

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

*Reading Regionalism.*

*Objects, Words and Spaces: Reflections of Regional Realism at the  
Museum of Liverpool.*

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Museum Studies

at Massey University, Manawatū,

New Zealand.

**Vanessa Ann Constantine**

**2015**



## Abstract

This thesis examines how museums and galleries can reflect regionalism through their objects and words and in the spaces (exterior, interior and symbolic) that these words and objects occupy. It also observes the scope and application of regionalism as a genre through which museums can narrate the stories and realities of their regional communities.

In Northern England, urban regeneration initiatives have resulted in stimulating a renaissance of cultural industries, in particular a rejuvenation of city museums as the arts and culture sentries of their region's material heritage. There is much evidence in the North demonstrating that regional identity is progressively celebrated in its museums and galleries and it is the recent popularity in representations of northern experience that deems this area of research significant. However, an initial literature review highlighted a lack of accompanying or documenting museum literature. Furthermore, although regional objects are exhibited as community or cultural signifiers, regionalism is not defined as an applicable museological concept.

This thesis perceives regionalism as a multifaceted notion with permeable boundaries. It is positioned within a conceptual framework that is extracted predominantly from ideas of place and space, human geography and critical regionalist theory, which are subsequently applied to museological contexts.

A visual method, photo-documentation, is utilised to collect evidence from a contemporary purpose-built museum, the Museum of Liverpool, purely dedicated to regionalism: the region and its people. Photo-documentation captured not only the tangible context of place but the sensory relationship between human inhabitants and their regional space while object case studies demonstrate the viability of regionalism.

This thesis aims to show that the application of regionalism in museums is critical, significant and socially inclusive because spaces of regionalism can accommodate performability: regional voice, consciousness and participation.

Dedicated to my remarkable children  
Kale, Lucia, Eloise  
& Delilah.

It is their unconditional love that keeps me  
going and makes everything possible.

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to Massey University Albany for providing me with the post graduate humanities study space, which became my second home. Thank you to Associate Professor Ann Dupuis for allowing me to utilize that space and plaster the walls with copious amounts of images of Liverpool and to Marissa Penfold, and her predecessor Dot Cavanagh, for maintaining the room and dealing with my administrative requests.

Thank you to Dickie Felton, Communications Manager, National Museums Liverpool, for giving me permission to use the photographs taken inside the Museum of Liverpool and to all the staff at the Museum for providing such an awesome environment.

Thank you to my Highwic conservation cleaning team, Jane Finnemore, Sheila Mickleson, Deborah Chandler and Leone Garmaz and our supportive leader, Madelaine Abey-koch, for our Tuesdays that kept me sane and provided stress relief during this process.

Thank you to Julian Larsen for your grand reviewing efforts and words of encouragement.

Thank you to my supervisor Susan Abasa for the direction, guidance and enduring patience. Also for the Thai meal and late night sculpture tour of inner city Palmerston North.

And a special thank you to my family for waiting.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	v
Abbreviations .....	viii
List of Illustrative Material- .....	viii
Tables.....	viii
Photographs .....	viii
<b>Chapter 1 <i>It's Grim up North</i></b> .....	12
<b>Introduction</b> .....	12
Regional realism: 'Living Back-to-Back' .....	25
Location for fieldwork.....	29
Rationale for research: why regionalism?.....	31
Aim and Scope:	
Reflecting regionalism in museums and galleries.....	32
Application of regionalism as a genre.....	33
Research Design - .....	33
Photo-documentation .....	36
Object case studies.....	46
Summary.....	47
Preview of chapters .....	48
<b>Chapter 2 <i>An Object of Mystery</i></b> .....	49
<b>Defining Regionalism</b> .....	49
Part 1	
Literature Review.....	50
Conceptual Framework.....	60
Part 2	
Collecting and displaying the region -	
Connotations for museums and galleries .....	61
Summary .....	64
<b>Chapter 3</b> .....	65
<b>The Landscape of a Region</b> .....	65
Part 1	
<i>The People are Savage yet Gentle</i> .....	65
Social Landscape .....	65
Part 2	
The Museum of Liverpool.....	72
Wondrous Place .....	75
Areas of dissonance: celebration and sacrifice.....	75
Skylight Gallery.....	80
The People's Republic.....	81

