is evident throughout the globe (cf. Neilson and Rossiter 2008; Phillips and Whiteside 1985; Standing 2011). It also challenged typical associations between regularity and security. Many dockers were nostalgic for a golden era of security and mediated irregularity. Moreover, their international reputation for labour solidarity and struggle could provide a source of inspiration for people who are looking for political alternatives to neoliberal capitalist globalization (a theme that was carried forward in Part III).

The three ethnographic studies revealed how dockers connect to wider urban identities and traditions of radicalism in each city. The Liverpool Dockers' Strike between 1995 and 1998 echoed the brief reign of the Militant Tendency in the Liverpool City Council in 1981: both examples stand out as acts of defiance against national and global neoliberal trends. Within the Liverpudlian popular imaginary, the Irish, male, truculent docker still symbolizes the archetypal 'Scouser'. In Marseille, the dockers represented a similar bastion of old trade unionism within changing political and economic times. However, the dockers occupied a more ambivalent place within urban identity and culture in Marseille, seen as more marginal and mafia-like. They occupied a smaller place within the wider urban identity of Marseille as a 'precarious city' (Ascaride 2001) including Mediterranean and North African migrants, itinerant workers, and diverse industries. The New Orleans black longshoremen's long history of civil rights activism and interracial solidarity within the context of a nationally conservative trade union provided an interesting contrast with the militant trade union politics of Liverpool and Marseille. The New Orleans longshoremen shed light on the intersection of race and trade union politics at national, state (Louisiana), and municipal levels. The longshoremen used pragmatic strategies of cooperation to manage the everyday constraints of anti-union right-to-work legislation in Louisiana; the conservative

versus 'radical' east coast trade union (International Longshoremen's Association); and interracial tensions between black and white workers. The black longshoremen's efforts to reconstruct collective memories that they lost during Hurricane Katrina also resonated with the wider experiences of workers and residents in post-Katrina New Orleans.

The dockers are important symbols for political struggle in port cities, their voices of solidarity representing a 'last stand' against the steady encroachment on labour protections within neoliberalism. The failure of the Liverpool Dockers' Strike was a significant blow to international dockworkers' solidarity, and trade unionism more generally. However, this was not the last global battle of dockworkers. As Miller (2012) argues, the port cities of the 'old global age', including Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans, have been outpaced by Asian ports of the 'new global age'. Despite poor labour and environmental regulations throughout many Asian ports, the voices of Asian labourers are becoming louder. In 2013, a 40-day strike of 500 dockworkers in Hong Kong attracted mass popular support and international solidarity, echoing the Liverpool Docker's Strike and attesting to the global nature of these struggles (Friedman 2013). However, unlike the Liverpool dockers, the Hong Kong dockers won their battle. Perhaps it is too soon, and too easy, to make proclamations about the impending demise of the dockers' international heritage of solidarity and struggle.

Finally, Part III explored the theme of radicalism in port cities. It juxtaposed the urban identity of port cities, associated with long traditions of radicalism, with contemporary realities of political action. The research demonstrated that post-industrial port cities are not, in fact, at the forefront of mass alternative political movements. Rather, radicalism was evident within small pockets of alternative politics in each city. I traced legacies of radicalism within different examples of contemporary alternative politics in each city: hubs of anarchistic feminism and working-class cultural production in Liverpool; an alternative urban heritage cooperative movement in Marseille; and environmental and racial justice activism in New Orleans. These radical legacies were based on trade union, anarchist, feminist, cooperative, environmental, and anti-racist movements dating from the early to the late twentieth century. While different examples of alternative politics in each city drew primarily on old repertoires of radicalism, they also adapted to new political conditions and issues.

Global legacies in post-industrial port cities reveal tensions between continuity and change, of what old forms and ideas to keep or to discard, to remember or to forget. Global legacies are material, written

into port city landscapes. They are social and cultural, evident in narratives, representations, and lived experiences. They are political and economic, embedded in logics of urban planning and capitalist development. And they are uncomfortable and contradictory, evoking nostalgia, ambivalence, and regret among local residents and workers.

Positive and negative global legacies are interconnected and difficult to disentangle. Ships, goods, and people from around the world have shaped centuries of urban cultures and identities. Generations of port city residents have pride and nostalgia for former days of prosperity, prestige, strong communities, ample employment, and bustling cosmopolitan atmospheres. However, these former days were the product of exploitative systems of empire, colonialism, and capitalism, and they carry negative legacies of oppression, racism, and social polarization. Global legacies also encapsulate temporal histories, as the residue that has endured over time. As such, they carry twin histories of ruination—of commerce and empire—which contribute to the bittersweet nature of ambivalent nostalgia.

