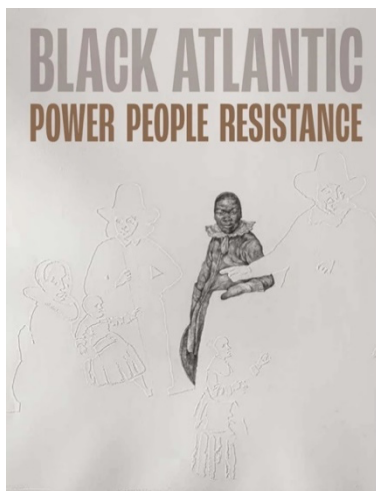


# UCLan Research Centre for Migration, Diaspora and Exile Seminar Series 2023-2024

## Liberated Africans and the Legal Order of the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World, by [Dr Jake Subryan Richards](#), London School of Economics

Across the nineteenth century, slave traders trafficked around 3 million people from sub-Saharan Africa to territories in North America, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Aside from being unjust in these victims' eyes, this transoceanic trafficking breached the domestic law of many places in the Americas. The trade also breached emerging international law. One prominent aspect of applying these laws against the trade was the deployment of naval squadrons that captured hundreds of slaving ships, rescuing hundreds of thousands of shipboard captives from these ships. At various sites in Africa and the Americas, courts adjudicated the legality of these naval captures and assigned the 'liberated Africans' from these ships into indentured labour. After horrific ordeals of maritime captivity and bonded labour that bore many similarities to enslavement, these 'liberated Africans' built their own lives in the face of political authorities committed to slavery and imperial rule. Following their paths helps to illuminate illegal enslavement, its protracted abolition, and its troubling afterlives.



(Cover of Exhibition Catalogue)

Dr Jake Subryan Richards is assistant professor of international history at the London School of Economics. His research concerns the African diaspora, empire, and law in comparative historical perspective. Richards has published research in *Past & Present* (2018) and *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (2020) on liberated Africans and the suppression of the transatlantic trade in enslaved African people.

Richards co-curated the recent exhibition [Black Atlantic: Power, People, Resistance at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge](#).

**Wednesday 14 February 16:00-17:00 (BWT), ABLT4 & [Online](#)**



Attendance is free

Hosted by The UCLan Research Centre for Migration, Diaspora and Exile (MIDEX)

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