Summary of Parts 1 and 2 .....	82
Part 3	
<i>This is a divided city</i> .....	83
A Renaissance City .....	83
Summary .....	92
<b>Chapter 4</b> <i>See what beats underneath</i> .....	94
<b>Regional narratives</b> .....	94
Part 1	
Identity, History and Place .....	94
Case Studies:	
<i>Made Up - the Liverpool Look</i> .....	100
<i>The Liverpool Map</i> .....	106
Regional History .....	109
Layers 1 & 2 .....	109
Layers 3 & 4 .....	110
Regional Boundaries .....	110
Layer 5 .....	111
Layer 6 .....	113
Layers 7 & 8 .....	114
Scousers .....	115
Layers 9-11 .....	115
<i>The Liverpool Saga: Layer 12</i> .....	117
Layers 13-16 .....	120
<b>Spaces of Regionalism</b> .....	122
Part 2	
<b>Portrait of a Region</b> .....	129
City as Region .....	129
Case Study: <i>The Liverpool Cityscape</i> .....	130
Summary .....	135
<b>Chapter 5</b> .....	137
Discussion and analysis .....	137
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	144
Scope for further study .....	146
Museology and regionalism – Where to from here? .....	147
<b>References</b> .....	151

## Abbreviations

<b>LCM</b> -	Leeds City Museum
<b>LMG</b> -	Leeds Museums & Galleries
<b>MOL</b> -	Museum of Liverpool
<b>NML</b> -	National Museums Liverpool

## List of Illustrative Material

All Illustrative material has been created by the author of this thesis unless otherwise stated.

### Tables

**Table 1.1** *Comparing Variations in Dialect*, 2014 p. 19.

### Photographs

#### Chapter 1

**Figure 1.1** *'Playing Out in Milton Terrace'*, Leeds, 2011, p.13.

**Figure 1.2** *'Snow Days, Milton Terrace'*, Kirkstall, Leeds, 2010, p.14.

**Figure 1.3** *"You can hear if someone's having a row, you can pick your sides"*, *Living Back to Back, The Story of Leeds*, LCM, 2011, p. 17.

**Figure 1.4** Constantine-Powles, Eloise and Lucia. *'Patrick (Pat)'*, *Milton Terrace*, 2011, p. 21.

**Figure 1.5** *'Lionel and Helen (with Lucia & Eloise)'*, *Milton Terrace*, 2011, p. 21.

**Figure 1.6** *'19<sup>th</sup> Century Campaniles, Tower Works'*, Leeds, 2011, p.22.

**Figure 1.7** *'The Dark Arches'*, *Granary Wharf, Leeds*, 2011, p.23.

**Figure 1.8** *'The Leeds-Liverpool Canal'*, Leeds, 2011, p.24.

**Figure 1.9** *'Living Back to Back'*, LCM, 2011, p. 27.

**Figure 1.10** *"It's quite difficult but I like It"* *Living Back to Back*, LCM, 2011, p. 28.

**Figure 1.11** *'Milestone on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal'*, 2011, p. 30.

**Figure 1.12** Constantine-Powles, Eloise. *'The Royal Liver Building, Liverpool by Eloise'*, 2011, p. 35.

**Figure 1.13** *'Landscapes', the People's Republic, MOL*, 2011, p. 38.

**Figure 1.14** *"yuh should hear some a the stories that we can tell nuh wonder the youths them did have to rebel"* *Wondrous Place, MOL*, 2011, p. 40.