Despite the inherent contradictions and entanglements within global legacies, I argue that it is nonetheless important to think through processes of disentanglement, between different limitations and possibilities that might be offered through global legacies. What are the limitations and possibilities for confronting difficult pasts and imagining alternative futures in post-industrial port cities?

There are a number of limitations within enduring features of old global eras. Despite efforts at urban recovery, post-industrial port cities remain constrained by their ongoing stigmatization as *noir* cities, replete with crime, poverty, racism, and social exclusion. It is difficult to overcome deeply entrenched negative imaginings of place, evident for example in the French national media backlash to the Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture (cf. Deroubaix 2013; Libération 2012). There are also limitations of imagination within collective memory and political traditions in former ports of empire and colonialism, reflected in resignation, insularity, and prejudice. Dominant models of market-driven waterfront development are also highly tenacious. They focus on physical development and corporate profit, pay only minimal attention to social concerns, and exacerbate polarization between city and port, rich and poor. Finally 'precarity' is an enduring global idea and practice. In port cities, old and new logics of casual labour have intersected in the context of increasingly flexible or precarious labour markets. The brief period of semi-regularization of casual dock labour in the mid-twentieth century supports the argument that 'precarity' is the norm within the

longer history of capitalism, and the relative security of Fordism and the Keynesian welfare state were in fact the exception (Neilson and Rossiter 2008). 'Precarity' as the norm is a troubling idea.

Yet possibilities for imagining alternative futures also stem from the limitations within global legacies. In recent years, social movements in cities around the world have organized around the concepts of 'precarity' and precarious workers (cf. Standing 2011; Neilson and Rossiter 2008). There are a number of different resources and possibilities within old global forms and ideas. For example, working-class traditions of trade unionism and solidarity—which are quickly losing traction across many parts of the world—can provide important resources for tackling global problems of precarious labour and economic insecurity. These resources include modes of civic self-education, strategies for collective organization, and networks of legal and political support. A wide range of old radical traditions provide resources for political action, including various techniques, tactics, and strategies that develop and deploy different forms of civic expertise. For example, community-led environmental justice movements in New Orleans have deftly combined strategies of civil rights, trade union, environmental, and anti-racist movements with grassroots scientific and legal expertise to tackle complex issues of toxic pollution in their communities. However, the process of disentanglement does not simply involve separating the good from the bad; or deciding what to keep or to discard (even if this was possible). It is more about the processes of remembering and recognizing. Both positive and negative aspects of contradictory and entangled global legacies should be remembered and recognized, with equanimity rather than reaction.

At first glance, legacies of former global eras seem anachronistic, rubbing shoulders with newer forms of globalization. They appear outmoded in their creaky nostalgia and in their fading visible import. Only a few hundred dockers remain in the port cities of Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans, carrying on traditions from largely bygone eras. Each city has endured painful processes of ruination and difficult attempts at economic and cultural recovery. However, as this book has argued, global legacies reveal important continuities within urban identity, waterfront work, and radicalism in struggling post-industrial port cities. While global legacies are fraught and contradictory, they also offer a framework of possibilities and resources for imagining alternative urban futures.

Notes

1 Introduction

1. Ninety per cent is a widely cited and commonly accepted figure about the per cent of global trade shipped by sea. Sources citing this figure include the International Maritime Organization, the International Chamber of Shipping, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Review of Maritime Transport.
2. The themes of precarious work, multiculturalism, and radicalism will be explored in detail in the three different parts of this book.
3. Some particularly insightful ways of 'reading' the city include Mike Davis' evocative description of the port city of Los Angeles, *City of Quartz* (1990), and Walter Benjamin's (1996) reflections on how to make sense of the city through digging up fragments, echoes, and other clues. However, these ways of 'reading' are merely suggestive rather than systematic. Moreover, many of these approaches follow the problematic tradition of the late-nineteenth-century European *flâneur* (cf. Benjamin 1996; Frisby 2001), the author-observer who walks the city in order to experience and understand it. To some extent, during my urban investigations in different cities, I resembled a female version of the *flâneur* through my encounters with each city as an 'outsider', walking and observing urban streets and everyday life. However, rather than relying on my own experiences and impressions, my primary focus was on other people's perspectives, drawing on interviews, ethnography, and a range of documentary sources.
4. The practice of fully identifying research participants by name rather than blanket anonymization stems from an ethical position of an ethics of giving voice or credit to research participants (cf. Tzeng 2012).

2 Out of the Blue, into the Black: Representing, Imagining, and Researching Port Cities

1. The title is a reference to the song 'Hey Hey, My My (Out of the Blue)' by Neil Young, from the 1979 album *Rust Never Fades*. The song uses dichotomies of black and blue to address questions of life and death, permanence and impermanence, the wider meaning of art and culture, and the significance of individual and collective human legacies:

   My my, hey hey
   Rock and roll is here to stay
   It's better to burn out
   Than to fade away
   My my, hey hey.

