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P 103, Philosophicum

Freedom, Slavery and Urban Development in the Northern British Atlantic World, 1660-1760



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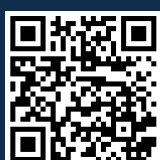
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England's imperial expansion after the chaos of the mid-seventeenth century and its increasing involvement and later domination of the transatlantic slave trade had major consequences for urban development on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Some cities became major hubs of the slave trade (Bristol), others received and employed slaves in large numbers (New York), while others grew rich from the profits of slave-produced commodities (Glasgow) or the provisioning trade for vessels making the journey to Africa and America (Cork). In this lecture, I will explore all four of these cities, which I am studying for a Habilitation project on concepts of freedom in the urban British Atlantic, and show how theories of freedom and practices of slavery profoundly shaped the development of these urban areas. From new market spaces to improved riverine navigation, from remodelled streets to dedicated burial grounds for the enslaved, the interplay of concepts and practices of freedom, liberty, and slavery not only shaped the political and cultural lives of these cities but also their physical spaces and the architectural and topographical traces of this history, many of which persist to the present.



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