**Figure 1.15** *"The most deprived 10% in the country"*, *the People's Republic, MOL*, 2011, p. 41.

**Figure 1.16** *"Liverpool is one of the wonders of Britain..."*, *the People's Republic, MOL*, 2011, p. 41.

**Figure 1.17** *'Coding – Spaces'*, 2012, p. 44.

**Figure 1.18** *'Coding – Words'*, 2012, p. 44.

**Figure 1.19** *'Coding – Expressive'*, 2012, p. 44.

**Figure 1.20** *'Liver Bird', the People's Republic, MOL*, 2011, p. 45.

## **Chapter 2**

**Figure 2.1** *'Boys from the Black Stuff', Wondrous Place, MOL*, 2011, p. 55.

## **Chapter 3**

**Figure 3.1** *'St. George's Hall', Liverpool*, 2007, p. 66.

**Figure 3.2** *'Echo and the Bunnymen at the O2 Academy', Liverpool*, 2008, p. 67.

**Figure 3.3** *'Maggie May's Original Scouse', the People's Republic, MOL*, 2011, p. 69.

**Figure 3.4** *'Liverpool Cityscape' (2008) by Ben Johnson, Skylight Gallery*, MOL, 2011, p. 72.

**Figure 3.5** *'MOL', Pier Head*, 2011, p.74.

**Figure 3.6** *'Art Matters - The Pool of Life' (2008) by Amrit and Rabindra Singh, Wondrous Place, MOL*, p.77.

**Figure 3.7** *'Miss El Salvador' (date unknown) by Arthur Dooley, Wondrous Place, MOL*, p.78.

**Figure 3.8** *'Miss El Salvador' (date unknown) by Arthur Dooley, Wondrous Place, MOL, p.79.*

**Figure 3.9** *'Renaissance Liverpool for Sale', 2011, p. 88.*

**Figure 3.10** Hale, P. *'Souvenir' (2003) by Pippa Hale, p. 89.*  
Retrieved from  
<http://www.croweandrawlinson.net/atp/artists/hale/intro.html>

**Figure 3.11** Petersen, C. *"I want to SING" Homeless woman in a Catholic church, Everton v The City of Liverpool: Inequality in Liverpool (2009) by Christian Petersen, p. 92.* Retrieved from  
<http://www.theguardian.com/society/gallery/2009/feb/02/everton-liverpool-photography-exhibition#img-6>

#### **Chapter 4**

**Figure 4.1** *"Tingy (rhymes with dinghy) – Anyone or anything whose name escapes the speaker", Accent & Expressions, the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 95.*

**Figure 4.2** *"Liverpool...did not ask, 'What is your creed, social position, race or politics?' but, 'What do you want? Deserve it, take it, and use it'." the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 96.*

**Figure 4.3** *"I sometimes wonder if there is a worse place on earth, but I never regret coming" the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 96.*

**Figure 4.4** *"Liverpool is one of the wonders of Britain...What is may grow to in time I know not", the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 96.*

**Figure 4.5** *"I had seen wealth. I had seen poverty. But never before had I seen the two so jammed together." the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 97.*

**Figure 4.6** *'communal spirit, overcrowded, squalid rooms', 26 Court, Burlington Street, 1870, the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 97.*

**Figure 4.7** *'Gerard Gardens', the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 98.*

**Figure 4.8** *'Made Up – The Liverpool Look', the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 100.*

**Figure 4.9** *'Made Up – The Liverpool Look', the People's Republic, MOL, 2011, p. 101.*

**Figure 4.10** Edwards, Sophie 'Dolled Up', 2011, p. 102.

**Figure 4.11** 'Made Up – The Liverpool Look', *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 103.

**Figure 4.12** "Made Up – The Liverpool Look", *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p.105.

**Figure 4.13** 'the Liverpool Map', *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 108.

**Figure 4.14** 'the Liverpool Map' *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 115.

**Figure 4.15** Panneels, I. & Sarmiento, J. 'Detail of the Liverpool Map showing boundaries, St. George's Hall, Metropolitan Cathedral and lines from the Liverpool Saga', 2010, p. 117.  
Retrieved from <http://www.idagos.co.uk/>

**Figure 4.16** 'Spaces of Regionalism', *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 122.

**Figure 4.17** 'Spaces of Regionalism', *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 123.

**Figure 4.18** 'Spaces of Regionalism', *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 125.

**Figure 4.19** 'Spaces of Regionalism', *the People's Republic*, MOL, 2011, p. 126.

**Figure 4.20** 'Liverpool Cityscape', 2008 by Ben Johnson, *Skylight Gallery*, 2011, p. 130.

**Figure 4.21** 'Liverpool Cityscape', 2008 by Ben Johnson, *Skylight Gallery*, 2011, p. 132.

**Figure 4.22** "I Loathe This Modern Building", *Skylight Gallery*, MOL, 2011, p.133.

**Figure 4.22** "A Wonderful Eclectic Mix of Old and Modern", *Skylight Gallery*, MOL, 2011, p.134.

**Figure 4.24** 'Liverpool Cityscape', 2008 by Ben Johnson, *Skylight Gallery*, 2011, p. 135.