Out of the blue
and into the black
They give you this,
but you pay for that
And once you're gone,
you can never come back
When you're out of the blue
and into the black . . .

2. The official English translation inverts the order of the colours to avoid the connotation of 'black and blue' with bruising. The Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations and the European Capital of Culture will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.
3. Of course, most cities fall outside of the gaze of popular fascination; the 'forgotten middle' of commuter cities, medium-sized old industrial cities, and other ordinary cities throughout the world.
4. *The Wire* echoes themes from the 1954 film *On the Waterfront* with Marlon Brando, which depicts the New York City waterfront as a place of corrupt unions and hard-working, hard-living dockworkers. These accounts, somehow, make us side with the workers but vilify the corruption of unions. Anti-unionism is a strong thread in representations of dockworkers, and port cities, in the latter half of the twentieth century.

3 Reconstructing Port Identities: The Urban Politics of Waterfront Development

1. As discussed in Chapter 1, Burawoy's (1998) extended case method aims to study how the 'global' is itself constituted within the local through ethnographic study.
2. In fact, similarities between waterfront developments in each city have been noted within the literature. In a working paper on waterfront development in New Orleans and Liverpool in the 1980s, Lauria (1994) argues that despite different political and local contexts, waterfront development policies in both cities were remarkably similar: they were both based on a 'corporate centered approach', with a focus on tourism and physical redevelopment. Urban scholars have also drawn comparisons between dockland redevelopments in Liverpool and Marseille, for Marseille planners explicitly copied the Liverpool example (cf. Meynard 1999; Pons 2004).
3. Other waterfront museums include the Beatles Story Museum (1990), the International Slavery Museum (2007), and the Museum of Liverpool (2011). The culture and tourism-led strategy of regeneration was further boosted by Liverpool's designation as European Capital of Culture in 2008 (see Chapter 4 for further discussion).
4. In the Liverpool City Council Planning Committee in March 2012, the project received support from the Chinese Business Delegation, the North Liverpool Business Forum, the Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council, and three local Councillors (two Labour and one Liberal Democrat), who cited economic reasons as the main reason for their support. Objections to the proposal

came from the Save Our City Campaign, the Liverpool Preservation Trust, and concerned residents, who expressed concern about the possible threat to Liverpool's World Heritage Site.

5. Its opening exhibition in summer 2013, which was free to the public, was a well-researched exhibition about port mobility. It focused on cargo shipping, container traffic, and the working lives of people in different ports around the world, including recorded and translated interviews with textile workers in Istanbul. It featured projected photographs and videos on different surfaces, with structures built to look like the museum visitor was entering a container shipyard or watching a boat sail off.
6. In fact, the port of Marseille used to be even more specialized; in 1970 liquid bulk cargo represented 90 per cent of its cargo volume (Merk and Comtois 2012: 11). The downtown in cargo trade since the 1970s prompted efforts at diversification.

5 Intergenerational Lessons from the Liverpool Dockers' Strike: Rebuilding Solidarity in the Port

1. As a foreigner and a woman, I was clearly an outsider within this all-male traditional dock labour community. This was also true of my research with dockworkers in Marseille and New Orleans. In some ways, this outsider status was an advantage in gaining trust and rapport, once I established myself as sympathetic to their history. However, this status posed some limitations for the research, as it was difficult to get beyond politicized and rehearsed-sounding narratives, particularly in relation to representations of unanimous solidarity and lack of conflict on the docks. Nonetheless, these narratives were in themselves revealing of the dockers' construction of their collective identities and politics.
2. At the time of my field research (2010–2013), the relationship between the ITF and dockworkers varied between the different cases. The ITF officially represents both seafarers and dockworkers, although its priority is seafarers. In Liverpool and New Orleans, the ITF works closely with the dockworkers. In Marseille, by contrast, the ITF does not work closely with the dockers, as the dockers feel that the ITF does not adequately represent the dockers' interests (and that they are 'reformists' rather than radicals).

6 Precarious Reforms and the Legacy of Struggle: The Dockers of Marseille-Fos

1. The French journalist E. Seznec (2006) has written about the relationship between the mafia and French syndicates, citing the CGT Marseille dockers as a key example. For a more critical analysis, see M. Pigenet's (2001) article on the negative stereotypes about dockworkers in France. See also De Vries (2000) for a comparative international analysis of the 'image' of the dockworker, including references to Marseille.
2. My focus on young and old generations of dockers in Marseille roughly paralleled my focus on sacked dockworkers and 'younger' (actually middle-aged)

dockworkers in Liverpool (see Chapter 5) and my focus on middle-aged longshoremen and elderly retired longshoremen in New Orleans (see Chapter 7). See Note 1 in Chapter 5 with regard to my position as a female outsider in all three dockworkers' communities.

3. Between the early 1800s and the 1860s, the *portefaix* (dockworkers) in Marseille were the 'aristocrats of labour', the 'best organized, highest paid and in all the most privileged working class occupational group in the city' (Sewell 1988: 79). They monopolized all work on the docks, with the tacit cooperation of the municipal authorities, and they had the highest rate of occupational inheritance in the city, at over 70 per cent. This system ended in the 1860s, when a new system for loading and unloading the docks drastically changed the organization of labour (Sewell 1988: 84). The system of father to son inheritance built up again throughout the early twentieth century, as dockers fought and organized for better pay, conditions, and security.
4. The dockers' claim has precedence within other dockers' unions. For example, some of the longshoremen in New Orleans of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) load and unload cruise ship luggage. While non-traditional, this is classified as longshoremen's work because it involves handling goods that come on and off of ships. During a tour of the New Orleans docks with the President of the ILA local in April 2013, I visited a cruise ship terminal and observed longshoremen in Hawaiian shirts greeting tourists and carrying their luggage.
5. By contrast, the New Orleans longshoremen were not among the strong supporters, as part of the more conservative east coast US International Longshoremen's Association (ILA). In North America, the more left-wing International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) gave more support for the Liverpool Dockers' Strike.
6. On a reflexive note, I wondered about the extent to which the non-prompted response related to my position as a female researcher.

7 Ruination and Recovery: Keeping the Longshoremen's History in Post-Katrina New Orleans

1. Dockworkers in North America are more commonly referred to as longshoremen. Both terms are used interchangeably in this chapter, although longshoremen is used more often since the longshoremen identify more strongly with this term.
2. The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) categorizes different local union branches, separated by locality but also by craft, into different 'locals', each with a separate number. Prior to the merger to form ILA Local 3,000, the separate ILA unions were the black Local 1419 and the white Local 1418.
3. See note 1 with regard to my position as an outsider in dockworkers' communities under Chapter 5.
4. The gap between these two periods of interracial cooperation related to the depression in the mid-1890s. The depression caused conflict between the white and black workers over competition for declining jobs, resulting in white riots against black workers. However, the employers used these divisions

against the workers to drive down wages and continued to hire black workers despite the protests of white workers. Gradually, the workers negotiated a new interracial alliance, once the white workers realized that they had no power to prevent their employers from hiring black workers. See Arnesen 1994; Rosenberg 1988.

8 Radicalism on the Waterfront: Imagining Alternative Futures in Liverpool, Marseille, and New Orleans

1. Port city representations as 'edgy cities' are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.
2. The pre-war histories of the cities are more divergent; Liverpool and New Orleans were conservative, while Marseille was left-wing since the late nineteenth-century.
3. One relevant example of 'dissensus' that Rancière (2009: 7) provides is the idea of 'aesthetic ignorance', recounting the story of a French joiner who wrote a text in a workers' revolutionary pamphlet during the French Revolution of 1848 that disrupts the sensibilities of 'elite' and 'disinterested' bourgeois aesthetics by showing an inherent conflict between the aesthetic gaze, the work of the hands, and the realities of ownership in his reflections about laying the floor in a house while admiring the arrangement of a room and views from a window.
4. In fact, Trotskyist organizations remain active within Liverpool today. Another activist who I met through the CASA was a Trotskyist community engagement organizer, who organized a number of cultural and educational political events in the city. One of the most interesting of these events was a talk related to the book launch in spring 2010 of the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* (Barnes 2009) published by Pathfinder, a Trotskyist book publisher. The book argues that Malcolm X was in fact, at the end of the day, an international socialist. This event attracted a very mixed crowd, including students and academics, but also a number of local people of different ages and backgrounds from various parts of the city. There were several black Liverpudlians who either identified with the message in the book or else felt that their history had been hijacked, and that there were no common grounds for solidarity given the racism in the city. There were also several young, white working-class Liverpudlians in the audience who expressed a great deal of enthusiasm about this book, and the power of self-learning outside of formal education.
5. For an overview of different community organizations in New Orleans, see Flaherty 2010 (appendix). See also Pyles 2007; Luft 2008; Irazábal and Neville 2007.
6. Liverpool and Marseille also have nearby petrochemical factories, at Runcorn (UK) and Fos-sur-Mer (France). There have been labour disputes over the decline of the petrochemical facilities in Fos-sur-Mer. However, neither city has supported strong environmental activist movements in relation to these facilities.

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